

Date Received : July 2026
Date Revised : August 2026
Date Accepted : August 2026
Date Published : August 2026

RECONSTRUCTING IBN AL-HAYTHAM'S MODEL OF MORAL EDUCATION THROUGH THE ATTRIBUTED *TAHDHĪB AL-AKHLĀQ*

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Kata Kunci:

Ibn Al-Haytham,
pendidikan akhlak,
Tahdhib Al-Akhlaq

ABSTRAK

Pendidikan akhlak dalam tradisi Islam menekankan integrasi antara pengembangan intelektual, pembiasaan, dan pembentukan karakter moral yang menetap. Penelitian ini bertujuan merekonstruksi dan menganalisis konsep pendidikan akhlak menurut Ibn al-Haitsam sebagaimana tertuang dalam kitab *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq*. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain library research, dengan *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq* sebagai objek utama penelitian serta didukung oleh literatur klasik dan kontemporer mengenai pendidikan akhlak dan filsafat Islam yang dianalisis melalui analisis isi kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Ibn al-Haitsam memandang akhlak sebagai keadaan jiwa yang menetap dan melahirkan perbuatan secara spontan, sehingga transformasi kondisi batin menjadi tujuan fundamental pendidikan akhlak. Karakteristik *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq* menunjukkan bahwa kitab ini merupakan karya yang ringkas, filosofis, dan tematik serta memandang pembentukan akhlak sebagai proses sepanjang hayat yang berkaitan dengan konteks individual dan sosial. Rekonstruksi pemikiran Ibn al-Haitsam menemukan metode pendidikan akhlak yang saling berkaitan, yaitu *al-riyadhah*, *al-tafakkur*, *al-ta'dib*, *al-nafyu*, *al-uswah wa al-iqtida'*, *al-muhasabah*, *al-islah*, dan *al-targhib*, yang mencakup pembiasaan, refleksi rasional, pengendalian diri, keteladanan, koreksi, dan motivasi. Secara keseluruhan, model pendidikan akhlak Ibn al-Haitsam memiliki kesinambungan dengan pemikiran Ibn Sina, Ibn Miskawaih, dan Al-Ghazali, sekaligus menawarkan pendekatan rasional-psikologis yang khas, yaitu mentransformasikan pengetahuan moral melalui latihan berkelanjutan hingga menjadi karakter yang stabil dan melekat.

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Keywords:

Ibn Al-Haytham,
moral education,
Tahdhib Al-Akhlaq

ABSTRACTS

Moral education in Islamic tradition emphasizes the integration of intellectual development, habituation, and the formation of stable moral character. This study reconstructs the moral educational framework attributed to Ibn al-Haytham in Tahdhib al-Akhlaq. This study employed a qualitative approach with a library research design, focusing on Tahdhib al-Akhlaq as the primary object of analysis and supported by classical and contemporary literature on Islamic moral education and Islamic philosophy, analyzed through qualitative content analysis. The findings show that Ibn al-Haytham conceptualizes akhlaq as a stable state of the soul from which actions arise spontaneously, making internal transformation the fundamental objective of moral education. The characteristics of Tahdhib al-Akhlaq reveal a concise, philosophical, and thematic work that presents moral formation as a lifelong process while relating moral qualities to individual and social contexts. The reconstruction identifies interconnected methods of moral education, including al-riyadhah, al-tafakkur, al-ta'dib, al-nafyu, al-uswah wa al-iqtida', al-muhasabah, al-islah, and al-targhib, which integrate habituation, rational reflection, self-regulation, social modeling, correction, and motivation. Overall, Ibn al-Haytham's model demonstrates substantial continuity with the Islamic moral philosophy of Ibn Sina, Ibn Miskawayh, and al-Ghazali, while offering a distinctive rational-psychological framework in which moral knowledge is transformed through continuous practice into stable and enduring character.

A. INTRODUCTION

Morality (*akhlaq*) occupies a central and highly esteemed position in Islam. Numerous textual and theological arguments demonstrate its significance. One of the strongest pieces of evidence is the Prophet Muhammad's own declaration that his mission was to perfect human moral character (Al-Qaradhwai, 2022).

إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ صَالِحَ الْأَخْلَاقِ

"Indeed, I was sent only to perfect noble moral character." (Narrated by al-Bukhari)

This noble hadith constitutes one of the fundamental principles of Islamic education, particularly in the domain of moral development. It clearly illustrates that one of the primary purposes of the Prophet Muhammad's mission was to perfect human character. The hadith also implies that even before the advent of Islam, Arab society already possessed certain commendable moral qualities, such as honesty in fulfilling promises and generosity. The Prophet's use of the word "perfect" indicates that these virtues already existed within society (Nurlena, 2022). Consequently, the message of Islam brought and propagated by the Prophet Muhammad did not seek to abolish existing moral values but rather to reform, refine, and elevate them to a higher standard of ethical excellence.

Another evidence highlighting the elevated status of morality in Islam is found in a hadith in which one of the Prophet's companions asked which deeds most frequently lead people to Paradise. The Prophet identified two principal deeds, one of which is good moral character, as stated in the following narration:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ: سُئِلَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنْ أَكْثَرِ مَا يُدْخِلُ النَّاسَ الْجَنَّةَ، فَقَالَ: تَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَحُسْنُ الْخُلُقِ

Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) was asked, "*Which deeds most frequently admit people into Paradise?*" He replied, "*Fear of Allah (taqwa) and good moral character.*" (Narrated by al-Tirmidhi)

In his commentary Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi, al-Mubarakfuri explains that this hadith refers to the fundamental causes through which people attain Paradise together with the righteous. The first is *taqwa* (God-consciousness), which encompasses varying degrees, the lowest of which is abstaining from associating partners with Allah (*shirk*). The second is good moral conduct toward fellow human beings, whose lowest level is refraining from causing harm to others, while its highest level is responding with kindness even to those who have acted unjustly (Al-Mubarakfuri, n.d.).

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) paired *taqwa* (God-consciousness) with noble moral character because *taqwa* governs the relationship between human beings and their Creator (*hablun min Allah*), whereas good moral character regulates relationships among fellow human beings (*hablun min al-nas*) (Ihwanudin et al., 2025). This demonstrates that moral education is inseparable from the ultimate aspiration of every Muslim, namely attaining salvation in the Hereafter.

In his commentary on this verse, al-Imam al-Baghawi cites the statement of Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him):

فِي الصَّلَاةِ مُنْتَهَى وَمُزْدَجَّرٌ عَنْ مَعَاصِي اللَّهِ، فَمَنْ لَمْ تَأْمُرْهُ صَلَاتُهُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ، وَلَمْ تَنْهَ عَنْ الْمُنْكَرِ، لَمْ يَزِدْ بِصَلَاتِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا بُعْدًا

"Prayer establishes a boundary and serves as a deterrent against disobedience to Allah. Therefore, if a person's prayer neither directs him toward righteousness nor prevents him from wrongdoing, then his prayer only increases his distance from Allah".

This interpretation highlights that prayer is not merely a sequence of physical movements; rather, it is intended to produce tangible moral transformation. When prayer fails to encourage righteousness and discourage sinful behavior, it loses its essential spiritual purpose.

The verse further indicates that prayer functions as a form of spiritual discipline that nurtures self-awareness, obedience to Allah, self-control, and mastery over one's desires. A believer who performs prayer sincerely and correctly should demonstrate these values by avoiding dishonesty, injustice, and various forms of moral misconduct. Likewise, fasting (*shaum*) is prescribed primarily to cultivate *taqwa* (God-consciousness), while the institution of *zakat* aims to purify the soul from miserliness and selfishness (Muhibah & Ginanjar, 2026). Together, these acts of worship illustrate that Islamic rituals are designed not only to strengthen one's relationship with Allah but also to shape moral character and ethical conduct in everyday life.

In this regard, Abuddin Nata argues that the Islamic doctrine of *aqidah* (creed), which emphasizes firm belief in Allah as the Creator of the universe and the Sustainer of life, is intended to provide human beings with the proper foundation for determining the direction and purpose of their lives. He further explains that Islamic worship is intrinsically connected to moral development. According to Nata (2006), the prescribed objectives of the major acts of worship including prayer (*salah*), fasting (*shaum*), *zakat*,

and pilgrimage (*hajj*) are profoundly enriched with ethical values and are fundamentally designed to cultivate noble moral character.

Historical evidence suggests that the decline of Muslim civilization was influenced not only by external pressures but also by internal factors, particularly the deterioration of moral character, social cohesion, and intellectual responsibility. This highlights the importance of examining how classical Muslim scholars successfully integrated intellectual excellence with strong moral integrity. Although Indonesian students have demonstrated outstanding academic achievements at the international level, persistent issues such as bullying, student violence, misuse of social media, and declining respect for teachers and parents indicate that intellectual success has not always been accompanied by moral development (KPAI, 2026; BKKBN Republik Indonesia, 2025). These challenges underscore the urgent need for an educational paradigm that integrates knowledge with *akhlaq*, reflecting the Islamic tradition in which intellectual achievement and moral character are inseparable foundations of human excellence.

In the Islamic intellectual tradition, the integration of knowledge and moral character is reflected in the works and lives of classical Muslim scholars, who regarded intellectual development and ethical formation as inseparable. Among them, Ibn al-Haytham occupies a distinctive position. Although he is widely recognized for his pioneering contributions to optics and the scientific method, his work *Tahdhīb al-Akhlaq* demonstrates that he also emphasized moral education and self-cultivation. This illustrates his view that the pursuit of knowledge should be accompanied by the development of noble character and ethical self-discipline (al-Ḥaitsam, n.d.).

An important methodological consideration in this study concerns the authorship of *Tahdhīb al-Akhlaq*. The attribution of ethical works bearing this title is not straightforward, as the title is associated with distinct works and scholarly traditions. Ibn Miskawayh is widely associated with *Tahdhīb al-Akhlaq wa-Taṭhīr al-A'rāq*, while Yaḥyā ibn 'Adī is recognized in modern scholarship as the author of a work entitled *Kitāb Tahdhīb al-Akhlaq* (al-Khatib, 2024). The present study follows the attribution to Ibn al-Haytham advanced by Nasim al-Hawwārī on the basis of philological and biographical considerations. This attribution is adopted as the working position of the study rather than presented as an uncontested scholarly consensus. Accordingly, the analysis focuses on the text identified and examined within this attributional framework, while acknowledging that the question of authorship remains relevant to its historical interpretation.

Despite Ibn al-Haytham's prominence as a pioneering scientist, his contribution to moral education requires further examination, particularly regarding the methods through which moral character is cultivated. A previous study by Amin et al., (2025), entitled "A Philosophical Reconstruction of Ibn al-Haytham's Moral Educational Objectives", published in *Ta'dibuna*, reconstructed Ibn al-Haytham's moral educational thought based on *Tahdhīb al-Akhlaq* and identified thirteen educational objectives grouped into three dimensions: self-formative, social-relational, and transcendental-moral. While that study focused on the objectives or ends of moral education: explaining why moral education is necessary and what it seeks to achieve the present study examines the methods of moral education, focusing on how those objectives can be cultivated through specific educational processes and practices. Accordingly, the

distinction between the two studies lies not in their primary source or general subject matter, but in their analytical focus: the previous study reconstructed the objectives of moral education, whereas the present study investigates eight methods through which Ibn al-Haytham's moral educational ideals may be developed. By examining these methods in relation to the previously identified educational objectives, this study seeks to provide a complementary analysis of Ibn al-Haytham's moral educational thought and clarify the relationship between its intended outcomes and the processes through which moral character is formed.

B. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a library research design to reconstruct Ibn al-Haytham's concept of moral education (Amin et al., 2025). The primary source of data was *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*, a work in which Ibn al-Haytham articulates his ethical thought beyond his widely recognized contributions to mathematics, optics, astronomy, medicine, and natural philosophy. Secondary sources included classical and contemporary literature on Islamic moral education, Islamic philosophy, and previous studies on Ibn al-Haytham's intellectual legacy. Data were collected through systematic document analysis and analyzed using qualitative content analysis. The analytical process involved identifying, classifying, interpreting, and synthesizing textual evidence to reconstruct the conceptual framework (Schreiber & Cramer, 2024) of an interpretive reconstruction presented in *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*. To enhance analytical rigor, Ibn al-Haytham's definition of *akhlaq* was compared with those proposed by prominent Muslim scholars, including Ibn Sina, Ibn Miskawayh, al-Ghazali, and Ibn al-Qayyim, in order to identify both the shared philosophical foundations and the distinctive features of his conception of moral education. The comparative framework adopted in this study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of the Definitions of *Akhlaq* According to Classical Muslim Scholars

Scholar	Core Definition	Key Elements	Distinctive Features
Ibn Sina (Avicenna)	Moral character (<i>akhlaq</i>) is a faculty of the soul that enables a person to perform actions with ease, without prior deliberation or conscious reflection.	Inclination of the soul, ease of action, spontaneity	Emphasizes <i>akhlaq</i> as a faculty or capacity of the soul.
Ibn Miskawayh	<i>Akhlaq</i> is a state of the soul that leads a person to perform actions without deliberation or conscious reflection.	State of the soul, inclination to act, spontaneity	Highlights the inner state of the soul as the source of human behavior.
Al-Ghazali	<i>Akhlaq</i> is a firmly established disposition within the soul that gives rise to actions easily and spontaneously, without	Stability of the soul, spontaneity, habituation	Introduces the concept of <i>rasikhah</i> (a deeply rooted and enduring disposition).

	prior reflection or deliberation.		
Ibn al-Qayyim	The soul is a living, luminous, and dynamic substance that serves as the source of human actions.	Spiritual substance, vitality, dynamism	Provides an ontological foundation for understanding moral character.
Ibn al-Haytham	<i>Akhlaq</i> is a stable state of the soul through which a person performs actions without deliberation or intentional choice.	State of the soul, spontaneity, automaticity of behavior	Emphasizes that <i>akhlaq</i> has become an enduring condition of the soul, from which virtuous actions arise naturally and effortlessly.

Overall, this methodological framework enables a systematic reconstruction of Ibn al-Haytham's concept of moral education while ensuring the validity of the interpretation through comparative textual analysis. The findings derived from this approach provide the basis for discussing the conceptual framework and contemporary relevance of his educational thought in the following section.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Characteristics of *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*

Tahdhib al-Akhlaq reflects a distinctive approach to moral thought within the Islamic intellectual tradition. Its characteristics can be identified through the scope of its discussion, the diversity of moral concepts it employs, and the contextual and sociological dimensions underlying its treatment of moral character. The researcher discusses the following:

a. A Product of the Fourth-Century AH Intellectual Tradition

Tahdhib al-Akhlaq is a product of the classical Islamic intellectual tradition that flourished during the fourth century AH, a period marked by significant developments in philosophy, medicine, mathematics, and the rational sciences.

b. Intended for All Levels of Society

Although Ibn al-Haytham's work is relatively concise, it is not intended exclusively for individuals with deficient moral character, nor is it limited to those who have already attained a high level of moral development. Rather, *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* is addressed to people at all levels of moral development, ranging from those with serious moral deficiencies to those who have attained a high degree of moral perfection. In this sense, the work is intended for humanity as a whole. This inclusive orientation is explicitly indicated in its introduction, where Ibn al-Haytham states:

وَقَدْ يَنْتَبِهْ أَيْضًا بِمَا نَذْكُرُهُ مَنْ كَانَتْ لَهُ عُيُوبٌ قَدْ اِشْتَبَهَتْ عَلَيْهِ، وَهُوَ مَعَ ذَلِكَ يُطْلُئُهُ اللَّهُ فِي غَايَةِ الْكَمَالِ

“It may be that what we have discussed here will awaken a person who still possesses a hidden deficiency or ambiguity, while mistakenly believing himself to have attained the level of the morally perfect.”

This statement indicates that the process of *tahdhib al-akhlaq* the refinement and cultivation of moral character is a lifelong educational process. Moral development does not cease at a particular stage of human life; rather, it must be continuously pursued and practiced throughout one's lifetime. Thus, moral education, in Ibn al-Haytham's perspective, is not a temporary process but a continuous endeavor aimed at refining the soul and perfecting human character.

c. Employs Detailed and Diverse Moral Terminology

One of the distinctive characteristics of this work is its use of detailed and diverse moral terminology. Among the concepts discussed are *al-bishr*, *al-munāfasah*, *al-sharh*, *al-tabadhdhul*, *al-quhhah*, and *al-kharq*, among others.

d. Discusses More Than Forty Moral Traits

One of the notable strengths of *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* is its conciseness, as the work consists of fewer than one hundred pages. Despite its brevity, it covers a wide range of issues related to moral character, including its definition, the classification of the soul, 21 virtuous moral traits, 23 blameworthy traits, and four moral qualities that may be regarded as virtues in certain circumstances but as vices in others.

e. Adopts a Contextual Understanding of Certain Moral Traits

Ibn al-Haytham does not merely distinguish between virtuous and blameworthy moral traits; he also identifies certain qualities whose moral value depends on the context in which they are manifested. Among these is the desire to be honored and respected. According to Ibn al-Haytham, such a disposition may be considered appropriate in childhood, when recognition can contribute to moral development. However, for adults, particularly those who have attained a position of social or intellectual prominence, an excessive desire for praise and recognition cannot be regarded as a noble moral quality. He explains that praise is appropriate when a virtue is uncommon or rarely practiced (*mustaghrabah*). By contrast, those who already belong to the *ahl al-fadl* (people of virtue) should not become overly pleased with praise or regard their virtuous conduct as something extraordinary. This distinction demonstrates Ibn al-Haytham's contextual understanding of moral character, in which the ethical value of a particular disposition may vary according to a person's age, status, and circumstances.

f. Employs a Sociological Approach to Moral Character

Beyond defining each moral trait he discusses, Ibn al-Haytham also identifies the types of individuals for whom certain moral qualities are particularly appropriate, as well as those who should be especially cautious of them. In this way, he relates moral character to an individual's profession, social status, and role within society. His approach therefore demonstrates that moral conduct should not be understood in isolation, but also in relation to the social position, responsibilities, and circumstances of the individual.

Table 2. Summary of the Characteristics and Distinctive Features of *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*

No.	Characteristic	Description
1	A Product of the Fourth-Century AH Islamic Intellectual Tradition	Written during the flourishing of Islamic scholarship, a period marked by the advancement of philosophy and the rational sciences.
2	Intended for All Members of Society	Addressed to individuals at every stage of moral development, from those with significant moral deficiencies to those striving for moral perfection.
3	Employs a Detailed Moral Terminology	Presents a wide range of moral concepts (<i>akhlaq</i>), each defined with precision and conceptual clarity.
4	Examines More Than Forty Moral Traits	Covers the definition of <i>akhlaq</i> , the classification of the soul, virtuous and blameworthy traits, as well as context-dependent moral qualities.
5	Adopts a Contextual Approach to Moral Character	Recognizes that certain moral qualities should be understood in relation to factors such as age, social status, position, and particular circumstances.
6	Incorporates a Sociological Perspective	Relates moral character to one's profession, social status, and role within society, highlighting the social dimension of ethical conduct.

2. Critical Notes on Tahdhib al-Akhlaq

Before examining the critical aspects of the *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*, researcher first summarizes its substantive content as follows:

Table 3. Summary of the Contents of Tahdhib al-Akhlaq

Section	Content
Pendahuluan	The significance of moral character and the importance of distinguishing between virtuous and blameworthy traits.
Soul Connection	The classification of the soul into <i>shahwaniyyah</i> , <i>ghadabiyyah</i> , and <i>'aqilah</i> , along with their respective characteristics.
Moral Character	An explanation of various virtuous and blameworthy moral traits.
Moral Formation	Methods for cultivating virtuous character and improving moral disposition.
Conclusion	The characteristics of a person who has attained noble moral character (<i>al-insan al-tamm</i>).

Based on the foregoing discussion, the author argues that the structure of *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* is neither encyclopedic nor alphabetical in its organization. Rather, the work follows a philosophical structure integrated with a thematic approach. This systematic arrangement demonstrates that Ibn al-Haytham develops his discussion progressively, moving from philosophical foundations toward the practical implementation of moral education.

No human work is entirely perfect; absolute perfection belongs only to the Book of Allah (*Al-Qur'an al-Karim*). As discussed above, *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* possesses

numerous strengths. Nevertheless, because it is a human work, several critical observations can be identified, including the following:

a. Its Discussion Is Highly Concise

One limitation of *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* is the relative brevity of its discussion. Several important concepts, including the classification of the soul, virtuous and blameworthy moral traits, and methods of moral formation, are often presented in general terms without extensive elaboration or detailed practical examples. Consequently, readers may need to consult other works to gain a more comprehensive understanding of these concepts.

b. Its Structure Is Not Systematically Organized

The structure of the discussion in *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* is not organized in as much detail as the works of Islamic ethics that emerged in later periods. Several themes are interconnected without a clearly structured division of chapters, requiring careful reading to understand the relationships among the ideas presented.

c. Limited Discussion of Spiritual Dimensions

Compared with the *Sufi-oriented* works on moral education that emerged in later periods, *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* places greater emphasis on the rational and psychological dimensions of moral development than on spiritual dimensions and inner spiritual experience.

3. Ibn al-Haytham's Methods of Moral Education

In general, a method can be understood as a systematic and effective means of achieving predetermined objectives (Ramdani et al., 2023). In the context of education, Purnama (2018) states that a method serves as a means of transmitting values, knowledge, and skills to learners so that educational objectives can be achieved effectively.

The following discussion focuses on Ibn al-Haytham's methods of moral education. Based on an analysis of *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*, Ibn al-Haytham not only discusses the objectives and content of moral education but also provides guidance on how to cultivate virtuous character and eliminate blameworthy traits. Although his discussion is not explicitly organized into a dedicated section on educational methods, various concepts and principles dispersed throughout the work can be reconstructed into a coherent framework of moral education methods.

The analysis indicates that several methods can be identified as means of cultivating learners' moral character from Ibn al-Haytham's perspective. These methods are derived from his various statements concerning habituation, character formation, self-discipline, and the development of human moral potential. Although this conception bears considerable resemblance to that of Ibn Miskawayh (Ibad & Setiyorini, 2025), but Ibn al-Haytham provides greater specificity in several aspects of moral formation. Accordingly, the methods of moral education reconstructed in this study represent a synthesis of the various concepts found in *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*.

The methods of moral education reconstructed from Ibn al-Haytham's thought are as follows:

Table 4. Ibn al-Haytham's methods of moral education

No.	Methods	Pages
1	<i>al-Riyadhah</i> (Moral Training and Exercise)	32, 35, 43,
2	<i>Tafakkur</i> (Deep Reflection)	36, 37, 44, 46, 82
3	<i>Ta'dib</i> (Moral Cultivation and Discipline)	39, 40, 41, 43
4	<i>al-Nafyu</i> (Isolation or Withdrawal)	40
5	<i>al-Uswah wa al-Iqtida</i> (Exemplary Conduct and Emulation)	45, 46, 82
6	<i>Muhasabah</i> (Self-Evaluation)	71, 93
7	<i>al-Ishlah</i> (Moral Reform and Improvement)	71
8	<i>Targhib</i> (Motivation and Encouragement)	33

a. The Method of *al-Riyadhah* (Moral Training and Exercise)

One of the methods of moral education that can be reconstructed from Ibn al-Haytham's thought is the method of *al-riyadhah* (moral training and exercise). This method receives considerable attention in *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* and is mentioned repeatedly throughout various discussions. According to Ibn al-Haytham, moral formation cannot be achieved merely through the acquisition of knowledge; rather, it requires continuous practice and training until virtuous conduct becomes an established character trait. Among his statements is the following:

وَنَدُلُّ أَيْضًا عَلَى طَرِيقِ الْإِزْتِيَاذِ بِالْمَحْمُودِ مِنْ أَنْوَاعِهِ وَالتَّدْرِبِ بِهِ، وَتَتَكَبُّ الْمَذْمُومُ مِنْهَا وَتَجَنُّبُهُ، حَتَّى يَصِيرَ لِلْمُرْتَاذِ بِهِ دِيدَنًا وَعَادَةً وَسَّيِّئَةً وَطَبْعًا،

“We also demonstrate the method of training oneself in various virtuous qualities and habituating oneself to them, while avoiding and refraining from blameworthy traits, until such training becomes a continuously practiced custom (*dīdan*), an established habit (*ādah*), an ingrained disposition (*sajīyyah*), and a natural temperament (*ṭabʿ*) in the person who practices it.”

This statement indicates that the purpose of *al-riyadhah* according to Ibn al-Haytham is not merely to produce temporary virtuous behavior, but to transform such behavior into an established habit, an ingrained disposition, and ultimately a natural temperament (Rohman et al., 2026). This demonstrates that ideal moral education should not remain at the cognitive level but should extend to the formation of enduring character.

Ibn al-Haytham's view is consistent with the Islamic educational perspective, which recognizes the existence of innate potential within human beings while emphasizing that such potential requires cultivation and training to develop into virtuous character (Munawarsyah, 2023). Elsewhere, Ibn al-Haytham explains that noble character may be innate in some individuals, whereas others can acquire it only through *al-riyadhah*, namely continuous training and practice. He states:

وَالْخُلُقُ قَدْ يَكُونُ فِي بَعْضِ النَّاسِ غَرِيزَةً وَطَبْعًا، وَفِي بَعْضِهِمْ لَا يَكُونُ إِلَّا بِالرِّيَاضَةِ.

“Indeed, for some people, moral character is innate and part of their natural disposition, whereas others attain such noble character only through the method of *riyadhah*.”

Ibn al-Haytham's consistent use of the concept of *al-riyāḍah* can also be observed in his discussion of the education and discipline of the irascible soul (*ta'dib al-nafs al-ghaḍabiyyah*). He states:

فَمِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ وَجَبَ أَنْ يُرَوِّضَ الْإِنْسَانُ نَفْسَهُ الْعَصَبِيَّةَ حَتَّى تَتَقَادَ لَهُ فَيَمْلِكَهَا وَيَسْتَعْمِلَهَا فِي الْمَوَاضِعِ الَّتِي
يَجِبُ اسْتِعْمَالُهَا فِيهَا

“Therefore, it is necessary for a person to train his irascible soul until it becomes obedient to him, enabling him to exercise control over it and employ it in circumstances where it ought properly to be employed.”

This statement demonstrates that the method of *al-riyāḍah* is not limited to the formation of outward behavior but also extends to the regulation of human inner dispositions. The tendency toward anger is not to be eliminated altogether; rather, it should be disciplined so that it can be controlled and directed proportionately in accordance with the demands of virtuous moral conduct.

Linguistically, the term *yurawwiḍ* derives from the root *rāḍa*, meaning “to train,” “discipline,” or “tame.” In Arabic usage, the expression *rāḍa al-muhr* refers to training a young horse until it becomes docile and manageable. As stated in *al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ* (Al-Fairūz, 2004):

وَرَأَى الْمُهْرَ رِيَاضًا وَرِيَاضَةً: دَلَّلَهُ

“He trained the young horse through exercise until it became docile.”

This linguistic meaning reinforces the conceptual significance of *al-riyāḍah* in Ibn al-Haytham's moral thought. Moral training is understood as a process of disciplining and habituating the soul, rather than suppressing or eliminating its natural faculties. Just as a young horse must undergo repeated training before it can be controlled and directed appropriately, the human soul requires continuous practice before its various tendencies can be brought under rational control and directed toward virtuous conduct.

This statement demonstrates that, according to Ibn al-Haytham, the source of moral character is not limited to natural disposition but can also be cultivated through education and habituation. Consequently, every learner has the potential to improve and develop their moral character through appropriate educational processes.

Based on the foregoing discussion, *al-riyāḍah* in Ibn al-Haytham's thought has several key characteristics. First, it is practiced gradually and continuously. Second, it is oriented toward the formation of habits rather than merely the acquisition of moral knowledge. Third, it addresses both the outward and inward dimensions of human character. Fourth, it aims to transform virtuous conduct into an enduring disposition within the individual.

Based on the analysis of Ibn al-Haytham's statements above, it can be concluded that *al-riyadhah* is a method of moral education based on continuous, gradual, and consistent practice aimed at cultivating virtuous habits, character, and disposition in learners. Therefore, the success of moral education, according to Ibn al-Haytham, should not be measured merely by the extent of an individual's moral knowledge, but by their ability to internalize moral values and manifest them consistently in their character and everyday conduct.

b. The Method of *Tafakkur* (Deep Reflection)

Another method of moral education that can be reconstructed from Ibn al-Haytham's thought is deep reflection (*al-tafakkur*). This method is evident throughout various discussions in *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*. Ibn al-Haytham demonstrates that moral formation is achieved not only through habituation but also through the use of reason to recognize, evaluate, and select virtuous conduct while avoiding blameworthy behavior.

When discussing the origins of blameworthy moral traits, Ibn al-Haytham states:

أَنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ إِذَا اسْتَرْسَلَ مَعَ طَبْعِهِ، وَلَمْ يَسْتَغْمِلِ الْفِكْرَ وَلَا التَّمْيِيزَ وَلَا الْحَيَاءَ وَلَا التَّحَفُّظَ، كَانَ الْغَالِبُ عَلَيْهِ أَخْلَاقُ
الْبَهَائِمِ

“When a person allows his natural inclinations to run unchecked and fails to employ reason, discernment, modesty, and self-restraint, animalistic traits will come to dominate his character.”

This statement demonstrates that, according to Ibn al-Haytham, reason plays an essential role in moral education. A person who fails to exercise reflection and consider the consequences of his actions is more susceptible to being dominated by desires and impulses. Conversely, the proper use of reason enables individuals to regulate such tendencies and preserve their moral dignity.

Ibn al-Haytham further emphasizes the importance of reflection when explaining differences in how individuals respond to blameworthy moral traits. He states:

وَفِيهِمْ مَنْ يَنْبُهُ بِجَوْدَةِ الْفِكْرِ، وَقُوَّةِ التَّمْيِيزِ، عَلَى قُبْحِهَا، فَيَأْتِفُ مِنْهَا، وَيَتَصَنَّعُ لاجْتِنَائِهَا، وَذَلِكَ يَكُونُ عَنْ طَبْعِ كَرِيمٍ،
وَنَفْسٍ شَرِيفَةٍ

“Among them are those who, through the clarity of their thought and the strength of their discernment, recognize the ugliness of such traits, become averse to them, and deliberately strive to avoid them. This arises from a noble disposition and an honorable soul.”

This statement indicates that clarity of thought and the ability to distinguish between good and evil constitute important means of developing moral awareness. Virtuous character does not arise solely from habituation but also from an individual's ability to understand the moral value of an action and reflect upon its consequences.

This conception is further reinforced by Ibn al-Haytham in his discussion of the education of the rational soul (*al-nafs al-natiqah*). He states:

فَمِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ وَجِبَ أَنْ يَعْمَلَ الْإِنْسَانُ فِكْرَهُ وَيُمَيِّزَ أَخْلَاقَهُ، وَيَخْتَارَ مِنْهَا مَا كَانَ مُسْتَحْسَنًا جَمِيلًا،
وَيَنْفِي مِنْهَا مَا كَانَ مُسْتَنْكَرًا قَبِيحًا

“Therefore, it is necessary for a person to exercise his reason, discern among his moral traits, choose those that are commendable and beautiful, and reject those that are reprehensible and blameworthy.”

This statement shows that moral education, according to Ibn al-Haytham, should develop reflective capacity within learners. They should not merely be taught to distinguish between good and bad conduct but should also be guided to understand why certain moral qualities are considered virtuous and why others should be avoided.

The method of *tafakkur* is further evident in Ibn al-Haytham's discussion of human relationships with others. He states:

وَإِذَا أَعْمَلَ الْإِنْسَانُ فِكْرَهُ، رَأَى أَنَّ ذَلِكَ وَاجِبٌ، لِأَنَّ النَّاسَ إِمَّا أَنْ يَكُونُوا فَضْلَاءَ أَوْ نُقْصَاءَ

“When a person exercises his reason, he will recognize that this is obligatory, because people are either virtuous or deficient.”

Through the proper use of reason, a person can recognize that those who possess virtue deserve respect, whereas those who have shortcomings deserve compassion and guidance. Thus, like Hedberg (2017) stated that sound reflection can lead to appropriate and ethical social conduct.

Based on the foregoing analysis, Ibn al-Haytham's method of *tafakkur* can be understood as a process of moral education that activates the faculty of reason to engage in reflection, moral evaluation, and critical consideration of human conduct. Through this method, learners are guided to consciously recognize virtue and vice, enabling them to choose virtuous character and reject blameworthy traits. Accordingly, Ibn al-Haytham's conception of moral education extends beyond the formation of habitual behavior to the development of moral awareness grounded in rational reflection and conscious deliberation.

c. The Method of *Ta'dib* (Moral Cultivation and Discipline)

Another method of moral education that can be reconstructed from Ibn al-Haytham's thought is *al-ta'dib*. Having emphasized the importance of habituation (*al-riyadhah*) and the development of moral awareness through reflection (*al-tafakkur*), Ibn al-Haytham also indicates the necessity of disciplining and regulating the soul so that negative tendencies within the human being do not dominate his life. He states:

وَهَذِهِ النَّفْسُ قَوِيَّةٌ جَدًّا مَتَى لَمْ يَفْهَرْهَا الْإِنْسَانُ وَيُؤَدِّبْهَا مَلَكَتُهُ وَاسْتَوَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ. فَإِذَا اسْتَوَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ، عَسَرَ تَذْهِيبُهَا
وَصَعِبَ قَمْعُهَا وَتَذْلِيلُهَا

“This soul is exceedingly powerful. If a person does not overcome and discipline it, it will take possession of him and dominate him. Once it has gained control over him, refining it becomes difficult, and restraining and subduing it becomes increasingly arduous.”

This statement indicates that, according to Ibn al-Haytham, the human appetite or desirous soul cannot be allowed to develop without restraint. The *nafs al-shahwaniyyah* must be guided and disciplined so that it remains under the control of reason and moral values. If this process is neglected, desire may dominate the individual, making moral instruction and subsequent reform increasingly difficult.

Ibn al-Haytham further explains that a person dominated by desire will lose many noble qualities and tend to exhibit behavior resembling that of animals. Such consequences include the loss of modesty, engagement in futile activities, avoidance of righteous people, attraction to corrupt environments, and affection for those who engage in sinful and immoral conduct. This demonstrates that the purpose of *al-ta'dib* is not to suppress human psychological faculties altogether, but to direct them so that they develop in accordance with human nature (*fiṭrah*) and moral principles.

The concept of *al-ta'dib* also appears in Ibn al-Haytham's discussion of the responsibility of political authorities toward society. He states:

وَاجِبًا عَلَى مُتَوَلَّى السِّيَاسَاتِ تَقْوِيَهُمْ وَتَأْدِيبَهُمْ

“It is incumbent upon those entrusted with governing to reform and discipline them.”

In his subsequent discussion, Ibn al-Haytham even proposes preventive measures to prevent immoral behavior from spreading throughout society, particularly among children who remain highly susceptible to the influence of their surrounding environment. This demonstrates that moral education, in his view, is not merely curative but also preventive, aimed at preventing blameworthy traits from developing into deeply rooted habits that become difficult to eradicate.

The concept of *al-ta'dib* is further evident in Ibn al-Haytham's discussion of the education of the irascible soul (*al-nafs al-ghadabiyyah*). According to him, the irascible soul must be guided and disciplined so that it can give rise to virtuous qualities such as patience, composure, and justice. He states:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ سَاسَ نَفْسَهُ الْعَصِيَّةَ وَأَدَبَهَا وَفَمَعَهَا كَانَ حَلِيمًا وَقَوْرًا عَادِلًا مَحْمُودَ الطَّرِيقَةِ

“Whoever governs, disciplines, and restrains his irascible soul will become patient, composed, just, and praiseworthy in conduct.”

Thus, the purpose of *al-ta'dib* is not to eliminate the inherent faculties of the human soul, but to direct and regulate them so that they are employed appropriately and in accordance with their proper purposes.

Based on an analysis of Ibn al-Haytham's various statements, *al-ta'dib* can be understood as a process of moral education involving the cultivation, guidance, regulation, and refinement of human psychological faculties so that they develop in accordance with moral values. Through this method, learners are not merely habituated to virtuous conduct or encouraged to reflect upon moral values; they are also guided to regulate their inner impulses, thereby developing a balanced personality.

Accordingly, the reconstruction of Ibn al-Haytham's concept of *al-ta'dib* indicates that it constitutes a systematic process of moral formation through the guidance and cultivation of the soul's faculties. Its primary aim is to regulate negative tendencies and develop positive ones, ultimately producing individuals who are capable of governing themselves in accordance with the principles of noble moral character.

d. The Method of *al-Nafyu* (Social Corrective Intervention)

Another method of moral education that can be reconstructed from Ibn al-Haytham's thought is *al-nafy*, or separation. This method emerges in Ibn al-Haytham's discussion of individuals who have become dominated by the appetitive soul (*nafs al-shahwaniyyah*), thereby losing the ability to exercise self-control and tending to commit various moral transgressions in pursuit of their desires. Ibn al-Haytham states:

وَاجِبًا عَلَى مُتَوَلَّى السِّيَاسَاتِ تَقْوِيَهُمْ وَتَأْدِيبَهُمْ وَنَفْيَهُمْ

“Those entrusted with governing are obliged to reform, discipline, and, when necessary, separate such individuals from society.”

This statement indicates that, according to Ibn al-Haytham, moral education is not limited to habituation and character cultivation but, under certain circumstances, also requires preventive and corrective measures to protect both individuals and society from the harmful effects of deviant behavior. In this context, *al-nafy* is not an ultimate educational objective but rather a means of preventing greater harm.

Notably, Ibn al-Haytham does not present separation as the initial measure. He first mentions *taqwim* (reform or correction) and *ta'dib* (discipline and education), followed by *al-nafy* (separation). This sequence suggests that separation is intended as a last resort when processes of guidance, discipline, and moral education have proven insufficient to regulate deviant behavior.

In his discussion, Ibn al-Haytham explains that individuals who have become dominated by their desires to the extent that they resort to any means necessary to satisfy them may exert a harmful influence on society, particularly on children and individuals whose moral character remains vulnerable to external influences. Therefore, such individuals should, in his view, be removed from environments in which their behavior may negatively affect others until their conduct can be appropriately reformed.

This concept also finds a basis within the Islamic tradition. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ applied the measure of exile in certain cases. ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar narrated:

عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ ضَرَبَ وَعَزَّبَ، وَأَنَّ أَبَا بَكْرٍ ضَرَبَ وَعَزَّبَ، وَأَنَّ عُمَرَ ضَرَبَ وَعَزَّبَ

“Ibn ‘Umar reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ administered corporal punishment and exile, and that Abu Bakr likewise administered corporal punishment and exile, as did ‘Umar.” (Narrated by al-Tirmidhi)

This hadith demonstrates that the concept of separation or exile was recognized within the Islamic tradition as one form of corrective and preventive intervention in response to certain forms of misconduct. However, in Ibn al-Haytham's thought, the emphasis is not primarily on punishment but rather on protecting society while providing an opportunity for the individual's moral reform.

In the context of contemporary education, the concept of *al-nafy* can be understood more broadly as an effort to separate learners from environments that may adversely affect their moral development and to place them in settings that are more conducive to character formation. Thus, the essence of this method does not necessarily lie in physically isolating an individual from society, but rather in creating an educational environment that supports moral rehabilitation while preventing the spread of negative behavior.

Based on the analysis of Ibn al-Haytham's statement, *al-nafy* can therefore be understood as a method of moral education involving the temporary separation of an individual from an environment that exerts a detrimental influence on his or her moral development, with the dual purpose of facilitating further guidance and protecting the wider community from the consequences of deviant behavior. Accordingly, this method performs preventive, corrective, and educational functions within Ibn al-Haytham's broader framework of moral education.

e. The Method of *al-Uswah wa al-Iqtida* (Exemplary Conduct and Emulation)

Another method of moral education that can be reconstructed from Ibn al-Haytham's thought is the method of exemplary conduct (*al-uswah wa al-iqtidā'*). Although Ibn al-Haytham does not explicitly use the term "method of exemplary conduct," several of his statements indicate that moral formation is strongly influenced by the people within an individual's social environment, particularly during childhood. Ibn al-Haytham states:

فَإِنَّ الْحَدَثَ النَّاشِئَ يَكْتَسِبُ الْأَخْلَاقَ مِمَّنْ يَكْثُرُ مُلَابَسَتُهُ وَمُخَالَطَتُهُ مِنْ أَبِيهِ وَأُمِّهِ وَأَهْلِيهِ وَعَشِيرَتِهِ

"Indeed, a growing child acquires moral traits from those with whom he frequently interacts and associates, including his father, mother, family, and relatives."

This statement demonstrates that, according to Ibn al-Haytham, a child's moral formation does not occur independently of his or her surrounding environment. Rather, character develops through continuous social interaction with the people around the individual. The family constitutes the first educational environment and plays a fundamental role in shaping a child's moral development.

Accordingly, the success of moral education depends not only on the transmission of knowledge, advice, and moral instruction but also on the quality of the examples provided by parents, family members, and the surrounding social environment. The more virtuous the environment in which an individual grows, the greater the opportunity for noble character to develop within that person.

The concept of exemplary conduct is further emphasized by Ibn al-Haytham in his discussion of the education of the rational soul. He states:

“And one should strive to emulate those who are virtuous.”

This statement indicates that moral formation does not occur merely through the passive influence of one's environment. It also requires conscious effort on the part of the individual to identify virtuous role models and intentionally emulate their moral qualities. Thus, exemplary conduct in Ibn al-Haytham's thought involves both environmental influence and the individual's conscious effort to imitate virtue.

Furthermore, Ibn al-Haytham explains:

وَمِمَّا يُصْلِحُ النَّفْسَ النَّاطِقَةَ وَيُقْوِيهَا أَيْضًا مُجَالَسَةُ أَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ وَمُخَالَطَتُهُمْ وَالْإِقْتِدَاءُ بِأَخْلَاقِهِمْ وَعَادَاتِهِمْ، وَخَاصَّةً أَصْحَابُ
عُلُومِ الْحَقَائِقِ

“Among the things that reform and strengthen the rational soul are associating and interacting with people of knowledge and emulating their moral qualities and habits, particularly those who possess knowledge of ultimate realities.”

This statement demonstrates that Ibn al-Haytham places particular emphasis on the importance of choosing a virtuous social environment. According to him, learned and morally upright individuals serve not only as sources of knowledge but also as role models whose character and habits can contribute to an individual's moral development.

Based on these statements, the method of exemplary conduct in Ibn al-Haytham's thought can be reconstructed as a process of moral education through interaction with individuals who possess virtuous character, accompanied by a conscious effort to emulate their conduct. As Munawwaroh (2019) stated, this method operates through three primary environments: the family as the first educational environment, society as the broader social environment, and scholars and righteous individuals as moral and intellectual role models.

Thus, the success of moral education according to Ibn al-Haytham is determined not merely by the amount of advice or instruction provided but also by the quality of the role models present in learners' lives. The more virtuous the examples they observe and consciously emulate, the greater the likelihood that noble moral character will become internalized within them.

f. The Method of *Muhasabah* (Self-Evaluation)

Another method of moral education that can be reconstructed from Ibn al-Haytham's thought is *muḥāsabah*, or self-evaluation. Although Ibn al-Haytham does not explicitly employ the term *al-muhasabah*, several of his statements emphasize the importance of self-discipline and the examination of one's shortcomings as integral components of moral development. Ibn al-Haytham states:

فَإِنَّ مَنْ لَمْ يَتَعَمَّلْ لِضَبْطِ نَفْسِهِ وَيَتَفَقَّدَ عُيُوبَهُ لَمْ يَحُلْ مِنْ عُيُوبٍ كَثِيرَةٍ

“Indeed, whoever does not strive to discipline and control himself and examine his own shortcomings will not be free from numerous faults.”

This statement demonstrates that, according to Ibn al-Haytham, moral formation requires an awareness of the need for continuous self-evaluation. It is not sufficient for an individual merely to understand the concepts of good and bad character; one must also be able to recognize one's own shortcomings and make a conscious effort to correct them.

Two essential elements of muḥāsabah can be identified from this statement. First, self-control (*dabt al-nafs*), namely the ability to regulate impulses and tendencies that may lead an individual toward blameworthy conduct. Second, the examination of one's shortcomings and faults (*tafaqqud al-'uyub*). These two elements complement one another in the process of moral formation: self-control prevents the emergence of negative behavior, while self-examination enables individuals to identify aspects of themselves that require improvement.

Interestingly, Ibn al-Haytham employs the verbs *يَتَعَمَّلُ* and *يَتَفَقَّدُ*, both in the *fi'l muḍari'* (imperfect verb) form. The use of this grammatical form conveys a sense of continuity and ongoing action. Thus, self-evaluation in Ibn al-Haytham's thought is not an occasional activity but a continuous process that should accompany an individual throughout life (Amin et al., 2025).

This concept further demonstrates that *muhasabah*, from Ibn al-Haytham's perspective, does not end with acknowledging one's mistakes. Rather, it must be followed by a conscious effort to reform oneself so that blameworthy traits can be removed and replaced with virtuous ones. This process is consistent with the broader purpose of moral education, which seeks not merely to develop moral knowledge but also to cultivate virtuous character.

In an educational context, the method of muhasabah can be implemented by habituating learners to periodically evaluate their own conduct, identify mistakes they have made, and make efforts to improve their behavior in subsequent situations. Through this approach, learners are not merely passive recipients of moral instruction but become active participants in the process of shaping and developing their own character (Arif, 2024).

Based on the foregoing discussion, *muhasabah* in Ibn al-Haytham's thought can be reconstructed as a method of moral education based on continuous self-control and self-evaluation, through which individuals identify, correct, and gradually eliminate their shortcomings in order to cultivate virtuous character as an enduring part of their personality.

g. The Method of *al-Ishlah* (Moral Reform and Improvement)

Erroneous theories must be corrected, and false or misguided knowledge must be rectified. This applies not only to knowledge in general but also to moral understanding and ethical conduct. This principle can be observed in the following statement by Ibn al-Haytham:

فَإِنَّ النَّاسَ إِنَّمَا يَتَفَاضِلُونَ عَلَى الْحَقِيقَةِ بِفَضَائِلِهِمْ، لَا كَمَا يَعْتَقِدُ الْجُهَالُ وَالْعَامَّةُ أَنَّهُمْ يَتَفَاضِلُونَ بِأَحْوَالِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَكَثْرَةِ الدَّخَائِرِ وَالْأَعْرَاضِ، فَإِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ إِنَّمَا يَتَفَاخَرُونَ بِالدَّخَائِرِ وَالْأَمْوَالِ وَالْآلَاتِ، وَيُعْظَمُونَ أَبَدًا الْأَغْنِيَاءَ وَذَوِي الْأَمْوَالِ، وَلَا يَتَرْتَبُ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ إِلَّا بِكَثْرَةِ الْأَمْوَالِ أَوْ الْجَاهِ الْمُكْتَسَبِ بِالْمَالِ، وَلَيْسَ كَثْرَةُ الْأَمْوَالِ مِمَّا يَتَفَاضَلُ بِهِ النَّاسُ، بَلْ كَثْرَةُ الْأَمْوَالِ إِنَّمَا يَتَفَاضَلُ بِهَا أَحْوَالُ النَّاسِ

“In reality, people differ in rank according to their virtues, not as the ignorant and the common people assume that they differ in rank on the basis of their circumstances, wealth, possessions, and worldly goods. Most people take pride in their possessions, wealth, and material resources, continually honoring the wealthy and those who possess riches. They place one person above another only on account of abundant wealth or social status acquired through wealth. Yet the abundance of wealth is not what determines people's true distinction; rather, wealth merely differentiates their worldly circumstances.”

Ibn al-Haytham presents this argument as a critique of the way some people perceive wealth and social status. Interestingly, the social phenomenon he observed in his time remains relevant today. Wealthy individuals may still receive preferential treatment compared with those of more modest means. For example, parents of students who arrive at an educational institution in expensive vehicles may sometimes receive more enthusiastic greetings than those who arrive in ordinary vehicles.

Through this argument, Ibn al-Haytham seeks to educate and remind Muslims that such attitudes are fundamentally misguided and therefore must be critically examined and abandoned. A person's dignity and status should never be measured by worldly possessions, such as the amount of wealth one possesses, the extent of one's land, the amount of savings, the luxury of one's private vehicle, one's position, or one's social standing. Rather, genuine distinctions among people are determined by their *faḍīlah*, namely their virtues and moral qualities.

From this perspective, *al-islah* can be understood not merely as correcting outward behavior but also as reforming erroneous perceptions and moral standards. Ibn al-Haytham demonstrates that moral education must address misconceptions that have become socially normalized, particularly when material wealth is mistakenly regarded as the measure of human worth. Moral reform therefore begins with correcting the way individuals understand virtue, dignity, and human excellence, so that their judgments are grounded in moral and intellectual virtues rather than worldly possessions.

h. The Method of *Targhib* (Motivation and Encouragement)

Another moral education method that can be reconstructed from Ibn al-Haytham's thought is the *targhib* method, or motivational approach. This method is evident in the concluding part of the introduction to *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq*, where Ibn al-Haytham explains the benefits of reading about and recognizing various virtuous qualities for individuals, whether they still have shortcomings in their moral character or have already reached a high level of moral perfection. He states:

وَكَذَلِكَ إِذَا تَصَفَّحَ الْأَخْلَاقَ الْمَحْمُودَةَ مَنْ كَانَ جَامِعًا لِأَكْثَرِهَا، عَادِمًا لِبَعْضِهَا، قَوْمٌ إِلَى التَّخَلُّقِ بِذَلِكَ الْبَعْضِ الَّذِي هُوَ
...عَادِمٌ لَهُ، وَتَأَقَّتْ نَفْسُهُ إِلَى الْإِحَاطَةِ بِجَمِيعِهَا،

“Likewise, when a person who possesses most of the virtuous qualities reads and examines them, while recognizing that he still lacks some of them, he will be encouraged to cultivate those qualities that he does not yet possess and aspire to attain all of them.”

This statement demonstrates that Ibn al-Haytham views knowledge of moral virtues as a stimulus capable of generating an internal desire for self-improvement.

A person who realizes his shortcomings after reading or studying various virtuous qualities will be motivated to address those deficiencies. Thus, *targhib* is not merely the provision of external rewards, but can also be achieved by introducing the value, merit, and beauty of virtuous conduct so that intrinsic motivation develops within the individual.

Interestingly, Ibn al-Haytham emphasizes that the benefits of *targhib* are not limited to those who still have significant moral shortcomings. Even individuals who have attained a high level of moral perfection can benefit from it. When a person recognizes that the virtuous qualities discussed in a particular work have already become his habits and natural dispositions, he experiences happiness and inner satisfaction. Moreover, when these qualities are described as good and noble, this can encourage him to maintain and continue the virtuous conduct he has already developed.

This indicates that *targhib* according to Ibn al-Haytham has two main functions, namely development and maintenance. First, *targhib* encourages individuals who still have moral deficiencies to improve and perfect their character. Second, *targhib* helps maintain virtuous qualities that have already become part of an individual's character so that they continue to be practiced consistently. Therefore, motivation is needed not only during the initial stage of moral formation but also during the process of maintaining and perfecting character.

In the context of education, the *targhib* method can be implemented by introducing the virtues of good character, explaining the benefits of virtuous conduct, appreciating positive behavior, and presenting exemplary figures or stories of individuals who possess noble character. However, based on Ibn al-Haytham's thought, its primary orientation is not merely to obtain external rewards, but to cultivate awareness and internal motivation so that individuals develop an appreciation for virtuous character and are motivated to maintain it.

Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that the *targhib* method according to Ibn al-Haytham is a process of moral education through introducing the virtues, beauty, and benefits of good character with the aim of generating internal motivation to acquire, perfect, and maintain virtuous qualities. Thus, *targhib* complements the methods of *al-riyadhah*, *al-tafakkur*, *al-ta'dib*, *al-nafyu*, *al-uswah wa al-iqtida'*, and *al-muḥasabah*. While these methods emphasize training, awareness, cultivation, control, exemplary conduct, and self-evaluation, *targhib* functions to strengthen internal motivation so that the process of moral formation continues consistently.

D. ANALYSIS/DISCUSSION

1. Ibn al-Haytham's Concept of Moral Education

The findings indicate that Ibn al-Haytham conceptualizes moral education as the transformation of the soul into a stable moral disposition from which virtuous actions arise spontaneously. Grounded in his definition of *akhlaq as hal li al-nafs*, this conception shows that moral education extends beyond the transmission of ethical knowledge or external behavioral regulation to the internalization of virtue. His emphasis on *al-riyadhah*, self-discipline, rational reflection, and the regulation of the soul demonstrates a process that moves from knowledge and reflection to practice, habituation, and ultimately stable character. This view is consistent with the broader

Islamic ethical tradition of Ibn Sina, Ibn Miskawayh, and al-Ghazali, while Ibn al-Haytham gives particular emphasis to *bila rawiyyah wa la ikhtiyar*, namely the spontaneity of virtuous conduct as an indicator of genuine moral formation.

2. Characteristics and Educational Orientation of *Tahdhib al-Akhlāq*

The analysis shows that *Tahdhib al-Akhlāq* is a concise yet comprehensive work rooted in the intellectual tradition of fourth-century Islamic scholarship, presenting moral refinement as a lifelong process applicable to all levels of human development. Its detailed and varied moral terminology, including the contextual classification of certain qualities as virtues or vices depending on age, social status, role, and circumstances, reflects Ibn al-Haytham's nuanced understanding of moral behavior. The work also emphasizes the sociological dimension of morality by relating character formation to social relationships, professions, and community roles. Although its discussion is relatively brief, less systematically organized than later works, and gives greater attention to rational and psychological dimensions than spiritual experience, *Tahdhib al-Akhlāq* provides a philosophical and thematic foundation from which a coherent framework of moral education can be reconstructed.

3. Reconstruction of Ibn al-Haytham's Methods of Moral Education

The analysis demonstrates that Ibn al-Haytham does not present a separate chapter explicitly entitled "methods of moral education." Nevertheless, various statements distributed throughout *Tahdhib al-Akhlāq* contain methodological principles that can be reconstructed into a coherent educational framework. The reconstructed methods include *al-riyadhah*, *al-tafakkur*, *al-ta'dib*, *al-nafyu*, *al-uswah wa al-iqtida'*, *al-muhasabah*, *al-islah*, and *al-targhib*. These methods can be organized into three interconnected dimensions: internal formation, social and environmental formation, and motivation and continuity.

a. Internal Formation

The first dimension concerns the internal formation and regulation of the self through four interconnected methods: *al-riyadhah*, *al-tafakkur*, *al-ta'dib*, and *al-muhasabah*. *Al-riyadhah* develops virtue through continuous practice and habituation until it becomes a stable character, while *al-tafakkur* provides the rational capacity to distinguish and choose between good and bad conduct. *Al-ta'dib* disciplines and directs the appetitive and emotional faculties so that they function appropriately, whereas *al-muhasabah* encourages continuous self-control and examination of personal shortcomings. Together, these methods show that Ibn al-Haytham's model of internal moral formation integrates habituation, rational reflection, self-discipline, and self-evaluation as mutually reinforcing processes for transforming moral behavior into stable character.

b. Social and Environmental Formation

The second dimension concerns the role of social interaction and the moral environment in shaping character. Ibn al-Haytham emphasizes that children acquire moral qualities through frequent interaction with parents, family members, and their

wider social environment, making *al-uswah wa al-iqtida'* (exemplary conduct) an essential method of moral education through association with virtuous and knowledgeable people. Meanwhile, *al-nafyu* functions as a corrective and preventive measure when harmful behavior persists despite prior efforts of *taqwim* and *ta'dib*. These findings demonstrate that Ibn al-Haytham views moral formation as socially embedded, requiring both positive role models and a conducive environment to support the development and preservation of virtuous character.

c. Motivation and Continuity

The third dimension is represented particularly by *al-targhib*. Ibn al-Haytham explains that reading and reflecting upon descriptions of virtuous qualities can motivate individuals to acquire virtues they do not yet possess. More importantly, this motivational mechanism also benefits individuals who already possess many virtues because recognizing their good qualities can encourage them to remain committed to virtuous conduct.

This finding expands the meaning of moral education beyond correction. Education must also sustain and strengthen existing virtues. Thus, *al-targhib* functions as a mechanism for maintaining moral motivation, while *al-riyadhah* transforms motivation into repeated practice. The relationship between the two indicates that moral education requires both motivation to begin moral improvement and continuity to sustain it.

4. An Integrated Model of Moral Education According to Ibn al-Haytham

Based on the reconstructed methods, Ibn al-Haytham's moral education can be understood as an integrated process that combines moral cognition, habituation, self-regulation, social modeling, self-evaluation, correction, and motivation. The process begins with *al-tafakkur* to recognize and distinguish virtues from vices, followed by *al-riyadhah* to transform moral understanding into habitual practice. This process is strengthened through *al-ta'dib* to discipline the soul, *al-uswah wa al-iqtida'* to provide positive models, *al-muhasabah* and *al-islah* to evaluate and correct deficiencies, and *al-targhib* to sustain moral motivation. Meanwhile, *al-nafyu* serves as a preventive and corrective measure when harmful behavior persists. Together, these methods form a holistic framework aimed at transforming moral awareness into stable and enduring character.

The integrated model can therefore be formulated as follows:

Moral awareness → rational reflection (*al-tafakkur*) → moral practice (*al-riyadhah*) → discipline (*al-ta'dib*) → positive modeling (*al-uswah wa al-iqtida'*) → self-evaluation (*al-muḥāsabah*) → correction (*al-islah*) → motivation and continuity (*al-targhib*) → stable moral character (*akhlaq*).

This model confirms that Ibn al-Haytham's conception is not a collection of isolated techniques. Rather, the methods form a complementary system directed toward one ultimate objective: transforming virtue from externally performed behavior into an internalized and stable disposition of the soul.

5. Comparison with Previous Islamic Moral Education Thought

The findings demonstrate substantial continuity between Ibn al-Haytham's thought and the broader tradition of Islamic moral philosophy, particularly Ibn Sina, Ibn Miskawayh, and al-Ghazali, who similarly understand *akhlaq* as a disposition or condition of the soul that shapes human behavior. However, Ibn al-Haytham distinguishes his approach by connecting this psychological conception with practical methods of moral formation, particularly *al-riyadhah* as continuous habituation and *al-tafakkur* as rational reflection in recognizing and choosing virtues. Compared with approaches that emphasize spiritual purification more strongly, *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* gives greater attention to rational, psychological, behavioral, and social dimensions, while maintaining the broader Islamic principle that moral knowledge must be translated into repeated practice and internalized character.

6. Implications for Contemporary Islamic Education

The findings have several implications for contemporary Islamic education. First, moral education should move beyond the transmission of moral concepts toward the formation of stable dispositions. Teaching students definitions of honesty, discipline, respect, and responsibility is insufficient if these values are not repeatedly practiced until they become habitual.

Second, the findings emphasize the importance of integrating cognitive and behavioral approaches. Students should be encouraged not only to perform virtuous actions but also to understand the reasons and moral principles underlying those actions. This makes *al-tafakkur* particularly relevant to contemporary education because it can develop moral reasoning and reflective awareness.

Third, the influence of the educational environment should receive greater attention. Ibn al-Haytham's emphasis on parents, family, scholars, and social interaction suggests that schools cannot bear the entire responsibility for character formation. Moral education requires consistency between the school, family, peer environment, and broader social environment.

Fourth, *al-muhasabah* can be adapted into contemporary reflective practices, such as student self-assessment, reflective journals, behavioral evaluation, and personal improvement plans. Meanwhile, *al-targhib* can be implemented through constructive appreciation and recognition of moral progress rather than merely through academic rewards.

Finally, Ibn al-Haytham's thought suggests that moral education should be understood as a lifelong process. The fact that even morally mature individuals can benefit from reminders about virtuous qualities indicates that character formation does not end when a particular educational stage is completed. This principle is particularly relevant to contemporary Islamic education, which increasingly seeks to integrate academic excellence with character, responsibility, and social ethics.

7. Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. First, the reconstruction of Ibn al-Haytham's educational methods is interpretive because *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* does not present a systematic methodological framework under explicit categories of moral education. The methods identified in this study are therefore reconstructed from dispersed statements and concepts within the text. Second, the relatively concise and thematically organized nature of the work limits the extent to which each method can be elaborated through detailed educational procedures. Third, the study focuses primarily on the conceptual dimension and does not empirically examine the implementation of these principles in contemporary educational institutions.

Future research could therefore develop this conceptual reconstruction into an empirical model of Islamic moral education. Studies could examine how *al-riyadhah*, *al-tafakkur*, *al-ta'dib*, *al-uswah*, *al-muḥasabah*, and *al-targhib* can be operationalized in schools, boarding (pesantren), and Islamic family education. Comparative studies involving Ibn al-Haytham, Ibn Miskawayh, al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina, and Ibn al-Qayyim could also provide a broader understanding of the development of Islamic moral educational thought. In addition, future research may investigate the relevance of Ibn al-Haytham's rational and psychological approach to contemporary issues such as digital behavior, social media ethics, bullying, consumerism, and the development of students' self-regulation.

Overall, the findings indicate that Ibn al-Haytham's *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* offers more than a classification of virtues and vices. It contains an implicit but coherent philosophy of moral formation in which reason provides moral awareness, training creates habituation, discipline regulates the soul, exemplary relationships shape the social environment, self-evaluation facilitates correction, and motivation sustains continuity. Its distinctive contribution lies in connecting the internal condition of the soul with observable conduct and in treating moral education as a continuous process of transforming virtue into a stable character.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Ibn al-Haytham views moral education as a process of cultivating a stable state of the soul through training, rational reflection, self-discipline, exemplary conduct, self-evaluation, moral improvement, and motivation. *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* reflects a philosophical, psychological, and social orientation that regards moral development as a lifelong process of character formation. These methods constitute an integrated model connecting moral awareness, habituation, self-regulation, environmental influence, and the continuity of virtuous conduct. Ibn al-Haytham's thought is consistent with the views of Ibn Sina, Ibn Miskawayh, and al-Ghazali, while offering a distinctive emphasis on the relationship between reason, habituation, and the spontaneity of moral conduct. Thus, Ibn al-Haytham's concept of moral education remains relevant to contemporary Islamic education, particularly in

developing character through the integration of knowledge, practice, exemplary conduct, reflection, and a supportive moral environment.

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