

Classical Conceptions of Moral Education: A Comparative Analysis of Al-Ghazali's *Tazkiyatun Nafs* and Ibnu Miskawaih's *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq* and Their Relevance to the Contemporary Youth Moral Crisis

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Abstrak

Masa remaja di era digital saat ini menghadapi krisis moral dan disorientasi nilai yang semakin kompleks, yang tercermin dalam berbagai fenomena seperti perundungan siber (*cyberbullying*), hedonisme, dan ketidakamanan identitas (*identity insecurity*). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk merekonstruksi model pendidikan moral yang holistik melalui sintesis pemikiran klasik Al-Ghazali dan Ibnu Miskawaih. Metodologi yang digunakan adalah penelitian kepustakaan (*library research*) dengan pendekatan komparatif-filosofis terhadap konsep *Tazkiyatun Nafs* (penyucian jiwa) dan *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq* (pembinaan akhlak).

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Al-Ghazali menekankan transformasi spiritual yang bersifat bottom-up melalui penyucian hati untuk mencapai kedekatan dengan Allah, sedangkan Ibnu Miskawaih menekankan pembiasaan rasional yang bersifat top-down melalui prinsip moderasi guna mencapai kesejahteraan sosial. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada formulasi model "Dialektika Moral Spiritual-Rasional", di mana spiritualitas berfungsi sebagai kedalaman makna internal, sementara rasionalitas berperan sebagai struktur logis tindakan yang menjamin konsistensi etis.

Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa pendidikan moral yang efektif memerlukan sinergi antara ketahanan spiritual internal dan kemampuan berpikir kritis. Ketergantungan semata pada aspek spiritual berisiko menimbulkan keterasingan sosial, sedangkan penekanan yang berlebihan pada rasionalitas dapat menghasilkan individu yang miskin empati. Model integratif ini menawarkan instrumen navigasi strategis bagi pendidik dan konselor dalam membentuk generasi yang memiliki kejernihan spiritual sekaligus kecerdasan intelektual, sehingga mampu menjaga keberlanjutan peradaban yang bermartabat di tengah disrupsi teknologi yang masif.

Kata Kunci: *Al-Ghazali; Ibnu Miskawaih; Tazkiyatun Nafs; Tahdzib al-Akhlaq; Pendidikan Moral Era Digital.*

Abstract

Adolescence in the current digital era is confronting a complex moral crisis and value disorientation, manifested in phenomena such as cyber-bullying, hedonism, and identity insecurity. This research aims to reconstruct a holistic moral education model by synthesizing the classical insights of Al-Ghazali and Ibnu Miskawaih. The methodology employed is qualitative library research with a comparative-philosophical approach toward the concepts of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* (Purification of the Soul) and *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq* (Refinement of Character). The findings indicate that Al-Ghazali emphasizes a "bottom-up" spiritual transformation through heart purification to achieve divine proximity, whereas Ibnu Miskawaih underscores a

"top-down" rational habituation through moderation to achieve social well-being. The novelty of this research lies in the formulation of the "Spiritual-Rational Moral Dialectics" model, where spirituality functions as the depth of internal meaning and rationality serves as the logical structure for action to ensure ethical consistency. This study concludes that effective moral education requires a synergy between inner spiritual resilience and critical reasoning. Reliance solely on spiritual aspects risks social detachment, while an exclusive focus on rationality may produce individuals lacking in empathy. This integrative model offers a strategic navigation tool for educators and counselors to foster a generation possessing both spiritual clarity and intellectual acumen, ensuring the sustainability of a dignified civilization amidst massive technological disruption.

Keywords: *Al-Ghazali; Ibnu Miskawaih; Tazkiyatun Nafs; Tahdzib al-Akhlaq; Moral Education Digital Era.*

INTRODUCTION

Moral education occupies a central position in the discourse of constructing a refined human civilization. Moral integrity is not merely a personal attribute but an existential foundation that determines the stability or collapse of the macro-social order (Husaeni, 2023). Currently, the world of education faces a formidable storm of disruption driven by the explosion of information technology and massive global value shifts. Objective reality demonstrates that rapid material progress is often disproportionate to the spiritual and ethical maturity of society. The moral crisis afflicting contemporary youth manifests in various forms of social pathology, ranging from the degradation of respect and bullying behaviors to the loss of meaningful life orientation amidst the grip of materialism.

The phenomenon of moral decadence among Generation Z adolescents demands a profound reflection on the effectiveness of character education models currently implemented in formal institutions. The currents of globalization bring values of pragmatism and hedonism that frequently obscure the traditional boundaries of virtue (Juliswara & Muryanto, 2022). Adolescents find themselves at the nadir of identity uncertainty within a virtual reality that is often artificial and toxic. This challenge requires answers that are not merely techno-pedagogical but also touch upon the ontological and axiological aspects of the human soul itself. Modern educational thought requires a sturdy anchor to remain relevant without losing direction in the unpredictable ocean of temporal change.

The classical Islamic intellectual treasury offers an exceptionally rich oasis of thought regarding the perfection of the human soul as the subject of education (Arifin, 2018). Great figures such as Al-Ghazali and Ibnu Miskawaih laid the foundational stones for a comprehensive and systematic architecture of moral education. Al-Ghazali, through the concept of *Tazkiyatun Nafs*, focuses on the esoteric dimension and the purification of the heart as an absolute prerequisite for attaining proximity to the Creator (Hasyim, 2022). His view emphasizes that noble character is a radiance from a soul cleansed of spiritual maladies through the mechanisms of *riyadhah* (spiritual exercise) and *mujahadah* (spiritual striving). This sufistic approach prioritizes spiritual discipline and inward contemplation as the primary path toward permanent character transformation.

Ibnu Miskawaih offers a distinct yet complementary perspective through his monumental masterpiece, *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq*. He integrates Aristotelian philosophical ethical principles with religious values to form a concept of balancing the soul's faculties. Ibnu Miskawaih perceives character as a state of the soul that prompts an individual to act

spontaneously without a lengthy deliberative process (Ibnu Miskawaih, 2011). His primary focus lies in achieving moderation (*al-wasath*) within every human potential, namely the rational faculty (*al-quwwah al-nathiqah*), the irascible faculty (*al-quwwah al-ghadhabiyyah*), and the appetitive faculty (*al-quwwah al-syahwiyyah*). This rational-philosophical approach provides a logical framework for character development that is adaptive to diverse socio-cultural realities (Mulia et al., 2024).

Previous studies have extensively explored the thoughts of these two figures either separately or comparatively in various contexts. (Hamim, 2014) conducted a comparative study emphasizing the methodology of ethical education of both figures, yet it did not specifically address its relevance to the adolescent crisis in the digital age. (Jalaldeen & Al-Hidabi, 2025) analyzed Al-Ghazali's concept of soul purification within a modern educational framework, focusing on the implications of spirituality in the classroom. Other research by (Ningrum et al., 2016) highlighted the importance of idea and character development in argumentative writing, indirectly suggesting the need for a strong cognitive foundation in education. Nevertheless, a research gap exists where the synthesis between Al-Ghazali's sufistic aspects and Ibnu Miskawaih's rational aspects is rarely positioned as an applicable solution for the contemporary adolescent moral crisis, which tends to be polarized between logical needs and spiritual thirst.

Prior studies have often succumbed to a rigid separation between the tasawuf approach, deemed too "transcendental", and the philosophical ethical approach, deemed too "pragmatic." The researcher identifies an urgent need to integrate both into a holistic and responsive model of moral education. This integration is expected to provide a stronger methodological offering for educators and guidance and counseling practitioners in facing complex adolescent dynamics. The fundamental question this research seeks to answer is how the dialectic between Al-Ghazali's spirituality and Ibnu Miskawaih's rationality can be formulated as a preventive and curative strategy for adolescent moral decadence.

The primary argument of this article rests on the assumption that the contemporary adolescent moral crisis is rooted in an imbalance between the fulfillment of cognitive-rational needs and spiritual-transcendent needs. Moral education that solely emphasizes normative-cognitive aspects loses its spirit, while education focused only on spirituality without a rational foundation will struggle to be accepted by the critical logic of modern youth. This comparative analysis will demonstrate that *Tazkiyatun Nafs* provides "depth of meaning," while *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq* provides "clarity of action." Together, they form a vital synergy to build mental resilience and moral integrity in the younger generation amidst the currents of globalization.

The methodology employed in this study is qualitative-descriptive using a profound library research approach. The researcher analyzes primary texts from both figures and relevant secondary literature to extract substantial moral education values. The analysis process involves contextual text interpretation techniques to ensure that classical thought remains faithful to its originality while remaining flexible for contemporary implementation. This approach allows the researcher to construct a robust theoretical model that is scientifically and methodologically accountable (Zed, 2004).

The discussion structure of this journal is divided into four strategic sections forming a coherent intellectual roadmap. The first section delves into the theoretical structure of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* in Al-Ghazali's thought, encompassing the mechanisms of soul purification and its spiritual stages as the foundation of ethics. The second section explores Ibnu Miskawaih's architecture of ethical philosophy, emphasizing the concept of soul moderation and the balance of human faculties. The third section presents a comparative-synthesis analysis to map the intersection points and potential integration of both thoughts. The final

section formulates the practical relevance and implementation strategies of this classical thought within the context of character education and guidance counseling for contemporary adolescents.

This exploration is expected to broaden the horizons of knowledge in the field of Islamic education and provide a significant contribution to the development of character education theory in the future. This systematic effort is crucial so that the messages of virtue from the past remain capable of "speaking" and addressing various human problems in the present. The researcher believes that returning to classical intellectual roots does not mean retreating, but rather taking a stronger stance to leap toward a more civilized future. The success in navigating this moral crisis will determine the face of the nation's civilization in the years to come.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research applies a qualitative methodology, specifically library research. The primary focus is directed toward philosophical inquiry and an in-depth analysis of classical manuscripts relevant to the discourse on moral education. The selection of this method is based on the characteristics of the research's formal object, which comprises the ideas, thoughts, and conceptual structures of two central figures in Islamic intellectual history. Pure library research requires interpretative acuity toward texts to uncover meanings embedded within linguistic structures (Zed, 2008). The scientific activities in this study are grounded in principles of rationality, systematicity, and objectivity to comprehensively extract the educational values within the primary texts.

The research data sources are categorized into two primary pillars to ensure analytical depth and the accuracy of the findings. Primary data is derived entirely from authoritative manuscripts containing philosophical constructions of moral education within the classical tradition. An intensive examination of these authoritative texts is performed to capture the essence of thought regarding soul purification and behavioral regularity in their pure form, without diminishing their original substance (Moleong, 2017). The primary focus is directed toward tracing the fundamental values that constitute the moral architecture of humanity within classical discourse. Secondary data is collected from various reputable publications, including scholarly journals, educational textbooks, and sociological research that illustrates the dynamics of the morality crisis among contemporary adolescents. The availability of these authoritative references serves as a critical determinant of validity in this text-based qualitative study. The synergy between authoritative classical manuscripts and contemporary academic discourse ensures that this analysis maintains a robust theoretical foundation and a sharp vision for addressing the modern challenges confronting today's youth (Creswell, 2014).

Data collection techniques employ documentation methods with measured and planned steps. The researcher systematically performed note-taking, thematic classification based on research variable categories, and reduction of information that lacked direct relevance to the focus of the study. This step allows the researcher to filter the essence of the figures' thoughts without losing their philosophical context. The data collection procedure also involved a comparative study of various expert opinions regarding the relevance of classical thought in modern character education curricula. Data collection in library research must be conducted diligently to allow the identification of consistent thought patterns from the object being studied (Sugiyono, 2008)

Data analysis in this study utilizes content analysis techniques that are descriptive-analytical and comparative. The analysis process begins with an in-depth dissection of Al-

Ghazali's thought architecture regarding the mechanism of soul purification, followed by a systematic mapping of Ibnu Miskawaih's ethical philosophy. Comparative methods are applied to identify convergence and divergence points between the two paradigms. The researcher then performs a creative synthesis to formulate an inclusive and responsive moral education hermeneutic model for Generation Z adolescents. Content analysis requires the researcher to make valid and replicable inferences from the text into its context of use (Krippendorff, 2018). The hermeneutic approach helps the researcher capture transcendent messages behind classical texts and translate them into the logic of human language, which is profane and limited.

Analytical sharpness is supported by data validity checks through source triangulation techniques and peer discussion. The researcher ensures that every conclusion is based on strong textual evidence and supported by references from reputable journals. This framework is designed to produce a moral education model that is not only theoretically ethical but also holds applicative value in the field of guidance and counseling. This entire methodological sequence guarantees that the research results are academically accountable and contribute significantly to the development of character education theory in the future (Denzin, 2008).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Al-Ghazali's Spiritual Architecture of Tazkiyatun Nafs: The Ontological Transformation of the Soul

The construction of Al-Ghazali's thought regarding the purification of the soul (*tazkiyatun nafs*) is established upon a robust and profound Islamic epistemological foundation. He does not perceive character as an entity separate from the essence of human existence, but rather as a direct radiance of the purest internal condition. A systematic exploration of his magnum opus, *Ihya' Ulumuddin*, reveals that moral education is a process of spiritual ascension aimed at returning humanity to its original state of primordial purity (*fitrah*). This process demands an ontological awareness of the existence of the spirit (*ruh*) as a luminous substance originating from the celestial realm (*alam malakut*) (al-Ghazali, 2020).

a. The Heart as the Epicenter of Moral Dynamics

The heart (*al-qalb*) occupies the most central position in the anatomy of human spirituality according to Al-Ghazali's perspective (Arroisi et al., 2023). The concept of the heart here refers to a subtle substance (*lathifah*) that is divine (*rabbaniyyah*) and possesses the capacity to perceive the essence of truth. The heart functions as the sovereign within the kingdom of the human self, where all other bodily members act as soldiers subordinate to its command. The moral integrity of an individual depends entirely on the health and clarity of this sovereign in leading all self-potentials.

Moral education for Al-Ghazali must begin with recognizing the highly dynamic characteristics and qualities of the heart. The heart possesses a natural inclination toward goodness; however, it is also highly susceptible to worldly temptations that can obscure the light of its *fitrah*. The accumulation of stains from sin resulting from acts of disobedience creates a veil (*hijab*) that prevents the heart from receiving the radiance of divine truth. Efforts to cleanse the heart become the primary priority before an individual proceeds to educational stages that are technical or intellectual in nature (Ayob et al., 2025).

b. The Four Pillars of the Soul (*Al-Quwwah al-Arba'ah*)

Al-Ghazali maps four primary pillars within the human soul that serve as determinants of moral quality. These four powers must exist in a state of equilibrium (*i'tidal*) to produce consistent and noble behaviors (Attar, 2023).

1) **1The Rational Faculty (*al-Quwwah al-'Ilmiyyah*):** This power pertains to the intellect's ability to distinguish between right and wrong, as well as between good and evil. The perfection of the rational faculty gives rise to wisdom (*al-hikmah*), the ability to place everything in its proper proportion based on the guidance of revelation.

2) **The Irascible Faculty (*al-Quwwah al-Ghadhabiyyah*):** This potential functions as a human self-defense mechanism. Al-Ghazali emphasizes that anger should not be entirely extinguished but rather controlled to foster courage (*al-syaja'ah*). True courage is the ability to act firmly for the sake of truth without falling into recklessness (*tahawwur*) or cowardice (*jubn*).

3) **The Appetitive Faculty (*al-Quwwah al-Syahwiyyah*):** This power encompasses all forms of biological and material desires. Moral education aims to sublimate desires to achieve a state of self-purity (*al-'iffah*). This state is reached when individuals can control their desires under the authority of reason and Sharia, ensuring they are not enslaved by momentary gratification.

4) **The Faculty of Justice (*al-Quwwah al-'Adalah*):** This fourth pillar functions as the balancer and regulator for the preceding three powers. Spiritual justice occurs when the rational, irascible, and appetitive faculties are under the full control of a heart illuminated by divine light. An individual is said to possess perfect character if they can manifest this internal justice in every action (Al-Ghazali, 2011).

c. **Spiritual Maladies as Barriers to Transformation**

The moral crisis from Al-Ghazali's perspective is rooted in the dominance of spiritual maladies (*amradh al-qalb*) that disrupt the order of the soul's four pillars. He identifies traits such as ostentation (*riya*), arrogance (*takabur*), envy (*hasad*), and worldly attachment (*hubb al-dunya*) as lethal viruses for spiritual life (Sameh, 2020). These diseases not only damage the relationship between humanity and God but also create friction and conflict in social interactions.

The dominance of spiritual maladies causes a distorted perception of reality. Someone afflicted with arrogance will view themselves as superior to others, thereby losing the capacity for empathy and justice. Al-Ghazali warns that the healing of spiritual maladies requires honest diagnosis and a continuous therapeutic process. Failure to cleanse these ailments will render character education merely decorative, failing to touch the actual root of the problem (Subandi et al., 2024).

d. **The Methodology of *Takhalli* and *Tahalli*: The Dialectic of Purification**

Al-Ghazali's mechanism of moral education is implemented through two major, interconnected stages. These stages represent the practical application of the transformative concept of *tazkiyatun nafs* (Wekke et al., 2018).

1) **Takhalli (Self-Purging):** This process focuses on the effort to eliminate all reprehensible traits (*al-akhlaq al-mazmumah*) from within the soul. The researcher likens *takhalli* to the process of cleaning a vessel of impurities before filling it with pure water. Every individual must engage in deep introspection to recognize the internal stains that have hindered their moral development.

2) **Tahalli (Self-Adornment):** This second stage involves active efforts to instill praiseworthy traits (*al-akhlaq al-mahmudah*) into the cleansed soul. Virtues such as patience, gratitude, trust (*tawakal*), and sincerity (*ikhlas*) must be systematically planted through intensive exercises. *Tahalli* ensures that the spiritual void following the *takhalli* process is immediately filled with noble values to prevent the return of negative traits (Al-Ghazali, 2011).

The continuity between *takhalli* and *tahalli* creates a cycle of spiritual growth that never ceases. This process enables humans to continuously enhance their moral quality toward a higher degree before the Creator.

e. Pedagogical Strategies: *Riyadhah* and *Mujahadah*

Al-Ghazali offers practical methods for achieving success in *tazkiyatun nafs* through the concepts of *riyadhah* and *mujahadah*. Both strategies emphasize self-discipline and earnest spiritual struggle (Fairuzzaman, 2025).

1) **Riyadhah (Spiritual Exercise):** This concept refers to the habituation of performing virtuous deeds repeatedly until they become an inherent character trait. *Riyadhah* begins by compelling oneself to perform good actions, even if they initially feel burdensome to the lower self (*nafs*). Over time, these actions transform into a habit performed effortlessly and with full awareness.

2) **Mujahadah (Striving Against the Self):** This strategy involves active resistance against base desires that conflict with moral values. *Mujahadah* demands mental resilience and the courage to reject illusory comforts for the sake of a greater spiritual goal. This struggle is viewed as the greatest form of warfare (*jihad al-akbar*) because the enemy faced resides within oneself.

The application of *riyadhah* and *mujahadah* in the context of modern education can be transformed into character development programs based on self-discipline and personal responsibility. Teachers must act as facilitators who assist students in undergoing this spiritual training process consistently.

f. The Vital Role of the *Mursyid* as a Spiritual Mirror

The process of soul purification is a journey fraught with challenges and the potential for delusion. Al-Ghazali strongly emphasizes the necessity of a spiritual guide (*mursyid* or *sheikh*) in traversing this path. The *mursyid* functions as a mirror reflecting the internal weaknesses of the student that are invisible to themselves. Without the guidance of an expert, an individual risks becoming trapped in a false sense of pride over their spiritual achievements (Mukti et al., 2021).

A competent guide possesses the ability to diagnose specific spiritual ailments in a student and provide therapy tailored to individual needs. The interaction between teacher and student within this framework of guidance must be based on mutual trust and openness. The role of a guidance and counseling teacher in contemporary educational institutions can draw inspiration from the function of the *mursyid*, serving as a companion who helps students understand their psychological and spiritual dynamics (Munir et al., 2025).

g. The Culmination of Character: *Ma'rifatullah* and Divine Proximity

The ultimate goal of the entire *tazkiyatun nafs* process is the attainment of *ma'rifatullah*, which is a profound recognition of the essence of divinity. For Al-Ghazali, noble character is not the end goal itself but rather a means to achieve proximity (*qurb*) to the Creator. Someone who has reached the degree of *ma'rifat* will perform virtuous deeds not out of hope for praise or fear of punishment, but purely as a form of love and devotion to God (Muhsinin, 2025).

Moral integrity born from *ma'rifat* is exceptionally robust and not easily swayed by environmental changes. The goodness that radiates is a natural manifestation of a soul that has experienced divine enlightenment. This transcendent dimension provides profound meaning to every ethical action, making humans feel constantly observed and guided in every step. Moral education culminating in divine values will produce individuals with extraordinary mental resilience amidst the moral crisis of the modern world (Hasib & Khasanah, 2025).

h. Relevance of Spiritual Architecture in the Era of Disruption

The application of Al-Ghazali's *tazkiyatun nafs* in the midst of the current digital disruption has become increasingly crucial. Adolescents living amidst a deluge of artificial information require a strong spiritual anchor to avoid losing their life orientation. The cleansing of the

heart provides the capacity to filter negative social media influences, while the strengthening of the soul's pillars helps adolescents maintain a balance between material and spiritual needs.

Modernity often distances humans from their internal aspects, leading to the phenomenon of spiritual void amidst material abundance. Al-Ghazali offers an inward journey to find true happiness that does not depend on external factors. Integrating this thought into the character education curriculum will provide the dimension of depth often missing in secular and pragmatic educational models. Holistic moral education must touch the deepest side of humanity: the transcendent relationship with the Creator.

The sustainability of civilization depends heavily on the moral quality of its younger generation. Through Al-Ghazali's spiritual architecture, character education regains its purest spirit. The effort to revive the values of *tazkiyah* is a strategic step to produce future leaders who are not only intellectually brilliant but also spiritually luminous. Commitment to soul purification is the primary key to building a society that is just, prosperous, and highly civilized.

2. *Ibnu Miskawaih's Philosophical Ethical Architecture of Tahdzib al-Akhlaq: A Synthesis of Reason and Morality*

Ibnu Miskawaih constructed an ethical architecture grounded in a highly systematic and rigorous rational philosophy. He is often referred to as the father of Islamic ethics due to his success in formulating a moral framework that harmoniously integrates Aristotelian logic with monotheistic values. An exploration of the monumental manuscript *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq wa Tathir al-A'raq* reveals that character education is both an intellectual and practical project aimed at achieving human perfection. His view provides the foundation that humans possess the potential to direct themselves toward the highest good through the empowerment of reason (Ibn Miskawayh, 1329).

a. Definition of Character and the Psychological Condition of the Soul

Ibnu Miskawaih defines character as a state of the soul that prompts an individual to act without requiring deep reflection or prolonged consideration. This definition indicates that character is not merely a momentary action but rather a settled internal disposition that becomes part of personal identity. He divides the origins of character into two primary categories: natural traits present from birth and traits acquired through habit and education. The belief that character can be modified through practice provides an optimistic pedagogical foundation for all efforts toward character improvement (Ibn Miskawayh, 1329). The process of character formation begins with an understanding of the essence of the human soul itself. The soul is perceived as a spiritual substance with the autonomy to control the body. Character education in this perspective is a systematic effort to purify the soul from material stains so that it may perform its intellectual functions with clarity. The purity of the soul is an absolute prerequisite for the birth of consistent and authentic moral actions.

b. Anatomy of the Soul: The Tripartite Soul and Internal Power Dynamics

An analysis of Ibnu Miskawaih's thought demonstrates the use of the concept of three potentials of the soul (*al-nafs*), adapted from the Greek philosophical tradition but imbued with religious content. These three potentials interact with one another and are often in a state of conflict requiring wise management (Radez, 2019).

1) **The Rational Soul (*al-Nafs al-Nathiqah*):** This potential is the highest faculty that distinguishes humans from other creatures. Its primary function is to think, reflect, and grasp the essence of truth. The rational soul must serve as the leader within the hierarchy of the human self. The perfection of this power will produce the virtue of wisdom (*al-*

hikmah), where an individual is able to profoundly understand the secrets of the universe and the Creator's commands.

2) **The Irascible Soul (*al-Nafs al-Ghadhabiyyah*):** This potential pertains to emotions, anger, and the desire for power or self-preservation. Ibnu Miskawaih does not view this energy as inherently negative. If managed by reason, the force of anger will transform into the virtue of courage (*al-syaja'ah*). Courage in this context is the readiness to face life's challenges for the sake of truth without falling into reckless behavior.

3) **The Appetitive Soul (*al-Nafs al-Syahwiyyah*):** This potential includes biological drives such as hunger, thirst, and sexual needs. Desire is viewed as the lowest yet highly powerful force in influencing human actions. Controlling desire under the guidance of reason will produce the virtue of self-purity (*al-'iffah*). Self-purity enables humans to enjoy worldly pleasures proportionally without slipping into hedonism (Ibnu Miskawaih, 2011).

c. The Concept of *Al-Wasath*: The Doctrine of Moderation as the Essence of Virtue

The primary focus in *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq* is the attainment of moderation (*al-wasath*) or the point of equilibrium between two blameworthy extremes. Ibnu Miskawaih argues that every virtue lies at the midpoint between two vices. For example, courage is the midpoint between recklessness and cowardice. Self-purity is the midpoint between greed and total neglect of physical needs. This concept demands intellectual acuity to determine the precise middle position in every dynamic life situation (Hermawan & Sudin, 2025).

Achieving this midpoint requires continuous habituation. Moderation does not mean taking a weak position but rather the strength to control oneself from extreme pulls. Someone capable of maintaining moderation of the soul will possess extraordinary emotional stability and clarity of thought. This principle of *al-wasath* becomes the foundation for the creation of a harmonious and balanced society where every individual is able to place self-interest and public interest fairly (Rosyid et al., 2022).

d. Justice as the Crown of Virtues

Justice (*al-'adalah*) occupies the most noble position in Ibnu Miskawaih's ethical architecture. He views justice not merely as one of the four cardinal virtues but as the manifestation of perfect balance among the other three soul powers. Justice is the condition where the rational, irascible, and appetitive souls perform their respective functions proportionally without dominating one another.

The integration of these three powers under the umbrella of justice creates a complete moral integrity. Someone who is just toward themselves will automatically be able to act justly toward others and their environment. Ibnu Miskawaih emphasizes that justice is a shadow of the oneness of God (*tawhid*) in human action. The existence of a just nature within an individual is the highest indicator of the success of the moral education process (Ibn Miskawayh, 1329).

e. Methodology of Character Education: Between *Tahdzib* and *I'tiyad*

Ibnu Miskawaih offers a highly systematic and gradual educational methodology. He believes that character education must begin from an early age through the process of habituation (*i'tiyad*) (Romadona, 2021). The habit of performing good deeds will form a strong "second character" within the child. Educators must create an environment that supports the growth of these positive habits.

The process of soul refinement (*tahdzib*) is carried out using reason as a tool for self-analysis. Individuals are taught to always reflect on every action and measure it against universal moral standards. Ibnu Miskawaih emphasizes the importance of intellectual discipline in this process. Education is not merely the transfer of knowledge but an effort to sharpen the conscience to choose the path of virtue independently. This strategy is highly

relevant for development in modern character education curricula that emphasize critical thinking and responsible decision-making (H. P. Putra & Hayeesama-ae, 2022).

f. Social Dimension: Virtue in Human Interaction

An analysis of Ibnu Miskawaih's thought shows a strong emphasis on the social dimension of ethics. He asserts that humans are social creatures (*madaniyyun bi al-thab'*) who require interaction with others to practice and perfect virtue (Rafida et al., 2025). Living in isolation or as a hermit is considered incapable of producing a complete character. True virtue can only be tested and developed within the dynamics of human relationships in society.

Social interaction provides space for the application of values such as patience, generosity, and justice. Friendship (*al-shadaqah*) is viewed as an essential element in moral growth. A good friend will serve as a mirror for one's own shortcomings and a motivator for improving moral quality. This view rejects all forms of extreme self-isolation and encourages individuals to be actively involved in building social welfare as a tangible manifestation of ethical maturity (Julita et al., 2025).

g. Relevance of Philosophical Ethics to the Adolescent Moral Crisis

Ibnu Miskawaih's rational ethical system offers a strategic response to contemporary adolescent moral problems. Adolescents today are often caught between extreme poles due to social media influence, ranging from excessive narcissism to acute inferiority. The doctrine of moderation (*al-wasath*) provides a mental navigation tool so that adolescents can maintain a balance of identity amidst confusing information flows.

The strengthening of the rational soul is the primary key to facing the challenges of the digital era. Adolescents need to be taught to use reasoning powers in filtering information and controlling appetitive impulses often triggered by provocative content. Education that emphasizes self-mastery and internal justice will produce a generation that is morally independent. Character built on the foundation of a healthy reason will be more resistant to environmental temptations and peer pressure.

h. Rational-Religious Synthesis: The Future Character Model

Ibnu Miskawaih's ethical architecture successfully proves that philosophical rationality and religious spirituality do not need to be conflicted. This synthesis gives birth to a human model possessing both intellectual intelligence and noble character. Holistic moral education must adopt this approach by providing a balanced portion of theological understanding and philosophical analysis.

The success of future education depends heavily on our ability to instill the values of justice and moderation into the hearts of students. Ibnu Miskawaih's classical thought provides a very clear roadmap to achieve that goal. Returning to the principles of *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq* means giving adolescents the opportunity to grow into individuals of integrity, wisdom, and the ability to make positive contributions to world civilization. This effort is a collective responsibility for the creation of a more dignified and humane future.

3. Comparative Analysis: The Sufi and Rational-Philosophical Dialectics in Ethical Construction

The comparison between Al-Ghazali and Ibnu Miskawaih reveals a compelling dialectic regarding the nature and mechanisms of human character education. These two seminal thinkers represent the two primary currents in Islamic intellectual history: the Sufi tradition, which emphasizes esoteric depth, and the philosophical tradition, which exalts rational acuity. The convergence of these two paradigms is not merely a methodological debate but a symphony of thought striving to answer the perennial question of how humanity can achieve moral perfection amidst destructive carnal impulses.

a. Ethical Epistemology: Revelation versus Reason

The epistemological foundation serves as the primary point of divergence between the two thinkers. Al-Ghazali constructs his ethical framework upon a robust foundation of spirituality and Sufism. In his view, moral knowledge is not solely the result of human intellectual labor but a gift of divine light radiated into a purified heart. Revelation and spiritual intuition (*dhawq*) occupy a superior position as the primary guides for reason in navigating the obscure corridors of the soul. For Al-Ghazali, ethical truth is absolute and theocentric, where the standards of goodness are determined entirely by the pleasure of the Creator (Al-Ghazali, n.d.).

Ibnu Miskawaih, conversely, adopts the path of ethical philosophy and rationality as his methodological anchor. He views character as a subject that can be dissected logically and systematically using the apparatus of human reason. The influence of Aristotelian logic imbues his thought with an anthropocentric color, wherein humans are viewed as autonomous moral agents with the intellectual capacity to achieve moderation. Within Ibnu Miskawaih's perspective, monotheistic values are integrated as the ultimate objective of this ethical reasoning process. The harmony between rational principles and religious norms creates an ethical system that is both universal and applicable to human socio-cultural realities (Ibn Miskawayh, 1329).

b. Ontology of the Soul: Between the Locus of Sanctity and the Potential for Equilibrium

The analytical focus of both figures is directed toward the essence of the human soul, albeit with different dimensional emphases. Al-Ghazali concentrates his intellectual energy on the purification of the heart (*tazkiyatun nafs*). The heart is perceived as a spiritual fortress that must be guarded against contamination by metaphysical spiritual maladies. This focus steers moral education toward the esoteric realm, where internal transformation becomes an absolute prerequisite for the emergence of virtuous external behavior. For Al-Ghazali, the soul is an entity yearning for proximity to God; thus, the entire educational process is directed toward facilitating that yearning.

Ibnu Miskawaih places the equilibrium of the soul (*i'tidal*) at the center of his ethical philosophy. The human soul is viewed as a dynamic field of forces between the rational, irascible, and appetitive faculties. The primary task of a human being is to act as the architect of their own soul by situating each faculty in its proportional position. His focus is more exoteric and practical, where indicators of moral success can be measured through the consistency of an individual's actions in the public sphere. For Ibnu Miskawaih, internal balance is the result of precise rational management of the animalistic and human potentials within (Anwar, 2022).

c. Transformation Methodology: Bottom-Up versus Top-Down

The most contrastive methodological difference is found in the direction of character formation. Al-Ghazali employs a radical bottom-up approach. Internal transformation through the mechanisms of *takhalli* (purging) and *tahalli* (adornment) must be fully realized in the depths of the soul before an individual can be considered truly virtuous (I. D. Putra et al., 2025). External actions that appear good but lack sincerity of intention and purity of heart are viewed as spiritual facades. Moral education begins at the deepest root: the refinement of human spiritual orientation toward pure sincerity.

Ibnu Miskawaih offers a top-down approach that emphasizes the use of reason to control base impulses. The process of character formation is conducted through the mechanisms of habituation (*i'tiyad*) and moderation (*al-wasath*), carried out systematically. Individuals are taught to habituate themselves to virtuous external actions until such actions become a settled character trait. Reason functions as a commander issuing logical instructions to the body to act in accordance with universal ethical standards. This approach is highly effective

for building an orderly and civilized social structure through the formation of positive habits within society (Ibn Miskawayh, 1329).

d. Visions of Happiness: *Ma'rifat* versus *Sa'adah*

The ultimate goal of the moral educational process for both thinkers is the attainment of true happiness, though interpreted with nuanced differences. Al-Ghazali formulates the ultimate goal as the achievement of proximity to God through *ma'rifatullah* (gnosis). True happiness can only be felt when the soul has reached a state of perfect tranquility (*mutma'innah*) and is capable of intimate dialogue with the Creator. Moral integrity is a natural manifestation of a profound love for God. This esoteric dimension renders character a spiritual journey that transcends the boundaries of the material world (Adnan et al., 2025). Ibnu Miskawaih formulates the educational objective as the attainment of comprehensive true happiness (*sa'adah*) (Syafrida, 2022). This happiness encompasses intellectual perfection, physical health, and noble character in social interactions. He emphasizes that humans reach the pinnacle of their humanity when they are able to manifest justice and proportionality in every action. The ultimate goal of moral education is to produce wise individuals (*al-hukama*) capable of leading themselves and others toward a harmonious life order. This vision places strong emphasis on human responsibility as the vicegerent (*khalifah*) on earth.

e. Categorical Comparison of Educational Concepts

The identification of the fundamental differences and similarities between these two paradigms can be viewed clearly through categorical mapping. Table 1 summarizes the crucial points forming the intellectual architecture of both figures.

Table 1. Comparison of Moral Education Concepts: Al-Ghazali vs. Ibnu Miskawaih

Analytical Category	Al-Ghazali (<i>Tazkiyatun Nafs</i>)	Ibnu Miskawaih (<i>Tahdzib al-Akhlaq</i>)
Primary Foundation	Spirituality and Sufism	Ethical Philosophy and Rationality
Central Focus	Purification of the Heart (<i>Qalb</i>)	Equilibrium of the Soul (<i>I'tidal</i>)
Primary Method	<i>Riyadhah</i> and <i>Mujahadah</i>	Habituation and Moderation
Ultimate Goal	Divine Proximity (<i>Ma'rifat</i>)	True Happiness (<i>Sa'adah</i>)
Nature of Education	Esoteric-Theocentric	Exoteric-Anthropocentric
Success Indicator	Internal Peace and Sincerity	Justice and Proportional Action

The data presented in this table demonstrates that the two figures do not occupy mutually exclusive positions. On the contrary, they complement each other within the spectrum of holistic human education. Al-Ghazali provides vertical depth, while Ibnu Miskawaih provides horizontal breadth in the concept of Islamic ethics.

f. Integrative Analysis: The Synergy of the Ethical Spirit and Body

A profound analysis indicates that these two thinkers actually provide complementary moral therapies for the human soul. Al-Ghazali provides the "spirit" for every ethical action through his emphasis on sincerity and internal spiritual depth. Moral action without a spiritual soul feels dry and mechanistic. Conversely, Ibnu Miskawaih provides the "body" or the clear

rational structure for those actions. This rational structure ensures that spirituality does not slide into wild subjectivity or behaviors that neglect social reality (Hanifah et al., 2025).

The synergy between these two paradigms has the potential to form a human profile possessing both spiritual depth and intellectual acuity. Modern humans require internal depth to maintain mental health, while simultaneously requiring rational sharpness to navigate the complexities of life in the digital era. Neglecting either side results in a character asymmetry. The integration of this classical thought offers a model of a human who "possesses the heart of Al-Ghazali and the intellect of Ibnu Miskawaih", an individual capable of profound devotion yet able to act intelligently and justly within society.

g. Relevance of the Dialectic to the Contemporary Adolescent Crisis

The implementation of this Sufi-rational dialectic serves as a highly relevant solution for addressing the moral crisis of contemporary adolescents. Today's youth often experience a vacuum of spiritual meaning due to materialistic lifestyles, yet simultaneously demand rational answers for every moral rule. Al-Ghazali's approach can fill this spiritual void by offering internal peace and a life purpose that transcends material satisfaction. Spirituality becomes a defensive fortress for adolescents against the onslaught of anxiety and depression often prevalent in the social media era.

Ibnu Miskawaih's approach provides a framework for adolescents to practice discipline and self-mastery through reason. Adolescents need to be taught that virtue is not merely a dogma but a logical necessity for achieving a better quality of life. The moderation of the soul taught by Ibnu Miskawaih serves as a practical guide for adolescents to avoid extreme behaviors such as bullying, radicalism, or substance abuse. Combining these two approaches creates a guidance system that touches the emotional-spiritual and cognitive-behavioral dimensions of the adolescent simultaneously.

h. Construction of a Holistic Moral Education Model

The synthesis resulting from this dialectic formulates a holistic and integrative model of moral education. This model no longer separates the strengthening of faith from the sharpening of logic. Character education must be viewed as a process of internal purification accompanied by rationally measured behavioral training. Teachers and parents are expected to play a dual role as spiritual guides who soothe the heart and intellectual mentors who enlighten the mind.

The exploration of this classical intellectual wealth proves that Islam possesses comprehensive answers to human problems across ages. The dialectic between Al-Ghazali and Ibnu Miskawaih provides a clear roadmap for the development of a dignified human civilization. Success in merging spiritual depth and rational acuity will determine the future of the younger generation amidst the uncertainties of globalization. A commitment to moral integrity based on the equilibrium of the soul and the purity of the heart is the primary key to achieving well-being in this world and the hereafter.

4. The Relevance of Classical Thought to Contemporary Adolescent Moral Crises: A Spiritual-Rational Navigation

Contemporary adolescents are currently caught in a vortex of information flows that transcend both geographical and value-based boundaries. The massive penetration of digital technology has created a new ecosystem of life that frequently outpaces the mental and spiritual preparedness of its users. The moral crisis afflicting the younger generation is no longer merely a matter of superficial social norm violations; current symptoms indicate a fundamental value disorientation at an ontological level. Phenomena such as cyber-bullying, pornography addiction, and hedonistic lifestyles are tangible manifestations of an internal vacuum of meaning. The synthesis of Al-Ghazali's and Ibnu Miskawaih's thought offers a

holistic solution encompassing preventive, curative, and developmental aspects in facing these modern challenges.

a. Moral Pathology in the Era of Digital Disruption

The era of digital disruption carries heavy psychological consequences for adolescent character development (Odgers & Jensen, 2020). The speed of information transmission is often unmatched by adequate value-filtering capabilities. Adolescents tend to absorb artificial identities offered by the virtual world without critical reflection on long-term impacts. A culture of ostentation (*riya*) and the pursuit of external validation through follower counts or "likes" have become new standards for self-worth. This condition creates a mentally fragile society, easily swayed by temporal trends.

Spiritual emptiness lies at the root of the various deviant behaviors observed on the surface. Adolescents have lost the value-based anchors capable of providing internal peace amidst aggressive social competition. The pressure to appear perfect on social media triggers high anxiety and chronic insecurity. Al-Ghazali's concepts regarding the clarity of the heart and Ibnu Miskawaih's focus on the moderation of the soul become crucial to reintroduce as instruments of social healing. The integration of these two perspectives provides a roadmap for restoring human dignity, which has been reduced by the logic of digital algorithms.

b. Tazkiyatun Nafs as a Fortress of Inner Resilience

The concept of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* (purification of the soul) formulated by Al-Ghazali offers a highly effective mechanism for internal protection. Soul purification is not merely an esoteric ritual but a process of building self-resilience against destructive environmental influences. Adolescents with a purified soul possess spiritual sensory capabilities to distinguish between beneficial and toxic information. Cleansing the heart from metaphysical maladies such as pride and envy is the first step in building a resilient character.

Purification of the soul empowers individuals to stop relying on human validation, which is often illusory. Al-Ghazali emphasizes that true tranquility can only be achieved through a close relationship with the Creator. Adolescents are taught to guard the heart's clarity from the virus of ostentation (*riya*), which flourishes in the social media era. Attention is shifted from outward appearance toward authentic internal quality. This internal transformation creates individuals with solid life principles who are not easily provoked by negative narratives in cyberspace (Arroisi & Hanifi, 2025).

c. Tahdzib al-Akhlaq as a Rational Compass in Decision Making

Ibnu Miskawaih contributes through a philosophical ethical framework emphasizing the use of critical reason. The concept of *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq* (refinement of character) guides adolescents to become conscious moral agents responsible for their actions. The capacity for moderation (*al-wasath*) is a valuable navigational tool amidst the behavioral extremes common today. Adolescents are directed to avoid both excessive carnal gratification and inhumane self-suppression.

The use of sound reason in processing digital information is a practical implementation of the rational faculty (*al-nafs al-nathiqah*). Ibnu Miskawaih argues that the highest virtue occurs when one can make a just decision amidst conflicting desires. Character education must sharpen an adolescent's logical acuity so they do not become objects of manipulation by digital industry interests. The ability to weigh the benefits (*maslahah*) and harms (*mudarat*) of every digital activity is a necessary form of moderation. This rational approach provides a foundation for self-discipline born of intellectual awareness rather than mere fear of legal sanctions (Ibn Miskawayh, 1329).

d. Analysis of Solutions Based on Classical Thought for Specific Problems

The application of both perspectives can be mapped in detail to address the real problems faced by adolescents. Table 2 illustrates the comparison of solutions from the perspectives of Al-Ghazali and Ibnu Miskawaih.

Table 2. Relevance of Classical Thought to Modern Adolescent Problematics

Contemporary Issue	Al-Ghazali's Perspective	Ibnu Miskawaih's Perspective
Hedonism & Consumerism	Cultivating <i>qana'ah</i> (contentment) and <i>zuhud</i> (asceticism) by purging the love of the world.	Training the moderation of desires to prevent excess in material pleasure-seeking.
Identity Crisis & Insecurity	Building self-confidence based on a transcendent relationship with God.	Developing rational power to recognize self-potential objectively and justly.
Digital Aggression & Bullying	Purifying the heart of anger and resentment through compassion.	Balancing the irascible faculty (<i>ghadhab</i>) into courage that defends the truth.
Value Disorientation	Directing the life outlook toward a meaningful teleological (afterlife) goal.	Forming habits of virtue through a positive and educative social environment.

1) Overcoming Hedonism through *Qana'ah* and Moderation

The culture of hedonism promoted through digital celebrity lifestyles creates unrealistic consumption standards. Al-Ghazali offers a solution through *qana'ah* (feeling sufficient) and *zuhud* (detachment from the world). In his view, *zuhud* does not mean abandoning possessions but ensuring the world does not dominate the heart. This leads to internal freedom, where adolescents find happiness in simplicity and spiritual depth. Ibnu Miskawaih complements this through rational management of the appetitive faculty, treating material pleasure as a means rather than an end, thereby fostering the virtue of temperance (*al-iffah*).

2) Overcoming Identity Crises through Divine Proximity and Self-Knowledge

Adolescent identity crises often lead to insecurity. Al-Ghazali emphasizes that a human's true identity lies in their status as a servant of God with spiritual nobility. This transcendent foundation prevents adolescents from collapsing under negative external judgment. Ibnu Miskawaih offers an objective recognition of potential through reason, teaching adolescents to understand their talents and limitations honestly. Justice toward oneself, placing potential where it belongs without arrogance or inferiority, creates a stable, rational self-confidence.

3) Overcoming Digital Aggression through Compassion and Moral Courage

Cyber-bullying is a manifestation of an uncontrolled irascible faculty. Al-Ghazali views aggression as a result of a heart clouded by resentment and pride; thus, he proposes purification through compassion and forgiveness (*hilm*). Ibnu Miskawaih views the irascible faculty (*ghadhab*) as an energy to be balanced into the virtue of courage (*syaja'ah*). In a digital context, this means the moral courage to defend victims and speak truth with dignity.

4) Overcoming Value Disorientation through Teleological Vision and Social Habituation

Disorientation occurs when adolescents lose meaningful life goals. Al-Ghazali offers a life vision transcending material boundaries: happiness in the hereafter. This theocentric outlook ensures every action has eternal spiritual consequences. Ibnu Miskawaih emphasizes the

importance of habituation (*i'tiyad*) through an educative social environment. School and family must serve as ecosystems where adolescents consistently practice virtue until it becomes a settled character trait.

e. Methodological Adaptation in Guidance and Counseling (BK)

Character education in the digital era must move beyond tedious, normative indoctrination. Implementing the thoughts of Al-Ghazali and Ibnu Miskawaih requires methodological adaptation in school counseling services. Counselors must transform the concept of *riyadhah* (spiritual exercise) into practical digital self-discipline, such as periodic "gadget fasting" to train impulse control. Introspection (*muhasabah*) can be integrated into group counseling to evaluate the impact of social media on mental health. Furthermore, Ibnu Miskawaih's moderation must be translated into smart digital ethics literacy, using philosophical discussions to sharpen students' rational faculties (Javed, 2024).

f. Synergy of Family and School as a Moral Ecosystem

The successful implementation of integrative moral education is fundamentally contingent upon the synergy between the family and the school (Pohan et al., 2025). Parents serve as the primary educators who cultivate the initial seeds of soul purification (*tazkiyah*) through exemplary conduct within the domestic sphere. A familial environment characterized by compassion and spiritual devotion facilitates the internalization of noble values by the child. Furthermore, parents must act as mentors in navigating digital technologies to ensure that children maintain their value orientation. Transparent communication between parents and children remains pivotal for the early detection of symptoms related to moral crises.

On the other hand, the school functions as a social laboratory wherein the values of moderation and justice are operationalized on a broader scale. Character education curricula must be integrated across all academic disciplines, rather than being confined solely to religious instruction. Every educator bears the responsibility of serving as a paragon of virtuous conduct for their students. The cultivation of an inclusive and supportive school climate assists students in navigating the process of *tahdzib al-akhlaq* (the refinement of character). Ultimately, robust synergy between these two institutions fosters a conducive environment for the development of a 'golden generation' characterized by high integrity.

g. Toward a Golden Generation: A Synthesis of Classical Morality and Modern Challenges

Revitalizing the thoughts of Al-Ghazali and Ibnu Miskawaih is not a regression to the past; it is a strategic step to extract the essence of ancient wisdom to answer future challenges. An education that pursues only intellectual intelligence without spiritual depth produces a directionless society. The expected human model from this synthesis is an individual possessing a clear heart to love the truth and a sharp intellect to manifest that truth in action. Commitment to holistic moral education is the best investment for preserving humanity in an increasingly sophisticated technological age.

5. Synthesis of an Integrative Moral Education Model: A Reconstruction of Spiritual-Rational Dialectics

The findings of this research formulate an integrative model of moral education that harmonizes the internal depth of Al-Ghazali with the logical systematicity of Ibnu Miskawaih. Conceptually termed "Spiritual-Rational Moral Dialectics," this construction is not a mere syncretic amalgamation of two philosophies but an organic synthesis that positions spirituality as the *spirit* (soul) and rationality as the *body* (form) in moral action. The strength of this model lies in its capacity to quench the spiritual thirst of adolescents while simultaneously satisfying their critical rational demands in the contemporary era.

a. Ontological Foundations of the Spiritual-Rational Dialectic Model

The Spiritual-Rational Dialectic model stands upon the ontological assumption that a human being is a unified entity comprising both the *malakut* (spiritual) and *nasut* (corporeal-rational) dimensions (Al-Attas (Syed.), 1978). This realization necessitates an educational approach that is non-partial. Al-Ghazali provides the foundation that character must be rooted in the purity of intention and the clarity of the heart to prevent actions from becoming hollow formalities. Ibnu Miskawaih complements this structure by asserting that moral actions must be logically accountable through the mechanism of moderation.

This synthesis posits that authentic goodness is that which is understood by the intellect and felt by the heart. Contemporary adolescents tend to reject blind indoctrination that lacks adequate causal explanation. The rational aspect derived from Ibnu Miskawaih provides the answer to the question of "why" a value should be embraced, while the spiritual aspect of Al-Ghazali answers "how" to maintain the consistency of that value amidst worldly temptations. The unification of these two dimensions fosters personal integrity that remains unshaken by shifting social trends.

b. The Synergy of *Tazkiyah* and *Tahdzib*: Internal Mechanisms

The operational mechanism of this model involves a collaborative process between soul purification (*tazkiyah*) and behavioral refinement (*tahdzib*). *Tazkiyah* serves to cleanse spiritual pathways so that the light of truth can enter the heart without obstruction, achieved through *mujahadah* (striving) against destructive carnal inclinations. *Tahdzib* acts as the architect, organizing these behaviors into a balanced and proportional structure. Reason is employed to measure whether an action aligns with the "golden mean" (*al-wasath*) or remains trapped in extremity.

The interaction between these two processes creates a dynamic dialectic. The heart provides the pure moral impulse, while the intellect verifies the most appropriate form of action within a specific social context. An individual relying solely on *tazkiyah* risks falling into antisocial individual piety. Conversely, one relying solely on *tahdzib* risks becoming a moral technocrat, performing good deeds only for utility or social propriety. This integrative model ensures that every virtue possesses deep spiritual roots and beneficial rational fruits (Sudin & Zailani, 2025).

c. Addressing Spiritual Vacuity and Rational Demands

Contemporary adolescents inhabit a world that is highly transactional and logical, yet they frequently experience acute existential emptiness. The Spiritual-Rational Dialectic model serves as a bridge to fill this void without sacrificing intellectual acuity. Moral education that emphasizes only dogmatic sides will be abandoned as irrelevant to complex life challenges. On the other hand, education focusing solely on secular ethics fails to provide internal peace when adolescents face failure or mental pressure.

Adolescents require logical reasons to act virtuously as an intellectual defense against an environment often cynical toward moral values (Moshman, 2005). Ibnu Miskawaih's capacity for moderation provides them with a navigational tool for social intelligence. Al-Ghazali's internal strength provides the spiritual "fuel" to remain consistent in virtue even when unobserved. This synthesis produces adolescents who are not only cognitively brilliant but also possess profound empathy and sensitivity toward divine values.

d. Implementation: The Collaboration of Faith, Logic, and Habituation

The implementation of the Spiritual-Rational Dialectic model requires a multidimensional educational strategy, operating through three simultaneous pillars (Hidayah et al., 2025):

1) Fortification of Faith (The Al-Ghazali Dimension): This pillar focuses on building a transcendent relationship between the student and the Creator. Faith is not taught as a theory but as an internal experience through meaningful spiritual practices. The consciousness of Divine presence (*muraqabah*) is instilled to build honest internal oversight.

2) **Logical Training (The Ibnu Miskawaih Dimension):** This pillar involves sharpening critical reasoning to dissect contemporary moral issues. Students are encouraged to discuss the logical consequences of every action, for themselves and others. Ethics is studied as a systematic and measurable science.

3) **Social Habituation (Practical Synthesis):** Values understood logically and felt spiritually must be manifested in tangible habits. The school environment must be designed so that justice, honesty, and moderation become the general norm. Habituation serves as the bridge connecting internal idealism with social reality.

e. The Educational Ecosystem: School and Family Synergy

The success of this integrative model depends heavily on a conducive educational ecosystem. Schools and families must not operate in isolation with diverging visions. They must form a unified living space where the processes of *tazkiyah* and *tahdzib* occur naturally. Parents act as the initial spiritual guides planting seeds of heart purity, while the school serves as the social laboratory to test and refine students' ethical rationality.

Guidance and Counseling (BK) teachers hold a key position as facilitators (Adinda et al., 2023). They must transform classical values into a language understood by modern youth. The counselor no longer acts as "school police" but as a mentor helping students understand their internal dynamics. The approach must blend rational-emotive counseling techniques with a soothing spiritual touch. Close collaboration between schools, families, and counselors creates a robust moral shield for adolescents (Capuzzi & Gross, 2014).

f. The Risk of Imbalance: Spirituality-Only Education and the Rationality-Only Education

Neglecting either aspect within this integrative model leads to a failure in character formation. Imbalanced approaches produce individuals who are functionally flawed in modern society:

1) **Spirituality-Only Education:** This tends to produce individuals with high ritual piety who are indifferent to social reality and scientific progress. They risk becoming "modern hermits" unable to solve worldly problems, viewing the world as something to be entirely shunned. Such characters are easily manipulated by extreme narratives.

2) **Rationality-Only Education:** This produces "intelligent robots" with high intellectual capacity but devoid of empathy and moral commitment. They perform good deeds only when logically profitable or reputation-enhancing. These individuals are vulnerable to corruption and opportunism, lacking the spiritual anchor to restrain carnal ambition (Walters, 1990).

The Spiritual-Rational Dialectic model avoids these extremes by seamlessly stitching the dimensions of the soul and the intellect. Virtue is understood as both an intellectual necessity and a sacred calling.

g. Scientific Authority and Practical Relevance of Classical Heritage

In conclusion, Islamic classical heritage maintains profound scientific authority and practical relevance in the 21st century. The thoughts of Al-Ghazali and Ibnu Miskawaih are not merely historical relics but sharp analytical instruments for dissecting modern social pathologies. Their deep analysis of the human soul transcends time by touching the universal substance of humanity.

Modern academia is often trapped in a fragmentation of knowledge that separates ethics, religion, and science. This integrative model offers a return to the "Unity of Sciences" (*wahdatul 'ulum*) within the context of character education. Revitalizing these thoughts is not a romanticization of the past but a futuristic strategy to safeguard future generations from the moral collapse brought by radical materialism.

The sustainability of a dignified civilization depends on the quality of its adherents' moral integrity. The Spiritual-Rational Dialectic model provides a framework to build this integrity systematically and profoundly. Moral education must no longer be viewed as a curricular supplement but as the primary foundation underlying all knowledge transmission. A resilient character is born from a purified soul and a sound mind. Adolescents equipped with the spiritual strength of Al-Ghazali and the rational order of Ibnu Miskawaih will emerge as wise, just, and high-integrity leaders, navigating the digital era while maintaining the nobility of their identity as servants of the Divine.

CONCLUSION

This study has successfully mapped and integrated the spiritual architecture of Al-Ghazali's *Tazkiyatun Nafs* with the philosophical ethical framework of Ibnu Miskawaih's *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq* as a response to the moral crisis of adolescents in the era of digital disruption. Major findings indicate that contemporary moral problematics, such as digital aggressiveness and value disorientation, are rooted in the fragmentation between internal dimensions and rational faculties within the character education process. The unification of these two major paradigms yields an integrative moral education model defined as *Spiritual-Rational Moral Dialectics*.

Al-Ghazali establishes the ontological foundation, asserting that moral education must originate from a radical internal transformation through the purification of the heart. The presence of this spiritual dimension ensures that every moral act possesses a "spirit" characterized by sincerity and profound transcendent meaning. Conversely, Ibnu Miskawaih provides a robust structural "body" through the application of reason to achieve the point of moderation (*al-wasath*). This philosophical rationality equips adolescents with critical navigational tools for ethical decision-making amidst the complexities of digital information. The synergy between these elements fosters a human profile that is not only intellectually astute but also spiritually luminous.

The *Spiritual-Rational Moral Dialectics* model carries significant implications for the advancement of knowledge, particularly in the fields of Islamic Education and Guidance and Counseling. Scientifically, this research demonstrates that the classical Islamic intellectual tradition possesses a formidable scholarly authority to engage with modern challenges. The integration of bottom-up (Sufistic) and top-down (rational-philosophical) approaches offers a novel and more holistic methodology for character education curricula. Neglecting either dimension inevitably produces character imbalances, resulting in either antisocial individual piety or pragmatic intelligence devoid of empathy.

The socio-religious aspects of this research emphasize the imperative of establishing a synergistic moral ecosystem between schools and families. Implementing this model necessitates a transformation of the educator's role into that of both a spiritual *mursyid* (guide) and an intellectual mentor capable of accompanying adolescents toward moral perfection. The successful purification of the soul and the habituation of moderate behavior will produce a "golden generation" endowed with extraordinary inner resilience. This character strength constitutes the most valuable social capital for sustaining a dignified civilization amidst an increasingly materialistic globalizing current.

In conclusion, moral integrity is not a static objective, but rather a continuous dialectical process between the heart and the mind. Safeguarding future generations from moral collapse requires a collective commitment to revitalizing the values of *tazkiyah* and *tahdzib* within both formal and informal educational spheres. The reconstruction of classical ethics serves as a strategic measure to restore human dignity to its most noble degree.

before the Creator and fellow beings. Only through the amalgamation of spiritual depth and rational acuity can the adolescent moral crisis be resolved comprehensively and sustainably.

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