# Imam Ghazzali's Sufism: An Analytical Study

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#### Abstract

Imam Ghazzali is considered as a great reformer of 5<sup>th</sup> century of Hijrah. His mastery over all disciplines of knowledge of his days is unchallengeable. He had written many books in the Philosophy and particularly "Tahafut al Falaasifah" in which he challenged the validation of many opinions and theories of Greek philosophers in theology. He had also written a number of books to refute the ideology of a group called Bathini and unveiled their hidden intentions to undermine the values and faith of Islam. By launching a strong intellectual war against Greek Philosophers and the followers of Bathini ideology, Imam Ghazzali warned the younger generation of Muslims to keep away from them.

However, Imam Ghazzali had chosen the Sufism as the best way among all the ideologies that were prevalent in those days. He also devotedly practiced it in his personal life and authored a number of books. Inspite of appreciation and criticism from various groups, his book "Ihya Uloomiddheen" is the master piece of his works. His methodology of writing and presenting facts are magical and deeply convincing both the intellectuals and common people.

This paper examines the biography of Imam Ghazzali, the spiritual exercise undertaken by him and the causes and justifications for his preference of Sufism. His unique contribution to the field and the reformation that he had introduced to Sufism are critically reviewed. In addition, the paper analyzes the views and critics of prominent Islamic scholars on the stands taken by Imam Ghazzali in philosophy and Sufism.

**Key words:** Sufism, Al Munqid, Purification, Mind, Soul, Figh, Philosophy.

### Introduction

Imam Abu Hamid Muhammad Ghazzali was born in 450 Hijri in Tus, a city in the provinces of Khurasan, Iran. His father was an uneducated poor weaver, but he had a pleasure in associating himself with learned scholars and Sufis. Hence, he had a strong desire to educate his two sons Muhammed and Ahamad. However, at his early age, when death approached, the father advised one of his Sufi friends to fulfil his desire. With the Sufi's support and guidance, both brothers completed their primary education.

When the young Muhammad Ghazzali was joined the Madrasah Nizamiyyah, Naisapur for higher study, his super extraordinary intelligence and talent were exposed. His master, Imamul Haramain al Juwaini, a well-known leading scholar of Sunni school of those days, nurtured the young Ghazzali as a revolutionary intellectual leader of the next generation who would be able to take the Sunni School and the ideology of Ash'ariyyah to the further height. In this institution, Imam Ghazzali excelled in all disciplines and became outstandingly talented in powerful oratory, eloquence, logical debates and challenging arguments against opponents.

When his master Juwaini died in 478 Hijri, Ghazzali left the institution and joined the camp of Nizamul Mulk, the great statesman and minister of Seljuk Empire. In fact, the minister was the learned scholar and in order to promote the education of Sunni school on the ideology of Ashariyyah, he had established a number of higher learning institutions in his name as 'Madrasah Nizamiyyah' in various cities like Baghdad, Naisapur etc. The camp where Imam Ghazzali had joined was established by the minister at outskirt of Naisapur which became a congregation of Ulama- the scholars. In the camp, Imam Ghazzali had a great opportunity to be closely associated with the ministers and various great scholars. He had spent about six years in the camp in knowledge exchange and debates. By his great knowledge and outstanding talent of logical debates among the scholars in the camp, Imam Ghazzali emerged as an exceptional personality.

In 484 Hijri, He was appointed as a teacher by the minister, Nizamul Mulk, in the Madrasah Nizamiyyah, Baghdad. Prior to his arrival, Imam Ghazzali's fame and reputation had already spread over Baghdad and its people celebrated his arrival. In a short period, he was able to prove himself as exemplary teacher and attracted a huge number of students from various cities of Muslim country. The lecture hall of the 34-year-old and energetic teacher was always filled with more than four hundred prominent students. Abdul Ghafir, the contemporary scholar recorded in his book as, "Imam Ghazzali achieved the leadership of Iraq after he had achieved it in Khurasan." 1

During his 4-year service in this institution, he had dedicated himself to teaching various disciplines in order to give to the younger generation a right orientation towards school of Ahlus Sunnah. This was on one hand and on the other hand, he spent the rest of his time in research on vital issues of various ideologies that attracted young people towards scattered directions. His research focused mainly on 4 dimensions:

- 1) Ilmul Kalam- Science of discourse
- 2) Greek Philosophy
- 3) Various ideological groups and particularly Bathini
- 4) Sufism

<sup>1)</sup> Al Subuki, Tabaqat Al Shafiyiya, Vol.4, page 107

His first academic research was on Ilmul Kalam- Science of discourse. After he had carried out a critical survey of all the literatures available on those days on the subject, he had concluded that the subject is not fulfilling his objectives. (Al Munqidh) Since the Ilmul Kalam is in violation of methodology of Sahaabah, it does not need to be considered as one of the disciplines of Knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

In the next step, he carried out a comprehensive research on Greek Philosophy, its later developments and contributions of Ibn Sina and Al Farabi. He had also published his book 'Maqaasid al Falasifa' to showcase his deep knowledge on the subject. One year later he published another book 'Tahafut al Falasifa' in which he disproved the validity of arguments of Greek philosophy related to theology.<sup>2</sup>

In the third step, he had taken up the task of revealing the hidden agenda of Baathini who were under the banner of Islam in appearance. Their hidden ideology was to undermine the basic faith of Islam in God, Prophethood, system of worship and resurrection. Imam Ghazzali had published his book 'Fadaayih al Baathiniya' which was appreciated by all Muslim scholars including Imam ibn Taimiyya and Imam ibn Al Jawzi who were the strong criticizers of Imam Ghazzali. Finally, he dedicated his life to the knowledge and practice of Sufism.

## **Experience of Doubt and Certainty**

During the prime time of his intellectual life, Imam Ghazzali had started querying every known thing. He doubted almost all values that were normally determined on the basis of human senses and reason. Though the attitude of querying had developed in him from his young age, a serious kind of doubt captivated him and it had become his own methodology while he was the teacher in Nizamiyyah of Baghdad. He says, "I proceeded with a great seriousness. My prolonged doubt did not allow me to accept certainly the facts established by human senses. This doubt had expanded widely."<sup>3</sup>

He argued that when he looks at the planets and stars in the sky, his eye sight views them like small size balls which is really not true. The human reason comes and disprove the fact established by the eye sight. So, he started to believe in the judgement of the reason. He says, "When the trust on the outcome of human senses became invalid, there would be no way than

<sup>1)</sup> Ihya Uloomiddheen, Vol.3, page 33

<sup>2)</sup> Dr. P.S. Syed Masood Jamali, Imam Ghazzali and his Criticism on Greek philosophy of theology, Al Bukhari journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Volume-1, Issue 1, July-Dec.2021, page:83 & 84

<sup>3)</sup> Al Munqidh min al Dhalal, page 86

accepting and trusting on the outcome of the human intelligence which could be the next priority. We say: Ten is bigger than three. The affirmation and negation never join together in one matter."<sup>1</sup>

Even though these statements are trustable as obvious facts, Imam Ghazzali stated that the doubt overtakes the rational facts too. Therefore, he says, "Beyond the human reason there might be another judge, if it comes into picture, it would certainly disprove the judgement of the human reason. It had happened when human reason had come into picture; it had disproved the judgment of the senses. If we could not yet find another judge beyond the human reason, it does not mean that all the judgements of human intelligence are final and unchallengeable."<sup>2</sup>

Thus, Imam Ghazzali doubted the both the judgement of senses and intelligence and believed that there must be another tool of understanding above these two faculties. At this stage, Imam Ghazzali resorted to Almighty Allah for guidance to overcome the process of his doubt. He confirmed that the guidance was really received and he had cured from his mental crisis. He believed that there is a wisdom beyond the intelligence. However, he also believes that the human sense and the intelligence have their own roles to play and limitations as well. They must also surrender to the next stage of wisdom. In the order of understanding, the human sense has the first role to play and the human intelligence takes the second role above the role of the sense. The role of wisdom comes above all faculties.

Beyond the human intelligence there is a phase of insights or wisdom by which the unseen (Ghaib) could be understood. As intelligence is independent from the five senses, the phase of wisdom too independent from the intelligence and it is also called as the phase of prophethood. Therefore, the human intelligence should surrender to the phase of Prophethood. Because, unseen knowledge is acquired through the light of prophethood and it is impossible by the human intelligence.<sup>3</sup>

### Self- Evaluation process experienced By Ghazzali

Like any other scholar, Imam Ghazzali was ambitious to be a great intellectual personality. He had associated himself with the minister of Seljuk Empire. By his broad knowledge of multidiscipline and logical oratorical skill, Imam Ghazzali became most distinguished and popular scholar. By attracting a huge crowd of distinguished students during his service as a teacher in Nizamiyyah, Baghdad, his name was popularized all over the Muslim world. The books he authored in refutation of Greek philosophy of theology, in moderating Ash'ary ideology and in unveiling the

<sup>1)</sup> Same source, page 87

<sup>2)</sup> Same source, page 87

<sup>3)</sup> Same source, page134

hidden intention of the sect of Baathini against Islam, had earned him a high regards and respect among the Muslim society.

He enjoyed all those high positions for about 10 years from the day he joined the camp of the minister, Nizamul Mulk in 478 Hijri, till he quitted his job and isolated himself from the public in 488 Hijri. At this stage, Imam Ghazzali carried out a long self- evaluation process. He said, "Through the knowledge I had learned and through the research methodology I had applied in both reason and revelation, I had earned a strong faith in (1) Almighty Allah, (2) the prophethood and (3) the Hereafter."

He believed that attaining the ultimate salvation and success after the death in the hereafter would not be possible, unless one leads a life of piety in this world. It requires to forgo the worldly pleasures such as wealth and prestige in order to get rid of any preoccupation and to devote towards the Almighty Allah.

By subjecting himself for self-examination, Imam Ghazzaly analyzed his characters, activities and intentions. His findings were as follow:

- He was fully preoccupied in the worldly affairs and no time for devotional worship.
- Though the teaching and learning are noble job, the subject knowledge did not help him to advance in the path that would lead to the success in hereafter.
- His intention in teaching was not for the sake of Allah, but for the sake of prestige and reputation.
- His entire intellectual efforts were focused to the theoretical aspects and not to the practical experience.
- Though his teaching and learning task was considered as a rewardable worship, by losing sincere intention (Niyyath), he lost entire credits in his balance sheet of hereafter.
- The vital element of sincerity towards Almighty Allah (Ikhlas) is missing.<sup>2</sup>

Based on those findings, Imam Ghazzali judged that his life was miserable and its destination would be the Hell Fire unless a serious remedy would be urgently taken. This conclusion terrified Imam Ghazzali and made him restless. He started searching a way out form the multi-disciplinary knowledge that he had already acquired such as Fiqh-Jurisprudence, Ilmul Kalam-science of discourse and etc. Of course, those are higher education and unfortunately, he could not learn from those disciplines how to be sincere and how to purify the intention.

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<sup>1)</sup> Same source, page 141

<sup>2)</sup> Same source, page 141

## **Imam Ghazzali towards Sufism**

As a next step in search of remedy, Imam Ghazzali had concentrated in the study of Sufism. Initially, he observed that the Sufi education basically aims at overcoming the hindrances of mind (Nafs) by purifying it from evil attributes and shameful characters in order to fill the mind with divinely thoughts. He recalls in his book Al Munqid, "I had started acquiring their knowledge by surveying their literatures such as Qooth al Quloob by Abu Talib Makki, books of Al Harith al Muhasibi and Abu Zaid al Bustami. I had explored the objectives of their knowledge." He also said, "I certainly understood that the Sufis are not people of speech, but people of spiritual attitudes. I had acquired all the knowledge that could be acquired by learning and the rest could not be learned except by spiritual taste, behavior and attitude." 1

After acquiring the deep knowledge of Sufism, Imam Ghazzali was in a great dilemma: Either to continue the reputed life that he was enjoying for the past ten years or give up the worldly pleasures and enter into an entire devotional life to practice Sufism. The dilemma continued for about 6 months. He had no one to consult and get guidance in making such a decision except the result of his own survey on Sufism which awakened his conscious and led him for self-evaluation and arrangement of his long-term future affairs.

Finally, he had decided to go ahead practicing the Sufism in the later year of 488 Hijri. Imam Al Subuki reported that Imam Ghazzali was the disciple of one of the prominent Sufis of that period, Shaikh Abu Ali Al Farmadhi Al Tusi.<sup>2</sup> However, this report may not be accurate. Because, Al Farmadhi had died in 477 Hijri and Imam Ghazzali made his decision of practicing Sufism after ten years of his death in the year 488 Hijri. Perhaps Al Farmadhi might have taught him the knowledge of Sufism, but not the practice of Sufism. Since the death of Al Farmadhi in 477 Hijri till Imam Ghazzali made his decision of isolation in 488 Hijri, he was ambitious to achieve high status and reputation in the society. Therefore, the entire advancement of Imam Ghazzali in Sufism practice was by his own personal struggle based on the result of his research in Sufism.

## **Isolation from society for practicing Sufism**

As a first step, Imam Ghazzali gave up his teaching job and disbursed all his wealth except the minimum requirement for feeding the children. He quitted Baghdad where he had a very high respect and reputation and travelled wandering in distant places where his personality was not known. As he had recorded in Al Munqid, he devoted and engaged himself in, "Loneliness, isolation, spiritual exercise, vigorous struggles for purification of the soul, refinement of behaviors and

<sup>1 )</sup>Same source, page 141

<sup>2)</sup> Al Subki, Tabaqaat Shafiyiyya Kubra, Vol.5, page 306

characters and cleaning the heart for remembrance of Allah, applying the knowledge of Sufism that I had already acquired".<sup>1</sup>

This statement also confirms that the Sufi practices of Imam Ghazzali were bases on his own knowledge that he obtained from Sufi literatures and not practically guided by any Shaikh.

Imam Subuki reported that Imam Ghazzali had started his journey from Baghdad to Makkah for Hajj. Al Safdi also said, "Ghazzali had gave up everything in Baghdad, stepped up in the way of self-denial and travelled to perform Hajj." In fact, Ghazzali made a trick. He was actually prepared to travel from Baghdad to Damascus but announced his determination to travel for Hajj in order to keep himself disappeared from the public and specially from the attention of Caliph. However, he had performed Hajj at the end his journey.

Imam Ghazzali narrates, "I entered Sham- Damascus and stayed there about 2 years. I had nothing to do there, but keeping me isolated in spiritual exercise, devotional worship and mind struggle. I kept myself in (I'tikaaf) seclusion at the masjid of Damascus for a period. I used to claim the minaret of the Masjid and stay there throughout the day closed. Then, I travelled to Al Aqsa-Masjid at the holy city of Jerusalem and there too I used to enter the Rock every day and stay in closed door. Ultimately, due to my strong desire to perform Hajj, to receive the blessings of Makkah and Madeenah and visit the prophet (PBUH), especially after I had visited the Khalilullah, the prophet Ibrahim (Pbuh), I travelled to Al Hijaz."<sup>3</sup>

During the ten-year isolation, Imam Ghazzali led a poor life with minimum cloth and minimum food for his survival. Ibn Al Jawzi said that he earned his bread by copying books and documents. Today, we have Xerox machines for copying books. But in those days learned scholars used to earn by serving as copiers and such scholars were called as "Warraaq". Imam Ghazzali earned his bread by serving as Warraq time to time.<sup>4</sup>

#### Ghazzali's Sufism

As analyzed in the above paragraphs, the Young Ghazzali, after death of his father, was brought up by a Sufi in a Sufi environment and he had acquired the knowledge of Sufism from his master Al Farmadhi. Later in Baghdad, in search of true path, he carried out scientific survey on Ilmul Kalam, various sects, Philosophy and arrived that the Sufism was the true ideology that would lead to the path of hereafter. This conclusions recorded by him in his book Al Munqid:

<sup>1)</sup> Al Munqidh min al Dhalal, page 144

<sup>2)</sup> Al Safdi, Al Wafi Bil Wafiyyath, Vol.1, page 274, Istanbul, 1351 Hijri

<sup>3)</sup> Al Munqidh min al Dhalal, page 130

<sup>4)</sup> Al-Muntazim, Ibn Al Jawzi, vol.9, page 169

"The Sufis are the travelers specifically towards the path of Allah; their way of life is the best; their approaches are more accurate; their characters and behaviors are most pure.... All their actions and calmness either in public or in secret are acquired from the light of prophethood and in fact, no light in the world beyond the light of prophethood".

Dr. Yusuf Qardawi viewed that Ghazzali who critically studied the Greek philosophy, Kalam and ideology of Baathini, did not apply similar critical approach to Sufism. But he had embarrassed Sufism accepting its ideology with love and affinity and not by critical thinking. This criticism may be partly true, from the point of view that Ghazzali might have naturally influenced by the Sufi environment in which he was brought up from his childhood. However, his books on Sufism in general and Ihya Uloomiddeen in particular, reveal that Imam Ghazzali never accepted Sufism as it was commonly prevalent those days. He rejected all kind of distortions in the basic concepts of Shariah in the name of Sufism. He also refused to accept the falsification of Sufism made by people like Al Khallaj and those who advocated Union of Existence.

In fact, the Sufism which Imam Ghazzali accepted was the Sunni Sufism derived from its original pure sources and based on Holy Quran and the Prophetic Sunnah. He had taken a great effort to analyze all ideas, practices and attitudes advocated by Sufis in order to verify their compliance with basic principles of Islam in accordance with Holy Quran and Sunnah. Imam Ghazzali had given a new dimension to Sufism. He had transformed the Sufism that was only representing feelings, experiences, symbolization and isolation, into practical characterology that aims at treatment of spiritual mind illness by regulating and purifying the soul and inculcating noble characters.

### **Ghazzali's rejection of false Sufis**

Imam Ghazzali who vigorously attacked on the false arguments of Greek philosophers in the field of theology and unveiled the hidden intention of Baathini, was not silent towards Sufis who distorted the true Sufism. He differentiates between the Knowledge and the Knower. The fault is not in the knowledge but in the knower, who does not act as per his knowledge. No one be Sufi without deeds and performance. He said, "Sufism means a total dedication of one's mind to Almighty Allah and neglecting everything other than Allah and make it in significant. This achievement depends on the performance of duties by both minds and organs. When action is missed, the originality of Sufism is lost".<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1)</sup> Al Qardawi, Al ImamaGazzali Bain Maadihihiwanaqideehi, DarulWafa, 3rd Edition, Egypt, 1992

<sup>2)</sup> Ihya, Vol.2, page 250

Imam Ghazzali says, "The country is now empty of true Sufi guide - Shaikh whose knowledge and life could be the role model to follow." <sup>1</sup>He believed that most of the Sufis of those days were not sincere and hens he highlighted their insincerity and said, "Their inner status is empty of fine thoughts and minute performance. By Dhikr (meditation) of Allah in isolation, they could not enjoy the love of Allah... They serve in the intention of gaining fame and reputation."<sup>2</sup>

Imam Ghazzali very strongly rejects the false utterances of Sufis and warns them that such attitudes would mislead the public. He categorizes such sufis into two groups:

## The first category of Sufis:

They claim that they became more closer to Almighty Allah with their deep love and affection and attained ultimate wisdom of Allah. Therefore, in such a stage, they need not require external worship activities and the external obligatory duties are not binding on them.<sup>3</sup> They talk about Union of Existence, Unveil of the Curtain and assimilate themselves to Mansoor Al Hallaj. They also quote his utterance "Anal Haqq". By such people, a great evil spread over the country and the common people were misled. Therefore, such people deserve for sentence to death.<sup>4</sup>

## The second category of Sufis:

They utter meaningless words which could not be understood. Such words do not serve the purpose, rather they cause confusion in the minds of people. The prophet said. "Talk to the people that they could understand and avoid what could not grasped by them". Such Sufis also indulged in misinterpretation of Quran verses and Hadeeth by diverting the words from their original obvious meanings.

For example: They mean that the word Pharaoh in the following verse refer to heart or mind of human. Allah says, "Go to Pharaoh. Indeed, he has transgressed all bounds." (20:24)

Another Example: They interpreted the predawn-Sahur meal as Isthighfar - seeking forgiveness in the following Hadeeth. The prophet (pbuh) said to those who fast, "Take predawn - Sahur meal. Surely there is a blessing in Sahur meal."

Imam Ghazzali warned that all such interpretations are obvious distortion of the true meanings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah. Such things never reported from the Sahabas - the

<sup>1)</sup> Ihya, Vol.2, page 250, DarulFikr, Beirut, 2001.

<sup>2)</sup> Same Source, Vol.2, page 250, DarulFikr, Beirut, 2001.

<sup>3)</sup> Same Source, Vol.3, page 403, DarulFikr, Beirut, 2001.

<sup>4)</sup> Same Source, Vol.1, page 39, DarulFikr, Beirut, 2001.

<sup>5)</sup> Same Source, Vol.1, page 40, DarulFikr, Beirut, 2001.

companions of the prophet and the Tabiyeen- the next generation who were the authorities in deriving proper meaning of the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

## **Combination of Figh and Tasavvuf**

To define the Sufism, Imam Ghazzali refers to the early Muslim Ummah especially the companions of the prophet and the next generation of Taabiyeen. Their understanding of Holy Quran and the Sunnah and their practices are appropriate base for the Fiqh. They viewed the Wudu - the ablution, for example, as a combination of external cleanliness and the internal purification. They also regarded that all external prayer activities lead to internal purification which was basic concept of Sufism. Though the Fiqh deals specifically with external prayers like ablution, Salah, Fasting, Zakat, Hajj and so on, its objectives are to achieve internal purification of mind and soul in order to advance in the path of the hereafter.

According to Imam Ghazzali, the early scholars had considered Fiqh as a science of internal purification of mind and soul which could lead to the path of the hereafter. All Sahaba – companions of the prophet especially the scholars among them like Abu Bakr Siddiq, Umar bin Khattab, Ibn Masood, Ibn Umar, Ibn Abbas were the best examples. The five Imams whose Madhabs have been widely followed namely Imam Shafi, Imam Malik, Imam Abu Haneefa, Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal and Imam Sufyan Thowri were not only exemplary scholars of Fiqh but also devoted worshipers and sincere travelers in the path of Aakhirathe Hereafter.<sup>1</sup>

Imam Ghazzali worried that such a discipline of fiqh, in later centuries, was limited to certain academic topics. He says, "In the first century, Fiqh had a different meaning. It was the science of path of the hereafter, the knowledge of soul and its dangerous mislead, the understanding of immoral human deeds and looking forward to the paradise life of hereafter." In this sense, the Fiqh and the Sufism were integral parts of prayers practiced by the early Muslim Ummah. However, in the later centuries, when Fiqh was limited to certain academic topics like marriage, divorce, trade, lease etc., which least concerned about the hereafter, the scholars who were more concerned about the hereafter and internal purification of mind and soul had started to travel on a separate path and thus Sufism was separated from Fiqh.

In a long run, when certain Sufis deviated from some of the basic principles of Shariah, a kind of conflict had developed between the jurists and Sufis. It was mainly due to lack of knowledge on Shariah principles. In this aspect, Imam Ghazzali's contributions to bridge between Fiqh and Sufism is incredible. He Invented a new methodology of writing, especially in his book Ihya Uloomiddhin by which he combined both Fiqh and Sufism and brought them back to the track of

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<sup>1)</sup> Ihya, DarulFikr, Beirut, 2001, Vol.1, page 29

<sup>2)</sup> Ihya, page 35

Holy Quran and Sunnah and the practices of early Muslim Ummah. In this methodology, the Sufism is based on Fiqh in the first stage and extended to further stages. In other word, Imam Ghazzali had established that the Sufism is based on the knowledge of Shariah without which the Haqiqath could stand alone.

## **Reformation of Figh**

Imam Ibn Al Jawzi criticized and said, "Imam Ghazzali had written Ihya according to Sufi school of thought and he neglected rulings of Fiqh." Generally this Kind of exaggerated criticism comes from those who do not accept the concept of Sufism. In fact, Imam Ghazzali did not follow traditional Fiqh methodology in Ihya, but he had extended the scope of Fiqh to cover texts of Shariah and wisdom behind each ruling. The behavioral implication is highlighted in Ihya as the integral part of each ruling. Thus, a new reformatory approach of comprehensive Fiqh was introduced by Imam Ghazzali which combined the ruling of Fiqh with its wisdom and impact on body, mind, thought and soul. Earlier, the Fiqh was dealing with Shari'ah ruling and its external implementation alone while Sufism was concerned only with purification of body, mind and soul. With his new methodology, Imam Ghazzali combined the both in one.

The methodology of combination of Fiqh and Sufism in Ihya is a scope of further research. However, by a few examples its trend can be understood. Generally, all topics in Ihya start in the first step, with quoting the verses of Holy Quran, texts from Hadeeth as basic evidences and in the second step, with explanations of the companions and Tabiyeen by their words and deeds as follow up evidences. On the basis on those evidence, all points related to the topic are being analyzed.

For Example, under the topic of "Kitab Asrar al Thahaarah"- 'Secrets of Cleanliness", Imam Ghazzali quotes the following verses and hadeeths:

- The prophet says, "the Cleanliness is half of Iman". (Thirmithi)
- Allah says, "He intends to purify you and complete His favour upon you that you may be grateful. (5:6)

Washing face and other organs by pouring water is normally considered as process of cleanliness. However, we cannot consider that this process alone constitutes as half of Iman while the inner pats of mind and soul are loaded with rubbish, untidy and evil.

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<sup>1)</sup> Ibn Al Jawzi, Al Muntazim, Volume 9, page 169

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