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AL-GHAZALI'S ETHICS OF SOCIAL INTERACTION IN IHYA' 'ULUM AL-DIN: RELEVANCE FOR SCHOOLS IN SOCIETY 5.0

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Abstract

*Moral education is the foundation for shaping students' personalities so that they develop moral attitudes and a harmonious social life. Moral degradation in schools, however, remains a challenge, as shown by widespread cheating, low honesty, and bullying. This study examines the relevance of the concept of the ethics of social interaction (*akhlaq al-mu'asyarah*) in al-Ghazali's* Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din *to social life in schools in the Society 5.0 era. It is qualitative library research; data were drawn from relevant literature and analyzed through content analysis using the thematic (*maudhu'i*) method. The results show that the concept is strongly relevant along two dimensions. The first is students' conduct toward teachers: (a) concentrating while learning as a sign of earnestness in seeking knowledge; (b) humility before teachers; (c) respecting teachers by prioritizing good manners; (d) kissing the teacher's hand as an expression of respect; and (e) refraining from backbiting teachers or peers. The second is conduct among students: (a) mutual respect and affection as a reflection of brotherhood; (b) exchanging greetings of peace (*salam*); (c) avoiding arrogance; (d) not belittling peers; and (e) honesty in word and deed. These findings indicate that al-Ghazali's teachings on social interaction remain a relevant foundation for building an ethical, harmonious, and character-based social life in schools.*

Keywords: *Ethics of Social Interaction, Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din, School Social Life, Society 5.0.*

Abstrak

*Pendidikan akhlak merupakan fondasi pembentukan kepribadian peserta didik agar memiliki sikap bermoral dan kehidupan sosial yang harmonis. Namun, degradasi moral di sekolah masih menjadi tantangan, sebagaimana terlihat dari maraknya praktik mencontek, rendahnya kejujuran, dan perundungan. Penelitian ini mengkaji relevansi konsep akhlak bergaul (*akhlaq al-mu'asyarah*) dalam* Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din *karya al-Ghazali dengan kehidupan sosial di sekolah pada era Society 5.0. Penelitian ini merupakan studi pustaka kualitatif; data diambil dari literatur yang relevan dan dianalisis melalui analisis isi dengan metode tematik (*maudhu'i*). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa konsep tersebut sangat relevan pada dua dimensi. Pertama, akhlak peserta didik terhadap guru: (a) berkonsentrasi saat belajar sebagai tanda kesungguhan menuntut ilmu; (b) rendah hati di hadapan guru; (c) menghormati guru dengan mengutamakan adab; (d) mencium tangan guru sebagai ungkapan penghormatan; dan (e) menjauhi ghibah terhadap guru maupun teman. Kedua, akhlak*

antarpeserta didik: (a) saling menghormati dan menyayangi sebagai cerminan persaudaraan; (b) saling mengucapkan salam; (c) menjauhi sikap sombong; (d) tidak merendahkan teman; dan (e) jujur dalam perkataan dan perbuatan. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa ajaran al-Ghazali tentang akhlak bergaul tetap menjadi landasan yang relevan untuk membangun kehidupan sosial sekolah yang beretika, harmonis, dan berkarakter.
Kata Kunci: *Akhlak Bergaul, Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din, Kehidupan Sosial Sekolah, Society 5.0.*

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INTRODUCTION

Moral education (*akhlaq*) is one of the main foundations of students' character formation. Educational success is measured not only by academic achievement but also by students' ability to put moral values into practice in daily life. In Islamic education, the formation of *akhlaq* is inseparable from the educational process because it aims to produce individuals who are knowledgeable, of good character, and able to build harmonious social relations. Schools, therefore, function not only as places for transferring knowledge but also as environments that shape a culture of social interaction grounded in moral values.[1]

This role becomes all the more important given the moral problems that persist in schools. The 2024 Education Integrity Assessment Survey (*Survei Penilaian Integritas*, SPI) released by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) shows that cheating is still found in about 78 percent of schools despite various integrity-strengthening programs.[2] In addition, low honesty, declining mutual respect, and rising cases of bullying show that students' social life still faces serious challenges. One case that drew public attention was the bullying of an elementary school student in Banjarmasin in 2025, which left the victim psychologically traumatized.[3]

In practice, students' conduct toward teachers has not been realized optimally. This can be seen, among other things, in the way students communicate, which does not always use polite language consistent with ethical norms, both in face-to-face learning and in interaction through

[1] Nurul Huda et al., "Internalisasi Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Akhlak terhadap Anak pada Keluarga Broken Home di Dusun Ramin Condong Desa Matang Labong Kecamatan Tebas Tahun 2023," *Tarbiya Islamica* 11, no. 1 (2023).

[2] Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi, "Temuan Hasil SPI Pendidikan 2024: Menyontek dan Plagiarisme Masih Merebak di Sekolah dan Kampus," *kpk.go.id*, accessed September 9, 2026, https://www.kpk.go.id/id/ruang-informasi/berita/temuan-hasil-spi-pendidikan-2024-menyontek-dan-plagiarisme-masih-merebak-di-sekolah-dan-kampus.

[3] Riyad Dafhi Rizki, "Dugaan Bullying di Sekolah Islam di Banjarmasin, Kepala Sekolah Bantah Tuduhan, Pelaku Dapat Skorsing, Korban Tak Terima Mediasi," *Radar Banjarmasin*, accessed September 9, 2026, https://radarbanjarmasin.jawapos.com/hukum-peristiwa/2503010021/dugaan-bullying-di-sekolah-islam-di-banjarmasin-kepala-sekolah-bantah-tuduhan-pelaku-dapat-skorsing-korban-tak-terima-mediasi.

various media.[4] This moral degradation toward teachers does not stop at communication patterns; in some cases students have physically assaulted teachers, leading to criminal acts. In East Kalimantan, for example, two *pesantren* students shocked the public by killing their teacher merely because they did not accept that their mobile phones had been confiscated during lessons.[5] In Situbondo, a vocational high school student struck a teacher out of annoyance at being reprimanded for being noisy during class.[6]

These phenomena indicate that character formation in schools has not fully succeeded in internalizing moral values in students' social life. The problem becomes more complex when students come from disharmonious (broken home) families, so that the internalization of moral values does not proceed optimally. Under such conditions, schools bear a greater responsibility as educational environments that instill moral values through learning and everyday social interaction.[7] Strengthening the ethics of social interaction is therefore an urgent need in creating a social life that is safe, mutually respectful, and supportive of students' character development.

One figure who paid great attention to moral formation was Imam al-Ghazali. In *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, he explains that *akhlaq* is a disposition rooted in the self that gives rise to behavior spontaneously. This concept affirms that moral formation cannot be achieved merely by conveying knowledge; it must be realized through habituation until it becomes an inherent character. Al-Ghazali's thought is not limited to the relationship between human beings and God but also covers the ethics of human relations, embodied in respecting teachers, guarding the tongue, humility, honesty, respect for others, and building brotherhood.[8]

These values are highly relevant to social life in schools in the Society 5.0 era. Interaction between students and teachers and among students requires a moral foundation so that a conducive learning environment is created, one that is mutually respectful and free from violence and behavior contrary to moral values. The concept of the ethics of social interaction put forward by al-Ghazali in *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* can thus serve as a relevant perspective for addressing the social problems that are developing in schools today.

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[4] Marsya Al Farin et al., "Analisis Bentuk Akhlak Siswa yang Mulia kepada Guru dalam Perspektif Hadits," *Jurnal Manajemen dan Pendidikan Agama Islam* 2, no. 3 (2024): 104.

[5] Muhammad Budi Kurniawan, "Tak Terima HP Disita saat Belajar, 2 Santri di Samarinda Bunuh Guru Pesantren," *detikSulsel*, accessed September 9, 2026, https://www.detik.com/sulsel/hukum-dan-kriminal/d-5955533/tak-terima-hp-disita-saat-belajar-2-santri-di-samarinda-bunuh-guru-pesantren.

[6] Chuk Shatu W, "Guru di Situbondo Lapor Polisi usai Dipukul Murid," *detikJatim*, accessed September 9, 2026, https://www.detik.com/jatim/hukum-dan-kriminal/d-8438774/guru-di-situbondo-lapor-polisi-usai-dipukul-murid.

[7] Khairunnisa Indah, "Urgensi Pendidikan Akhlak pada Anak Usia Dini menurut Perspektif Psikologi Islam," *Dayah: Journal of Islamic Education* 7, no. 1 (2024).

[8] Nurul Huda et al., "Konsep Pendidikan Al-Ghazali dan Relevansinya dalam Sistem Pendidikan di Indonesia," *As-Salam: Jurnal Studi Hukum Islam & Pendidikan* 9, no. 1 (2020).

Various studies have examined al-Ghazali's thought on moral and character education, both conceptually and in its implementation in educational institutions. Syifa and Auliya state that al-Ghazali's thought can guide efforts to overcome the moral decline visible in many aspects of life as a result of social and cultural change, especially in the digital era.[9] Fadillah et al. reveal that al-Ghazali's framework provides a solid and contextually relevant foundation for authentic, deep, and sustainable character education in the modern era.[10] Hidayati et al. find that al-Ghazali's thought offers an integrative and transformative framework for Islamic education in which moral education is the foundation that unites knowledge, practice, and spirituality, and that his ideas are relevant to contemporary education, which tends to neglect the moral dimension in pursuit of academic achievement.[11]

In general, these studies show that al-Ghazali's thought remains relevant to the development of Islamic education and students' character formation. Most of them, however, discuss moral education in general terms, while studies that specifically analyze the relevance of the ethics of social interaction in *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* to social life in schools in the Society 5.0 era remain limited. Moreover, earlier studies of the *Ihya'* tend to focus on the vertical relationship between students and teachers, such as the duty to respect teachers, to be humble, and to observe proper manners in acquiring knowledge.

This study seeks to fill that gap. Unlike previous studies, it focuses on the relationship between al-Ghazali's values of social interaction and the problems of social interaction occurring in schools, such as low honesty, weakening mutual respect, and rising bullying. Its novelty lies in extending the study of al-Ghazali's ethics beyond the vertical student–teacher relationship to the horizontal relationships among students within the school environment, and in positioning his concept of the ethics of social interaction as an analytical framework for school social life in the Society 5.0 era.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the relevance of the concept of the ethics of social interaction in *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* to social life in schools in the Society 5.0 era. The analysis focuses on moral values in students' relationships with teachers, such as respecting teachers, humility, guarding the tongue, refraining from backbiting, and honoring teachers, and in relationships among students, including mutual respect, not belittling peers, avoiding arrogance, exchanging greetings, and upholding honesty. The findings are expected to contribute

[9] Alfiana Syifa and Ridwan Auliya, "Pendidikan Karakter Islami di Era Digital: Tantangan dan Solusi Berdasarkan Pemikiran Sosial Imam Al-Ghazali," *Social Studies in Education* 2, no. 2 (2024): 117.

[10] Khaeril Fadillah et al., "Pendidikan Akhlak dalam Pemikiran Imam Al-Ghazali dan Relevansinya dengan Pendidikan Karakter di Era Modern," *Pendas: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar* 11, no. 3 (2026): 433–34.

[11] Ashri Hidayati et al., "Pendidikan Akhlak sebagai Inti Konsep Pendidikan Islam dalam Pemikiran Al-Ghazali," *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat dan Riset Pendidikan* 4, no. 1 (2025): 2614.

theoretically to Islamic education studies and to serve as a conceptual reference for strengthening character education and building a school social life grounded in moral values.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach in the form of library research, in which data are obtained by examining written sources.[12] Data were collected from books, scholarly articles, documents, and other relevant literature.[13] The primary source was al-Ghazali's *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, while secondary sources comprised books, journal articles, and scholarly literature relevant to moral education and school social life in the Society 5.0 era. Data were gathered through documentary study by examining, identifying, and classifying data related to the concept of the ethics of social interaction.[14] The data were then analyzed using content analysis with a thematic (*maudhu'i*) approach to group the moral concepts in *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* and to analyze their relevance to students' social life in schools in the Society 5.0 era.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of the Ethics of Social Interaction in Islam

The Concept of Akhlaq

Etymologically, *akhlaq* derives from the Arabic *khuluq*, meaning disposition, nature, habit, or character. The term is related to *khalq* (creation) and *Khaliq* (Creator), which points to the connection between human character and divine values.[15] Terminologically, *akhlaq* is a trait rooted in the soul that prompts actions spontaneously without lengthy deliberation.

According to Ibn Miskawayh, as quoted by Ismail, *akhlaq* is a settled state of the soul that gives rise to actions easily without prior reflection. Ibrahim Anis similarly holds that *akhlaq* is a trait embedded in the human self from which both good and bad behavior arise.[16] *Akhlaq* can thus be understood as an inner character reflected in a person's daily behavior.

In general, *akhlaq* is divided into two: praiseworthy (*akhlaq mahmudah*) and blameworthy (*akhlaq madhmumah*). Praiseworthy *akhlaq* includes attitudes in line with Islamic values, such as honesty, humility, compassion, and patience, whereas blameworthy *akhlaq*

[12] M. Nazir, *Metode Penelitian* (Jakarta: Ghalia Indonesia, 2020), 112.
[13] Fitria Widiyani Roosinda et al., *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (Yogyakarta: Zahir Publishing, 2021), 37.
[14] Ahmad Tanzeh, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif: Konsep, Prinsip, dan Operasionalnya* (Yogyakarta: Teras, 2020), 117.
[15] Rosihon Anwar, *Akidah Akhlak* (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2016), 255.
[16] Asep Usman Ismail, *Kuliah Akhlak Tasawuf* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2023), 33.

includes behavior contrary to Islamic teachings, such as arrogance, envy, and demeaning others.[17] Quraish Shihab explains that the Qur'an contains moral teachings as guidance for human thought, attitude, and action toward God, fellow human beings, and the environment; it encourages noble character through the promise of reward and warns against blameworthy character with the threat of sin and punishment.[18] The goodness or badness of a person's behavior is thus strongly determined by the moral disposition rooted within.

The scope of *akhlaq* in Islam, as stated by Yusuf al-Qaradawi and Muhammad 'Abdullah Darraz in Nasharuddin, is broad, covering human relationships with God, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, fellow beings, the environment and .[19] This study focuses on *akhlaq* toward fellow human beings, particularly students' ethics of social interaction in school life.

The Concept of Social Interaction in Islam

To interact socially means to engage in social relations with others. In Islam, social interaction is called *mu'asyarah*, a shared life built on compassion, respect, and care.[20] The school is one of the social environments that plays an important role in shaping students' character because it is where students interact with teachers and peers.

Social interaction at school serves not only to support learning but also as a means of moral formation.[21] Students therefore need to observe proper manners in their relations with teachers and peers so that a harmonious educational environment is created.

Students' Ethics of Social Interaction at School

In Islamic education, *akhlaq* is a principal goal that concerns not only intellectual ability but also the formation of a civilized personality. The Prophet ﷺ affirmed that one of the main purposes of his mission was to perfect human character. Islamic education aims not only to develop the intellect but also to purify the soul and form righteous, well-mannered individuals through role modeling and the habituation of good conduct.[22]

The relationship between students and teachers in Islam is built on respect for knowledge and for those who convey it. In *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*, al-Zarnuji accords teachers a very high status: they must be respected and honored, and a teacher's position toward his students is like

[17] Ulil Amri Syafri, *Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada, 2014), 74–75.

[18] M. Quraish Shihab, *Wawasan Al-Qur'an: Tafsir Maudhu'i atas Pelbagai Persoalan Umat* (Bandung: Mizan, 2007), 567.

[19] Nasharuddin, *Akhlak: Ciri Manusia Paripurna* (Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada, 2015), 215.

[20] M. Imam Pamungkas, *Akhlak Muslim Modern: Membangun Karakter Generasi Muda* (Bandung: Marja, 2012), 28–29.

[21] Eni Elyati, Abdullah Idi, and Yulia Tri Samiha, *Sekolah/Madrasah sebagai Organisasi* (Palembang: Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah Palembang, 2023), 188.

[22] Indah, "Urgensi Pendidikan Akhlak."

that of a parent toward a child.[23] Such an attitude reflects appreciation for knowledge and forms part of the etiquette for obtaining its blessing.

Besides the relationship with teachers, Islam also attends to relationships among students. Interaction among learners should be built on affection, brotherhood, and mutual respect. Forms of conduct among students that are important to practice at school include respecting and caring for peers, making a habit of greeting, avoiding arrogance, not belittling peers, and maintaining honesty in word and deed.[24]

These attitudes underpin a positive school environment, because students are expected not only to have academic ability but also to build good social relations. The ethics of social interaction in the Islamic perspective is thus an important part of students' character formation. By habituating moral values in daily interaction, the school can become an educational space that produces students who are not only knowledgeable but also civilized.

Al-Ghazali's Concept of the Ethics of Social Interaction in Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din

In *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, al-Ghazali defines *akhlaq* as a disposition firmly rooted in the soul that gives rise to behavior spontaneously without lengthy deliberation. He states:

فَالْخُلُقُ عِبَارَةٌ عَنْ هَيْئَةٍ فِي النَّفْسِ رَاسِخَةٌ عَنْهَا تَصْدُرُ الْأَفْعَالُ بِسُهُولَةٍ وَيُسْرٍ مِنْ غَيْرِ حَاجَةٍ إِلَى فِكْرٍ وَرَوِيَّةٍ، فَإِنْ كَانَتِ الْهَيْئَةُ بِحَيْثُ تَصْدُرُ عَنْهَا الْأَفْعَالُ الْجَمِيلَةُ الْمَحْمُودَةُ عَقْلًا وَشَرْعًا سُمِّيَتْ تِلْكَ الْهَيْئَةُ خُلُقًا حَسَنًا، وَإِنْ كَانَ الصَّادِرُ عَنْهَا الْأَفْعَالُ الْقَبِيحَةُ سُمِّيَتِ الْهَيْئَةُ خُلُقًا سَيِّئًا

> *"*Khuluq *is an expression for a firmly rooted disposition of the soul from which actions issue easily and readily, without any need for thought or deliberation. If the disposition is such that beautiful actions, praiseworthy by reason and the* shari'ah*, issue from it, it is called good character (*husn al-khuluq*); if ugly actions issue from it, it is called bad character (*su' al-khuluq*)."*[25]

Based on this definition, al-Ghazali affirms that *akhlaq* is the character from which all behavior originates. Good character produces behavior in accordance with the guidance of the *shari'ah*, whereas bad character produces behavior that deviates from it. This concept is the basis for understanding the ethics of social interaction, both between students and teachers and among students. The values of social interaction in *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* are therefore analyzed below for their relevance to school social life in the Society 5.0 era.

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[23] al-Zarnuji, *Pedoman Belajar bagi Penuntut Ilmu: Terjemah Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*, trans. Muhammadun Thaifuri (Surabaya: Menara Suci, 2008), 36.

[24] A. Rifqy Hanif and Abdul Khobir, "Konsep Akhlak Seorang Peserta Didik dalam Mencari Ilmu menurut Kiai Ahmad Sakhowi Amin: Kajian Kitab Miftah al-Akhlaq," *Forum Tarbiyah* 11, no. 1 (2013): 61.

[25] Abu Hamid Muhammad bin Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* (Maktabah Dar al-Tsaqafah al-Islamiyyah, 1356 AH), 1434.

Students' Conduct toward Teachers

Al-Ghazali explains that the formation of students' character begins with the etiquette of seeking knowledge. One such etiquette is the ability to focus attention on learning by reducing attachment to worldly affairs. He states:

أن يقلل علائقه من الاشتغال بالدنيا، فإن العلائق شاغلة وصارفة، وما جعل الله لرجل من قلبين في جوفه، ومهما توزعت الفكرة قصرت عن درك الحقائق

"He should reduce his attachments to worldly preoccupations, for attachments distract and divert. God has not placed two hearts in any man's breast, and whenever thought is divided, it falls short of grasping the realities."[26]

Besides emphasizing the readiness of the heart in seeking knowledge, al-Ghazali explains that students should be humble before their teachers. This attitude is regarded as part of the etiquette of acquiring knowledge and a path to honor. He states:

وينبغي أن يتواضع لمعلمه ويطلب الثواب والشرف بخدمته. قال الشعبي: صلى زيد بن ثابت على جنازة فقربت إليه بغلته ليركبها، فجاء ابن عباس فأخذ بركابه، فقال زيد: خل عنه يا ابن عم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال ابن عباس: هكذا أمرنا أن نفعل بالعلماء والكبراء، فقبل زيد بن ثابت يده وقال: هكذا أمرنا أن نفعل بأهل بيت نبينا صلى الله عليه وسلم. وقال صلى الله عليه وسلم: ليس من أخلاق المؤمن التملق إلا في طلب العلم

"A student should be humble toward his teacher and seek reward and honor by serving him. Al-Sha'bi related that Zayd ibn Thabit once prayed over a funeral, after which his mule was brought near for him to ride. Ibn 'Abbas came and took hold of his stirrup. Zayd said, 'Let go of it, O cousin of the Messenger of God ﷺ.' Ibn 'Abbas replied, 'This is how we were commanded to treat scholars and elders.' Zayd ibn Thabit then kissed his hand and said, 'And this is how we were commanded to treat the family of our Prophet ﷺ.' The Prophet ﷺ said, 'Flattery is not among the traits of a believer except in seeking knowledge.'"[27]

Through this account of Zayd ibn Thabit and Ibn 'Abbas, al-Ghazali presents an example of mutual honoring between scholars and seekers of knowledge. The story shows that humility (*tawadu'*) and respect for teachers are inseparable from the etiquette of seeking knowledge. The concept of social interaction in *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* thus provides a basis for building social relations founded on respect, humility, and the protection of others' honor.

[26] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 84.
[27] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 84.

Conduct among Students

Alongside the student–teacher relationship, al-Ghazali also attends to the ethics of interaction among peers. He explains that the Companions maintained social relations by showing friendliness and avoiding backbiting (*ghibah*), as in the following passage:

وكان الصحابة رضي الله عنهم يتلاقون بالبشر، ولا يغتابون عند الغيبة. الغيبة: أن تذكر أخاك بما يكرهه لو بلغه، والغيبة لا تقتصر على اللسان

> *"The Companions, may God be pleased with them, met one another with cheerful faces and did not backbite one another in their absence. Backbiting is to mention your brother with something he would dislike were it to reach him, and backbiting is not confined to the tongue."*[28]

Al-Ghazali regards relationships among students as an important aspect of moral formation in education. In his view, students within one scholarly community should build relationships founded on affection, brotherhood, and mutual assistance in goodness, as he explains in *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*:

وكما أن حق أبناء الرجل الواحد أن يتحابوا ويتعاونوا على المقاصد كلها، فكذلك حق تلامذة الرجل الواحد التحاب والتواد. قال الله تعالى: إنما المؤمنون إخوة

> *"Just as it is the right of the sons of one man to love one another and to cooperate in all their aims, so it is the right of the students of one teacher to love and cherish one another. God Most High says: 'The believers are but brothers.'"*[29]

Through this statement, al-Ghazali likens relationships among students to brotherhood within a family. The scholarly bond among students learning from the same teacher should give rise to affection, care, and cooperation. This shows that, for al-Ghazali, education aims not only to develop intellectual ability but also to build a social character capable of fostering harmonious relationships between individuals. In the context of school social life in the Society 5.0 era, mutual affection and assistance can be realized through cooperation in learning, appreciating peers' abilities, helping classmates who struggle, and avoiding behavior that damages social relations, such as hostility and discrimination.

In addition to affection, al-Ghazali warns students to avoid arrogance (*kibr*) in seeking knowledge. A seeker of knowledge, he explains, must be humble and must not feel superior to others. In *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, he states:

[28] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 1598–1601.
[29] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 1598–1601.

أن لا يتكبر على العلم ولا يتأمر على المعلم، بل يلقي إليه زمام أمره بالكلية في كل تفصيل، ويذعن لنصيحته إذعان المريض الجاهل للطبيب المشفق الحاذق

"He should not be arrogant toward knowledge nor domineering toward the teacher; rather, he should hand over to him the reins of his affairs entirely, in every detail, and submit to his advice as an ignorant patient submits to a compassionate and skilled physician."[30]

الكبر: هو استصغار الناس واحتقارهم، ورؤية النفس فوقهم

"Arrogance is to regard people as small and contemptible, and to see oneself as above them."[31]

Al-Ghazali thus affirms that arrogance hinders the blessing of knowledge, because it makes a person reluctant to accept the truth and inclined to belittle others. Humility (*tawadu'*) is an essential trait that enables students to build healthy social relations. Its relevance to school life is seen in students who value their peers' opinions, do not feel superior because of particular academic abilities, and are open to criticism and advice.

Al-Ghazali further makes honesty an essential element of moral formation. Honesty, he explains, concerns not only speech but also the correspondence between outward behavior and inner state. Among the forms of honesty he describes are truthfulness of the tongue (*sidq al-lisan*) and truthfulness in deeds (*sidq fi al-a'mal*):

صدق اللسان، وذلك لا يكون إلا في الأخبار أو فيما يتضمن الأخبار وينبه عليها

"Truthfulness of the tongue: this applies only to reports, or to what contains or points to a report."[32]

وصدق في الأعمال، وهو أن يجتهد حتى لا تدل أعماله الظاهرة على أمر في باطنه لا يتصف هو به، لا بأن يترك الأعمال، ولكن بأن يستجر الباطن إلى تصديق الظاهر

"Truthfulness in deeds is to strive so that one's outward deeds do not indicate an inner quality that one does not actually possess, not by abandoning the deeds, but by drawing the inner self to confirm the outward."[33]

This concept of honesty is closely related to students' social life at school. Truthfulness in speech can be practiced by habitually speaking the truth, maintaining good communication, and not spreading unverified information, while truthfulness in deeds is reflected in responsibility, consistency between words and actions, and earnestness in fulfilling one's duties as a student. Al-Ghazali's concept of conduct among students thus encompasses affection, humility, and honesty,

[30] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 84.
[31] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 338.
[32] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 2728.
[33] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 2732.

values that can underpin a harmonious, mutually respectful, and character-oriented school environment in the Society 5.0 era.

The Relevance of the Ethics of Social Interaction to School Social Life in the Society 5.0 Era

Students' Conduct toward Teachers

Concentrating while Learning

One form of students' conduct toward teachers according to al-Ghazali is full concentration in seeking knowledge. In his words, a student "should reduce his attachments to worldly preoccupations, for attachments distract and divert," because "whenever thought is divided, it falls short of grasping the realities."[34] Both statements indicate that successful learning depends not only on intellectual ability but also on students' capacity to maintain focus and control whatever disrupts learning. This view is in line with al-Nawawi in *Al-Tibyan fi Adab Hamalat al-Qur'an*:

ومن آداب المتعلم أن يجتنب الأسباب الشاغلة عن التحصيل إلا سببا لا بد منه للحاجة

> *"Among the manners of the learner is to avoid the causes that distract from acquiring knowledge, except for a cause that is unavoidable out of need."*[35]

In the school context, this concept is relevant to the challenges of modern learning, especially distractions such as excessive smartphone use, social media, and other activities that reduce attention during lessons. Controlling such distractions is a form of students' respect for teachers and appreciation of the process of acquiring knowledge. A study at SD Plus Hang Tuah V found that some students had difficulty concentrating because their smartphone use was insufficiently supervised; playing games, accessing social media, and watching YouTube and TikTok even took place during study time.[36] This underlines the importance of instilling the etiquette of learning, especially maintaining concentration while receiving knowledge. Excessive smartphone use therefore needs to be controlled so that students can value the learning process and the teacher as a source of knowledge. From al-Ghazali's perspective, concentration is not merely a matter of academic achievement but part of students' conduct toward teachers, reflecting responsibility, discipline, and respect for knowledge and for those who teach it.

Humility

Humility (*tawadu'*) is one of the traits students must have in interacting with teachers. Al-Ghazali states that "a student should be humble toward his teacher and seek reward and honor by

[34] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 84.

[35] Yahya bin Syaraf al-Nawawi, *Al-Tibyan fi Adab Hamalat al-Qur'an* (Indonesia: Al-Haramain, n.d.).

[36] Nanda Aini Zulfa and Mujazi Mujazi, "Pengaruh Penggunaan Smartphone terhadap Konsentrasi Belajar Siswa," *Jurnal Riset Tindakan Indonesia* 7, no. 3 (2022): 468.

serving him."[37] For al-Ghazali, humility is reflected in students' willingness to respect teachers, accept guidance, and regard teachers as sources of knowledge worthy of honor. It is not mere politeness but part of the etiquette that brings the blessing of knowledge. This view is in line with al-Nawawi:

وينبغي أن يتواضع لمعلمه، ويتأدب معه وإن كان أصغر منه سنا، وأقل شهرة ونسبا وصلاحا وغير ذلك

> *"The student should be humble toward his teacher and behave courteously with him, even if the teacher is younger in age, less renowned, of lesser lineage or piety, and so forth."*[38]

This concept is strongly relevant to school social life in the Society 5.0 era. Humility can be realized through students' willingness to accept advice, reprimands, and corrections from teachers graciously, without defiance or a sense of being always right. In reality, however, humility is not yet firmly embedded in some students. The case of a student who challenged a teacher to a fight after being reprimanded about the neatness of his uniform illustrates the lack of habituation in humility.[39] This shows the importance of accustoming students to accepting advice and correction graciously, as al-Ghazali emphasizes. Cultivating humility not only builds harmonious relations between students and teachers but also lays an important foundation for character formation and successful education.

Respect

One manifestation of *tawadu'* described by al-Ghazali is respect for those who excel in knowledge. As noted above, al-Ghazali quotes the account of Ibn 'Abbas holding the stirrup of Zayd ibn Thabit's mount and saying, "This is how we were commanded to treat scholars and elders."[40] The story shows that respect for people of knowledge is based not on age, social status, or kinship, but on the nobility of the knowledge they possess. Ibn 'Abbas's conduct exemplifies that humility and appreciation of knowledge are important in the Islamic educational tradition. The same value is affirmed in *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*:

اعلم بأن طالب العلم لا ينال العلم ولا ينتفع به إلا بتعظيم العلم وأهله وتعظيم الأستاذ وتوقيره

[37] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 84.
[38] al-Nawawi, *Al-Tibyan*.
[39] Riani Rahayu, "Viral Siswa SMA Tantang Guru Berkelahi gegara Tak Terima Ditegur," *detikSulsel*, accessed September 9, 2026, https://www.detik.com/sulsel/berita/d-7005957/viral-siswa-sma-tantang-guru-berkelahi-gegara-tak-terima-ditegur.
[40] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 84.

> *"Know that a seeker of knowledge will neither attain knowledge nor benefit from it except by venerating knowledge and its people, and by venerating and honoring the teacher."*[41]

This statement shows that success in acquiring knowledge depends not only on intellectual ability but also on the quality of one's manners toward the teacher. In the school context, respect for teachers can be expressed through courtesy, greeting, attentiveness in lessons, acceptance of advice, and care in speech and behavior toward teachers. Yet respect for educators still faces challenges, as illustrated by the verbal bullying of a junior high school principal in Kendal by his students in 2022.[42] This points to the need to strengthen moral education so that students are aware of the importance of respecting teachers as part of a civilized school culture.

Kissing the Teacher's Hand

Al-Ghazali continues the account of Zayd ibn Thabit and Ibn 'Abbas as a picture of reciprocal honor among people of knowledge and nobility: Zayd kissed Ibn 'Abbas's hand and said, "This is how we were commanded to treat the family of our Prophet ﷺ," followed by the Prophet's saying, "Flattery is not among the traits of a believer except in seeking knowledge."[43] The story shows that respect in Islam is based not only on age or social position but also on knowledge, nobility, and virtue. Zayd ibn Thabit, a senior Companion and scholar, still showed respect to Ibn 'Abbas because of his position as a member of the Prophet's family.

In education, this means that respect for teachers rests not merely on age but on their role and responsibility as guides to knowledge; a teacher deserves respect whether older or younger than the students. In modern education, the age gap between teachers and students sometimes complicates relationships based on proper manners. Excessive joking, inattention to teachers' instructions, or taking teachers lightly indicate that understanding of the etiquette of seeking knowledge still needs strengthening. The Prophetic saying quoted by al-Ghazali explains that respect for teachers is not pretense or attention-seeking but an attitude born of awareness of the nobility of knowledge. In school social life in the Society 5.0 era, this value can be applied through simple behavior such as speaking politely, listening to the teacher's explanations, accepting advice, and maintaining good conduct during lessons. Symbolic forms of respect such as kissing the teacher's hand can be part of a moral culture insofar as they accord with prevailing norms; the essence of respect, however, lies not in outward form but in inner humility, appreciation of knowledge, and awareness of the teacher's role.

Refraining from Backbiting

[41] al-Zarnuji, *Pedoman Belajar*.

[42] Muhammad Fadlan, "Krisis Wibawa Guru di Sekolah," *Kompasiana*, accessed September 9, 2026, https://www.kompasiana.com/muhammad7697/67790a60ed641509f367ea22/krisis-wibawa-guru-di-sekolah.

[43] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 84.

An important aspect of the ethics of social interaction for al-Ghazali is guarding the tongue (*hifz al-lisan*), which means not only avoiding hurtful words directly but also protecting others' honor in their absence. He describes the Companions as people who "met one another with cheerful faces and did not backbite one another in their absence," and stresses that "backbiting is not confined to the tongue."[44] Social ethics is thus measured not only by how one behaves face to face but also by how one protects others' honor when they are not present. Backbiting may occur through writing, gestures, insinuation, or any other form of communication that degrades a person's honor. The importance of protecting the teacher's honor is also affirmed by al-Nawawi in *Al-Tibyan*:

وأن يرد غيبة شيخه إن قدر، فإن لم يقدر على ردها فارق ذلك المجلس

> *"He should repel any backbiting of his teacher if he is able; if he is unable to repel it, he should leave that gathering."*[45]

A student, therefore, is obliged not only to guard his or her own tongue but also bears a moral responsibility to protect the honor of others. In the modern context, this principle also applies to digital communication: not spreading unverified information, not posting demeaning comments, and not sharing content that defames anyone. Insults directed at teachers on social media show that guarding the tongue remains a challenge. In February 2025, a teenager from Pontianak known as Riezky Kabah posted a TikTok video calling the teaching profession corrupt, extortionate, and criminal. The video went viral and provoked protests from educators, and on February 26, 2025, the West Kalimantan branch of the Indonesian Teachers' Association (PGRI) reported him to the regional police for alleged defamation of the teaching profession.[46] Al-Ghazali's concept of *hifz al-lisan* thus remains relevant: it teaches students not only to avoid backbiting but also to develop ethical awareness in communication, both offline and online.

Conduct among Students

Mutual Respect and Affection

Relationships among students are an important part of moral formation in education. As quoted earlier, al-Ghazali likens students of one teacher to the sons of one man who are entitled to "love and cherish one another."[47] This shows that relationships among students rest not merely on sharing a place of learning but on a moral bond of care, cooperation, and responsibility toward

[44] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 1598–1601.
[45] al-Nawawi, *Al-Tibyan*, 38.
[46] Rachmawati, "Tiktoker Riezky Kabah Sebut Guru Korupsi, PGRI Kalbar Lapor ke Polisi," *Kompas.com, March 5, 2025*, accessed September 9, 2026, https://www.kompas.com/jawa-timur/read/2025/03/05/190900988/tiktoker-riezky-kabah-sebut-guru-korupsi-pgri-kalbar-lapor-ke-polisi.
[47] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 1598–1601.

one another. The concept is reinforced by Hafidz Hasan al-Mas'udi in *Taisir al-Khallaq fi 'Ilm al-Akhlaq*, who describes the concrete forms of brotherhood:

فيطلب من كل منهما للآخر المواساة بالمال والإعانة بالنفس والعفو عن الزلات، والإخلاص والوفاء والتخفيف عليه، وترك التكلف له، والسكوت عما يؤذي، والتكلم بما يرضاه الشرع ويقبله الدين، فيأمره بالمعروف وينهاه عن المنكر، ويدعو له بحسن الحال ودوام الاستقامة

> *"Each of them is required to support the other with wealth and with personal help, to pardon his lapses, to be sincere and loyal, to lighten his burdens, to avoid formality with him, to keep silent about what hurts, and to speak what the* shari'ah *approves and religion accepts; to enjoin him to good and forbid him from wrong, and to pray for his well-being and lasting steadfastness."*[48]

Affection among students is thus not merely a feeling but is realized through helping one another, forgiving, guarding one's words, and supporting each other in goodness. In the school context, this value is relevant to building a comfortable learning environment through respect for differences, helping peers in difficulty, and avoiding individualism. Positive social relations make the school a space not only for acquiring knowledge but also for character formation and social maturity. This is in line with educational psychology research showing that healthy friendship quality, marked by empathy, respect, and the ability to manage conflict, contributes to students' psychological well-being.[49]

Exchanging Greetings of Peace

One form of conduct in building social relations among students is the habit of exchanging greetings of peace (*salam*). In *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, al-Ghazali grounds brotherhood among Muslims in the verse "The believers are but brothers" (Q. 49:10). This verse indicates that social relations in Islam rest not only on human interaction but also on a bond of faith that gives rise to affection, care, and respect. One concrete expression of this brotherhood is spreading greetings of peace. The Prophet ﷺ said:

أَلَا أَدُلُّكُمْ عَلَى شَيْءٍ إِذَا فَعَلْتُمُوهُ تَحَابَبْتُمْ؟ أَفْشُوا السَّلَامَ بَيْنَكُمْ

> *"Shall I not tell you of something that, if you do it, you will love one another? Spread the greeting of peace among yourselves." (Narrated by Muslim, no. 54)*

The *salam* is thus not merely an utterance upon meeting but carries respect, a prayer for safety, and a means of building social closeness. Islam also teaches the etiquette of returning greetings, as God says:

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[48] Hafidz Hasan al-Mas'udi, *Taisir al-Khallaq fi 'Ilm al-Akhlaq*, trans. Abi Medan (Banda Aceh: Karya Aneuk Gampong, n.d.), 12.

[49] Made Cherista Dinda Lana and Komang Rahayu Indrawati, "Peranan Kualitas Persahabatan dan Kecerdasan Emosional pada Kebahagiaan Remaja," *Jurnal Psikologi Udayana* 8, no. 1 (2021): 103.

وَإِذَا حُيِّيتُم بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيُّوا بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا أَوْ رُدُّوهَا

"When you are greeted with a greeting, respond with a better one or return it in kind." (Q. 4:86)

In *Al-Durr al-Manthur*, al-Suyuti explains that the verse teaches Muslims to return a greeting in a better or equal manner as a form of appreciation for others:

عن الحسن في قوله: فحيوا بأحسن منها، قال: يقول: إذا سلم عليك أخوك المسلم فقال: السلام عليك، فقل: السلام عليكم ورحمة الله، أو ردوها، يقول: إن لم يقل لك: السلام عليك ورحمة الله، فرد عليه كما قال: السلام عليكم، كما سلم، ولا تقل: وعليك

"Al-Hasan said concerning the words 'respond with a better one': If your Muslim brother greets you saying, 'Peace be upon you,' then say, 'Peace be upon you and the mercy of God.' 'Or return it': if he does not say to you, 'Peace be upon you and the mercy of God,' then return it as he said it, 'Peace be upon you,' just as he greeted you, and do not merely say, 'And upon you.'"[50]

In the school context, the culture of greeting is relevant to character formation. Greeting teachers, peers, and other members of the school community trains courtesy and social care and strengthens interpersonal relations. This is seen, for example, in the 3S culture (*Senyum, Sapa, Salam*: smile, greet, and say *salam*) at MTsN 2 Ponorogo, which, according to the head of the madrasah, improved students' courtesy and attitude in interacting with teachers.[51] The *salam* is therefore not merely an outward habit but a means of character education for creating a courteous and harmonious school culture.

Avoiding Arrogance

Besides affection and respect, al-Ghazali emphasizes avoiding arrogance (*kibr*). As quoted above, a seeker of knowledge "should not be arrogant toward knowledge nor domineering toward the teacher," but should accept advice "as an ignorant patient submits to a compassionate and skilled physician."[52] The analogy shows that humility is not a sign of weakness but a precondition for knowledge to be understood and to bring benefit. Although addressed to the student–teacher relationship, the value of *tawadu'* is also relevant among students. Each student needs to realize that every individual has strengths and weaknesses; feeling superior because of achievement, ability, or background creates social distance and hampers cooperation. This is also affirmed by al-Habib 'Abdullah ibn 'Alawi al-Haddad in *Risalat al-Mu'awanah*:

[50] Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, *Al-Durr al-Manthur fi al-Tafsir bi al-Ma'thur*, vol. 4 (Cairo: Markaz al-Buhuth wa al-Dirasat al-'Arabiyyah wa al-Islamiyyah, 2003), 561.

[51] Diah Ayu Noviatu Fasa Nazira et al., "Internalisasi Budaya Sekolah 3S (Senyum, Sapa, dan Salam) dalam Meningkatkan Nilai Kesopanan di MTsN 2 Ponorogo," *Asanka: Journal of Social Science and Education* 4, no. 2 (2023): 235.

[52] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 84.

وإياك والتكبر، فإن الله لا يحب المتكبرين، ومن تواضع رفعه الله، ومن تكبر وضعه الله

"Beware of arrogance, for God does not love the arrogant. Whoever is humble, God raises him; and whoever is arrogant, God lowers him."[53]

Arrogance may take the form of feeling better than others, resisting criticism, dismissing peers' opinions, or refusing to cooperate. At school, such behavior disrupts students' social relations, for example when students refuse group work, disregard peers' opinions, or demean classmates with different abilities. Al-Ghazali's prohibition of arrogance is thus related not only to success in acquiring knowledge but also to students' social character: *tawadu'* helps students value others, accept differences, and strengthen brotherhood (*ukhuwwah*) in school life.

Not Belittling Peers

An important principle of Islamic social ethics is protecting others' honor by not demeaning or belittling them. Behavior such as mocking, underestimating peers' abilities, or feeling superior obstructs a healthy learning environment. For al-Ghazali, belittling others is a form of arrogance, which he defines as "to regard people as small and contemptible, and to see oneself as above them."[54] Arrogance is therefore not only pride in oneself but also looking down on others. Al-Habib 'Abdullah al-Haddad similarly states:

وقال عليه السلام: الكبر بطر الحق (يعني: رده) وغمط الناس (يعني: احتقارهم). ومن نظر إلى نفسه بعين التعظيم وإلى غيره بعين الاستصغار فهو من المتكبرين

"The Prophet ﷺ said: 'Arrogance is rejecting the truth and despising people.' Whoever looks at himself with an eye of veneration and at others with an eye of contempt is among the arrogant."[55]

Belittling others thus belongs to arrogance because it contains a sense of superiority over one's fellows; in social relations it creates distance, conflict, and the loss of mutual appreciation. In the school context, not belittling peers is highly relevant to an inclusive learning culture. Differences in academic ability, family background, or personality should not justify unequal treatment, since every student has potential that can develop in a supportive environment. Conversely, demeaning peers can be a factor in bullying. The bullying of a fifth-grade student at SD Ukhuwah Banjarmasin in February 2025 shows how low regard for fellow students can harm social life and the victim's psychological development.[56]

Honesty in Word and Deed

[53] 'Abdullah bin 'Alawi al-Haddad, *Risalat al-Mu'awanah wa al-Muzaharah wa al-Muwazarah*, ed. 'Ali Abu Bakr al-Saqqaf (Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyyah, 2010).
[54] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 338.
[55] al-Haddad, *Risalat al-Mu'awanah*, 122.
[56] Rizki, "Dugaan Bullying di Sekolah Islam di Banjarmasin."

Honesty (*sidq*) is one of the main values in forming a Muslim's character. As discussed above, al-Ghazali distinguishes truthfulness of the tongue (*sidq al-lisan*) from truthfulness in deeds (*sidq fi al-a'mal*), the latter meaning to strive "so that one's outward deeds do not indicate an inner quality that one does not actually possess."[57] Truthfulness of the tongue means that speech corresponds to reality, so that a person guards his or her words from lies, manipulation of information, and statements that harm others; truthfulness in deeds concerns the harmony of speech, action, and intention. This is in line with the Prophetic saying quoted by Abu al-Laits al-Samarqandi in *Tanbih al-Ghafilin*:

> قال رسول الله ﷺ: عليكم بالصدق، فإن الصدق يهدي إلى البر، وإن البر يهدي إلى الجنة، وما يزال الرجل يصدق ويتحرى الصدق حتى يكتب عند الله صديقا
>
> *"Hold fast to truthfulness, for truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise. A man continues to speak the truth and to seek truthfulness until he is recorded with God as a truthful one."*[58]

In school life, *sidq* is relevant to forming trustworthy and responsible students. Honesty is practiced through truthful communication, admitting mistakes, completing assignments independently, and avoiding cheating. Cheating is a form of dishonesty in deeds because it presents results that do not reflect one's actual ability and erodes trust in the educational environment. The KPK's 2024 SPI Education data show that 78 percent of schools still face cases of cheating.[59] This reflects the suboptimal internalization of honesty as part of noble character in academic settings. Cheating not only harms the student and deceives the teacher but also erodes trust among students. Al-Ghazali's concept of honesty is therefore highly relevant to building a school social life with integrity: truthfulness in speech fosters healthy communication, while truthfulness in deeds forms responsible and trustworthy individuals.

Based on the study of *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, this research finds that al-Ghazali's ethics of social interaction encompasses two main dimensions, summarized in Table 1. The first is students' conduct toward teachers, comprising concentration in learning, humility, respect, honoring the teacher as in the account of Zayd ibn Thabit and Ibn 'Abbas, and protecting the teacher's honor by refraining from backbiting. The second is conduct among students, comprising affection and brotherhood, the habit of greeting as a means of strengthening *ukhuwwah*, avoiding arrogance, not belittling peers, and honesty in word and deed.

[57] al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 2728, 2732.
[58] Abu al-Laits al-Samarqandi, *Tanbih al-Ghafilin* (Indonesia: Al-Haramain, n.d.), 63.
[59] Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi, "Temuan Hasil SPI Pendidikan 2024."

Table 1**.** Components of the Ethics of Social Interaction in School Life Based on Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din

Dimension	Form of Conduct	Al-Ghazali's Statement	Page in Ihya'
Students toward teachers	Concentrating while learning	أن يقلل علائقه من الاشتغال بالدنيا ...	84
	Humility	وينبغي أن يتواضع لمعلمه ...	84
	Respect	هكذا أمرنا أن ...	84
	Kissing the teacher's hand	فقبل زيد بن ثابت ...	84
	Not backbiting the teacher	وكان الصحابة ...	1598–1601
Among students	Mutual respect and affection	كما أن حق أبناء الرجل الواحد أن يتحابوا ...	93
	Exchanging greetings (*salam*)	كما أن حق أبناء الرجل الواحد أن يتحابوا ...	94
	Avoiding arrogance	أن لا يتكبر على العلم ...	84
	Not belittling peers	الكبر: هو استصغار الناس واحتقارهم ...	338
	Honesty in word and deed	صدق اللسان ... وصدق في الأعمال ...	2728; 2732

Source: Authors' analysis of Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din.

The novelty of this study lies in constructing al-Ghazali's moral concepts as a system of students' social ethics at school. It views *akhlaq* not merely as individual rules for acquiring knowledge but as values that shape patterns of social interaction, such as respect for teachers, appreciation of peers, careful communication, avoidance of social conflict, and a culture of trust in the educational environment. In addition, the study offers new relevance by connecting al-Ghazali's classical moral concepts to contemporary educational problems such as fading respect for teachers, bullying, demeaning peers, misuse of digital communication, and weak academic integrity. The concept of the ethics of social interaction in *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* thus has not only historical value in the Islamic educational tradition but also a practical contribution to building a harmonious and civilized school culture grounded in Islamic moral values.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the concept of the ethics of social interaction in al-Ghazali's *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* is strongly relevant to social life in schools in the Society 5.0 era. The moral values he teaches are not merely normative but remain contextual in responding to problems of social interaction in education, such as weak mutual respect, declining honesty, and widespread bullying. This relevance appears in the values governing students' relationships with teachers, namely earnestness in learning, humility, respect for teachers, honoring educators, and guarding the tongue from backbiting, and in relationships among students, namely mutual respect, exchanging greetings, avoiding arrogance, not belittling peers, and upholding honesty in word and deed. These principles can support a more conducive and character-oriented school social life.

The study implies that strengthening school social life in the Society 5.0 era requires not only the enforcement of school rules but also the internalization of Islamic values of social interaction through learning, teachers' role modeling, habituation, and school culture. Al-Ghazali's thought in *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* can therefore serve as a conceptual reference for developing character education in educational institutions. Future research is recommended to test the implementation of these values through field studies at various levels of education so that their relevance can be demonstrated empirically.

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