



# A Spiritual-Cognitive Framework for Islamic Religious Education through the Integration of Al-Ghazali's Concepts of Kasbi and Laduni Knowledge

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## ABSTRACT

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at the senior high school level still tends to emphasize cognitive-normative mastery, while spirituality, adab, moral reflection, character formation, and social sensitivity remain insufficiently integrated. Previous studies on Al-Ghazali's epistemology have mainly focused on philosophical and mystical aspects, with limited attention to its pedagogical application in contemporary Islamic education. This article aims to reconstruct Al-Ghazali's concepts of kasbi and laduni knowledge into a spiritual-cognitive educational model to strengthen PAI learning at SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut. The study employs a qualitative conceptual approach through library research and educational reconstruction methods. Data were analyzed using conceptual synthesis and pedagogical interpretation. The findings show that the integration of kasbi and laduni knowledge can be formulated into a spiritual-cognitive educational model consisting of seven components: learning objectives, learning materials, learning strategies, spiritual habituation, teacher roles, learning outcome indicators, and evaluation. The model integrates cognitive, affective, spiritual, and practical dimensions in PAI learning. The study contributes to contemporary Islamic education by operationalizing Al-Ghazali's epistemology into a practical framework relevant to pesantren-based secondary education.

## Abstrak

Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) di tingkat sekolah menengah atas masih didominasi oleh penguasaan kognitif-normatif, sementara aspek spiritualitas, adab, refleksi moral, pembentukan karakter, dan sensitivitas sosial belum terintegrasi secara optimal. Kajian tentang epistemologi Al-Ghazali selama ini lebih banyak menyoroti dimensi filosofis dan mistis, dengan perhatian yang masih terbatas pada penerapan pedagogisnya dalam pendidikan Islam kontemporer. Artikel ini bertujuan merekonstruksi konsep ilmu kasbi dan laduni Al-Ghazali menjadi model pendidikan spiritual-kognitif untuk memperkuat pembelajaran PAI di SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif konseptual melalui studi kepustakaan dan metode rekonstruksi pendidikan. Data dianalisis melalui sintesis konseptual dan interpretasi pedagogis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa integrasi ilmu kasbi dan laduni dapat dirumuskan ke dalam model pendidikan spiritual-kognitif yang mencakup tujuh komponen: tujuan pembelajaran, materi, strategi pembelajaran, pembiasaan spiritual, peran guru, indikator hasil belajar, dan evaluasi. Model ini mengintegrasikan dimensi kognitif, afektif, spiritual, dan praksis dalam pembelajaran PAI. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan pendidikan Islam kontemporer dengan mengoperasionalkan epistemologi Al-Ghazali ke dalam kerangka praktis yang relevan bagi pendidikan menengah berbasis pesantren.

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Kata Kunci

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## Introduction

Classical Sufism studies occupy an important position within the Islamic intellectual tradition, particularly in understanding the inner dimensions and spirituality of human beings. One of the major works in this field is *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* by Imam Al-Ghazali, which serves not only as an ethical and spiritual guide but also as an epistemological framework that integrally combines *sharia*, *haqiqah*, and *ma'rifah*. In his discussion, especially in the section *Bayān al-Farq Bayna al-Maqāmayn bi-Mithāl Maḥsūs*, Al-Ghazali demonstrates a distinctive pedagogical approach by combining abstract concepts with concrete examples to facilitate understanding. This approach reflects the principles of Islamic education that balance intellectual reasoning (*ta'aqqul*) and spiritual experience (*'irfan*), so that knowledge does not remain merely theoretical but becomes internalized within human life.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at the secondary school level plays a strategic role in shaping students who not only understand religious teachings conceptually but also internalize divine values, *adab*, moral responsibility, and social awareness in their daily lives. In the context of contemporary education, the challenges faced by PAI have become increasingly complex because students live within social environments shaped by digitalization, value pluralism, changing youth cultures, and the rapid flow of information that is not always aligned with the development of religious character. Therefore, PAI learning should be developed as an educational process that integrates cognitive, spiritual, affective, and practical dimensions, rather than functioning merely as a transfer of religious knowledge (Al-Ghazali, n.d.; Hatta, 2024).

This direction is consistent with national education policies that position character formation as an essential component of the learning process. The *Pancasila Student Profile*, for example, emphasizes that Indonesian students should possess faith, devotion to God Almighty, and noble character, encompassing religious ethics, personal morality, social ethics, environmental ethics, and civic responsibility. Accordingly, strengthening PAI at the senior high school level should not be limited to the mastery of subject matter. However, it should also aim to foster religious consciousness that influences students' moral, social, and civic behavior (Kemendikbud, 2025).

In the context of this study, SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut is an educational institution characterized by Islamic and pesantren-based values. The institution requires an Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning framework capable of integrating the mastery of religious knowledge, spiritual habituation, character formation through *adab*, the value of compassion (*welas asih*), and the ability to live within a pluralistic society. This need is significant because pesantren-based schools are not only responsible for producing academically competent students but also for producing individuals who possess spiritual depth, social character, tolerance, and the ability to translate religious teachings into practical life.

Conceptual studies on Al-Ghazali often demonstrate a strong tendency toward metaphysical and epistemological discussions. Discussions concerning *kasbi* knowledge, *laduni* knowledge, the heart, *tazkiyah*, and inner knowledge frequently remain limited to philosophical explanations regarding the sources and hierarchy of knowledge. The limitation of such an approach is that it does not sufficiently demonstrate how Al-Ghazali's ideas may be utilized to address the problems of religious education within specific educational institutions. Therefore, the orientation of this article shifts from merely being a "study of a scholar's concepts" toward the "reconstruction of an educational model" that is more operational and relevant to PAI learning at SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut.

Previous studies on Al-Ghazali's epistemology have predominantly focused on the philosophical, mystical, and theological dimensions of *laduni* knowledge. Other studies on Islamic Religious Education mainly discuss character education, curriculum implementation, or multicultural learning as separate domains. However, limited attention has been given to operationalizing Al-Ghazali's epistemological framework into a practical spiritual-cognitive learning model applicable to contemporary pesantren-based schools. Consequently, there remains a lack of integrative educational models that systematically connect cognitive learning, spiritual formation, moral reflection, *adab*, and social awareness within Islamic Religious Education practices. This article addresses that gap by reconstructing the concepts of *kasbi* and *laduni* knowledge into an operational spiritual-cognitive framework for PAI learning at SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut.

Based on this background, the article formulates three principal research questions. First, what contemporary problems in religious education need to be addressed to strengthen PAI learning at SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut? Second, how can the concepts of *kasbi* and *laduni* knowledge in Al-Ghazali's thought be reconstructed into a spiritual-cognitive educational model? Third, what are the implications of this model for curriculum design, learning strategies, spiritual habituation, teacher roles, competency indicators, and the evaluation of PAI learning?

The novelty of this article lies in its attempt to reconstruct Al-Ghazali's epistemology into an operational spiritual-cognitive educational model. This article not only explains the concepts of *kasbi* and *laduni* knowledge philosophically, but also organizes them into an implementative matrix for PAI learning at SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut. Thus, this article offers a conceptual contribution to the development of a PAI learning model that integrates mastery of religious knowledge, purification of the heart, formation of *adab*, and social sensitivity.

## Methods

This study employs a conceptual, qualitative approach, drawing on library research and educational reconstruction methods. This approach was selected because the article's focus is not to test the effectiveness of the proposed model empirically, but rather to formulate an initial conceptual framework that may be used to strengthen Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning at SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut. In conceptual qualitative research, analysis focuses on interpreting ideas, constructing relationships among concepts, and formulating models relevant to educational needs (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The primary source of this study is Al-Ghazali's thought, particularly concerning the concepts of knowledge, the heart, *tazkiyatun nafs* (self-purification), *adab*, and educational objectives. Supporting sources include literature on Islamic education, character education, multicultural education, the Merdeka Curriculum policy, the *Pancasila Student Profile*, and Islamic Religious Education learning. This article also incorporates sources on multicultural education in Indonesia to strengthen the social dimension of the proposed model (Baihaqi, 2021).

The analysis was conducted through four stages. First, the identification of core concepts in Al-Ghazali's thought relevant to education, namely *kasbi* knowledge, *laduni* knowledge, the heart, *tazkiyah*, *adab*, and the role of the teacher. Second, the reduction of metaphysical discussions that do not directly support the article's educational objectives, particularly lengthy discussions of *Lauh al-Mahfuz*, angels, and prophetic knowledge. Third, the pedagogical interpretation of these concepts to ensure their

relevance to PAI learning. Fourth, the formulation of an operational model in the form of a matrix encompassing learning objectives, learning materials, learning strategies, spiritual habituation, teacher roles, learning outcome indicators, and evaluation.

This article does not employ a full systematic literature review design. Nevertheless, the principle of source transparency is maintained by clearly explaining the types of literature utilized and the limitations of the analysis. PRISMA 2020 itself is a reporting guideline for systematic reviews that includes procedures for source identification, selection, assessment, and reporting. However, this article does not fully implement the PRISMA procedure because its objective is conceptual reconstruction rather than a comprehensive systematic review (Page et al., 2021).

## Results and Discussion

Imam Al-Ghazali positions epistemology as the foundation of education and human transformation. In *Ihyā' Ulūm al-Dīn*, particularly in the subsection *Bayān al-Farq Bayna al-Maqāmayn bi-Mithāl Maḥsūs*, he discusses two *maqām* (levels or states) of knowledge that distinguish how human beings acquire knowledge. The first *maqām* is knowledge obtained through the senses and reason (*al-'ilm al-kasbi*). The second is knowledge that radiates from a purified heart (*al-'ilm al-ladunī*). Al-Ghazali illustrates this concept through the analogy of a pond supplied by rivers and springs. The rivers symbolize the senses that convey knowledge from the external world to the heart. In contrast, the springs symbolize inner sources of knowledge that may emerge when the depths of the heart are uncovered through *tazkiyah* (self-purification) (Siti Mutholingah & Basri Zain, 2021).

This analogy demonstrates that outward and inward forms of knowledge are complementary. *Kasbi* knowledge fills the pond of the heart with information and understanding, whereas *laduni* knowledge illuminates it with a clearer, deeper, and more enduring light of wisdom. This analogy may also be recognized within modern cognitive psychology, where knowledge is understood not merely as the result of external stimuli but also as a product of internalization and reflection. Jean Piaget, for instance, emphasized the importance of constructivism in learning, arguing that individuals construct knowledge through interaction between external experiences and internal cognitive structures (Piaget, 2021). However, unlike Piaget, Al-Ghazali introduces a spiritual dimension: a purified heart can perceive transcendent realities beyond empirical experience.

Al-Ghazali's perspective also demonstrates certain parallels with concepts found in Western philosophy of knowledge. In classical epistemology, a distinction is made between empiricism (John Locke and David Hume), which emphasizes sensory experience as the primary source of knowledge, and rationalism (Descartes and Spinoza), which prioritizes reason and intellect. Al-Ghazali appears to transcend this dichotomy by presenting an "integrative epistemology" in which the senses, reason, and the heart all play essential roles. Furthermore, he introduces a dimension of *mystical insight* that is largely absent from secular Western epistemology.

From an educational perspective, these two *maqām* may be understood as two phases of learning: (1) the cognitive phase, involving the reception of information and conceptual understanding; and (2) the contemplative phase, involving internalization of values, spiritual reflection, and creative intuition. Thus, Al-Ghazali emphasizes that true education is not merely the production of intellectually capable individuals, but rather the cultivation of wise and enlightened human beings.

In Al-Ghazali's thought, knowledge is not merely a collection of information but rather a light that guides human beings toward truth, closeness to Allah, and the formation of moral character. Knowledge possesses an epistemological dimension because it concerns how human beings acquire understanding, while simultaneously containing a spiritual dimension because true knowledge should lead individuals toward moral consciousness and submission to God. In this context, education must not be reduced to a purely cognitive activity; instead, it should be directed toward the formation of individuals who are knowledgeable, well-mannered, and spiritually responsible (Al-Ghazali, n.d.; Wekke, Amiruddin, & Wardi, 2018).

*Kasbi's* knowledge may be understood as knowledge acquired through human effort, such as studying, reading, listening, observing, reasoning, discussing, conducting research, and receiving guidance from teachers. This form of knowledge emphasizes the importance of systematic, methodical, and rational educational processes. Within the context of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), *kasbi* knowledge is reflected in activities such as understanding religious arguments, reading Islamic texts, analyzing moral issues, constructing arguments, and relating Islamic teachings to students' lived realities.

Meanwhile, *laduni* knowledge in Al-Ghazali's thought refers to knowledge or wisdom that arises from the purity of the heart, *tazkiyatun nafs* (self-purification), sincerity, *adab*, *muraqabah* (spiritual awareness of God's presence), and spiritual closeness to Allah. In the context of modern education, *laduni* knowledge should not be overinterpreted as a form of mystical or magical knowledge detached from the learning process. Rather, it may be pedagogically understood as depth of understanding, purity of conscience, reflective capacity, and moral sensitivity that enable religious knowledge to influence students' attitudes and behavior (Hatta, 2024; Rohman, 2024).

The integration of *kasbi* and *laduni* knowledge means connecting rational learning processes with the cultivation of the heart. *Kasbi's* knowledge ensures that religious learning remains argumentative, systematic, and academically accountable. *Laduni* knowledge ensures that religious education does not become devoid of *adab*, spirituality, and moral consciousness. Therefore, these two forms of knowledge should not be opposed to one another; rather, they should be integrated as the foundation of spiritual-cognitive education.

In this article, spiritual-cognitive education is understood as an educational approach that integrates the development of intellect, heart, attitudes, and actions. This approach is based on the assumption that students should not merely know religious teachings but also internalize, reflect upon, and habituate them in real-life contexts. Effective PAI learning does not stop at the question of "what students know," but also addresses "what students are aware of," "how students behave," and "how students practice religious values in everyday life."

Within the framework of the *Merdeka Curriculum*, the Learning Outcomes for Islamic Religious Education and Character Education at the senior high school level demonstrate that religious learning encompasses dimensions of understanding, belief, presentation of ideas, and habituation of attitudes. In Phase E, for example, students are encouraged to analyze Qur'anic verses and hadiths, present arguments, internalize religious values, and cultivate attitudes consistent with Islamic teachings. This indicates that PAI learning at the policy level indeed requires integrating cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions (Kemendikbud, 2025).

Accordingly, the spiritual-cognitive educational model, based on the integration of *kasbi* and *laduni* knowledge, may be positioned as an effort to align PAI learning with the *Merdeka Curriculum*. This model assists teachers in designing learning processes

that are oriented not only toward subject mastery but also toward reflection, habit formation, exemplary conduct, attitude evaluation, and character formation.

### Islamic Religious Education in Pesantren-Based Schools

Pesantren-based schools possess distinctive characteristics because they integrate formal educational systems with Islamic traditions, spiritual habituation, the culture of *adab*, and character development. In this context, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) occupies a broader role than merely functioning as a school subject. PAI becomes a space for integrating religious knowledge, school culture, teacher exemplarity, and the formation of students' personalities.

SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut, as the locus of this article, may be understood as an institution that requires a PAI model aligned with its institutional identity. The value of *welas asih* (compassion) may serve as an ethical foundation for religious learning, particularly in shaping students who are faithful, well-mannered, empathetic, respectful toward others, and able to connect Islamic teachings with social life. Therefore, the reconstruction of Al-Ghazali's thought within this context should be directed toward a model that can be implemented through learning objectives, instructional materials, learning strategies, habituation practices, and evaluation.

### Findings

The findings of this study indicate that Al-Ghazali's thought provides a strong conceptual foundation for the development of spiritual-cognitive education. The first finding concerns the existence of two sources of knowledge acquisition. Knowledge may be acquired through human effort, such as studying, reading, listening, thinking, and learning from teachers. This pathway is referred to as *kasbi* knowledge. On the other hand, knowledge may also emerge as wisdom and clarity of understanding originating from a purified heart, which in Al-Ghazali's tradition is associated with *laduni* knowledge (Al-Ghazali, n.d.; Hatta, 2024).

The second finding relates to the analogy of the heart as a vessel for receiving knowledge. Al-Ghazali describes the heart as the center of consciousness that may be influenced by external experiences and learning processes, as well as by inner spiritual clarity. In the educational context, this idea implies that learning should not merely fill the intellect, but should also purify and guide the heart so that knowledge may influence behavior.

The third finding concerns the hierarchy of knowledge. In Al-Ghazali's thought, knowledge does not stop at outward or superficial dimensions, but possesses deeper layers of meaning. Religious knowledge should not merely be understood as information about laws, arguments, or concepts; rather, it should guide students toward an understanding of the purpose of life, moral responsibility, and the relationships among human beings, Allah, and fellow human beings.

The fourth finding concerns the function of *tazkiyatun nafs* (self-purification). Purification of the soul becomes a necessary condition to ensure that knowledge does not remain merely at the level of memorization or argumentation, but is transformed into moral character (*akhlaq*). In the context of schooling, *tazkiyah* may be understood as the cultivation of worship practices, muhasabah (self-reflection), ethics, discipline, self-control, and social responsibility. Accordingly, *tazkiyah* may serve as a bridge between religious knowledge and character formation.

The fifth finding concerns the teacher's role as a guide to both knowledge and *adab*. From Al-Ghazali's perspective, teachers do not merely function as transmitters of subject matter, but also as moral and spiritual guides. This role is highly relevant to Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers because the success of religious learning is

determined not only by the completeness of instructional materials but also by the teacher's exemplarity, educational relationships, and ability to guide students in understanding the deeper meaning of knowledge.

**Operational Model for the Integration of *Kasbi* and *Laduni* Knowledge**

Based on these findings, this article formulates an operational model for integrating *kasbi* and *laduni* knowledge into PAI learning at SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut. This model is referred to as a spiritual-cognitive educational model, namely a learning framework that connects the mastery of religious knowledge with the development of spiritual awareness, *adab*, character, and social sensitivity.

**Table 1. Matrix of the Spiritual-Cognitive Education Model Based on the Integration of *Kasbi* and *Laduni* Knowledge**

Component	Dimension of <i>Kasbi</i> Knowledge	Dimension of <i>Laduni</i> Knowledge	Implementation at SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut
Learning Objectives	Students understand Islamic Religious Education (PAI) concepts rationally, textually, and contextually.	Students develop spiritual awareness, <i>adab</i> , sincerity, and moral responsibility.	PAI objectives are formulated not only in terms of "understanding the material," but also in terms of "internalizing, reflecting upon, and habituating values."
Learning Materials	<i>Aqidah, akhlaq, fiqh</i> , Qur'an-Hadith studies, Islamic history, and contemporary Islamic issues	Wisdom ( <i>hikmah</i> ), <i>tazkiyah, muhasabah, adab</i> , compassion ( <i>welas asih</i> ), <i>rahmah</i> , and social responsibility	PAI materials are connected to real-life adolescent issues, digital ethics, social relations, tolerance, and school life
Learning Strategies	Textual studies, discussions, problem-based learning, analysis of religious arguments, and case studies	Spiritual reflection, <i>tadabbur, muhasabah</i> , reflective journaling, and habituation of worship practices	Teachers combine the analysis of religious texts with reflection on students' lived experiences.
Spiritual Habituation	Religious literacy, discipline-building exercises, and reinforcement of religious understanding	Prayer, <i>dhikr</i> , congregational prayer, daily <i>adab</i> , <i>muhasabah</i> , and habituation of compassionate behavior	The school develops a spiritual culture integrated with formal learning processes.
Teacher Roles	Facilitator of knowledge, academic mentor, and discussion moderator	<i>Murabbi</i> (spiritual educator), role model of <i>adab</i> , guide of the heart, and model of spirituality	PAI teachers function as integrative figures embodying knowledge, <i>adab</i> , compassion, and exemplary conduct
Learning Outcome Indicators	Students can explain, analyze, present, and relate PAI materials to real-life contexts.	Students demonstrate <i>adab</i> , empathy, responsibility, honesty, tolerance, and awareness in worship.	Assessment encompasses cognitive, affective, reflective, and social-behavioral dimensions.

<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Written examinations, assignments, presentations, case analyses, and academic portfolios</b>	<b>Observation of <i>adab</i>, <i>muhasabah</i> journals, character portfolios, and habituation assessments</b>	<b>PAI evaluation is not solely score-based, but also considers the development of attitudes and value-based practices</b>
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The model demonstrates that integrating Kasbi and Laduni knowledge can be translated into a more operational educational framework. Kasbi knowledge preserves the academic dimension of Islamic Religious Education (PAI), while laduni knowledge sustains its spiritual and moral dimensions. In the context of SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut, this integration may serve as a foundation for developing PAI learning that is more aligned with the needs of a school grounded in values, *adab*, and compassion (Welas Asih).

## Discuss

### The Educational Significance of the Integration of Kasbi and Laduni Knowledge

The integration of the two maqām of knowledge proposed by Al-Ghazali provides a rich framework for constructing a holistic system of Islamic education. At the first stage, education must teach kasbi knowledge through rational, empirical, and systematic methods. This stage corresponds to the instructional process in modern educational theory. Students should be equipped with critical, logical, and scientific thinking skills. However, education must not stop at this stage, because without purification of the heart and the development of spirituality, knowledge may merely produce intellectual arrogance.

The second stage is laduni knowledge, which requires efforts of tazkiyah (purification of the soul), mujahadah (spiritual struggle), and muraqabah (spiritual awareness of God's presence). Al-Ghazali emphasizes that only by removing the veils of desire and passion can the heart receive the illumination of divine knowledge from Allah. The integration of these two stages of knowledge opens the possibility for a holistic epistemology of unveiling knowledge.

This perspective resonates with Seyyed Hossein Nasr's concept of sacred science. Nasr argues that modern science has undergone a process of "desacralization" by severing the relationship between knowledge and transcendent reality. According to him, knowledge should not merely consist of factual knowledge, but also knowledge of meaning—knowledge that reveals the deepest significance of reality and directs human beings toward God. In this regard, kasbi knowledge may be viewed as an important yet limited empirical domain. It maps observable phenomena but does not necessarily uncover the metaphysical meanings underlying them. Laduni knowledge, which Al-Ghazali understands as the result of the heart's openness to inner realities, corresponds to the dimension of knowledge emphasized by Nasr—knowledge arising from an awareness of the sacredness of the universe.

Accordingly, the integration of these two forms of knowledge produces what may be termed sacred science: knowledge that is rationally valid while simultaneously imbued with spiritual meaning. Furthermore, Nasr's perspective helps reinterpret and revitalize Al-Ghazali's ideas within the modern context. In an era in which education and science are increasingly secularized, the concept of the "two gateways of knowledge" may be revived by reintroducing the dimension of sacredness. Education should not merely transfer information or technical skills, but must also facilitate students' inner journeys toward spiritual enlightenment. In other words, the curriculum should accommodate the integration between scientia (rational knowledge) and sapientia (spiritual wisdom).

This concept has direct implications for the orientation of the Islamic education curriculum. A curriculum that emphasizes only cognitive aspects is analogous to filling a pond solely through river channels, as Al-Ghazali illustrates, while the inner spring remains sealed. Conversely, when the pond is purified and the layers covering the spring are removed, *laduni* knowledge emerges in a purer, clearer, and deeper form. This perspective is consistent with the principle of *sacred science*, which demands openness to the metaphysical dimensions of reality. Furthermore, Al-Ghazali's integrative framework also contains an epistemological critique of positivism. Modern positivism tends to disregard anything that cannot be empirically verified.

Within Al-Ghazali's framework, such a tendency represents a reduction of knowledge because it closes the possibility for human beings to attain supra-empirical forms of understanding. By opening oneself to *intellectual intuition*—a term used by Seyyed Hossein Nasr to describe knowledge acquired through inner illumination—human beings may gain access to higher truths. This approach also possesses an ethical dimension. Knowledge acquired through a purified heart is less likely to be misused because moral values have already been internalized within it. This directly addresses Nasr's criticism of modern science as morally neutral yet potentially destructive. An educational model grounded in the integration of the two *maqām* of knowledge would produce individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also wise, just, and responsible in their use of knowledge.

Accordingly, the integration of Al-Ghazali's concepts, reinforced by Nasr's notion of *sacred science*, presents a comprehensive epistemological paradigm: rational yet spiritual, empirical yet metaphysical, individual yet cosmic. This paradigm is not only relevant for the development of Islamic scholarship. However, it may also contribute significantly to contemporary global philosophy of science, which increasingly seeks a synthesis between science and spirituality.

In the contemporary context, Al-Ghazali's ideas may also be understood as a process of *deep learning* that involves not only cognition but also affection and spirituality. This model resembles Jack Mezirow's concept of *transformative learning*, which emphasizes paradigm shifts through critical reflection. The distinction, however, lies in Al-Ghazali's emphasis that such reflection is not merely rational but also spiritual, ultimately leading to *ma'rifatullah* (gnosis of God). Similarly, John Dewey, as a major figure of pragmatism, proposed the concept of *experiential learning*, in which life experience serves as the primary source of learning. However, Dewey's educational orientation tends to focus on problem-solving and social effectiveness. Al-Ghazali expands this perspective by incorporating the dimension of transcendence—the ultimate purpose of education is not merely social adaptation, but closeness to Allah.

From a curricular perspective, the integration of these two *maqām* implies the necessity of an educational system that unites science and spirituality. The curriculum should provide not only cognitive subjects but also habitual spiritual practices such as *dhikr*, ethical cultivation, and self-reflection. Teachers, therefore, perform dual roles as *mu'allim* (transmitters of knowledge) and *murabbi* (educators of the soul), becoming living examples for students. This corresponds to what modern educational theory calls the principle of the *hidden curriculum*, in which exemplarity and the learning environment are considered as important as the formal content of instruction.

In the contemporary global context, this model may offer a response to the crisis of modern education, which is often criticized for "producing knowledgeable monsters"—individuals who are intellectually advanced yet lacking moral values. The integration of the two *maqām* prevents the dichotomy between science and religion, as well as between knowledge and wisdom. Indeed, this study may also be situated within broader discussions on *character education* and *spiritual intelligence*, which have increasingly gained attention in Western academic discourse. Thus, the integration of these two *maqām* is not merely a classical idea, but also a contemporary solution. It advances a paradigm asserting that education must integrate *knowledge*, *virtue*, and *illumination*. Such an educational model is expected to produce generations capable of responding to the challenges of modernity while preserving divine values, thereby becoming *insan kamil*—complete human beings who fulfill their role as *khalifah* on earth.

The integration of *kasbi* and *laduni* knowledge holds significant implications for strengthening Islamic Religious Education (PAI) because both serve as a bridge between knowledge and character formation. *Kasbi's* knowledge emphasizes the importance of rational, systematic, and effort-based learning processes. Meanwhile, *laduni* knowledge emphasizes that knowledge must touch the heart and cultivate inner consciousness. In the educational context, these two forms of knowledge demonstrate that religious learning should not merely focus on students' ability to

answer questions. However, they should also encourage them to live according to religious values.

Problems in contemporary PAI learning often arise when students master religious concepts yet fail to fully demonstrate *adab*, empathy, responsibility, and moral awareness in social life. For example, students may be able to explain the concept of noble character (*akhlaq*). However, they may not necessarily be able to maintain digital ethics, respect differences, or regulate emotions in social interactions. Therefore, the spiritual-cognitive model becomes important as an approach that integrates dimensions of understanding, internalization, and habituation.

#### Dialogue with Modern Educational Theory

The spiritual-cognitive educational model based on Al-Ghazali's thought may be brought into dialogue with modern educational theories, particularly character education, reflective learning, the *Merdeka Curriculum*, and multicultural education. Character education emphasizes the importance of internalizing values into students' behavior. At the same time, reflective learning provides space for students to evaluate themselves, understand their experiences, and derive meaning from the learning process. Within this framework, Al-Ghazali's concept of *tazkiyatun nafs* may be understood as a spiritual foundation for reflective practices and character formation.

The *Merdeka Curriculum* also provides opportunities for teachers to develop contextual learning approaches that are responsive to students' needs and the characteristics of educational institutions. The Learning Outcomes for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and Character Education require integrating competencies related to understanding, analyzing, presenting, internalizing, and habituating religious values. This strengthens the relevance of the spiritual-cognitive model, as it integrates cognitive, affective, and practical dimensions within PAI learning (Kemendikbud, 2025).

Furthermore, multicultural education constitutes an important dimension of PAI learning because students live within pluralistic societies. Multicultural education does not merely teach diversity as a social fact, but also cultivates the capacity to respect others, cooperate, and live peacefully within diverse communities. In Baihaqi's study (2021), multicultural education is positioned as a paradigm that guides students toward tolerant and inclusive attitudes toward the realities of a diverse society.

#### Implications for the PAI Curriculum

The first implication of this model is the necessity of formulating PAI learning objectives that integrate cognitive, spiritual, affective, and practical dimensions. Learning objectives should not merely be expressed as "students can explain" or "students can mention." However, they should be expanded into formulations such as "students can understand, reflect upon, demonstrate attitudes, and habituate values." In this way, the objectives of PAI learning become more holistic.

For example, in the teaching of *akhlaq* (moral character), the learning objective should not simply state that "students can explain the meaning of *tawadhu* (humility)." Rather, the objective may be expanded into "students can explain the meaning of *tawadhu*, analyze examples of humble behavior within school life, reflect upon their own behavior, and demonstrate humility in social interactions." Such formulations are more aligned with the orientation of spiritual-cognitive education because they connect understanding, reflection, and practice.

In the context of SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut, the PAI curriculum may also be enriched by the institution's distinctive values, such as compassion (*welas asih*), *adab*, peace, simplicity, and social responsibility. These values may be incorporated into learning objectives, project themes, school culture, and indicators for attitude evaluation. In this manner, the PAI curriculum becomes more contextualized and aligned with the school's institutional identity.

#### Implications for Learning Strategies

PAI learning strategies based on the integration of *Kasbi and Laduni* knowledge may be developed through several approaches. First, text-and-context studies, in which students read religious arguments or Islamic concepts and then relate them to contemporary adolescent life.

Second, moral case studies, in which students analyze real-life issues such as social media ethics, bullying, intolerance, consumerist lifestyles, or crises of *adab*. Third, spiritual reflection, in which students write *muhasabah* (self-reflective) journals after studying particular materials. Fourth, value habituation, in which students are encouraged to practice religious values within school life.

For example, in lessons on *tabayyun* (verification of information) and digital communication ethics, teachers may begin the learning process by studying Qur'anic verses or hadiths, followed by discussions analyzing cases of hoaxes, hate speech, or abusive comments on social media. Subsequently, students may be asked to write reflective responses about their experiences with social media. This process demonstrates that learning moves from *kasbi* knowledge toward *laduni* consciousness in a pedagogical sense.

#### Implications for the Role of PAI Teachers

Within this model, PAI teachers perform the roles of both *mu'allim* and *murabbi*. As *mu'allim*, teachers are responsible for delivering knowledge accurately, systematically, and in an argumentative manner. As *murabbi*, teachers are responsible for guiding in *adab*, cultivating a healthy spiritual atmosphere, exemplifying conduct, and directing students so that the knowledge they acquire influences their behavior.

The teacher's role becomes highly significant because spiritual-cognitive education cannot function solely through instructional materials. Teacher exemplarity constitutes part of the *hidden curriculum* that shapes students' attitudes. If teachers preach compassion yet communicate harshly, the learning process loses its moral force. Conversely, when teachers demonstrate *adab*, gentleness, discipline, and honesty, students receive concrete examples of how religious knowledge is translated into behavior.

#### Implications for Students

For students, this model is expected to develop four principal competencies. First, religious-cognitive competence, namely the ability to understand Islamic teachings accurately and contextually. Second, reflective competence, namely the ability to evaluate oneself, derive wisdom, and improve one's behavior. Third, spiritual competence, namely awareness in worship, gratitude, repentance, and maintaining a relationship with Allah. Fourth, socio-multicultural competence, namely the ability to respect differences, demonstrate empathy, cooperate with others, and live peacefully within diverse communities.

Socio-multicultural competence is particularly important because Islamic education should not produce students who are personally pious yet socially exclusive. A comprehensive religious education must cultivate students who possess strong convictions while remaining capable of appreciating diversity. In the context of Peacesantren Welas Asih, the values of *rahmah* (compassion), *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), *ta'awun* (mutual assistance), and the *adab* of respecting differences of opinion may serve as foundations for strengthening students' social attitudes.

#### Critique and Limitations of the Model

The model proposed in this article has several limitations. First, the model remains conceptual in nature and has not yet been empirically tested through observations, interviews, or instructional experiments. Second, this article has not conducted an in-depth analysis of the internal curriculum documents of SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut. Third, the model has not measured teachers' and students' responses to its potential implementation within Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning.

Therefore, this article does not claim that the integration model of *Kasbi and Laduni* knowledge has been empirically proven to improve students' character development. A more appropriate claim is that this article offers an initial conceptual framework with the potential to serve as a foundation for the development of PAI learning at SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut. To demonstrate its effectiveness, further studies are required, including field research, educational development research, or limited implementation trials.

## Conclusion

This article demonstrates that the primary problem of contemporary Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning lies in the dominance of cognitive-normative approaches. At the same time, the dimensions of spirituality, *adab*, moral reflection, character formation, and social sensitivity have not yet been fully integrated into operational learning designs. In the context of SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut, this need becomes increasingly important because the institution is characterized by Islamic educational values rooted in pesantren traditions and compassion (*welas asih*).

The concepts of *kasbi* and *laduni* knowledge in Al-Ghazali's thought may be reconstructed into a spiritual-cognitive educational model. *Kasbi* knowledge represents rational, systematic, and academic learning processes, while *laduni* knowledge may be pedagogically interpreted as purity of heart, depth of reflection, wisdom, *adab*, and spiritual awareness. The integration of these two forms of knowledge produces a PAI learning model that combines mastery of religious knowledge with character formation and social responsibility.

The principal contribution of this article lies in the formulation of an operational matrix model consisting of seven components: learning objectives, learning materials, learning strategies, spiritual habituation, teacher roles, learning outcome indicators, and evaluation. This model may serve as an initial framework to strengthen PAI learning at SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut, making it more balanced across cognitive, spiritual, affective, and practical dimensions.

This article has limitations because it remains conceptual in nature and has not yet employed field-based data. Therefore, further research is necessary through classroom observations, interviews with teachers and students, analysis of curriculum documents, or educational development research. In this way, the integration model of *Kasbi and Laduni* knowledge may be tested more empirically and refined according to the practical needs of PAI learning at SMA Peacesantren Welas Asih Garut.

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