

## **The Relevance of Al-Ghazali's Educational Views to the Contemporary System of Muslim education: Focus on Islamic Education in Uganda**

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### **Abstract**

*Imam Al-Ghazali used a combination of the wisdom, exposure and experience he had acquired while running the Nizamiyyah colleges to contribute to the core of the theory knowledge, education and Islamic sciences. His ideas suggest that God is the primary source of knowledge and sense alone cannot deliver one to the ultimate truth. He categorised knowledge according to the needs of the society. Knowledge according to him should shape an individual and help him/her to interact with the creator and with the other existents. Knowledge should affect body and soul, mind and heart and ultimately deliver one to happiness here and in the hereafter. His views on the core values of Islam affecting both individuals and society can be employed in determining and redefining the philosophy of knowledge in our contemporary world. The brief on the philosophy of knowledge reflected in here as well as the method of teaching and instruction especially in the Islamic institutions is drawn from Al-Ghazali's rich reservoir of experience. This literature can be used to develop teaching and learning models and policies in developing Islamic academic institutions especially in Uganda.*

*Keywords:* knowledge, ilm, education, Al-Ghazali, epistemology

Abū Hāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Al-Ghazali (1058-1111), was exceptionally one of the greatest Islamic and Muslim theologians, jurists and mystical thinkers of his time. He studied a variety of subsidiary disciplines of traditional Islamic religious sciences in Tus his home town, Gurgan and Nishapur in the northern part of Iran (Nofal, 1993). He was also deeply immersed in mystic (*Sufi*) practices from rather an early stage while he was still a young and an energetic man. The fact that he was identified and acknowledged by the *Nizam al-Mulk*, vizier of the Turkic Seljuq sultan Alp Arslan, is how he scooped an appointment as the principal leader of the *Nizamiyyah* College at Baghdad in AH 484/ AD 1091 (Al-Ghazali, 1962). He used his status of being the intellectual head of the Islamic community not only to instruct and teach Islamic sciences for instance jurisprudence and *sufism*, but he also used the privileges of his position to refute divergencies, heresies, blasphemy, and to answer Islamic related questions from several parts of the community and also to issue Islamic juristic verdicts. A few years after, he migrated from Baghdad to Syria because of the spiritual conflict and crisis he encountered, that, is how he renounced his career and the world affairs for two years, wandering in Syria and Palestine and also used this time to perform his pilgrimage to Mecca. On his return back to Tus, he started writing again, continued with his mystic (*Sufi*) practices and lectured his

disciples until his death. Meanwhile, towards the end of his career, he resumed teaching for a few years at the *Nizamiyyah* College in Nishapur (Ormsby, 2007).

Al-Ghazali clarified and justified in his autobiography (*Munqidh mina Dhalal*) [The Deliverer from Error] why he surrendered his promising journey for mysticism. It is strongly argued that Al-Ghazali was convinced that knowledge (*ilm*) most especially revelatory truth cannot be achieved or realized except through *sufism* (Al-Ghazali, 2005).

He studied, comprehended and mastered philosophy writing his treatise "The intentions of philosophers" (*maqasid al-falasifa*) and then critiqued some of the philosophical ideas that he was himself uncomfortable with in order to Islamize the discipline in his legendary work "The incoherence of philosophers" (*Tahaafut al-falasifa*). After this endeavor he philosophized not only Islamic theology but also *sufism*. Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali was taught by Imam al-Haramayn al-Juwayni (Treiger, 2012).

Al-Ghazali's deep inner growth and development that later led to his shift is clearly elaborated in his autobiography, *Al-Munqidh Min Al-Dalal*, one of his final pieces. He explained that he was fond of looking and searching for truth and was passionate about knowing the true reality of phenomena, facts and events. In his deliberations and processes of searching for truth he came to question the validity and reliability of senses and even reason itself as the means to reach 'certainty of knowledge'. This led him into a deep skepticism. He, however survived this doubt and re-acquired the trust and belief in rationalism. Using reason, he then set out to assess and analyse the teachings of 'the seekers after truth': the *mutakallimun* (theologians), *faylasufiyyin* (philosophers), Isma'ilis, Shi'as and *mutasawwifin* (*Sufis*). It was due to these intensive and rigorous studies that he came to the realization that there was no way to certainty of knowledge and truth except through *tasawwuf* (*Sufism*). He claimed that in order to reach this ultimate truth of the Sufis, however, it was first necessary to renounce the world and to devote oneself to mystical practice. Al-Ghazali came to this realization through an agonizing process of decision, which led to a nervous breakdown and finally to his departure from Baghdad.

The illustrative disposition of al-Ghazali's *al-Munqidh* has enabled diverse interpretations, but it is irrelevant to examine the main line of the story. Though certainty of knowledge is greatly expounded in *al-Munqidh* as something logically necessary, it is also religious conviction, (*yaqin*), prayer and to understand that ultimately Allah is the source of Knowledge and wisdom as mentioned in the *Ihya' 'ulum al-din* (The Revival of the Religious Sciences) (Al-Ghazali, 1983).

Al-Ghazali's life has been elaborated majorly as the growth, development and creation of his individual personality. However, since the 1950s there has appeared contemporary endeavours to make sense and establish Al-Ghazali's life in its wider spectrum of social, political and historical context (Al-Ghazali, 2005). Should his religious confession be accepted as sincere, then we must be careful not to trim Al-Ghazali's thought and work entirely to non-religious factors. It may

well be that al-Ghazali's transformation from the life of a scholar of orthodox traditional Islamic sciences to *Sufism* was not merely the outcome of his personal development but also a manifestation of a new stage in the understanding of faith in the historical development of Islam, from the traditional form of faith expressed in the effort to establish the kingdom of God on Earth through the *shari'ah* to a faith expressed as direct communion with God in Sufi mystical experience. This may be a reflection of a development in which the former type of faith had lost its relevance and become a mere formality due to the political and social confusion of the community. Basing on the changes that Al-Ghazali experienced in his life, he was convinced that the only way to attain truth in religious sciences was through *sufism*. He thus dedicated himself and wrote various works on the revival of Islamic sciences using mysticism, while at the same time arguing for the official recognition of the latter and providing it with solid philosophical foundations.

In his theological manifestations, Al-Ghazali dedicated mainly two treatises on theology, *al-Risala al-Qudsiyya* (The Jerusalem Epistle) and *al-Iqtisad fi al-Ittiqad* (The Middle Path in Theology). The theological deliberations expounded in the two treatises are majorly of the Ash'arite school of thought, and there is no fundamental variance between al-Ghazali and the Ash'arite school of theology. However, he made certain upgrades in his theological deliberations and this is visible in his later treatises which he made under the the influence of Sufism and philosophy.

Al-Ghazali's reputation and legacy proceeded him. He inspired many Muslim scholars, in the fields of *kalam*, philosophy and general Islamic thought for instance Suhrawardi, Mulla Sadra and his direct student Mulla Muhsin Fayd who gave Al Ghazali's magnum opus (*Ihya uluum ddiin*) a *shia* twist composing the revival of the revival (*ihya' al-ihya'*) (Hasr & Aminrazavi, 2010).

Kiyimba (1986) argues that the education of Muslims in Uganda both secular and theology was greatly affected by colonial masters. Parents feared taking their children to school because of the threat of being converted to Christianity (Musisi & Kiggundu, 2019). Throughout history, Islamic education has been conducted in such a way that it has been transmitted through oral tradition, memorisation especially of the Qur'an and the traditions of the prophet, morals and history. There has always been a line drawn to differentiate between worldly knowledge and revealed knowledge creating groups of Muslims, the elites who know little or nothing about Islam and the sheikhs who no little or nothing about other sciences like psychology, philosophy, sociology, biology and the rest (Syah, 2016).

### **Methodology**

The method employed in this study is purely desk research in which secondary data as well as Al-Ghazali's medieval works, revised editions and biographies are carefully analysed in comparison to classical and contemporary publications especially educational policies and goals. This method is used in

order to provide an in-depth interrogation of the methods and aims of education of our current times.

### **Al-Ghazali's View of Curriculum**

Al-Ghazali institutionalized the colleges so much that variation in methodology of instruction and assessment were evident. Lectures were conducted, learner-instructor interaction was highly emphasized, the colleges were built on a very strong foundation where learners were tasked to visit and read books recommended by facilitators and sometimes the libraries would lend books to learners since by this time there was a proper catalogue system (Ibn-Jubayr, 1900). Most of these libraries however were owned by notable scholars of great prominence and reputation who often permitted their learners to read, write and copy books and at some point, some of the teaching- learning sessions would be conducted from there (Al-Ghazali, 2005).

Al-Ghazali's policy was also designed in such a way that it would accommodate both the formal regular learners and the informal irregular learners most especially when learning took place in mosques. The later would receive their brief lectures in the mosques as they proceeded with their errands and journeys. Even the regular students were at liberty to choose instructors that were fitting for the learners' objectives to seek for knowledge (Isiri, 1985).

Before the Nizamiyyah colleges, in the Muslim world, most of the teaching was more of elementary learning known as *kuttub*, or the learning circles in the mosques known as *halaqa*. This kind of learning was informal and focused on the fundamental basics of Islam like prayer, fasting, Qur'an memorization, Islamic culture and morality. It however never tackled the depth of other vital issues for instance medicine, philosophy, logic nor any kind of scholarly and advanced knowledge. The introduction of the colleges by Nizam al-Muluk gave birth to a more formal comprehensive and advanced approach of knowledge, education and learning. This was known as *Madrasa* (Al-Hasani, 2019). This system of *Madrasa* was to influence education not only in the Muslim world but also in the Western worlds for centuries (Mushtaq, Sadiq, & Ijaz, 2014).

It is in these colleges that education was departmentalized by Al-Ghazali into theology which included hadith sciences, Islamic history, Quran sciences, and Islamic schools of thought; sciences like math, physics, alchemy, astronomy, philosophy logic; and humanities like poetry, music, art, literature and languages among others. Each department had special professors assigned to it and would meet the large classes for lectures. The relationship between the instructors and learners was so close and friendly. Once the professors were convinced that a particular learner was ready and satisfied them up to a certain level, then real academic awards would be conferred to the graduates in form of diplomas, degrees, certificates which were known as *ijaaza*. This gave powers to the graduates to disseminate knowledge thereafter (Ahmad, Hifazatullah, & Rahman, 2012). Al-Ghazali paid special attention to religious sciences which he considered more essential in the life of every Muslim and he felt they should be given the first priority during the early stages of childhood (Nofal, 1993). He believed that

the education of morals and religion would give shape to an individual in preparation for the rest of the disciplines.

### **Al-Ghazali's Philosophy of Knowledge**

Al-Ghazali's thought on knowledge in particular and education in general, after centuries remains relevant to contemporary education trends as well as towards the thought of knowledge. This is evident since he made major contributions to the cleansing of both speculative and philosophical thought. He played a very instrumental role in transforming the traditional religious sciences for logical rational, scientific and spiritual disciplines. His ideas and teachings have served to inspire the spiritual and intellectual lives of successive generations of humanity.

Al-Ghazali considers the one who takes charge of instructions of the minors to have undertaken a very great responsibility. Once the teacher accepts to take on this noble responsibility, he must focus on the morals of the young ones and treat them as his own biological children (Al-Ghazali, 1951).

Aman (2017) argues that Al-Ghazali believed that a proper education system based on sound values and sure knowledge should change and develop an individual's personality, build character and attitude. From this aspect, knowledge should therefore help mankind to realize and acknowledge his purpose to self, surrounding and environment since he is God's vicegerent on earth *وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ* "...And makes you (Khulafa') inheritors of the earth" (Surat Naml 27:62). This system and patterns of knowledge should thus promote the relationship between man and his creator and also improve on the progress and success of the entire community.

Al-Ghazali emphasized on co-curricular activities. Endless studying leads to boredom, kills creativity abilities. Children must play to prevent dullness, diminution in intelligence and unhappiness (Al-Ghazali, 1962), thus, knowledge should build character of the body and soul, mind and heart and should ultimately lead to the attainment of happiness (*as'aada*) here and in the hereafter.

Al-Ghazali's philosophy of knowledge and education is rooted both from the Islamic sources that is the Qur'an and Sunnah as well as his gigantic reservoirs of experience he accumulated during his lifetime career as both a teacher and a Muslim philosopher. For him, the main aim of education is to improve and build a connection with the Creator and also build holistic character of an individual ready to live amongst other existents. Therefore, the sources of knowledge cannot be limited to only human senses but also to revelatory sources, which was evident in his approach especially when he fused this with Islamic mysticism (*at-tassawuf*) as well as Avicenna's philosophy.

According to him, Allah has elevated the status of the knowledgeable in all ways. He for instance, refers to numerous verses in the Qur'an as well as prophetic traditions. Allah says in the Qur'an;

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

“...Are those who know equal to those who know not? It is only men of understanding who will remember” (Surat Zumar 39:12).

According to him all knowledge is relevant, therefore, the curriculum must be comprising of both divine as well as worldly knowledge, this in a way will help to achieve success in building a humble, moral and ethical character through values like obedience, self-reliance, humility, civility, simplicity etcetera.

It should enable an individual to distinguish evil from righteousness (Mirza, 2017 ).

For Al-Ghazali, knowledge generated by senses without the guidance of religion cannot lead to the reality, truth and happiness. The senses of a human being merely play an initiation role and act as an orientation in the process of perception and understanding as well as gathering information and facts which later facilitates basic knowledge. They prepare for cognition to be introduced to the mind. One's soul or spirit plays a very great and important role in the cognition. Man's intellect by itself is not sufficient for knowledge or learning to take place. A combination of belief/Faith and logic/reason or intellect leads man to have a proper perception of phenomena and events. The erroneous nature innate in our senses and limited ability cannot deliver human intellect to reality and truth without the divine guidance.

This is not so far away from the Christian perspective as presented by Augustine. While exploring the relationship between faith and reason, Augustine with reference to idiosyncrasies insisted that faith must precede understanding. For understanding is usually the result and simultaneously the reward of faith, therefore, he thus discouraged seeking to understand in order to believe, and rather instead, he encouraged believing in order for one to attain an understanding (Matthews, 1998).

Al-Ghazali also contributed to statement of the major aims of education for instance character formation, moral development, societal development and human livelihood (Sheikh & Ali, 2019), thus to him knowledge rests potentially in the human soul and mind like the seed in the soil; by acquiring knowledge, the potential becomes actual.

### **The Nature of Knowledge according to Al-Ghazali**

In his magnum opus ‘*Al-Ihya' Uluum Ddiin*’, Al-Ghazali perceives knowledge in different angles, sometimes as a possibility to remember facts and information, as a process of searching for information, as an image or imagination or vision of reality and as ability to have certainty about facts of everything. He defined knowledge as faith and that knowledge is the perception (*tasawwur*) of things through in-depth and exhaustive understanding (*tahaqquq*) of quiddity and definition and apperception (*tasdiq*) with regard to them through pure, verified (*muhaqqaq*) certainty.

He further categorises knowledge in terms of human actions. He for instance distinguishes individual knowledge (*ilm ayn*) from specialised or public knowledge (*ilm kifa'i*). He argues that individual knowledge is the kind that is used by an individual person to worship his God and to live harmoniously in the

community hence every person has to acquire this type of knowledge and it is obligatory knowledge for every individual person.

Then specialised knowledge, is not necessarily for everyone, one person or a few individuals can acquire that kind of knowledge on behalf of the community, however if the entire community neglects specialized knowledge, then it is headed to destruction. For example, not everyone in the community has to be a medical or veterinary doctor, nor engineer or plumber; one or two specialists are enough for a small community given the ratio of the population. He also differentiates knowledge (*ilm*) from wisdom (*hikmah*). Allah narrates how he granted Daud and Sulaiman ilm *وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُودَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ عِلْمًا* “*And indeed We gave knowledge to Dawud and Sulayman...*” (*surat Naml 27:15*) but he also talks about the wisdom he granted Lukman *وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ* “*And indeed We bestowed upon Luqman Al-Hikmah...*” (*Surat Luqman 31:12*).

For Al-Ghazali (1983), wisdom is deeper than knowledge although the latter lays a foundation for proper understanding through basic facts and hence the beginning of contemplation. He in the same treatise perceives knowledge as a source of reward in the hereafter, Allah says in the Qur'an:

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

“...Allah will exalt in degrees those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge. And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do.” *Surat al-Mujadila 58:11*

According to Al-Ghazali, all forms of knowledge are beneficial and it is the responsibility of man to find use in whatever knowledge they are exposed to. This will enable man to manipulate the knowledge for survival and also to earn the pleasure of the almighty Allah.

### Sources of Knowledge According to Al-Ghazali

For Al-Ghazali, God is the primary source of all knowledge. One cannot therefore separate knowledge from God since it is also one of his attributes. Therefore, the primary source of knowledge for a Muslim is the holy Qur'an and the tradition of the prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). Then the basic knowledge can be generated from the senses, instincts and intuition, and experience. Al-Ghazali insists that one of the most effective methods of harnessing deep knowledge is through mysticism because it can lead to a deeper understanding of revelatory truth. The messenger of Allah, Muhammad (ﷺ) always prayed and asked God to increase him in knowledge as the Qur'an indicates: ﴿وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا﴾

“...and say: "My Lord! Increase me in knowledge." (*Surat Twaha 20:114*). This is one of the ways of acknowledgement of the original and primary source of knowledge and also one of the divine mystic ways of acquisition of knowledge. In chapter 18 of the Qur'an, *surat Kahf*, Musa (A.S), was asked by the children of Israel on who was the most knowledgeable. He attributed the honour to himself without recognising Allah as the All Knower, All Hearer, All Seer (*Aalim al-Ghaib*), then Allah proved him wrong. Therefore, the Islamic epistemological

approach should be such that all knowledge is attributed to Allah and all forms of knowledge should act as signs (*ayat*) that lead someone to appreciate and accept or believe in the existence of God. From the Islamic tauheedic perspective, knowledge is a constant and not a variable implying that *ilm* always has to be true, because the major source of it is constantly true and that is Allah, that is why He is *Al-Haqq*, The Truth.

Besides *ilm*, Al-Ghazali also perceives Allah as the source of wisdom and intelligence, where he separated the two. He also encouraged that wisdom (Hikmah) be sought from the primary source.

﴿يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ﴾

*“He grants Hikmah to whom He wills, and he, to whom Hikmah is granted, is indeed granted abundant good. But none remember (will receive admonition) except men of understanding”* (Surat al Baqarah 2:269).

Therefore, in both *Ayyuha al-Walad* (Dear Son) and ‘The book of Knowledge’, Imam Al-Ghazali (1951; 1962) encourages praying for both knowledge and wisdom, because knowledge without wisdom may be misapplied. This is also consistent with the prophetic teachings for instance Ibn `Abbas narrated that Once the Prophet (ﷺ) embraced him (pressed him to his chest) and said, "O Allah, teach him wisdom" "اللَّهُمَّ عَلِّمَهُ الْحِكْمَةَ" (Sahih al-Bukhari 3756).

### **Methods of Acquisition and Retention of Knowledge**

Having appreciated that knowledge is majorly divinely controlled, Al-Ghazali emphasized in his *Ihya Uluum Ddiin* that knowledge should be acquired from the major source. He encouraged praying to the almighty for wisdom because as a mystical thinker, introspection comes with intuitive knowledge, thus the internal processes of analysing and digesting the information gathered by the senses of the body need the guidance and intervention from the almighty (Al-Ghazali, 1962).

The method used by the instructor should lead and enable the learners to think critically, ask more relevant questions and equip learners with problem solving abilities. Al-Ghazali discouraged blind following from both the teachers and learners. He was against the acquisition of knowledge through imitation without criticism. Neither did he nullify or negate the epistemological culture of imitation from parents and rote learning from teachers, Al-Ghazali rather emphasized the application of instruments of correct thinking so as to purify knowledge acquired through wrong or inappropriate method from errors, hence such knowledge can be accepted. He defined the role of doubt by saying,

*“doubts are the things that lead to right; he who does not doubt had not looked, and he who does not look did not see, and he who does not see remains all his life in blindness and ignorance”* (Al-Ghazali, 1995).

For the learner, his/her role is to fully attend to the lessons, respect the teacher, and fear Allah through constant prayer. The learner has to be enthusiastic and curious and should always ask relevant questions to the teacher (Al-



Ghazali, 1951). In this letter-like treatise, Al-Ghazali dedicated to one of his extraordinary students to help him improve on self-character in order to attain happiness in this world and in the hereafter. *Ayyuhal al-Walad* therefore remains a must read for all the enthusiastic and curious seekers of knowledge for guidance.

For his disciples, he discouraged them from belonging to specific dogmas and from being indoctrinated again revealing the importance of reason, and not to be too blind to imitate a leader who has gone astray but instead to guide to the right way. He encouraged them to have an independent mind to distinguish between right and wrong and to never blindly follow nor be overwhelmed by the wicked, tyrant leaders and dogmatic teachers (Al-Ghazali, 1995).

Al-Ghazali further discouraged his learners from memorization and rote learning without critically thinking about the content and being inquisitive (Al-Ghazali, 1951). Therefore, the teacher has to ensure that Bloom's taxonomy and levels have been realized, all cognitive faculties explored and efficiently utilized right from knowledge level to application, evaluation and synthesis. According to (Al-Ghazali, 1962), the spiritual aspect as well as the psychomotor domains have to be fully catered for.

### **Theories of Knowledge**

Al-Ghazali's approach to education combined many medieval, classical and contemporary theories of both knowledge and education, for instance he never underestimated the experiences of learners, and his approach was rather tilted towards constructivism where a teacher is more of a facilitator who helps the learners organise and put together the bits and pieces of information building a meaningful whole hence useful knowledge. He was opposed to the notion of *tabula rasa* thus, to him, a teacher is a supreme guide, mentor, role model, facilitator and a channel through which knowledge passes onto the learner (Al-Ghazali, 1951). Al-Ghazali gave great importance to teachers as he emphasized on the respect that should be rendered to them. The teacher should guide the learners and conduct counselling sessions, should help learners to find new knowledge by facilitating and stimulating their internal motivators (Soussi, 2016).

The criticisms on al-Ghazali's approach towards epistemology have always arisen on grounds of applicability in the contemporary situations in the fields of education. However, the practicability of Al-Ghazali's philosophy and ideas is highly reflected in his management and running of the *Nizamiyyah* colleges, whereas they may not have followed the contemporary structures but the rich ideas can still be carefully applied.

### **The Relevance of Al-Ghazali's Views to the Islamic Religious Education System in Uganda**

The curriculum of Islam in the secondary schools of Uganda is built on Western education philosophy, this reality applies to both ordinary and advanced levels of education at high school (NCDC, 2008) and the same is not so different from theological institutions in Uganda. According to Kiyimba (1986), he seems

to allude to an understanding that to a great extent education in Uganda generally is buttressed from the British colonial values (Syah, 2016).

Although the general objective of the government was to introduce the streamlined instruction of the Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in the 1970s, like many subjects, it did not survive Western education values. Practically the mode of instruction of IRE may only enable learners acquire a handful of values and majorly focus on passing exams. The method of instruction is usually pivoting on exams question approach even at advanced level. The approach is more theoretical than practical. The quickest example is on the paper of Qur'an where a few short chapters are taught and the mode of instruction imparts less of the very values of the Qur'an and ethos of the revelation of Islam to humanity.

On the side of theological institutions in Uganda, there is no unanimously agreeable body that governs the development and implementation of a single curriculum or syllabus (Kiyimba, 1986). The tenth objective of Uganda Muslim Education Association UMEA is: To improve the quality of teaching in Quran schools and Islamic Institutes by providing a unified curriculum, appropriate text books and instructional materials, joint examinations and improvement of the quality of teachers through special training and providing support supervision to the schools (UMEA, 2015). However, stakeholders seem to be divided alongside tribal lines, political and ideological affiliations as well as selfish individual interests. This therefore leaves a huge gap of guidance on exactly what needs to be followed in terms of curriculum and instruction of Islamic-related courses.

Thus, Al-Ghazali's pragmatic approach can be carefully borrowed, polished and tailored to fit in the latest technological and information age to enrich the methods of instruction used in delivering Islamic related courses in Ugandan institutions of learning. These may include Islamization of knowledge as also suggested by (Lujja, Muhammed, & Hassan, 2016); and redefining the aims, goals, objectives, mission and vision of the Islamic studies curriculum at all levels such that it rhymes with the needs of the contemporary times (Syah, 2016). This can also be achieved through the use of modern Information communication Technologies and also enabling the learners to develop critical thinking abilities (Lubis, Yunus, Lampoh, & Ishak, 2010).

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Al-Ghazali's Tauheedic approach towards knowledge and education is still relevant and the literature about the philosophy of knowledge and values of education can still be used while designing the curriculum as well as the mode of instruction not only in Islamic studies-related courses but education in general. Al-Ghazali's philosophy of knowledge resides in acknowledgement of Allah as the supreme source of knowledge and wisdom.

The aims of education in Islamic institutes should be tailored to build a holistic human being ready to serve the creator and live harmoniously amongst other existents. This can be achieved through integration of knowledge and ensuring that learners receive a value loaded package in terms of skills, problem solving abilities, morality and spirituality. From Al-Ghazali's experience the

products of our education system should be equipped with adequate capacity to address the challenges of their respective societies hence in the process of developing and designing our curriculum, the challenges of the society have to be incorporated.

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