

THE CONCEPT OF IDEAL LEADER IN AL-GHAZALI'S THOUGHT

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Abstract

Imam Al-Ghazali (1058-1111M) was a great Muslim scholar, thinker, scientist and prolific writer has written a lot of thoughts and ideas in various fields of science, including in the field of Islamic law. In light of the scientific credibility of Imam Al-Ghazali in the Muslim world, this article seeks to discuss the concept of the ideal leader in Islamic law according to Imam Al-Ghazali as he offered in his various works: Al-Iqtisād fī al-'Itiqād, At-Tibr al-Masbūk fī Nashibat al-Mulūk, Ihya' 'Ulumi ad-Dīn, and Fadhb'ih al-Batinīyah wa Fadhb'ih al-Mustazhiriyyah. While al-Ghazali seemed to offer a different set of criteria across these works, the essential criteria of the ideal leader in his view include: (1) having knowledge and competence, (2) having good religion and morals, (3) physically and mentally healthy, (4) trustworthy (amanah), (5) fair, (6) willing to listen to advice from scholars, and (7) live simply and close to the people.

Keywords: *al-Ghazali, ideal leader, Islamic law*

A. Introduction

Human life cannot be separated from association and association cannot be separated from the existence of a leader who is obeyed and becomes a unifying figure. Likewise, a country or a nation cannot stand and move without a leader who is able to guide, lead, direct, and protect all citizens from dangers and solve their problems, both those within the country and those coming from outside. So, it is very important to appoint a leader, head of state, who manages the country, leads the people, and takes care of state problems.¹

¹Mujar Ibnu Syarif and Khamami Zada, *Fiqh Siyasah: Doktrin dan Pemikiran Politik Islam*, (Jakarta: PT.Gelora Aksara Pratama Erlangga, 2008), p. 96.

In Islam, the existence of a leader is very important for a country and society. This can be seen from the existence and position of the Prophet Muhammad as the leader of the Muslims. In the Qur'an, Allah emphasizes the important position of a leader, and states that he must be obeyed after obedience to Allah and His Messenger.

In selecting a leader, certain criteria and conditions need to be met, so that a leader will be elected according to the expectations and needs. The accuracy in choosing a leader will bring progress for the country. Meanwhile, mistakes in choosing a leader can have a devastating impact on a country, negatively affect the people, and have major consequences in religion. The ideal leader is the desire of every person because this kind of leader will bring advances in an organization, country or nation. Therefore, it would not be surprising that leaders who are considered less capable or less ideal, for example, because they are disabled mentally and physically, tend to invite controversy over whether they should still be retained or dismissed.²

The importance of an ideal leader has been conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad 1400 years ago. The Prophet said, "If the message has been wasted, then just wait for the destruction to occur." A companion then asked, "what do you mean by the message is wasted?" The Prophet replied, "If a matter is left to those who have no expertise, then wait for the destruction." (Narrated by Bukhari). This suggests the importance of the position of leader in Islam to the extent that the goodness of religious affairs and world affairs of the people depends on the leader.

In reality, however, there are still many elections and the determination of leaders that do not match expectations. For example, a person is made a leader based solely on heredity, wealth, strength, influence, and popularity while he does not have sufficient competence to become a leader. This occurs both within the scope of the highest Islamic leadership in the caliphate system, as well as in the sphere of the national leadership of a country and local leadership in the regions. As a result, there

² Muhadi Zainuddin dan Abd. Mustaqim, *Studi Kepemimpinan Islam (Konsep, Teori, dan Praktikanya dalam Sejarah)*, (Yogyakarta: SUKA-Press UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2012), p. 33-34.

was a mismanagement of state regulations, a lack of leadership power, and so on which resulted in deterioration and damage in the fields of religion, economy, defense, socio-politics, and others.

One scholar who became a reference on Islamic law and political Islam is *Hujjatul Islam*, Imam Al-Ghazali, (1058-1111M). This great scholar, thinker, scientist and prolific writer has written a lot of thoughts, ideas, the results of analysis and observation as well as the formulation of concepts in various fields of science, including in the field of Islamic law. His works have become teaching materials in various universities and Islamic boarding schools in various Islamic countries. It is not surprising that Al-Ghazali's theories are often researched and quoted by scholars, especially in the field of Islamic studies. In light of the scientific credibility of Imam Al-Ghazali in the Muslim world, this article seeks to discuss the concept of the ideal leader in Islamic law according to al-Ghazali. In so doing, the article relies on primary and secondary sources. The primary sources consist of four important works of al-Ghazali which discuss about the ideal leader: *al-Iqtisād fī al-I'iqād*, *at-Tibr al-Masbūk fī Nashibat al-Mulūk*, *Iḥyā 'Ulumi ad-Dīn*, and *Fadhā'ih al-Bātinīyyah wa Fadhā'il al-Mustazhiriyyah*, also known as *al-Mustazhiri*. To enrich the analysis, the article also relies on secondary sources consisting of other books by Imam al-Ghazali, books by other figures, scientific papers, journals, and articles that have a correlation with the theme of this study.

B. Theoretical Framework

1. Ideal Leader

Discussions on ideal leaders are inseparable from terms conditions, traits, or characteristics of ideal leaders. The term *condition* means (1) as a demand or request that must be fulfilled; (2) everything that is necessary or must exist; (3) everything that is necessary to convey a purpose; (4) provisions (regulations, instructions) that must be heeded and implemented, and so on.³ Term traits or characteristics means

³ Tim Penyusun Kamus Pusat Bahasa, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, (Jakarta: Pusat Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2008), p. 1042

(1) the manner and circumstances which looks at an object; outward sign; (2) the condition of which by nature exists in something (objects, people, etc.); (3) the characteristics that exist in something (to distinguish from others); (4) basic character (carried from birth).⁴

The words terms, traits, and characteristics are often used in research on leadership, and sometimes they are both used in the same meaning, namely provisions, regulations, instructions regarding the appearance or condition that appears to a person, which becomes the basis for an assessment or determination of something, which must be heeded and carried out.

The word leader in Arabic has a variety of terms such as *imam*, *amir*, *malik*, *khalifah* and *sulthan*. Imam is linguistically derived from the word (*amma-yaummu-imaman*) which means those who are followed by the people. Imam is also defined as a leader, chairman or others.⁵ The word imam is also used for the position of those who regulate the benefit of something, army leaders, prayer leaders and other leading functions.⁶

The term imam is more synonymous with leader who brings goodness in religion and has a function as the designation of a prayer (*shalat*) leader in Islam. Thus, Islamic literature distinguish between an imam who leads prayer and an imam who serves as head of state. The imam for the position of head of state is often referred to as *al-imamah al-udhma* or *al-imamah al-kubra* (high leader), while the imam of prayer is called *al-imamah as-sughra* (little leader).⁷

The word *khalifah* comes from the word *al-khalaf*, which means *al-badal*, with the meaning of replacing, as can be understood in the word of Allah in surah Al-Baqarah verse 255. From this verse, the word *khalifah* is often defined as a substitute, a person who comes to replace and occupies the position of the person he replaces. *Khalifah* means someone who is authorized to act and act according to the

⁴ Ibid, p. 1345

⁵ Mahmud Yunus, *Kamus Arab-Indonesia Mahmud Yunus*, (Jakarta: Mahmud Yunus Wa Dzurriyyah, 1999), p. 428.

⁶ Ali al-Salus, *Imamah dan Khalifah*, (Jakarta: Gema Insan Press, 1997), p. 15.

⁷ A Djazuli, *Fiqh Siyasah Implementasi Kemaslabatan Umat dalam Rambu-rambu Syariah*, (Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Grup, 2003), p. 54.

provisions of the person giving the authority.⁸

The word *amir* comes from the word *amara-ya'muru-amran* which means ordering, the opposite of prohibiting. *Amir* is a person who rules and can be consulted.⁹ The word *amir* with the meaning of a leader is not found in the Quran, although the basic word, *amara*, is found. The term *amir* was popular among the Prophet's companions (*sahabat*) during their deliberation in Tsaqifah Bani Sa'idah to determine the replacement of the Prophet in worldly leadership. The term *amir* was also used by the Caliph Umar bin Khattab when he became caliph replacing Abu Bakr.¹⁰

The next term which indicates which leader is *malik*. *Malik* is linguistically derived from the word *malaka-yamliku-milkan* which means owning or possessing something, the owner of the government or power in a nation, tribe or country.¹¹ Likewise the word *sulthan* which has the same meaning, a king or a guardian. The word *sulthan* is mentioned in the Qur'an with the meaning of authority. This shows that the word *sulthan* was well known by the people of Arab at that time so that it was used in the Qur'an and al-Hadith.¹² Thus, the term *sultan* was synonymous with kings, heads of state, and *malik*. In Indonesia, however, *sulthan* is also more widely understood and used than the word *khalifah*, *imam*, *malik* or *amir* and absorbed in the Indonesian language with meaning of king or head of government.¹³

Regarding the concept of leadership in Islam, there are strong foundations that are not only built from Islamic values derived from the Qur'an but also the role models and direct practices of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions centuries ago. It is proven that they can develop their exemplary dynamically in Muslim society amidst various social, political and cultural conditions. According to

⁸Taufiqi Rahman, *Moralitas Pemimpin dalam Perspektif al-Quran*, (Bandung: CV Pustaka Setia, 1999), p. 21.

⁹Louis bin Nakula Dhahir Makhluaf, *al-Munjid fi al-Lughab wa al-A'lam*, (Beirut: Dâr al-Machreq sarl Publishers, 2000), p. 344.

¹⁰A. Djazuli, *Fiqih Siyasah*, p. 59.

¹¹Mahmud Yunus, *Kamus*, p. 428.

¹²A Djazuli, *Fiqih Siyasah*, p. 60.

¹³Ibid., p. 60

Islamic understanding, the trust and responsibility given to a leader are not only accountable to those he leads, but also will be accounted for in the presence of God. So, accountability of leadership in Islam not only held accountable horizontally to fellow human beings, but also held accountable vertically to Allah in the hereafter.¹⁴

2. Islamic Law

Islamic law comes from two basic words, namely Islam and law. The term Islam, according to Mahmut Syaltout, is the name of religion of Allah that is mandated to the Prophet Muhammad to be taught and propagated to all human beings. Simply put, Islam means the religion of God brought by Muhammad and then delivered to the race of man to achieve the well-being of his life both in the world and in the Hereafter later.

The word law in Arabic (*al-hukm*) is derived from the word *hakam-yahkumu* which means to lead, to decide, to order or to judge. Law can be understood as rules or norms that regulate behaviors of man in society, both norms that grows and develops in a society as well as the regulations made by the authorities. In practice, there are written laws in the form of legislation such as the laws in Western countries and the majority countries in the world, and there are also laws that are not written like legal customs.

Based on the meaning of the basic two words, the term Islamic law can be understood as a set of norms or laws or regulations that are revealed to the Prophet Muhammad to regulate human behavior or morals in their private and public life. Put simply, Islamic law is law which is derived from the teachings of Islam.

The term Islamic law is actually not known in the literature of Islam such as the Qur'an and the hadith. The term Islamic law in Arabic literature is referred to as *al-shari'ah al-Islamiyah* and *al-fiqh al-Islami*. The term Islamic law is a Western term used by Western authors, especially orientalist, to describe the law

¹⁴Muhadi, *Studi Kepemimpinan*, p. 23-24.

upheld in Muslim societies derived from the teachings of Islam from the mid-20th century to the present.¹⁵

From the explanation of the definition of Islamic law and its use in various language contexts, it seems that there is a confusion in the meaning of Islamic law between *shari'ah* and *fiqh*. In Indonesian literature, the meaning of Islamic law includes *sharia* and *fiqh* and even *ushul fiqh*. Therefore, we often find specific terms such as Islamic *sharia*, Islamic *fiqh*, to avoid ambiguity in the meaning of the word Islamic law.

Regarding Islamic law which talks about politics, it is included in the third part of Islamic law, namely about *muamalat*, later known as *fiqh siyasah*.¹⁶ Political jurisprudence or Islamic law in the field of politics has the focus of discussion, among others, on *dusturiyah* (legislation), *maliyah* (finance), *qadaiyah* (justice), *harbiyah* (warfare), *idariyat* (administration), *dauliyah* (sovereignty), *tanfiziyyah* (implementation), and so on.¹⁷ *Fiqh siyasah* or Islamic law in the political field is very important to be studied in order to answer the political problems faced by mankind as well as for the development of Muslim political thought as part of *ijtihad* to uphold justice and the welfare of mankind.¹⁸

C. Biography and Contribution of al-Ghazali

The full name of al-Ghazali is Abu Hamid Muhammad bin Muhammad al-Ghazali ath-Thusi asy-Shafi'i. He was born in the mid-5th century in Tusia, the area of Khurasan, in 450 H/1058 AD.¹⁹ Another source mentions the full name of Imam Al-Ghazali is Abu Hamid Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Ahmad Al-Ghazali, and he was born in the village of Ghazalah/Ghuzala, at the end of the area Thus in 450

¹⁵ Marzuki, *Pengantar Studi Hukum Islam*, (Yogyakarta: Ombak, 2013), p. 8-9.

¹⁶ YUSDANI, *Fiqh Politik Muslim*, (Yogyakarta: Amara Books, 2011), p. 22

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 24

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 26-7

¹⁹ Munawir Sjadzali, *Islam dan Tata Negara*, (Jakarta: UI Press, 1990), p.70

H/1058 AD. Al-Ghazali thus had a Persian/Iran blood.²⁰

The education background of al-Ghazali started with learning with his father who taught him reading the Qur'an and basic religious knowledge as well as moral education. After the death of his father, al-Ghazali and his brother was raised and educated under guidance of his father's friends, a well-known Sufi, Ahmad bin Muhammad Ar-Rasykani or Ar-Razikani.²¹ Then after the property of al-Ghazali's father was exhausted and the sufi was no longer able to finance the needs of al-Ghazali and his brother, al-Ghazali was entrusted to institutions that provide them scholarships and the cost of living. This school was the place where al-Ghazali met his teacher Yusuf An-Nassj.²²

After graduating, al-Ghazali continued his education in the city of Jurjan, taking knowledge from a prominent scholar named Abu Nasr al-Isma'ili, studying various religious sciences and linguistics.²³ A few years later, al-Ghazali moved to the city of Nisabur for admission to the oldest university, an-Nidzamiyyah (founded by Nizam al-Mulk, the then current prime minister), led by al-Juwaini whose school (mazhab) is Syafi'ite.²⁴ From al-Juwaini, al-Ghazali studied *ushul fiqh*, *mantiq* (logics) and natural science. Al-Ghazali was later appointed as his teacher's assistant and was able to write books at the age of 28. In addition to the al-Juwaini, al-Ghazali also studied from other scholars but are generally less well known.

At that time began to arise doubts about the truth that he obtained from his teachers. Shortly thereafter he joined the group of Nizam al-Mulk, the prime minister of Seljuk dynasty, A. Arsalan, who at that time was very attractive to young Islamic scholars.²⁵ Al-Ghazali was never satisfied with the knowledge he

²⁰ Amin Syukur dan Masharuddin, *Intelektualisme Tasawwuf*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2002), p. 126

²¹ Muhammad Iqbal dan Amin Husein Nasution, *Pemikiran Politik Islam Dari Masa Klasik Hingga Indonesia Kontemporer, Edisi Revisi*, (Jakarta: Kencana, 2010), p. 25.

²² Amin, *Intelektualisme*, p. 128.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 128

²⁴ Surwandono, *Pemikiran Politik Islam*, (Yogyakarta: LPPI UMY, 2001), p. 60.

²⁵ H.M. Zukarni Jahja, *Teologi Al-Ghazali, Pendekatan Metodologi*, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2009), hlm. 71, dan Munawir Sjadzali, *Islam dan Tata Negara*, (Jakarta: UI Press, 1990), p. 70.

possessed.²⁶ Pleasure to discuss and deepen a variety of science is influenced by the nature of the critical and skeptical that he has, along with intellectual development and a surge in spiritual development through made al-Ghazali a thinker who excel in a variety of scientific fields, ranging from *fiqh*, theology, philosophy, methods of discussion, *ushul fiqih*, and sufism (*tassawuf*). Imam al-Ghazali received recognition from his teacher and earned the nickname "*babr mughriq*" (sinking ocean).²⁷In 1090 AD, al-Ghazali was appointed professor and rector of the University of Nizamiyah in Baghdad, whose position was very respectable at that time.²⁸

Al-Ghazali was a thinker and scholar who was very productive in working and pouring his thoughts in various fields of knowledge. This ability puts al-Ghazali as the thinker who was original, expert of Islamic law and sufism, a leading theologian and defender of Islam in science and knowledge, to the title of *Hujjatul Islam*.²⁹

Al-Badawi has collected a variety of Imam al-Ghazali in the book *Muallafat al-Ghazali* whose contents can be classified into three groups. *First*, the group of books whose authenticity can be ascertained as al-Ghazali's works that consists of 72 books. *Second*, groups books that are doubted as original works of Imam al-Ghazali that consists of 22 books. *Third*, the group of books that can be ascertained as not his work that consists of 31 books.³⁰ According to other sources, the work of writing al-Ghazali reached 220 works or 228 works.³¹

The political thought of al-Ghazali is not much different from the opinion of al-Mawardi regarding government, the obligation to establish a government, and appointment of an Imam to function in matters of religion and the world. Religion

²⁶ Munawir Sjadzali, *Islam...*, p.71.

²⁷ H.M. Zukarni Jahja, *Teologi*, p. 71.

²⁸ Surwandono, *Pemikiran*, p. 61.

²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 62, see also Munawir Sjadzali, *Islam*, p. 70

³⁰ Ahmad Daudy, *Kuliah Filsafat Islam*, (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1986), p. 97.

³¹ Abdullah Mushtafa Al-Maraghi, *Pakar-Pakar Fikih Sepanjang Sejarah*, (Yogyakarta: LPKSM, 2001), p. 177; see also Mohammad Waryanto, Pengaruh Pemikiran Imam Al-Ghazali Terhadap Pemikiran Umar Ibnu Ahmad Baraja Tentang Pateri Pendidikan Akhlak Anak (Lampung: Fakultas Ilmu Tarbiyah dan Keguruan UIN Raden Intang, 2018), p. 45.

is the foundation, and the sultan is the guardian. This is because humans are social beings who need each other both in fulfilling worldly practical needs and for preparation for hereafter life. The obligation to form a state and elect a head of state is not based on rational considerations but rather on religious obligations. Even al-Ghazali emphasized that politics/state occupies a very important and strategic position, which is only one level below prophethood.³²

Philip K. Hitti classifies al-Ghazali as one of the most decisive scholars in the history of Islam and the Muslim world. In term of laying the basis of the teachings of Islam, al-Ghazali was even placed at the second place after the Prophet. He was a thinker who is not only outstanding, but also very fertile and productive.³³ According to Ibn Khaldun, al-Ghazali was the first of Muslim thinker who used "the new method" (*tariqat al khalaf*), in addition to "the classical method" (*tariqat as-salaf*).³⁴

D. The Ideal Leader according to Imam al-Ghazali

During the time of al-Ghazali, the study of Islamic constitutional law had developed and influenced the life of the nation and state. Al-Ghazali talked about the concept of an ideal leader in four of his works, namely *al-Iqtisad fi al-I'tiqād, at-Tibr al Masbuk fi Nashibat al-Muluk, Ihyā 'Ulumi ad-din* and *Fadhā'ih al-Bāṭiniyyah wa fadhā'il al-Mustazḥenyyah*. Al-Ghazali's ideas and thoughts in the four books are not the same, have their own uniqueness. Likewise, there are several terms in each of these works which have different uses and meanings. This is, among other things, what caused some researchers on Al-Ghazali's thoughts to draw different conclusions about the characteristics of the ideal leader according to al-Ghazali's view. How al-Ghazali actually thinks about the ideal leader can be seen from some of his views spread across these four books. In his *Al-Iqtisad fi al-I'tiqād*, al-Ghazali's

³² Muhammad, *Pemikiran...*, hlm. 29, dan Munawir, *Islam*, p. 74-77.

³³ Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam Kemodernan dan Keindonesiaan* (Bandung: Mizan, 1998), p. 280.

³⁴ Montgomery Watt, *The Islamic Philosophy and Theology* (Edinburg: The University Press, 1979), p. 117-118; and Nurcholish, *Islam*, p. 285.

criteria of the ideal leader include:³⁵

1. Having expertise, namely having the competence to manage subordinates and bring them to achieve their goals.

In a hadith, the Prophet said that an important matter must be submitted to people who have competence. If not, then what will happen is destruction. From this it can be understood that if a country is led by people who do not have competence, then it is feared that it will further retreat and be destroyed. Conversely, if a country is led by people who have the expertise and competence to lead, the country can be expected to progress, and it is predicted that it will become a developed country in the future.

2. Having knowledge and character of *ward'*.

If there is a leader who does not have the knowledge, then it will be difficult for him to be able to understand all the problems of the country or institution that he leads. It will be difficult as well for him to gain the respect and obedience from his subordinates. Thus, science is very much needed by a leader, especially the science of religion for the leader of the religion, science administration for leaders of government, and the science of management and leadership in general for all leaders. In addition to science, a leader is also in need of an attitude *ward'*, ie cautious in dealing with the things he faces. He needs to keep himself away from all things that are forbidden by religion and can denigrate their integrity such as corruption and criminal acts that have been forbidden by the rules of religion and state.

3. Fulfilling the requirements to become *qadhi*, including being male, mature, sensible, free (not a slave), physically healthy in speaking, hearing and seeing (not mute, deaf and blind), fair, and has integrity.

³⁵ Al-Ghazali, Imam., *al-Iqtisād fi al-'Itiqād*, (Damaskus: Dar Qutaibah, 2003). p. 170-171.

Here al-Ghazali included fulfilling the requirements of *qadbi* as one of the criteria for an ideal leader. This is understandable because at the time of his life a state leader was also a religious leader. When al Ghazali conveyed the criteria for an ideal leader, he also included the criteria for a *qadbi* including the condition of being an independent man.

In the present context when a government leader does not function as a religious leader, the *qadbi* criteria for leaders cannot be fully applied. For example, the male criterion is suitable for the position of khalifah in the past but is not applicable to the current context for the position of president or regional head in Indonesia, where men and women have the same right to be nominated as leaders. After all, the positions of president of a country and head of regions are different from the positions of caliph as the supreme leader of the believers across countries and regions. As a whole, however, al-Ghazali's criteria in many respects are relevant to the conditions in the present context of leadership.

4. Having a lineage from the tribe of Quraish.

This condition is based on the hadith of the Prophet, "The leader is from the Quraish tribe." Al Ghazali was an Islamic jurist who argued that among the criteria for an ideal leader is from the Quraish tribe. Al-Ghazali argued that this had been determined by the Prophet. In contrast to al-Haramain, al-Ghazali's teacher, who argued that an ideal leader does not have to be from the Quraish tribe, as long as he has real competence and power, then he is eligible and entitled to become a leader.

In addition, according to Ibn Khaldun in his *Muqaddimah*, the hadith can actually be understood contextually that the right of the leader is not on the ethnic Quraish, but on his ability and authority. At the time of the Prophet, the people who met the requirements for leadership and were obeyed by the community were the Quraish. Therefore, if one day someone who is not from the Quraish tribe has the ability and authority to lead, he can be appointed as a leader, including the head of

state.³⁶

In this case, al-Ghazali himself also has a second opinion about the existence of a leader who does not meet the ideal criteria such as not coming from the Quraish tribe, namely that the leader is still worthy of being obeyed. Because if not, there will be chaos and destruction.³⁷

5. The appointment or transfer of power from another party

According to al-Ghazali, a person cannot become a leader without getting the appointment or transfer of power from the previous leader. In the context of today's leadership, a leader cannot be a leader without appointment by the previous leader or election by the people, and inauguration by a council that has the authority in this matter. In this case, al-Ghazali emphasized on orderly administration and the continuity of leadership regeneration, as well as the official leadership change process and according to the rules.

In his *At-Tibr al-Masbūk fi Nashibat al-Mulūk*, al-Ghazali offered another set of criteria for the ideal leader as follow:³⁸

1. Good understanding of the benefits and harms of power

In-depth knowledge of the benefits and dangers of power, which is strengthened by a *kehanf-raja'* attitude, will encourage a leader to become a person who always self-introspects and is careful in every word, action and policy. This is because he knows well that everything associated with it will have implications for better or worse to the people and will be accounted for in the presence of God.

³⁶Ibnu Khaldun, *Muqaddimah Ibnu Khaldun* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, n.d); Syuhudi Ismail, *Hadis Nabi yang Tekstual dan Kontekstual* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1994), p. 38-40; Muhadi Zainuddin dan Abd. Mustaqim, *Studi Kepemimpinan Islam (Konsep, Teori, dan Praktiknya dalam Sejarah)* (Yogyakarta: SUKA-Press UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2012), p. 37-39.

³⁷ Al-Ghazali, *al-Iqtisād*, p. 172-173.

³⁸Imam Al-Ghazali, *At-Tibr al-Masbūk fi Nashibat al-Mulūk* (Beirut: Muassasah Ar-Risalah, 1991), p. 14-29.

2. Willingness to listen to the advice of scholars (ulama)

What is meant by ulama here are those sincere scholars who do not speak and act except for the sake of Allah, and not the bad scholars (*ulama su'*) who always approach and praise the rulers for only pursuing the world. The advice of this sincere scholars will make leaders become leaders who are just for their people.

3. Ability to distance from wrong deeds

A leader must be able to distance himself and his subordinates from all wrongdoing behavior. Even though he can be fair and stay away from injustice, but if it turns out that his assistants do wrong things, he will be held responsible and will also bear sins for the wrongdoing of his subordinates. In the Torah it is written that an unjust behavior committed by a subordinate, which is known and ignored by the leader, will be attributed to the leader, and the latter will get tormented for it.

4. Avoiding arrogant attitude

The arrogant attitude that arises in a person can cover his common sense. Justice cannot possibly be born of individuals whose hearts are still filled with pride. Instead of being fair, a leader who keeps the seeds of pride in him will become a despicable leader, get angry easily, and may end up with a cruel attitude towards anyone who opposes him.

5. Strong empathy with the suffering of the people

What is meant by air empathy with the suffering of the people is to feel what is perceived by the people. A leader who has a high sense of empathy will treat his people as he treats himself. He loves his people as he loves himself.

6. Good attention to the needs of the people

A good leader never underestimates the needs of the people, even if they look trivial. Power can give rise to superstitious nature, which will give birth to indifference to the fate and needs of the little people. The interests

of the people, whether they appear trivial or heavy, must always take precedence over a leader's needs. In fact, according to al-Ghazali, leaders are not allowed to be busy with sunnah worship to the point that they are negligent in their duties to serve the needs of the people.

7. Having a simple life

A leader is not supposed to live in luxuries and indulgence. He should have a *qana'ah* character, namely accepting gracefully the gift of God and not exaggerating in its uses or consumption. According to al-Ghazali, justice will not exist if a leader does not have *qana'ah* characteristics.

8. Being gentle to the people

The ideal leader must be gentle towards his people. It does not mean soft or indecisive towards law enforcement. Meek is loving others and behaving with courtesy to anyone. Not rude, not easily angry, not easy to yell when facing his people.

9. Commitment to make people happy and prosperous

A leader must always try to make people happy and prosperous by implementing regulations or policies that are still within the corridors of religious rules. The purpose of a leader is to regulate and serve the needs of the people, so that a leader is required to be able to bring prosperity and happiness to his people. When he is able to make his people prosperous, people will love him. When the leader and his people love each other, divine mercy and pleasure will come.

10. Not seeking popularity and sympathy of the people by breaking religious rules

A leader is supposed to fight for the people, build and bring progress to their nation. However, he is not allowed to violate religious regulations just to make his people happy and prosperous. If a leader only seeks human sympathy, then he will never find it. The attitudes, styles, and policies that are born from a leader will never be separated from the pros and cons. This has become the law of nature (*sunnatullah*).

Ihyā' Ulumi ad-Dīn is another important work of al-Ghazali in which he discussed about the ideal leader. In this book, al-Ghazali explained how important the role of the ruler is for the progress of the country and the lives of its people.³⁹ Damage to the people can be caused by the destruction of the rulers, the damage to the rulers can be caused by the destruction of the ulama, and the damage to the ulama can be caused by their love for the world and their position. According to al-Ghazali in this book, the criteria for an ideal leader are:

1. Having knowledge or expertise

A leader is responsible for the country's progress and welfare of the people. Therefore, a leader must have the knowledge or skills to accomplish his task with good leadership.

2. Having the character of cautious (*ward'*)

A leader has power over all wealth and state treasury, so he is prone to falling into criminal acts of corruption, collusion and nepotism. So, the *ward'* attitude, guarding himself from all things that are haram and *syubhat*, is needed for a leader to be able to lead with care and integrity.

3. Descendent of *alamy* (*ahlu al-bait*)

The Prophet said that the leader of the Quraish tribe (HR Ahmad). A leader needs authority and influence to be obeyed by his people, so his existence as a person who has an honorable lineage can help his leadership.

4. Good at keeping trust

A leader is a bearer of the mandate who must be accountable for that mandate before Allah and the people. Therefore, he should be someone who is good at maintaining the mandate.

The final work of al-Ghazali that deals with the issue of leadership in *Fadhā'ih al-Bāṭiniyyah wa fadhā'il al-Mustaẓammiyyah*, In this book, al-Ghazali explained

³⁹Imam al-Ghazali, *Ihyā' Ulumi ad-Din*, Juz 2 (Beirut: Dar el Fikr, 1995), p. 292.

the four criteria leader or head of an ideal state as follows:⁴⁰

1. Having strength and authority

A leader needs strength and dignity to be respected and obeyed by all his subordinates and his people. The leader must be a strong person, not a weak person.

2. Having the ability to lead

The position as a leader is not only for pride, but to carry out leadership duties properly, effectively and efficiently. Therefore, a leader must have the ability to lead for governing the country and its people and resolve any problems.

3. Keeping himself from things that are haram and *syubhat*

A leader has full power over the country and all its treasures. Therefore, he needs a *ward'* attitude. If not, he is prone to falling into criminal acts of corruption, collusion and nepotism.

4. Having knowledge

A leader needs knowledge, expertise and competence in the field of leadership. Thus, he can carry out his leadership duties appropriately and effectively. If he does not have it, he will not be able to lead well.

E. Conclusion

Based on the above discussion, it is safe to conclude that in al-Ghazali's view, there are several criteria for an ideal leader. Al-Ghazali wrote his criteria of the ideal leader in his four works, namely *al-Iqtisād fī al-I'tiqād*, *at-Tibr al-Masbuk fī Nashibat al-Mulūk*, *Ihyā 'Ulumi ad-Dīn*, and *Fadhā'ih al-Bātiniyyah wa Fadhā'il al-Mustazhiriyyah* also known as *al-Mustazhirī*. Al-Ghazali's ideas and thoughts in these four books are not the same and have their own uniqueness. This, among other things, caused some researchers about Al-Ghazali's thoughts to draw different

⁴⁰Imam al-Ghazali, *Fadhā'ih al-Bātiniyyah wa Fadhā'il al-Mustazhiriyyah* (Kairo: al-Dar al-Qaumiyah li ath-Thaba'ah wa an-Nasyr, 1974), p. 68. Zainal Abidin Ahmad, *Konsep Negara Bermoral Menurut al-Ghazālī* (Jakarta; Bulan Bintang, 1975), p. 267.

conclusions about the characteristics of the ideal leader according to al-Ghazali's view. From these different set of criteria, the essence of the criteria for the ideal leader according to al-Ghazali can be summed up as follow: (1) having knowledge and competence, (2) having good religion and morals, (3) physically and mentally healthy, (4) trustworthy (*amanah*), (5) fair, (6) willing to listen to advice from scholars, and (7) live simply and close to the people.

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