

Integrative Model of Moral Education in the Perspective of Ibn Miskawaih, Al-Ghazali, and Ibn Khaldun and Its Relevance to Student Character Education

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ABSTRACT: *This study aims to analyze and integrate the thoughts of Ibn Miskawaih, Al-Ghazali, and Ibn Khaldun in the field of moral education and to develop an integrative model relevant to student character education. This study uses a qualitative approach with the library research method through the collection and analysis of classical literature and relevant scientific journals. The results show that Ibn Miskawaih emphasizes the formation of moral character through the balance of the soul, habituation, role modeling, and self-control. Al-Ghazali views morality as an inner condition formed through the processes of mujahadah, riyadhah, and tazkiyatun nafs to achieve spiritual perfection. Meanwhile, Ibn Khaldun asserts that moral character is greatly influenced by social, cultural, economic factors, and leadership in the educational environment. The three perspectives indicate an integration between the psychological, spiritual, and social dimensions in character formation. This study concludes that the combined thinking of the three scholars produces a comprehensive model of moral education that is still highly relevant to help shape the character of students in the modern era.*

Keywords: *Moral education, Ibn Miskawaih, Al-Ghazali, Ibn Khaldun, character education.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Islamic education is one of the main ways to improve and enhance the morality of the younger generation, especially in the modern era full of various global challenges. Islamic Religious Education is greatly needed so that students can grow into individuals with good character. Through Islamic education, humans are guided to become beneficial individuals with good behavior and dignity, capable of living according to Islamic teachings (Erfina et al., 2024).

The development of the times, marked by technological advancement, globalization, and rapid social change, has a major influence on the moral condition of society. This impact is not only visible in public life but is also beginning to penetrate the world of education. Various problems such as bullying, intolerance, misuse of digital media, and verbal and physical violence in schools are increasingly occurring and becoming a concern for many parties. In this situation, moral education is no longer merely supplementary, but has become a very important need in the education system. This is increasingly felt because advances in student knowledge and intelligence are not always accompanied by good moral development (Anwar et al., 2025).

Previous studies emphasize the importance of moral education as the foundation of student character formation. A study by Nu'man Ibnu Rajab et al. shows that moral education can be a solution in overcoming the moral crisis and strengthening the independent character of students (Rajab et al., 2024). A study by Ahdar et al. affirms that optimal moral education is capable of forming a Muslim personality with noble character and integrating moral and spiritual values into student behaviour (Ahdar et al., 2024). Nevertheless, most of these studies remain descriptive and have not yet developed an integrative and applicable conceptual model in the context of modern education.

In Islamic scholarship, the concept of moral education has been comprehensively developed by classical scholars such as Ibn Miskawaih, Al-Ghazali, and Ibn Khaldun. Ibn Miskawaih emphasizes the importance of character formation through the balance of the soul manifested in habituation, role modeling, and self-control. Al-Ghazali defines morality as an inner condition that drives behavior to emerge spontaneously, and emphasizes the importance of tazkiyatun nafs in moral formation. Meanwhile, Ibn Khaldun argues that moral development is greatly influenced by the social environment, habituation, and a gradual educational process. The three perspectives

indicate an integration between the psychological, spiritual, and social dimensions in moral education.

Although they have a strong theoretical foundation, research integrating the thought of all three scholars into a single systematic moral education model is still relatively limited. Most studies only discuss each scholar separately without connecting them in a complete conceptual framework. In addition, not many studies explicitly link the integration of these perspectives with student character formation. This indicates a research gap, namely the absence of an integrative model of moral education that combines these various dimensions into a complete and applicable conceptual framework.

Based on this problem, this study aims to analyze and integrate the thoughts of Ibn Miskawaih, Al-Ghazali, and Ibn Khaldun in the field of moral education, and to formulate an integrative model relevant to student character formation. In addition, this study also aims to examine the relevance of such a model in the current educational context.

The contribution of this research is to produce an integrative model of moral education that combines aspects of self-control, spiritual development, and the role of the environment in the educational process. This model is expected to serve as an alternative for strengthening student character formation and to make a conceptual contribution to the development of curricula and learning strategies that are more holistic and oriented toward moral values.

II. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with library research to gain a deep understanding of the thoughts of Ibn Miskawaih, Al-Ghazali, and Ibn Khaldun on moral education and their relevance to student character formation. Data were obtained from various written sources, including classical works such as *Tahdzib al-Akhlak*, *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*, *Mizan al-Amal*, and *Muqaddimah*, as well as supported by relevant books and scientific journals. This approach allows researchers to examine the thoughts of the three scholars conceptually and comparatively without field data collection, so that the analysis is focused on understanding moral education values and how to combine them into a complete educational model.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Moral Education According to the Thought of Ibn Miskawaih

Ibn Miskawaih derived his name from his grandfather, who had previously followed the Zoroastrian faith before converting to Islam. He bore the title Abu Ali, taken from the name of the companion Ali, who in the view of some Shia is regarded as the figure rightfully entitled to succeed the Prophet Muhammad as the leader of the Muslim community after him, so some consider him to have Shia inclinations. He was also known by the title al-Khāzin, meaning treasurer, because he was once entrusted with managing finances during the reign of Adid al-Daulah of the Buyid Dynasty. He was born in the city of Ray, although the year of his birth is still debated by historians, such as M. Syarif who mentions 320 H/932 AD, Margoliouth who mentions 330 H/942 AD, and Abd al-Aziz Izzat who mentions 325 H, while regarding his death, historians agree that he passed away on 9 Safar 421 H or 16 February 1030 AD (Napitupulu, 2019).

Ibn Miskawaih's thought on morality is one of the important contributions to the development of Islamic moral philosophy. He is known as a figure who succeeded in combining classical Greek philosophical ethics, particularly the thinking of Aristotle and Plato, with Islamic teachings derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah. In his view, morality is not only related to outwardly visible behavior, but also reflects a stable inner condition or soul. This condition is formed through training and a continuous educational process. Morality is understood as the result of self-awareness and a person's ability to control their soul, not merely compliance with social norms (Salamah, 2025).

Ibn Miskawaih explains that the human soul is composed of three main faculties, namely the rational faculty (al-quwwah al-'aqliyyah), the irascible faculty (al-quwwah al-ghadhabiyyah), and the appetitive faculty (al-quwwah al-shahwiyyah). These three potentials are neutral in nature, but the direction of their use can determine whether a person moves toward goodness or evil, depending on the ability to control them in a balanced way. If reason is in a dominant position and able to regulate the other two forces, a personality with noble character will be formed. Conversely, when reason is defeated by the impulse of desire, human behavior tends to deviate and stray from moral values (Salamah, 2025).

In the context of Islamic character education, Ibn Miskawaih's concept of morality provides a strong philosophical basis for shaping the personality of students. It teaches that good character is not only taught through lectures or theory, but must be instilled through role modeling, habituation, and consistent practice. Education must be able to develop the balance between intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects. Teachers and educators serve as moral role models who guide students with love and wisdom,

not by compulsion. Thus, the goal of education is not only to create academically intelligent individuals, but also those who are noble-souled and responsible to themselves and to society (Salamah, 2025).

Moral Education According to the Thought of Al-Ghazali

Imam Al-Ghazali, whose full name is Abu Hamid Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Muhammad Al-Ghazali Al-Thusi, was born in 450 H/1058 AD in Ghazalah, a small village on the outskirts of the city of Thus, Khorasan, Iran. There is also an opinion that he was born in a small village near Thus, which at that time was one of the centers of knowledge under the rule of the Seljuk Dynasty in the Baghdad region. He died on Monday, 18 December 1111 AD, corresponding to 14 Jumadil Akhir 505 H, in his hometown of Thus. Al-Ghazali is known by the title Hujjatul Islam, meaning the proof of the truth of Islam, and Zain al-Din, meaning the adornment of religion. From childhood he was known as a figure diligent in seeking knowledge, beginning in his hometown, then continuing to Jurjan and Naisabur, studying under Imam Al-Juwaini until his teacher died in 478 H/1085 AD. He also came from a modest family (Kusuma & Rahmadani, 2023).

In Al-Ghazali's view, morality is understood as an inner condition or state of the soul that spontaneously gives rise to an action without requiring a prior deliberative process. Morality is not merely an outward act or intellectual knowledge, but an internal quality of the soul that has a tendency to prompt or restrain a person in performing a certain action. He also explains that morality is composed of several key elements, namely hikmah (wisdom), shaja'ah (courage), and 'adl (justice), which are interrelated and form balance within the human being. Nevertheless, Al-Ghazali places morality not as the ultimate goal of human life, but as a means or path to achieving ma'rifatullah — the knowledge of God — which ultimately leads humans to true happiness (Sanuhung et al., 2021).

In Al-Ghazali's view, moral education cannot be separated from the process of human development encompassing physical, cognitive, and personality aspects. This development occurs in stages, beginning from the fetal phase when the human is still in the womb and the spirit has been breathed into them. Subsequently, at the childhood stage (tifl), character formation begins to be directed through habituation and training so as to be able to recognize the difference between good and bad deeds. At the tamyiz stage, the child's ability to think begins to grow so that they can distinguish the values of goodness and evil and understand basic knowledge. After that comes the 'aqil stage, in which the human intellect has developed maturely and functions optimally in assessing and making decisions. The highest stage of human development according to Al-Ghazali is the rank of al-anbiya' and al-awliya', namely the level of spiritual perfection attained by the prophets and saints as the pinnacle of the soul and character's maturity (Fadhlurrahman et al., 2020).

The implications of these developmental stages show that morality is essentially changeable in nature, so that the formation of good character requires a continuous process of habituation. This is in line with Al-Ghazali's view, which divides humans into two categories, namely creatures that are static and creatures that are dynamic — that is, humans who have the potential to develop and change through sincere effort (mujahadah), education, and self-discipline (riyadhah). The process of character formation according to him is carried out through two main approaches, namely mujahadah as a serious effort to subdue the carnal desires, and riyadhah as consistent training of the soul until it becomes a firmly embedded habit. Both processes will be stronger when accompanied by prayer and the help of God and the optimization of human nature (fitrah). Furthermore, Al-Ghazali also emphasizes the concept of the purification of the soul (tazkiyatun nufus) which includes the stage of emptying oneself of blameworthy traits (takhliyah) and filling the soul with the values of goodness (tahliyah), so that in the end a soul that grows and perfects in goodness is formed (Sanuhung et al., 2021).

Moral Education According to Ibn Khaldun

Ibn Khaldun, whose full name is Abu Zaid Abdurrahman bin Muhammad bin Khaldun Al-Hadrami, was born on 27 May 1332 in Tunis, now part of Tunisia. He came from a distinguished family with a lineage from Hadramaut, Yemen, and was known for having strong traditions in the fields of scholarship and politics that helped shape his intellectual development from a young age. In a family environment rich with knowledge, he studied various disciplines such as Islamic theology, law, philosophy, Arabic literature, and natural sciences from leading scholars of his time. In his monumental work *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun put forward a comprehensive and forward-looking theory of civilization, explaining that civilization (umran) is formed through mutually interrelated relationships between power, economic conditions, and moral values in society. These three elements, he argued, do not stand alone but mutually influence each other and are determinants of the continuity of a civilization. He also affirmed that the advancement or decline of a civilization is a cyclical process, so that every society will experience phases of development and collapse, influenced by the dynamics of power, economy, and morality that continuously change throughout history (Efendi, 2024).

Ibn Khaldun's thinking on morality has been very influential in the field of education and social life. He explains that education is not only aimed at providing knowledge, but also at shaping good character and morality in a person. According to him, humans are social beings who always live and interact with others, so a person's morality is greatly influenced by the environment in which they live. Therefore, education plays an important role in instilling ethical and moral values appropriate to social life. Ibn Khaldun also emphasizes the importance of comprehensive education, covering

religious, moral, social, and vocational aspects, because with such complete education a person can grow into a responsible individual capable of making positive contributions to society (Hasan et al., 2025).

Ibn Khaldun's concept of morality emphasizes the social and historical aspects of the formation of human morality. He argues that morality is not formed individually alone, but is greatly influenced by the social and cultural environment in which a person lives. According to him, economic conditions, the political situation, and religious values in society all play a major role in shaping a person's character and morality. Thus, social change in a society will also directly affect the moral change of its members (Hasan et al., 2025).

According to Ibn Khaldun, morality cannot be separated from social conditions, culture, and the quality of leadership in a society. In a study entitled "*Islamic Education Management in the Thought of Ibn Khaldun: Integration of Knowledge and Morality in Educational Leadership*," it is explained that Ibn Khaldun sees a strong connection between knowledge and morality in educational leadership. Teachers or educational institutions not only play the role of conveying knowledge, but also serve as moral role models for students. They are required to demonstrate fairness, responsibility, and good character, so that the educational process not only shapes students' intellectual intelligence but also builds a strong ethical and social character (Kurniawan, 2024)

Relevance of Moral Education by Ibn Miskawaih, Al-Ghazali, and Ibn Khaldun to Student Character Formation.

The thought of these three classical scholars is not merely theoretical but has very strong practical relevance if integrated into the modern character education system. This integration forms a holistic model that touches the internal (soul), spiritual (divine), and external (social) dimensions of students.

In the context of modern education, Ibn Miskawaih's concept of the balance of the three soul faculties, the rational faculty (*al-quwwah al-'aqliyyah*), the irascible faculty (*al-quwwah al-ghadhabiyyah*), and the appetitive faculty (*al-quwwah al-shahwiyyah*), is highly relevant to the strengthening of emotional intelligence (EQ). Today's students are faced with high exposure to information and lifestyle temptations. The Ibn Miskawaih model trains students to have strong self-regulation so that they are not easily swept away by negative currents and are able to make decisions based on sound reason (*hikmah*).

1. Al-Ghazali's concept of *tazkiyatun nafs* provides a spiritual dimension that is often overlooked in secular character education. Its relevance lies in the formation of religious character. Through the method of *mujahadah* (earnestness) and *riyadhah* (spiritual training), students are invited to have sincere intentions in learning. The character built is not merely social "image-making," but character that arises from

inner honesty and the awareness that every action is observed by God. This is very effective in minimizing deviant behavior such as cheating or bullying.

2. Ibn Khaldun offers the perspective that character does not grow in a vacuum. Its relevance to contemporary education is the emphasis on the educational ecosystem. Schools, families, and the social community must form a unified entity that supports moral growth. Ibn Khaldun's thought reminds educators that a character curriculum will fail if the social environment (school culture) does not reflect those values. The role modeling of the teacher as a leader and moral figure is the primary key to the successful internalization of values in students.
3. This integrative model of moral education integrates three main strengths from the thought of classical scholars. First, the perspective of Ibn Miskawaih emphasizes the concept of balance of the soul and moderation, which in the modern context is highly relevant to the development of emotional intelligence (EQ); through critical and wise self-control, students are directed to have strong internal control over their impulsive drives. Second, Al-Ghazali's thought through the concept of tazkiyatun nafs provides a dimension of spirituality that gives birth to the spontaneity of doing good, thus forming a person with integrity, inner honesty, and profound religiosity. Finally, Ibn Khaldun's sociological approach highlights the role of the environment and social culture as a means of moral habituation, which is crucial in fostering social adaptability, a sense of responsibility, and a leadership spirit in students. The combination of these three dimensions creates character education that is balanced between intellectual intelligence, spiritual steadiness, and social competence.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis, this study concludes that an integrative model of moral education can be formulated through the alignment of the thoughts of Ibn Miskawaih, Al-Ghazali, and Ibn Khaldun, encompassing rational, spiritual, and sociological dimensions. Ibn Miskawaih provides the foundation of the balance of the soul to strengthen self-control and emotional intelligence (EQ), while Al-Ghazali complements this with the method of tazkiyatun nafs to build integrity and religious inner honesty. On the other hand, Ibn Khaldun emphasizes the crucial role of the environmental ecosystem and social culture as a means of habituation that fosters adaptability and a leadership spirit in students.

The synergy of the three classical scholars' perspectives produces a holistic character education model that is highly relevant to addressing the challenges of the moral crisis in the modern era. The combination of the power of logic (self-balance), spiritual depth (piety of the heart), and environmental influence (social) creates a balanced educational ecosystem. Thus, this integration not only shapes students who are

intellectually intelligent, but also possess a steadfast character born from inner awareness and supported by a supportive and exemplary educational environment.

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