



## THE URGENCY OF THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD BASED ON AKIDAH AKHLAK LEARNING ACCORDING TO IMAM AL-GHAZALI'S PERSPECTIVE ON INCREASING STUDENT FAITH

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**Abstract:** *The Urgency of the Scientific Method Based on Akidah Akhlak Learning according to Imam Al-Ghazali's Perspective on Increasing Student Faith*

The religious life and faith of students in the context of *aqidah akhlak* learning are very important. This study aims to explain the urgency of the scientific method in increasing students' faith with a focus on Imam Al-Ghazali's perspective. This research uses the library research method. The data analysis used in this research is a literature review. The results explain Al-Ghazali's perspective on *aqidah*, the scientific method can help students develop a deeper understanding of *aqidah* through a rational and objective approach. The urgency of the scientific method in improving faith includes increasing understanding of religion, overcoming doubts, improving the quality of research, and improving the quality of teaching. The conclusion shows that the understanding of *aqidah* from the perspective of Imam Al-Ghazali emphasizes the importance of a correct understanding of *aqidah* as the foundation of a Muslim's life. The importance of the scientific method in faith enhancement lies in its ability to increase understanding of religion, overcome doubts and improve the quality of teaching.

**Keywords:** *Scientific method, Faith, Aqidah akhlak, Imam Al-Ghazali's perspective*

**Abstract:** *Urgensi Metode Ilmiah dalam Peningkatan Keimanan Mahasiswa pada Pembelajaran Aqidah: Tinjauan dalam Perspektif Imam Al-Ghazali.*

Kehidupan keagamaan dan keimanan mahasiswa dalam konteks pembelajaran *aqidah* merupakan hal yang sangat penting. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan urgensi metode ilmiah dalam meningkatkan keimanan mahasiswa dengan fokus pada perspektif Imam Al-Ghazali. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode *library research*. Analisis data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah literatur review. Hasil penelitian menerangkan perspektif Al-Ghazali mengenai *aqidah*, metode ilmiah dapat membantu mahasiswa mengembangkan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam terhadap *aqidah* melalui pendekatan rasional dan objektif. Urgensi metode ilmiah dalam meningkatkan keimanan meliputi meningkatkan pemahaman tentang agama, mengatasi keraguan, meningkatkan kualitas penelitian, serta meningkatkan kualitas pengajaran. Kesimpulan menunjukkan bahwa pemahaman *aqidah* dari perspektif Imam Al-Ghazali menekankan pentingnya pemahaman yang benar tentang *aqidah* sebagai landasan hidup seorang muslim. Urgensi metode ilmiah dalam peningkatan keimanan terletak pada kemampuannya untuk meningkatkan pemahaman tentang agama, mengatasi keraguan dan meningkatkan kualitas pengajaran.

**Kata Kunci:** *Metode Ilmiah, Keimanan, Pembelajaran Aqidah, Perspektif Imam Al-Ghazali*

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## A. INTRODUCTION

Education is a major pillar in building individuals, especially in the context of higher education. When students enter the academic world, they not only develop academic knowledge and skills but also experience a process of deep spiritual and intellectual growth (Bunyamin, 2017) argues that the religious life and faith of students in the context of aqidah akhlak learning is very important. In general, the purpose of aqidah itself is to become the basic foundation of a strong and true religion and also become the view of the life of its adherents. Strong faith can provide a moral foundation, ethics, and a deep perspective in facing the challenges of life.

In understanding aqidah in Islam, students are expected to explore fundamental aspects of their beliefs. (Sabila, 2019) argues that aqidah is the primary basis of Islamic belief which is the basis for a Muslim's life in every aspect, from shari'ah, morals, to tarbiyah. This is because humans were created to worship the Creator and Allah commands humans to give Him as the first thing. In addition, the pillars of faith are also an important part of aqidah. One of the effective ways of understanding aqidah is by using scientific methods that provide strong guidance.

According to Milasari et al., (2021), the scientific method is a process used to form science from pre-scientific knowledge in a systematic manner and following the principles of regulating normative technical procedures. The purpose of the scientific method itself is as a requirement for scientific validity or specificity, which is generally claimed as scientific validity that can be scientifically accounted for. In addition, the scientific method also brings a rational, analytical, and critical approach to religious concepts, thus allowing students to do deep thinking and critical thinking about aspects of aqidah.

This journal article will explain the urgency of the scientific method in improving students' faith, focusing on Imam al-Ghazali's perspective. The author will explore how the scientific method helps students understand and permeate the concepts of aqidah better, bringing them to a deeper and more convincing level of understanding. In the discussion of this article, we will detail the role of the scientific method in shaping the way students think, understand how this relates to the religious process, and what Imam al-Ghazali's perspective on aqidah is. Thus, this article will help to open up insights into how a scientific approach can enhance the faith of university students and provide a firmer foundation for their belief in Islamic aqidah..

## B. METHOD

This research was conducted from October to November 2023. The data collection method used is library research. Library research or library method is research conducted by reading books or journals with other data sources in the library. The data analysis used in this research is a literature review. A literature review can be interpreted as a systematic, explicit, and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing the works of research results and the results of thoughts that have been produced by researchers and practitioners.

The procedure or steps in this study is the first step, involving the identification of inclusion and exclusion criteria for the selection of literature relevant to aqidah and the scientific method, especially those related to Imam Al-Ghazali's views. In the second step, data will be collected from the literature that meets these criteria, and the relevant information will be analyzed in depth. Step three, through the analysis of the literature, this study will explore the relationship between the concept of aqidah and the application of the scientific method, detailing Imam Al-Ghazali's views as the theoretical basis. The results of this literature analysis will form the basis of the research and provide a deep insight into the urgency of the scientific method in increasing students' faith in learning aqidah, from the perspective taught by Imam Al-Ghazali..

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Imam Al-Ghazali

Imam Al-Ghazali, whose full name is Abu Hamid Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Muhammad Al-Ghazali Ath-Thusi An-Naysaburi Al-Faqih Ash-Shufi Asy-Syafi'I Al-Ashari, was given the title al-hujjah al-Islam Zaynuddin al-Thusi. The name Al-Ghazali itself comes from the village of Ghazalah in Khurasan, Iran, which is his birthplace. However, there is another opinion that states that Al-Ghazali comes from the word Ghazzal al-Shuf, which means wool yarn spinner, where the designation is his father's profession as a wool yarn spinner to make ends meet for his family. Therefore, the title Al-Ghazali comes from two Ghazala. In Western circles, Al-Ghazali is known as Al-Qazee.

Imam Al-Ghazali was born in the city of Thus, which is the second largest city after Naisabur in Khurasan, in 450 H/1058 AD. He was born into a Muslim family whose members were wool spinners. Later Imam Al-Ghazali was known as a philosopher, theologian, jurist, and Sufi. Al-Ghazali's father died when he was still a child, but before his father died, Al-Ghazali was entrusted to a friend of his father who was active in the field of Sufism. This is where Al-Ghazali got his first education. At the age of seven, Al-Ghazali studied Arabic, Persian, and religious principles. At the age of 15, Al-Ghazali moved to the city of Jurjan, which was 160 km away from Thus. The following year, Al-Ghazali returned to Thus, to memorize and understand what he had learned from his teachers. After that, he continued his education in Naisabur, which is one of the most important cities for the development of science in the Islamic world.

There Al-Ghazali met the great theologian and leader of the religious community known as imam al-Juwayni, or Al-Harayman of the Ash'ariyah school. At the age of 28, Al-Ghazali began to be actively involved in the government's political program. For six years he became one of the judges of the Saljuk Banu. During his time as a judge, Al-Ghazali was an active writer, and one of his most important works was al-Mustaziri and al-I'tiqad fi al-Iqtishad. After serving in the position for five years, from 1090 to 1095 AD, he resigned (Wahyudi, 2018). On Monday 14 Jumada al-Akil 505 AD / 1111 AD, Imam Al-Ghazali died when he was 55 years old. His body was then buried in Zhahir al-Thabiran, the capital of Thus.

Based on his life journey, al-Ghazali has produced more than 300 works covering the field of science, such as ayyuhal walad and ihya ulumuddin, and others. Al-Ghazali was a very productive Islamic scholar. In a relatively short period, about 55 years, he utilized this time to play an active role in society and write various scientific works that are very well known throughout the world, both in the West and in the East. His thoughts were also embraced by Western orientalists. Dozens of scientific works he wrote cover the virtues of knowledge in various scientific disciplines, such as philosophy, kalam, fiqh, usul fiqh, tafsir, Sufism, education, and so on (Mubarak, 2020).

### 2. Scientific Method and Aqidah Akhlak

#### a. Scientific Method

This method is the way scientists gain new knowledge correctly and update their previous knowledge. It consists of systematic observation, measurement, experimentation, and formulation of questions or hypotheses" (Tu et al., 2022). In this context, methods have the meaning of research, scientific method, and scientific review, which refers to a way of acting according to a certain system of rules. On the other hand, the methodology consists of the words method and logos, which means the science that discusses methods. Therefore, a method can be interpreted as a systematic process or procedure, based on scientific principles and techniques (Kafara, 2022). Mashuroh (I. P. Sari, Fitriani, & Ofianto, 2023) states that scientific methods are carried out by following predetermined procedures to answer questions faced by a scientist. And observation is the main key in formulating the problem.

From the perspective of positivism, the scientific approach has scientific attributes that include empirical, rational, and systematic aspects. The empirical aspect shows that all ideas and concepts come from experience, and truth can only be built on that experience. Therefore, empirical methods can be observed by humans, so that others can observe and learn from these experiences. Meanwhile, the rational aspect means that truth can be known through reason, so research activities must be carried out in a way that makes sense and can be understood by human reason. Meanwhile, the systematic aspect means that a process must be carried out by established or agreed procedures.

In this case, the meaning of the scientific method itself is a system and approach that regulates knowledge about natural and social phenomena. Research is a conscious effort accompanied by deliberation to understand these phenomena based on scientific methods from relevant disciplines. According to (Sholihah, 2020), the components of scientific truth include the rules of induction logic (empirical) and deduction logic (theoretical), which are used to test the truth of scientific theories together. To find new principles or new things contained behind the meaning of these phenomena.

From the definition of the scientific method presented, a common thread can be drawn that the scientific method is a systematic and organized approach to research and problem-solving, based on scientific principles. It includes three important elements. First, the origin of the word "method" from Greek which describes an organized way of acting and certain rules. Second, the characteristics of the scientific method involve empirical elements, which are based on experience and observation, rationality, with research to be conducted reasonably and a systematic approach that follows established procedures. Observation also plays a key role in formulating problems and carrying out the scientific method. In addition, the scientific method combines the logical rules of induction and deduction to test and develop scientific theories, thus helping in the discovery of new principles or things underlying natural and social phenomena. Overall, the scientific method is an important foundation for the development of knowledge and understanding across a range of disciplines, enabling scientists to answer questions and understand the world around us.

#### b. Aqidah

The word *aqidah* comes from Arabic, to be precise, "*aqada*" which means bond, or in this context refers to something that is believed and determined by the human heart and feelings (conscience) (Sabila, 2019). On the other hand, terminologically, *aqidah* is something strong and deep that is embedded in a person's soul and cannot be moved or replaced. Therefore, when someone has faith in his heart, he will indirectly form a bond of faith within himself. This has a huge impact on every aspect of his life because in the process (actions and words) he does reflect his beliefs.

*Aqidah* is a fundamental principle that connects and determines all aspects of religious judgment. If it is interpreted as a fundamental principle of something and causes a reaction, then in this case *aqidah* can be interpreted as an Islamic worldview. This fundamental principle is built into the mind and heart of every Muslim and gives a certain picture of his existence.

*Aqidah* can also be referred to as a collection of beliefs and the things behind them. Therefore, belief in faith affects all actions.

According to Shaykhul Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (Sabila, 2019), *aqidah* is considered something that must be believed in the heart to give the soul peace, strong confidence, and stability without doubt or worry. The heart is an element that must be contained in faith. It is not enough to follow physically if it is not balanced with heart belief. Not only that, it will affect mental calmness. Because in the hearts of believers, there is tenderness of the soul.

So, the author concludes that *aqidah* is a fundamental belief in Islam, which refers to a person's understanding and belief in the basic principles of Islam. This includes belief in Allah, prophets, scriptures, the Day of Judgment, destiny, and other important elements in Islam.

Aqidah is the core of a Muslim's faith, which must be firmly embedded in their hearts and minds, influencing their worldview and daily actions. In other words, aqidah is the foundation of belief that guides an individual's religious life and practice in Islam..

### 3. Understanding Aqidah from Imam Al-Ghazali's Perspective and its Relationship to the Urgency of the Scientific Method

Al-Ghazali is a great Islamic figure who has a high intellectual spirit, always wants to know about everything, and studies various scientific fields. His deep love for science made him an expert in many fields and one of the most influential Islamic figures in Islamic history. His contribution to the development of Islamic science is reflected in his many contributions and writings that discuss aqidah. As an Islamic figure, Al-Ghazali also took part in strengthening the aqidah system in Islam. However, some criticize his aqidah teachings because they are considered to have similarities with the moral teachings of Greek philosophers, including Plato and Aristotle, and also previous Muslim scholars (Farhani, 2019).

According to (Sabila, 2019) aqidah is the foundation of a Muslim's life and is the basis for all aspects of life, including sharia, morals, and tarbiyah (education). Al-Ghazali's approach to aqidah is based on the integration of aqidah and morals. He believes that aqidah and morals are interconnected and a correct understanding of aqidah will produce good morals. According to (M. Sari, 2022) Al-Ghazali's concept of aqidah is based on the Al-Quran and Sunnah. He believes that the Qur'an and Sunnah are the main roots of aqidah and should be the basis of all discussions about aqidah. As found in QS. An-Nisa: 59:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا ٥٩

*Meaning: O you who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. And if you differ in any matter, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best [method] and the best result.*

In the thought of Al-Ghazali, who was a renowned Islamic scholar, the concept of aqidah must be grounded in the primary sources of Islam, namely the Qur'an and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad. This verse emphasizes important principles in Islam relating to belief (aqidah) in religion. First of all, the verse begins by commanding obedience to Allah and His Messenger, which in this case refers to the Qur'an and Sunnah. Al-Ghazali supports this principle and emphasizes the importance of understanding and following the teachings of Allah and the Prophet as the primary basis of belief.

Furthermore, this verse guides how to resolve disputes or differences of opinion in religious matters. Disputes should be resolved by referring to Allah and His Messenger, i.e. by referring to the Qur'an and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad. This is to Al-Ghazali's principle that the Qur'an and Sunnah should be the primary basis for discussion and resolution of disputes relating to aqidah. Finally, the verse emphasizes that these steps should be taken by someone who "truly believes in Allah and the Last Day". This reflects Al-Ghazali's concept that aqidah should be based on firm faith and belief in the teachings of Islam in preparation for this world and the hereafter. Therefore, this verse supports Al-Ghazali's view of aqidah being based on the Qur'an and Sunnah, and the importance of referring to these primary sources in overcoming differences of opinion and building a strong belief in Islam.

According (M. Sari, 2022), argues that Al-Ghazali's approach to aqidah was influenced by his background as a philosopher and Sufi. He believed that a correct understanding of aqidah requires intellectual and spiritual development. Al-Ghazali built a conception of aqidah that has religious, rational, and Sufistic-intuitive elements. In addition, the concept shows diversity because Al-Ghazali studied various sources (Farhani, 2019).

Therefore, a common thread can be drawn that in Al-Ghazali's perspective on aqidah, the scientific method can help students develop a deeper understanding of aqidah through a rational and objective approach. By using the scientific method, students can conduct research, analysis, and criticism of various views, including Al-Ghazali's views, and still adhere to the principles of Islamic teachings.

In this case, the scientific method can also help students understand and apply Islamic teachings in the context of the present and the complexity of modern society. Thus, students not only have a strong belief, but also have a more mature understanding of aqidah by the demands of the times. This can be combined with intellectual and spiritual aspects, as applied by Al-Ghazali, and can also be part of a scientific method that involves holistic learning. Therefore, students can strengthen their faith not only through intellectual aspects, but also through spiritual experiences and daily life practices.

#### **4. Urgency of Scientific Method in Faith Enhancement**

According to (Nasrullah, 2022) the scientific method is a systematic approach used to gain knowledge and solve problems by observing, formulating hypotheses, testing hypotheses, and drawing conclusions based on the data obtained. In understanding religion and increasing faith, proof is needed through observation of an event. Therefore, the scientific method used in the natural world also applies to the study of religion. Here is the urgency of the scientific method in increasing faith:

##### **a. Increase understanding of religion**

According to (Ramadhani, Fitria, & Kurniawan, 2021) By using the scientific method, one can study religion more deeply and objectively. This can help improve understanding of religious teachings and strengthen belief in Islamic aqidah. The scientific method can help students study religion systematically and logically so that they can understand religious concepts better.

##### **b. Overcoming doubts**

The scientific method can help a person overcome doubts or uncertainties about religious teachings. By making observations and testing, a person can obtain evidence that can strengthen their belief in religious teachings (Hidayatullah, 2019). In this context, observation and testing can be done by studying scriptures, observing natural phenomena, and studying religious history. By making observations and tests, one can obtain evidence that can strengthen their belief in religious teachings. However, it is important to remember that the scientific method cannot be used to prove the existence of Allah Swt. or the absolute truth of religious teachings. This is because Allah Swt. and religious teachings are metaphysical and cannot be tested empirically. Therefore, the scientific method can only help one to gain a better understanding of religious teachings and overcome any doubts or uncertainties that may exist.

##### **c. Improving the quality of research**

The scientific method can also be used in research on religion. By using the scientific method, research can be conducted systematically and objectively, so that the results of the research become more accurate and accountable.

##### **d. Improving the quality of teaching**

According to (Add, 2014) in his book reveals that the scientific method can be used by lecturers in teaching religion. By using the scientific method, lecturers can teach religious teachings systematically and objectively, so that students can understand religious teachings better. The scientific method can help lecturers design effective and enjoyable learning, as well as improve the ability of lecturers to implement learning by the characteristics of their students.

## 5. Application of the Scientific Method in Aqidah Akhlak Learning

The application of the scientific method in teaching Aqidah involves the use of observation and experimentation to obtain data (Cahya, 2021). The use of appropriate teaching methods is also important in improving students' understanding and character in Aqidah. Here are some examples of research on the application of scientific methods and teaching methods in Aqidah:

### a. Scientific approach

According to (Cahya, 2021) this scientific approach is based on data obtained through observation or experimentation. Aqidah can be applied by encouraging students to ask questions, make hypotheses, and test their ideas through research and analysis.

### b. Discussion method

This method involves group discussions where students can share ideas and opinions on a particular topic. It can be used to teach Aqidah by encouraging students to discuss and debate different interpretations of religious texts and beliefs (Lumajang, 2022).

### c. Lecture method

This method involves a teacher presenting information to students in a lecture format. It can be used to teach Aqidah by providing students with a comprehensive overview of religious concepts and beliefs.

### d. Peer tutor method

According to (Nurjanah, Yahdiyani, & Wahyuni, 2020) this method involves students teaching and helping each other. It can be used to teach Aqidah by pairing students with different levels of knowledge and encouraging them to work together to understand and apply religious concepts.

## D. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the understanding of aqidah from the perspective of Imam Al-Ghazali emphasizes the importance of a correct understanding of aqidah as the foundation of a Muslim's life. Al-Ghazali states that aqidah and morals are interconnected, and a correct understanding of aqidah will produce good morals. This integration of aqidah and morals is based on the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, which Al-Ghazali believed to be the main sources of aqidah. Although there are criticisms of Al-Ghazali's concept of aqidah which has similarities with the moral teachings of Greek philosophers, it is important to understand that Al-Ghazali has a major contribution to the development of Islamic science.

In addition, the urgency of the scientific method in the enhancement of faith lies in its ability to improve understanding of religion, overcome doubts, improve the quality of research, and improve the quality of teaching. The scientific method can be used in aqidah akhlak learning by applying the scientific approach, discussion method, lecture method, peer tutor method, and team quiz method. By applying scientific methods in the aqidah akhlak learning process, students can improve their understanding of religious concepts and beliefs, and strengthen their faith.

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