
Integrating Reason, Revelation, and *Tazkiyah al-Nafs* in Indonesian *Salafiyah Pesantren*: A Hermeneutic Study of al-Ghazali's *Ayyuhā al-Walad*

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ABSTRACT

This article explores Imam al-Ghazali's educational thought and its relevance to the *Salafiyah pesantren* tradition in Indonesia within contemporary socio-cultural and intellectual contexts. Responding to challenges such as moral decline, epistemological fragmentation, and the dominance of instrumental educational paradigms, the study positions al-Ghazali as a key figure offering a holistic and transformative model of Islamic education. The research aims to examine al-Ghazali's educational principles as articulated in *Ayyuhā al-Walad* and to analyze their actualization in Indonesian *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools. Employing a qualitative library-based approach, this study utilizes hermeneutic analysis grounded in Paul Ricoeur's interpretive framework. *Ayyuhā al-Walad* serves as the primary source, supported by contemporary literature on Islamic educational philosophy, *pesantren* studies, and al-Ghazali's intellectual legacy. The analysis highlights three core pillars of al-Ghazali's educational paradigm: the integration of reason and revelation as epistemological foundations, *tazkiyah al-nafs* (purification of the soul) as the ultimate educational objective, and the integration of moral, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions within the learning process. The findings demonstrate that *Salafiyah pesantren* embody al-Ghazali's educational ideals through practices such as *tahfiz*, adab-centered pedagogy, the transmission of scholarly *sanad*, and spiritually grounded learning environments. Philosophically, al-Ghazali's thought reflects a synthesis of idealism, essentialism, and perennialism. This study concludes that *Salafiyah pesantren* function as dynamic institutions capable of recontextualizing classical Islamic educational values to address contemporary educational challenges in Indonesia.

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INTRODUCTION

Thomas Lickona's theory, which conceptualizes moral education as an integrated process encompassing moral knowledge, moral feeling, and moral behaviour, remains highly relevant in addressing the moral challenges faced by younger generations today (Pengabdian & Masyarakat, 2024). These challenges indicate that Islamic education cannot be limited to institutional survival or curricular continuity alone; rather, it must critically reinterpret its spiritual and moral vision within the dynamic realities of modern society. Amid rapid socio-cultural transformation, globalization, and the growing dominance of instrumental rationality in education, there is an urgent need to develop an educational paradigm that not only promotes academic competence but also cultivates moral integrity, spiritual depth, and holistic human development.

Within this context, the educational thought of Imam al-Ghazali emerges as a timeless intellectual legacy that offers a comprehensive philosophical synthesis integrating reason (*'aql*), revelation (*naql*), and spirituality (*tazkiyah al-nafs*) as the foundational pillars of Islamic education (Khusnadin & Shihab, 2025). This synthesis enables Islamic education to maintain its metaphysical and ethical orientation while remaining pedagogically responsive to contemporary demands. Al-Ghazali's framework rejects the dichotomy between intellectual achievement and moral formation, instead positioning education as an integrated process aimed at the cultivation of the whole person.

Al-Ghazali laid a foundational premise that education is not merely the transmission of knowledge, but a lifelong process of humanization oriented toward moral perfection and spiritual proximity to God (*taqarrub ilā Allāh*). As articulated by Alwan Suban, al-Ghazali conceives education as "the process of humanizing human beings throughout their lives in the direction of approaching God" (Suban & A, 2023). This definition situates education as a continuous spiritual journey rather than a purely academic endeavour. Empirical studies further reinforce this perspective, demonstrating that al-Ghazali's concept of character education emphasizes moral formation through habituation from an early age (Nurhayati et al., 2024). Such findings underscore al-Ghazali's conviction that moral refinement constitutes the necessary foundation upon which intellectual mastery must be built.

Unlike Ibn Sina and al-Farabi, who regard intellectual perfection as the highest educational objective, al-Ghazali grounds knowledge in moral discipline and spiritual purification (Iqbal & M, 2024). In his epistemological framework, knowledge is not an end in itself but a transformative process that purifies the self and aligns reason with divine truth. This position highlights al-Ghazali's originality in redefining knowledge from a purely intellectual achievement into a pathway of ethical and spiritual realization. For al-Ghazali, the intellect functions as an instrument for accessing divine knowledge, while the heart (*qalb*) serves as the locus of illumination and ultimate truth.

In the Indonesian context, particularly within *Salafiyah pesantren*, al-Ghazali's educational ideals have been concretely institutionalized through the integration of *tahfīz* (Qur'anic memorization), *tazkiyah* (purification of the soul), and *adab* (ethical formation) as core pedagogical components. These elements not only preserve the classical spiritual pedagogy of Islam but also function as effective frameworks for contemporary character formation. Through daily educational practice, *pesantren* operationalize al-Ghazali's moral-spiritual paradigm: *tahfīz* cultivates intellectual discipline and devotional commitment, *tazkiyah* institutionalizes spiritual refinement, and *adab* ensures the ethical application of knowledge in both personal conduct and social relations. In this way, *pesantren* embody the unity of reason, revelation, and spirituality envisioned by al-Ghazali, demonstrating that classical Islamic educational traditions remain adaptive and responsive to modern pedagogical challenges.

A growing body of scholarship affirms the continued relevance of al-Ghazali's thought in contemporary education, particularly with regard to the prioritization of manners before knowledge, the centrality of the heart (*qalb*), and the integration of knowledge, worship, and ethics. Yusliani et al.

(2023), for instance, emphasize that the urgency of instilling *adab* prior to intellectual instruction in children is deeply influenced by al-Ghazali's pedagogical vision. Similarly, studies examining moral education in *Ayyuhā al-Walad* reveal its direct relevance to current character education practices in Indonesia (Mushoffa Zain & Manik, 2023).

Beyond classroom pedagogy, al-Ghazali's educational philosophy has also been interpreted within the framework of educational management. His conception of the teacher-student relationship emphasizes that educators are not merely transmitters of knowledge but moral guides responsible for the spiritual refinement of their students. As noted by Kurniasari and Astuti, "according to al-Ghazali, educators not only impart knowledge but also provide moral guidance and align students' behaviour with Islamic teachings" (Kurniasari & Astuti, 2024). Within this framework, the integration of reason, revelation, and spirituality occupies a central position, as true knowledge is defined as knowledge that leads to ethical practice and self-purification. This perspective is reinforced by Nurohman, who asserts that "the key to education according to al-Ghazali is the heart, because the heart constitutes the essence of humanity beyond mere physical existence" (Nurohman, 2020).

In the face of global transformations, Islamic educational institutions increasingly confront a dilemma between preserving inherited traditions and adapting to contemporary demands (Hidayati & Humam, n.d.). *Salafiyah pesantren*, with their distinctive scholarly heritage, are challenged to sustain their *sanad*-based intellectual tradition rooted in *turāth* while simultaneously engaging modern pedagogical approaches, including educational technology, quality management, and interdisciplinary collaboration. Research indicates that *pesantren* capable of integrating Sufi spirituality with intellectual rigor while maintaining contextual relevance tend to demonstrate greater educational resilience and effectiveness (Aldeia et al., 2023; Malik et al., 2023).

Within this broader context, the concept of *tazkiyah al-nafs*, which lies at the core of al-Ghazali's thought, assumes particular significance in addressing contemporary spiritual crises. Al-Ghazali viewed the heart as the centre of moral consciousness, warning that education which neglects spiritual cultivation risks producing intellectually capable individuals devoid of ethical direction (Apriansyah et al., 2023). The value of *tazkiyah* is translated into educational practice through disciplined cultivation of manners, structured worship, and the habituation of virtuous conduct (Safitri & S, 2025). Such spiritual discipline provides a necessary counterbalance to the secular-instrumentalist tendencies of modern education, ensuring that intellectual progress remains anchored in moral responsibility and divine purpose.

Al-Ghazali further emphasized that authentic knowledge is not the mere accumulation of information, but a means of attaining knowledge of God. Consequently, the ultimate aim of education must be oriented toward purification of the heart and character formation. From a philosophical standpoint, al-Ghazali's educational vision represents a synthesis of idealism and spiritual transcendence, wherein rational inquiry is directed toward higher religious ends (Syafii et al., 2023). This paradigm offers a viable foundation for the development of *pesantren* education that is value-oriented rather than narrowly skill-based, aligning with national educational policies that emphasize character formation and spirituality (Wardani et al., 2022). Drawing upon the concept of *insān kāmil*, Islamic education particularly within *pesantren* seeks to cultivate intellectual, moral, and spiritual excellence while fostering existential awareness of human responsibility as God's vicegerent on earth.

From a broader philosophical perspective, al-Ghazali's triadic epistemology integrating reason, revelation, and spirituality provides a compelling response to the epistemological fragmentation characteristic of modern education, which often isolates intellect from morality and faith. His framework reaffirms that authentic knowledge arises from the convergence of rational inquiry, divine guidance, and ethical purification, thereby forming the essence of holistic Islamic education. Contemporary philosophical discourse affirms that Islamic education should lead learners toward

existential consciousness and a sense of responsibility as *khalifah* (vicegerent) on earth (Mansir et al., 2023).

Recent studies also reveal a notable convergence between al-Ghazali's educational thought and twenty-first-century educational paradigms emphasizing critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and character (4C). Through his concept of *adab qabl al-'ilm*, al-Ghazali underscores the primacy of ethics as the foundation of critical inquiry (Oktavia et al., 2024). Consequently, his classical insights continue to inform the development of a modern Islamic curriculum that remains both humanistic and spiritually grounded. From the standpoint of educational philosophy, al-Ghazali's thought intersects meaningfully with idealism, essentialism, and perennialism, emphasizing enduring values such as monotheism, moral integrity, and wisdom rather than mere pragmatic adaptation to economic demands (Sirojudin, 2024).

Accordingly, the actualization of al-Ghazali's educational values within *Salafiyah pesantren* holds significant potential for the renewal of Islamic education in Indonesia modern in terms of institutional management yet substantive in spiritual depth (Faizin, 2023). Against this backdrop, the present study highlights the relevance of three core principles of al-Ghazali's educational thought: (1) the unity of reason and revelation as sources of knowledge; (2) *tazkiyah al-nafs* as the ultimate educational goal; and (3) the integration of moral, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions in educational practice. Through a qualitative approach employing hermeneutic analysis of *Ayyuhā al-Walad*, this study examines how these principles are enacted within *Salafiyah pesantren* as traditional yet dynamic Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative hermeneutic approach grounded in library-based research, focusing on a systematic examination of Imam al-Ghazali's classical text *Ayyuhā al-Walad* alongside contemporary scholarly works that address the relevance of al-Ghazali's educational thought within modern Islamic education, particularly in the context of *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) in Indonesia. The hermeneutic approach enables the interpretation of texts as intellectual and spiritual products situated within their historical, theological, and socio-educational contexts, while also allowing their meanings to be critically related to contemporary educational challenges (Harsono et al., 2021).

The data sources for this study are divided into two primary categories. The primary source consists of *Ayyuhā al-Walad*, which serves as the principal object of hermeneutic analysis. Secondary sources include books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and scholarly studies predominantly published between 2020 and 2025 addressing Islamic educational philosophy, al-Ghazali's intellectual legacy, *pesantren* education, and hermeneutic methodology in Islamic studies (Piri et al., 2024; Rosidin et al., 2022). These sources were selected purposively based on their academic credibility, thematic relevance, and direct contribution to the research focus.

All references were accessed through reputable academic databases, including DOAJ, Taylor & Francis Online, and Google Scholar, to ensure the validity, reliability, and contemporaneity of the literature. In addition to conventional secondary sources, the study incorporates contextual empirical materials documenting *Salafiyah pesantren* practices such as curriculum outlines, published case studies on *tahfīz*, reports on *tazkiyah* programs, and guidelines for *adab* formation. These materials were used to reconstruct how al-Ghazali's moral-spiritual educational model has been adopted, adapted, and institutionalized within contemporary *pesantren* settings.

Hermeneutic analysis in this study is applied not merely as a linguistic interpretive technique, but as a philosophical method aimed at uncovering the deeper ethical and spiritual meanings embedded in *Ayyuhā al-Walad*. The analytical procedure follows Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutic

framework, which consists of three interrelated stages. The first stage, text description, involves a close reading of *Ayyuhā al-Walad* to identify key educational concepts, including the relationship between reason and revelation, the centrality of *tazkiyah al-nafs*, and the purpose of education as moral and spiritual self-transformation (Nisa' & Trianawati, 2024).

The second stage, contextual interpretation, situates these concepts within the broader discourse of Islamic education and the lived realities of contemporary *Salafiyah pesantren*, taking into account socio-cultural change, moral challenges, and educational transformation in modern society (Sumarni et al., 2024). This stage explicitly traces how al-Ghazali's classical prescriptions have been operationalized, modified, or institutionalized within current *pesantren* pedagogical practices. The third stage, philosophical reinterpretation, synthesizes the hermeneutic findings by relating them to broader traditions in educational philosophy namely idealism, essentialism, and perennialism as well as to comparative frameworks within Islamic intellectual history. In this phase, the study critically engages with the epistemological perspectives of Ibn Sina, al-Farabi, and Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas as analytical lenses to highlight al-Ghazali's distinctive triadic synthesis of reason, revelation, and spirituality, and to articulate its normative significance in responding to secular-instrumentalist tendencies in modern education (Tadris et al., 2025).

Methodological rigor is ensured through multiple forms of triangulation. Source triangulation is applied by comparing classical texts, contemporary interpretations, and empirical descriptions of *pesantren* practices. Conceptual triangulation is employed through the juxtaposition of different philosophical frameworks, including Ibn Sina's rationalism, al-Farabi's civic teleology, and al-Attas's concept of *ta'dīb*. Interpretive reflexivity is maintained by systematically documenting analytical decisions and considering alternative readings of the texts. In addition, a meta-synthesis technique is used to integrate diverse findings into coherent philosophical propositions that can inform both educational theory and teacher-formation discourse.

Through these methodological stages, this study seeks to uncover the conceptual structure of al-Ghazali's educational thought and interpret it as an integrated Islamic educational model encompassing intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions. The validity of this literature-based research is reinforced through rigorous source triangulation and thematic analysis, in line with the view that triangulated literature strengthens the credibility of conceptual interpretations in Islamic educational philosophy (Amuntai & Selatan, 2025). Furthermore, as emphasized by Piri and Maleki Avar sin, hermeneutic literary analysis remains academically robust when it is conducted transparently, reflectively, and grounded in authentic primary texts (Piri et al., 2024). By adopting this methodological framework, the study is able to elucidate the enduring relevance of al-Ghazali's educational thought in shaping a balanced Islamic educational paradigm that harmonizes intellectual rigor, moral formation, and spiritual depth, particularly within the context of *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools in contemporary Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Integration of Reason, Revelation, and Spirituality in al-Ghazali's Educational Paradigm (A Hermeneutic Study of *Ayyuhā al-Walad*)

Ayyuhā al-Walad stands as one of Imam al-Ghazali's seminal works, reflecting a sophisticated epistemological synthesis that integrates reason (*'aql*), revelation (*naql*), and spirituality (*taṣawwuf*). In this text, al-Ghazali does not merely offer moral exhortations to his students; rather, he articulates a coherent philosophical framework concerning the nature, function, and ethical orientation of knowledge. For al-Ghazali, authentic knowledge (*al-'ilm al-ḥaqīqī*) is knowledge that leads human beings toward recognition of God and spiritual proximity to Him, rather than serving as a means for the accumulation of information or the pursuit of academic prestige

(Rosidah & L, 2024). This perspective underscores the transcendental purpose of knowledge and affirms that learning detached from worship and moral intention is deprived of its ontological significance.

Within *Ayyuhā al-Walad*, al-Ghazali consistently emphasizes that reason constitutes a noble gift from God, entrusted to human beings to comprehend the meaning of existence and discern the signs of divine wisdom. Nevertheless, reason is not accorded ultimate epistemic authority independent of revelation. Al-Ghazali cautions his students: “O my son, do not be proud of your knowledge, but reflect on whether that knowledge has led you to good deeds.” This statement clearly situates reason as an instrumental faculty that facilitates understanding of revealed truth, rather than as the arbiter of truth itself. Consequently, the role of reason in al-Ghazali’s educational paradigm does not align with pure rationalism; instead, it reflects a form of spiritual rationalism subordinated to divine values and moral discipline (Sulaiman & A, 2023).

Reason, in this framework, functions as a means of distinguishing reality from illusion, yet it remains susceptible to error when detached from revelatory guidance. For al-Ghazali, therefore, genuine education is education that unites intellectual competence with transcendental awareness. Within *Salafiyah pesantren*, this principle is embodied in the tradition of *tafaqquh fī al-dīn*, which encourages critical reasoning while maintaining firm grounding in Islamic law and theology.

From a comparative perspective, al-Ghazali’s epistemological orientation diverges markedly from that of Ibn Sina and al-Farabi. Whereas Ibn Sina prioritizes the perfection of the intellect as the pathway to metaphysical truth and al-Farabi situates knowledge within a civic-rational teleology, al-Ghazali repositions the intellect as subordinate to revelation and subject to rigorous spiritual discipline. Similarly, although Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas emphasizes *ta’dīb* the cultivation of proper adab and worldview al-Ghazali extends this ethical concern by embedding a systematic program of inner purification (*tazkiyah*) that explicitly reorients cognition toward divine knowledge. These comparative perspectives clarify al-Ghazali’s distinctive philosophical synthesis: a triadic epistemology in which reason serves an instrumental role, revelation provides normative and moral authority, and spirituality ensures ethical transformation.

Revelation occupies a central and non-negotiable position in al-Ghazali’s epistemological framework. In *Ayyuhā al-Walad*, he states: “O my son, learn beneficial knowledge, for knowledge that does not lead you to God is merely an argument against yourself.” This assertion emphasizes that truly beneficial knowledge (*‘ilm nāfi*) must be oriented toward revelatory values. Revelation functions as a moral compass that safeguards knowledge from devolving into intellectual arrogance or ethical deviation (Rahman & A, 2023). Al-Ghazali’s position thus constitutes a critique of modern educational paradigms that treat knowledge as neutral, value-free, and detached from moral responsibility. For al-Ghazali, no form of knowledge is ethically neutral; every intellectual pursuit carries spiritual and moral consequences. Consequently, the integration of revelation into educational practice is imperative if learning is to produce not merely intellectual elites, but *‘ulamā’ rabbāniyyūn* scholars whose knowledge is animated by devotion to God (F. Hamid et al., 2022).

The third and most decisive component of al-Ghazali’s educational paradigm is spirituality, which represents the core moral message of *Ayyuhā al-Walad*. The text itself is framed as a personal letter of counsel addressed to students who, despite extensive study, have failed to attain inner tranquility. Al-Ghazali warns: “O my son, if you do not practice knowledge, then that knowledge will not benefit you in this world or the hereafter.” This admonition illustrates that knowledge devoid of *tazkiyah* the purification of the soul is merely a hollow form lacking transformative power (Rahim & M, 2023). Such an orientation implies that Islamic education, if it is to remain authentic, must be fundamentally transformative, aiming not simply to produce technically skilled individuals but morally awakened and spiritually conscious persons.

In the Indonesian context, *Salafiyah pesantren* exemplify this triadic synthesis through the integration of three interrelated educational systems: *tahfīz*, *tazkiyah*, and *adab*. *Tahfīz* fosters intellectual discipline and sustained concentration, *tazkiyah* institutionalizes self-purification through daily spiritual practices and ethical mentoring, while *adab* governs behavioral norms and social relations between teachers and students (Modernitas et al., 2024). For al-Ghazali, spirituality is not merely an affective or emotional dimension; it is a structured methodological process aimed at cleansing the heart from moral maladies such as *riyā'* (ostentation), *'ujb* (self-admiration), and *ḥubb al-dunyā* (excessive attachment to worldly concerns). Through sustained *tazkiyah*, knowledge becomes an illuminating force that guides the heart toward *ma'rifat Allāh* intimate knowledge of the Divine. This orientation reinforces the view that Islamic education must transcend textual mastery and prioritize inner transformation. Historically, *pesantren* have existed long before Indonesia's independence and continue to evolve in response to broader educational developments (Sasadara & Fakhroh Setiawan Agung, 2022). Accordingly, authentic education must encompass intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions in an integrated manner (Ahmad et al., 2021).

The integration of reason, revelation, and spirituality thus gives rise to a holistic educational paradigm. In *Ayyuhā al-Walad*, al-Ghazali articulates a pedagogical model that remains profoundly relevant to contemporary Islamic education, particularly within *Salafiyah pesantren*. He underscores the significance of the spiritual bond between teacher and student, the centrality of proper etiquette in the pursuit of knowledge, and an educational orientation directed toward seeking divine pleasure. Within this framework, teachers function not merely as instructors but as spiritual mentors (*murabbī*), while students are envisioned not only as seekers of knowledge but as seekers of truth (Hidayat et al., 2022). This model acquires heightened relevance amid the modern crisis of values, wherein knowledge increasingly becomes detached from ethical and spiritual foundations. Al-Ghazali's insistence that true knowledge must culminate in righteous action and spiritual enlightenment thus provides a critical foundation for reconstructing contemporary Islamic educational paradigms (Nurlaili & H, 2024). In practice, this paradigm is reflected in the systematic implementation of instruction aligned with clearly articulated moral and spiritual competencies (Zakiyyah et al., 2024).

Ultimately, the paradigm of integrating reason, revelation, and spirituality articulated in *Ayyuhā al-Walad* shapes not only individual ethical formation but also the collective epistemology of the Muslim community. It decisively rejects the dualism between so-called "worldly" and "religious" knowledge, restoring knowledge to its primary function as a means of devotion to God. Within this ontological framework, thinking and learning themselves are construed as acts of worship that guide human beings toward existential perfection (*insān al-kāmil*). This vision constitutes the foundation of a transformative philosophy of Islamic education, directing learners from mere cognition toward divine recognition (Rosidah & L, 2024). Consequently, *Ayyuhā al-Walad* should be understood not only as a moral treatise but as a profound epistemological work that affirms the enduring necessity of integrating reason, revelation, and spirituality within educational practice. Its values remain highly relevant for contemporary Islamic educational institutions particularly *pesantren* that seek to sustain a balanced relationship between rational inquiry and spiritual depth.

***Tazkiyah al-Nafs* as the Goal of Islamic Education in al-Ghazali's Thought**

Tazkiyah al-nafs, or the purification of the soul, constitutes a central and defining concept in al-Ghazali's educational philosophy. In *Ayyuhā al-Walad*, al-Ghazali firmly asserts that the aim of education transcends the mere acquisition of knowledge (*ta'allum al-'ilm*) and must instead be oriented toward the moral and spiritual transformation of the learner. Addressing his students, al-

Ghazali cautions: “O my son, mend your heart, for knowledge without a purified heart will only become a burden and lead you astray.” This admonition underscores that authentic Islamic education must situate *tazkiyah al-nafs* at the very core of the learning process (Khalid & R, 2021). Such an orientation defines al-Ghazali’s pedagogical teleology, directing knowledge toward purification of the self and proximity to the Divine rather than toward instrumental or utilitarian objectives.

Al-Ghazali conceptualizes the process of soul purification as a multidimensional and interrelated endeavor. In *Ayyuhā al-Walad*, he emphasizes three principal dimensions of *tazkiyah al-nafs*. The first is moral purification (*akhlāq*), which entails the cultivation of noble character as a foundational educational objective. Learners are instructed to avoid reprehensible traits such as *riyā’* (ostentation), *‘ujb* (self-admiration), and *ḥasad* (envy), while actively developing virtues such as patience, *tawāḍu’* (humility), and honesty. Within this framework, moral integrity functions as a prerequisite for knowledge to become genuinely beneficial (*‘ilm nāfi’*) (Rahman & A, 2023). This dimension reveals that ethical refinement is epistemologically inseparable from intellectual achievement. In contrast to Ibn Sina, who conceives virtue because of intellectual perfection, al-Ghazali positions moral discipline as a precondition for intellectual illumination an inversion that underscores the distinctive spiritual epistemology of his thought (Nasr, 2021).

The second dimension emphasized by al-Ghazali is spiritual development, rooted in the Sufi tradition. Knowledge, in this sense, must ultimately cultivate transcendental awareness and deepen the learner’s closeness to God. *Tazkiyah al-nafs* encourages students not only to recognize divine values intellectually but also to internalize and embody them in practice, ensuring that knowledge transcends cognitive abstraction and becomes a means of transforming the heart (Al-Faruqi & I, 2020). Unlike al-Farabi’s rational mysticism, which conceptualizes spiritual ascent through the mediation of the Active Intellect, al-Ghazali frames spirituality as a process of moral purification achieved through submission to revelation and the disciplined eradication of ego-centered desires. This distinction highlights al-Ghazali’s reconciliation of intellect and revelation in the pursuit of spiritual truth (Avarsin & M, 2024).

The third dimension is intellectual purification, which concerns the proper orientation of reason (*‘aql*). Al-Ghazali maintains that intellectual activity must be guided by revelation and illuminated by a purified heart. When detached from *tazkiyah al-nafs*, reason risks devolving into arrogance or ethical deviation. Accordingly, al-Ghazali emphasizes that genuine knowledge can only be attained through the integration of textual mastery, practical engagement, and inner purification (Sulaiman & A, 2023). This integration stands in stark contrast to the epistemic dualism characteristic of modern secularism, which isolates rational inquiry from ethical and spiritual considerations. Al-Ghazali’s approach affirms that authentic understanding emerges from a purified consciousness illuminated by divine guidance (Huda et al., 2023). Collectively, these three dimensions moral, spiritual, and intellectual purification embody al-Ghazali’s holistic vision of education as simultaneously epistemological and soteriological, transforming the pursuit of knowledge into a sacred journey of the self that unites cognition, faith, and character.

Within the context of *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia, the principle of *tazkiyah al-nafs* is vividly reflected in daily educational practices. Students are systematically trained in proper learning etiquette, discipline of speech, the cultivation of *dhikr* (remembrance of God), and the application of knowledge in acts of worship and social interaction. These practices resonate directly with al-Ghazali’s insistence in *Ayyuhā al-Walad* that knowledge devoid of action is ultimately futile. Moreover, many pesantren implement *suluk* structured spiritual guidance designed to cultivate self-discipline, control desires, and strengthen ethical awareness. Such practices serve as the foundation for nurturing *insān kāmil* (the complete human being), individuals who integrate intellectual competence with moral integrity and spiritual depth (Hamid & Latif, 2022).

The *pesantren* tradition of *tahfīz* (memorization), *tazkiyah* (purification through devotional practice), and *adab* (ethical conduct) offers a concrete pedagogical translation of al-Ghazali's triadic epistemology (Faizin et al., 2023; Kurniawati, 2024). For instance, *tahfīz* fosters concentration, discipline, and cognitive focus aligned with divine remembrance; *tazkiyah* practices such as *murāqabah* and *muḥāsabah* cultivate emotional regulation and humility; and *adab* instruction structures social ethics and spiritual etiquette within the learning community. This integration demonstrates how *Salafiyah pesantren* have effectively operationalized al-Ghazali's concept of purification within contemporary institutional frameworks, illustrating that classical spirituality can coexist with systematic and structured pedagogy.

Furthermore, many *pesantren* incorporate *suluk* and *riyāḍah* (ascetic discipline), wherein students engage in guided introspection and devotional exercises under the supervision of a *kyai* or *murshid*. These practices represent an educational continuity between al-Ghazali's Sufi ethics and contemporary moral pedagogy, where inner transformation complements academic formation (S. Hamid et al., 2022). Collectively, such programs aim to cultivate *insān kāmil* individuals in whom intellectual capacity, moral virtue, and spiritual awareness coexist harmoniously.

From the perspective of educational philosophy, *tazkiyah al-nafs* reflects a form of religious idealism deeply embedded in al-Ghazali's thought. His idealism emphasizes that the ultimate purpose of education lies not in cognitive accumulation or technical mastery, but in the formation of hearts and souls aligned with transcendental values. This orientation is particularly relevant in addressing contemporary moral and spiritual crises, where scientific and technological advancement often proceeds without commensurate ethical responsibility (Ahmad et al., 2021). Accordingly, *tazkiyah al-nafs* functions not merely as an individual spiritual endeavor but as a foundational principle for the collective sustainability of Islamic education. *Salafiyah pesantren*, which prioritize the integrated development of moral, spiritual, and intellectual capacities, thus represent a tangible realization of al-Ghazali's educational vision as articulated in *Ayyuhā al-Walad*.

Philosophically, al-Ghazali's triadic epistemology reason, revelation, and spirituality offers an integrative paradigm capable of addressing the fragmentation characteristic of modern education. By uniting rational inquiry with revelatory guidance and spiritual consciousness, al-Ghazali redefines learning as an act of worship and moral cultivation (Hassan & S, 2024). This perspective implies that contemporary Islamic education must embed moral purification and spiritual awareness as core learning outcomes rather than relegating them to supplementary or extracurricular domains. Analytically, this framework carries significant implications for educational policy and teacher formation. Teacher education programs, for instance, should reintroduce *tazkiyah*-based pedagogical models that emphasize ethical self-discipline and reflective spirituality in professional preparation (Harahap et al., 2023). Similarly, curriculum development should institutionalize *adab* and *tazkiyah* as structured and assessable components of religious education, ensuring that moral and spiritual dimensions are systematically cultivated (Wahidah & S, 2025).

Taken together, this discussion demonstrates that al-Ghazali's doctrine of *tazkiyah al-nafs* is not merely an ethical injunction but a comprehensive educational philosophy that integrates cognition, ethics, and spirituality into a coherent framework of human development. The sustainability of Islamic education, therefore, depends upon its capacity to preserve and actualize this integrative vision within contemporary pedagogical structures, particularly within institutions such as *Salafiyah pesantren* that continue to embody al-Ghazali's transformative educational legacy.

The *Salafiyah* Islamic Boarding School Tradition as a Practical Implementation of Al-Ghazali's Thought

Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia are a concrete platform for implementing al-Ghazali's educational principles, as reflected in *Ayyuhā al-walad*. In this work, al-Ghazali emphasizes the importance of integrating reason, revelation, and spirituality, and places *tazkiyah al-nafs* (religious devotion) as the goal of education. This synthesis not only distinguishes al-Ghazali from earlier Muslim philosophers such as Ibn Sina and Al-Farabi who emphasized intellectual perfection and rational virtue but also parallels Syed M. Naquib al-Attas's concept of *adab* as the realization of one's proper place within divine order (Al-Attas, 2022; Nasr, 2021). The *pesantren* tradition, which emphasizes discipline, etiquette, the chain of knowledge, and spiritual development, is a concrete manifestation of these principles (S. Hamid et al., 2022)

One of the main values emphasized in *Ayyuhā al-walad* is the importance of the chain of transmission of knowledge and etiquette in seeking knowledge. Al-Ghazali wrote: "O my son, learn knowledge from a pious teacher, and be mindful of your etiquette in seeking knowledge, for knowledge acquired without etiquette is futile." This message became the foundation of the *Salafiyah pesantren* tradition, which emphasizes students' moral discipline, respect for teachers, and adherence to classical learning rules (Rahman & A, 2023). The chain of transmission in *pesantren* education is not merely academic legitimacy but also a means of instilling spiritual and moral values. By following the chain of pious teachers, students acquire not only knowledge but also spiritual examples that guide *tazkiyah al-nafs* (self-control). This demonstrates a direct implementation of al-Ghazali's teaching that knowledge must be combined with ethics and purity of heart (Al-Faruqi & I, 2020)

Al-Ghazali emphasized in *Ayyuhā al-walad* that knowledge without spiritual practice will be dry and devoid of blessings. The tradition of *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools reflects this through various methods, such as memorization (*tahfīz*), *murāja'ah* (recitation), *dhikr* (remembrance of God), and regular religious studies. These activities are not merely rituals, but rather a means of internalizing moral values, strengthening spiritual awareness, and developing personal discipline (Khalid et al., 2021). This spiritual experience bridges theory and practice. Islamic boarding schools emphasize that truly beneficial knowledge is knowledge that is applied in daily life and leads students to moral transformation. Thus, the learning process in *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools emulates al-Ghazali's ideal educational model: an integration of cognition, ethics, and spirituality (Rahim & M, 2023) *Tazkiyah al-nafs* (the inner self) is the core of educational practices in *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools, as directed by al-Ghazali in *Ayyuhā al-walad*. Students are trained to control their desires, cultivate admirable qualities, and avoid reprehensible ones. *Suluk* (spiritual meditation) and spiritual development are the primary means of building character and spiritual maturity. With this approach, Islamic boarding school education not only produces knowledge but also individuals with morals, intelligence, and devotion to God (Hidayat et al., 2022).

The *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding school tradition demonstrates the practical application of al-Ghazali's principles in *Ayyuhā al-walad*. The integration of reason, revelation, and spirituality is realized through teaching methods that emphasize understanding classical texts, teacher-student dialogue, practicing worship, and strengthening character. This system shapes individuals with a balance between knowledge, morals, and spirituality. This implementation strengthens the identity of Islamic boarding schools as Islamic educational institutions that combine mastery of knowledge with spiritual development (Sulaiman & A, 2023). The *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding school tradition demonstrates the relevance of al-Ghazali's educational principles to modern Islamic education. While modern formal education tends to be fragmented, Islamic boarding schools offer a holistic educational model, integrating cognition, morals, and spirituality. This demonstrates that al-Ghazali's legacy of thought in *Ayyuhā al-walad* remains relevant in shaping a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent but also morally and spiritually mature (Ahmad et al., 2021). Thus,

Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools are not merely conservative institutions, but also practical representations of al-Ghazali's educational philosophy, which prioritizes the transformation of the soul as the core of every learning activity. This implementation demonstrates the continuity of the Islamic scholarly tradition rooted in morality, spirituality, and intellectual discipline.

The Philosophical Dimensions of Education: Idealism, Essentialism, and Perennialism in the Thought of al-Ghazali

Al-Ghazali's educational thought in *Ayyuhā al-walad* presents dimensions of educational philosophy encompassing idealism, essentialism, and perennialism. These concepts form a pedagogical framework that emphasizes not only mastery of knowledge but also the moral and spiritual development of students (A. Qasim et al., 2021). This synthesis distinguishes al-Ghazali from earlier Muslim philosophers such as Ibn Sina and Al-Farabi, who prioritized intellectual perfection and political rationality respectively. In contrast, al-Ghazali redefined education as a process of ethical purification and divine orientation, thereby grounding epistemology in spirituality rather than pure reason (Avarsin & M, 2024; Nasr, 2021).

Idealism, in the context of al-Ghazali, emphasizes that true reality is spiritual and moral values are absolute. In *Ayyuhā al-walad*, al-Ghazali emphasizes that the goal of education is not merely mastery of material things, but self-development towards perfection (*insān al-kāmil*). He writes: "O my son, seek knowledge that brings your heart closer to God, for knowledge that does not purify the heart is nothing but empty knowledge." From an idealistic perspective, education aims to shape the character, morals, and spirituality of students so that they are able to recognize eternal values. This concept is reflected in al-Ghazali's emphasis on etiquette, spiritual discipline, and strengthening faith, which are the core of education in *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools (Sulaiman & A, 2023). Al-Ghazali's idealism emphasizes that every learning process must be directed towards the discovery of truth and divine wisdom, not merely the achievement of academic competence. While Ibn Sina associates ideal knowledge with the intellect's union with the Active Intellect, al-Ghazali transforms this pursuit into a moral-spiritual journey governed by divine revelation. His idealism thus bridges metaphysical reason with spiritual practice, situating truth not in abstract speculation but in the purified heart (Al-Attas, 2022). In *Salafiyah* pesantren, this idealism manifests through *adab* formation, *dzikrullah* routines, and spiritual mentoring (*riyāḍah nafsiyyah*). Students are trained to internalize eternal values such as humility, sincerity, and obedience, reflecting al-Ghazali's principle that knowledge must culminate in ethical embodiment. This integration of spiritual idealism into educational praxis illustrates how *pesantren* preserve metaphysical orientation while adapting to modern learning systems (F. Hamid et al., 2022).

Essentialism emphasizes mastery of core knowledge and fundamental values that every student must master. In *Ayyuhā al-walad*, al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of mastering religious knowledge, ethics, and rationality as the foundation of education. He advised his students to study beneficial sciences, emphasized basic principles, and ensured that the practice of knowledge was in accordance with moral and spiritual principles (Rahman & A, 2023). Unlike Al-Farabi, who situates essential knowledge within civic philosophy, al-Ghazali grounds it in revelation and ethical practice, making moral action the essence of knowledge (Sulaiman & A, 2023). In *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools, this principle of essentialism is implemented through a curriculum based on classical texts (*kitab kuning*) that focuses on mastering the fundamentals of *fiqh*, *'aqidah*, *tafsir*, and Sufism. This emphasis on core knowledge ensures that students do not lose their value orientation, in line with al-Ghazali's principle that knowledge without practice is useless (Al-Faruqi & I, 2020).

Perennialism emphasizes that education must teach eternal values that apply across time. In *Ayyuhā al-walad*, al-Ghazali emphasized that knowledge should be directed towards developing

morals, purifying the heart, and closeness to God. Values such as honesty, patience, humility, and devotion are universal and relevant in all social and historical contexts (Khalid & R, 2021). The application of perennialism in *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding school education is evident through character building, disciplined worship, and the integration of knowledge with spiritual practices. Education not only produces intellectual competence but also shapes individuals capable of facing the challenges of the times without losing the noble values of Islam (Latif et al., 2023). Al-Ghazali successfully integrated idealism, essentialism, and perennialism into a coherent educational framework. In *Ayyuhā al-walad*, students are guided to: Recognizing and appreciating spiritual values (idealism), Mastering basic knowledge and basic moral principles (essentialism), Emulating eternal values that are relevant across time (perennialism).

This integration forms the basis of the *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding school educational tradition, which combines mastery of knowledge, spiritual transformation, and the formation of lasting character. Thus, Al-Ghazali's educational philosophy is not merely a theory, but a practice that produces individuals balanced between reason, morality, and spirituality (Ahmad et al., 2021; Sulaiman & A, 2023). The dimensions of Al-Ghazali's educational philosophy remain relevant to modern Islamic education, particularly in the face of fragmentation of knowledge and moral crisis. Idealism emphasizes lofty educational goals, essentialism ensures mastery of core knowledge, and perennialism keeps eternal values alive in educational practice. *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools, as a concrete implementation of this thinking, demonstrate the success of a holistic educational model that integrates cognition, morality, and spirituality (Rahim & M, 2023). The novelty of this study lies in articulating how al-Ghazali's philosophical triad idealism, essentialism, and perennialism operates not merely as a theoretical construct but as an embodied educational practice within Indonesia's *Salafiyah pesantren*. It demonstrates that classical Islamic philosophy, when contextualized in modern pedagogy, continues to offer a sustainable model for integrating intellect, morality, and spirituality.

The Relevance of al-Ghazali's Thought to Strengthening the Scholarly Tradition of Salafiyah Islamic Boarding Schools

Al-Ghazali's educational thought, particularly as articulated in *Ayyuhā al-Walad*, holds strategic relevance for strengthening the scholarly tradition (*tradisi keilmuan*) within Indonesian *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools. In this work, al-Ghazali firmly asserts that education is not limited to the transmission of knowledge but must also encompass moral refinement, spiritual cultivation, and ethical discipline in the pursuit of learning. This perspective provides both a philosophical and methodological foundation for sustaining the integrity of Islamic scholarly traditions within *pesantren* institutions (Sukma et al., 2021).

One of the central principles emphasized by al-Ghazali in *Ayyuhā al-Walad* is the indispensable role of *isnād* (the chain of knowledge transmission) and *adab* (ethical discipline) in the acquisition of knowledge. Al-Ghazali advises his students: "Learn knowledge from a pious teacher and observe proper adab, for knowledge without adab is useless." This principle situates education within a moral-spiritual hierarchy in which the teacher (*mu'allim*) functions not merely as a transmitter of information, but as a moral exemplar and spiritual guide (*murabbī*) responsible for nurturing divine consciousness in the learner. In contrast to Ibn Sina, who primarily conceptualized the teacher as a rational facilitator, or al-Farabi, who framed the educator as a political philosopher, al-Ghazali emphasizes the teacher's role in the purification of the soul and moral formation of students (Avarsin & M, 2024).

Salafiyah Islamic boarding schools operationalize this principle through pedagogical structures that emphasize hierarchical teacher-student relationships, deep respect for educators, and

disciplined learning practices (Rahim & M, 2023). Within this framework, the *sanad* functions not only as a marker of academic legitimacy but also as a vehicle for transmitting ethical sensibilities and spiritual virtues from one generation to the next. This tradition ensures that the knowledge acquired by students is accompanied by lived moral exemplarity, aligning with al-Ghazali's insistence that knowledge must be inseparable from purity of heart and moral integrity (Mahmudi et al., 2022). In this sense, the *isnād* serves simultaneously as an epistemological and ontological link, safeguarding Islamic knowledge from detachment and secularization, and preserving its transformative ethical function.

Al-Ghazali further emphasizes in *Ayyuhā al-Walad* that knowledge must ultimately serve as a means of transforming the heart. In *Salafiyah pesantren*, this principle is embodied through sustained practices such as *dhikr* (remembrance of God), *tahfīz* (memorization), regular religious instruction, and *suluk* (spiritual guidance). These practices prioritize the internalization of ethical values, self-discipline, and closeness to God, ensuring that learning remains not only cognitive but also transformative (Hussein & A, 2020). Consequently, students are encouraged to practice knowledge as a lived ethical commitment rather than merely mastering theoretical content, thereby reinforcing the integration of reason, heart, and action in Islamic education (Rahman et al., 2023).

The pedagogical traditions of *Salafiyah pesantren* particularly the emphasis on classical texts (*kitab kuning*), *sorogan* and *bandongan* methods, and perseverance in the pursuit of knowledge closely reflect the educational ideals articulated by al-Ghazali in *Ayyuhā al-Walad*. These practices strengthen the continuity of Islamic scholarship by maintaining the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, internalizing moral and ethical values rooted in classical Islamic teachings, and integrating intellectual rigor with spiritual and ethical development (H. Qasim et al., 2021). As a result, al-Ghazali's thought functions not merely as a theoretical construct but as a practical guide that sustains the pesantren's scholarly tradition and ensures that knowledge remains meaningful and beneficial (*'ilm nāfi'*) for the wider community.

From an analytical standpoint, the *pesantren* model offers significant insights for contemporary educational reform. Teacher education programs, for instance, should reintegrate *adab* and *tazkiyah* as core pedagogical competencies rather than marginal ethical supplements (Harahap et al., 2023). Likewise, educational policy frameworks should formally incorporate spiritual and ethical indicators into institutional evaluation systems. Such reforms would sustain al-Ghazali's vision of knowledge as illumination (*ma'rifah*), ensuring that Islamic scholarship remains both intellectually rigorous and spiritually alive (Wahidah & S, 2025). The novelty of this study lies in demonstrating that al-Ghazali's synthesis of rational, ethical, and spiritual dimensions is not an abstract philosophical ideal, but a living epistemic tradition embodied within Indonesia's *Salafiyah pesantren*. This continuity between classical Islamic thought and contemporary practice underscores the enduring relevance of al-Ghazali's educational legacy for constructing a value-centered, spiritually grounded, and intellectually coherent model of Islamic scholarship.

Strengthening the Identity of Islamic Education through al-Ghazali's Educational Principles in *Salafiyah* Islamic Boarding Schools

Al-Ghazali's educational philosophy, as articulated in *Ayyuhā al-Walad*, emphasizes that Islamic education is not merely concerned with the accumulation of knowledge, but with the formation of students' spiritual, moral, and intellectual identity. For al-Ghazali, the identity of Islamic education is rooted in the integration of reason, revelation, and spirituality, alongside the disciplined practice of *tazkiyah al-nafs* (self-purification), which fundamentally distinguishes Islamic education from secular educational paradigms (Khalid et al., 2021). This integrative vision transcends both the rational elitism of Ibn Sina and the civic-ethical orientation of al-Farabi by

grounding intellectual development in spiritual purification. Moreover, it anticipates Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas's philosophy of *adab*, wherein knowledge is inseparable from ethical and metaphysical order (Al-Attas, 2022; Nasr, 2021).

Al-Ghazali places strong emphasis on the internalization of Islamic moral values within the learning process, including honesty, patience, humility, and devotion to God. In *Ayyuhā al-Walad*, he repeatedly reminds his students that knowledge must be accompanied by righteous action, as knowledge devoid of practice weakens character and diminishes spiritual blessing. *Salafiyah pesantren* implement this principle through disciplined worship, structured moral training, and the cultivation of ethical conduct in students' daily lives (Rahman & A, 2023). The consistent internalization of these values forms the foundation of Islamic educational identity, enabling students not only to master religious sciences but also to embody the moral exemplars of the Prophet and the pious scholars. Thus, Islamic educational identity emerges through sustained moral and spiritual habituation, in accordance with al-Ghazali's pedagogical vision (Hidayat et al., 2022).

Central to this identity formation is the concept of *sanad* as a mechanism for preserving scholarly continuity and ethical integrity. In *Ayyuhā al-Walad*, al-Ghazali underscores the necessity of learning from pious and knowledgeable teachers, ensuring that knowledge transmission encompasses spiritual depth in addition to cognitive understanding. *Salafiyah pesantren* maintain this tradition through pedagogical practices such as *sorogan*, *bandongan*, intensive engagement with classical texts (*kitab kuning*), and close interpersonal interaction between teachers and students (Mahmudi et al., 2022). The reinforcement of *sanad* and *adab* thus generates a distinctive scholarly identity that preserves classical Islamic traditions while simultaneously cultivating the moral and spiritual character of learners. This feature constitutes a defining hallmark of Islamic education, differentiating it from secular educational systems that prioritize technical competence over ethical formation.

Tazkiyah al-nafs further plays a central role in consolidating Islamic educational identity. Al-Ghazali emphasizes that the goal of education lies in cultivating the heart, disciplining desire, and nurturing noble character. *Salafiyah pesantren* actualize this principle through practices such as *dhikr*, sustained religious study, and structured spiritual development programs that enable students to internalize Islamic values across all dimensions of life (Hussein & A, 2020). Through this process, Islamic educational identity transcends formal curricular content and becomes embodied in the ethical, spiritual, and behavioral dispositions of students.

In addressing contemporary challenges such as moral disintegration, value erosion, and cultural globalization al-Ghazali's educational framework offers a robust model for strengthening the identity of Islamic education. By integrating knowledge, spirituality, and morality, *Salafiyah pesantren* can produce graduates who possess not only intellectual competence but also strong character and a deeply rooted Islamic identity (Rahim et al., 2022). Accordingly, al-Ghazali's educational principles function not merely as theoretical ideals but as practical and transformative foundations for cultivating an authentic, resilient, and sustainable model of Islamic education in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

This study affirms the enduring relevance of al-Ghazali's educational thought for the development of Islamic education within *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. Al-Ghazali's synthesis of reason (*'aql*), revelation (*naql*), and spirituality (*tazkiyah al-nafs*) provides a comprehensive epistemological framework that bridges classical Islamic scholarship with contemporary educational challenges. His educational philosophy emphasizes the unity of reason and revelation as sources of knowledge, positioning *tazkiyah al-nafs* as the ultimate goal of education

and orienting learning toward moral refinement, self-discipline, and spiritual transformation. From a philosophical perspective, al-Ghazali integrates elements of idealism, essentialism, and perennialism, underscoring noble educational purposes, mastery of essential knowledge (*al-‘ulūm al-mahmūdah*), and the preservation of timeless values an integration that distinguishes his thought from that of Ibn Sina and al-Farabi and anticipates al-Attas’s emphasis on *adab*.

Empirically, this study demonstrates that *Salafiyah pesantren* function as living embodiments of al-Ghazali’s educational model. Through practices such as *tahfīz*, *tazkiyah*, *adab*-based mentoring, and the preservation of scholarly *sanad*, *pesantren* sustain a holistic educational framework that balances intellectual rigor with moral and spiritual cultivation. Rather than operating as static or conservative institutions, *Salafiyah pesantren* emerge as dynamic spaces where Islamic intellectual traditions are preserved, contextualized, and transmitted across generations.

The novelty of this study lies in showing that al-Ghazali’s educational philosophy is not confined to textual discourse but has been effectively institutionalized within Indonesia’s *pesantren* tradition. By integrating intellect, revelation, and spirituality, *Salafiyah* Islamic boarding schools offer a transformative educational paradigm capable of addressing contemporary moral, epistemic, and spiritual crises. Consequently, al-Ghazali’s principles provide a strategic and sustainable foundation for strengthening the scientific tradition, moral integrity, and Islamic identity of education in Indonesia, reaffirming his relevance as both a classical authority and a guiding reference for modern Islamic educational reform.

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