

Exploring Al Ghazali's Theory for Professional Development in Middle Leadership: A Systematic Literature Review

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Published: 26 March 2024

To cite this article: Ahmad, N. S., Ismail, A., Mat@Ahmad, N. H., Yaakob, M. N., & Abdul Halim, 'Imaaduddin. (2024). Exploring Al Ghazali's Theory for Professional Development in Middle Leadership: A Systematic Literature Review. *Management Research Journal*, 13(1), 98–111. <https://doi.org/10.37134/mrj.vol13.1.8.2024>

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.37134/mrj.vol13.1.8.2024>

Abstract

Al Ghazali's theory, renowned for its profound philosophical and ethical foundations, offers a unique lens through which to explore the intricacies of professional development in educational leadership. Al Ghazali's ethical theory emphasized virtues such as justice, wisdom, temperance, and courage, which can profoundly impact leadership practices and professional growth. This systematic literature review explores the intersection of Al Ghazali's theory for professional development seeking to promote a comprehensive approach that bolsters both teacher empowerment and enhanced student outcomes. Employing the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework, a thorough search was conducted in SCOPUS and Web of Science databases using keywords such as "Al Ghazali," "professional development," and "middle leader teacher empowerment." Analysis of 16 relevant articles structured around four main themes: Al Ghazali's influence on professional development, middle leadership and instructional leadership, management and organizational practices, and environmental and contextual influences on educational development. The findings of the review suggest that Al Ghazali's theory, with its emphasis on self-reflection, lifelong learning, and spiritual development, has significant potential for enhancing the professional development of middle leaders in a variety of educational contexts. However, the review also highlights the need for further research to fully understand the complexities and challenges of implementing Al Ghazali's theory in different cultural and institutional settings.

Keywords: Al Ghazali, Professional Development, Middle Leadership, Educational Leadership, Ethical Leadership, Teacher Development

Abstrak

Teori Al Ghazali, terkenal dengasas falsafah dan etikanya yang mendalam, menawarkan lensa unik untuk menerokai selok-belok pembangunan profesional dalam kepimpinan pendidikan. Teori etika Al Ghazali menekankan nilai-nilai murni seperti keadilan, kebijaksanaan, kesederhanaan, dan keberanian, yang boleh memberi kesan yang mendalam terhadap amalan kepimpinan dan pembangunan profesional. Kajian literatur sistematik ini meneroka persimpangan teori Al Ghazali untuk pembangunan profesional yang bertujuan untuk menggalakkan pendekatan komprehensif yang menyokong pemerksaan guru dan peningkatan hasil pelajar. Menggunakan rangka kerja Item Pelaporan Pilihan untuk Kajian Sistematik dan Meta-Analisis (PRISMA), carian menyeluruh telah dijalankan dalam pangkalan data SCOPUS dan Web of Science menggunakan kata kunci seperti "Al Ghazali," "pembangunan profesional," dan "pemerksaan pemimpin pertengahan." Analisis 16 artikel berkaitan disusun berdasarkan empat tema utama: Pengaruh Al Ghazali terhadap

pembangunan profesional pemimpin pertengahan dan kepemimpinan nilai dan etikal, pengurusan dan amalan organisasi, dan pengaruh persekitaran dan kontekstual terhadap pembangunan pendidikan. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa teori Al Ghazali, dengan penekanan kepada muhasabah diri, pembelajaran sepanjang hayat, dan pembangunan rohani, mempunyai potensi besar untuk meningkatkan pembangunan profesional pemimpin pertengahan dalam pelbagai konteks pendidikan. Walau bagaimanapun, penyelidikan lanjut adalah diperlukan bagi memahami sepenuhnya kerumitan dan cabaran dalam mengaplikasikan teori Al Ghazali berdasarkan latar budaya dan institusi yang berbeza.

Kata Kunci : *Al Ghazali, Pembangunan Profesional, Pemimpin Pertengahan, Kepimpinan Pendidikan, Kepimpinan Beretika, Pembangunan Profesionalisme Guru*

INTRODUCTION

The pivotal role of middle leaders in shaping instructional practices, fostering professional learning communities, and driving school improvement initiatives has garnered significant attention in contemporary educational discourse. However, despite their influential positions, professional development opportunities tailored to the unique challenges and complexities faced by middle leaders remain inadequate (Bush, 2019; Harris & Jones, 2017). This gap underscores the pressing need to explore alternative theoretical frameworks that can inform and elevate professional development strategies for this crucial tier of educational leadership.

Emerging from the rich tapestry of Islamic philosophical thought, Al Ghazali's seminal work offers a compelling lens through which to examine the intricacies of professional development for middle leaders. Al Ghazali's emphasis on virtues such as justice, wisdom, temperance, and courage (Alimudin, 2022) not only aligns with the ethical foundations of educational leadership but also provides a nuanced understanding of how these principles can be operationalized to cultivate holistic professional growth.

Within the Malaysian context, Islamic secondary schools grapple with distinct leadership challenges that necessitate a contextually relevant and culturally responsive approach to professional development (Harun & Ghani, 2024). Integrating Al Ghazali's teachings with contemporary educational frameworks presents a unique opportunity to develop tailored initiatives that resonate with the philosophical underpinnings of these institutions while simultaneously addressing the diverse needs of their middle leaders (Saari & Ghani, 2024).

This systematic literature review seeks to critically examine how Al Ghazali's profound insights can inform and enhance professional development initiatives for middle leaders in educational institutions. The review is focused on answering the research question: How can Al Ghazali's theory be utilized for professional development in middle leadership within educational institutions worldwide? This review aims to summarize the current literature on Al Ghazali's theory and professional development in middle leadership, along with its potential benefits and challenges. However, it's important to note that this study has limitations, as it focuses solely on the educational setting, relies on existing literature, and does not capture current practices and challenges faced by middle leaders in real-time. Despite these limitations, this review provides valuable insights into the application of Al Ghazali's theory in middle leadership development.

By bridging traditional wisdom with modern educational theory and practice, this research endeavors to contribute a holistic and innovative perspective to the ongoing discourse on cultivating effective and ethically grounded educational leadership, ultimately advancing the pursuit of holistic educational excellence in the Era of Education 4.0 (Paul, 2023; Saman & Musa, 2023; Yusak & Jumahat, 2023)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Middle managers have a crucial role in accomplishing organizational objectives, particularly in ensuring efficiency, effectiveness, empowerment, and education (Sukor Beram et al., 2021). Being situated between the top leaders and educators allows them to effectively bridge the gap (Ding et al., 2019; Grootenboer et al., 2023; Thorpe & Garside, 2017). Furthermore, in an era marked by rapid technological advancements and evolving educational paradigms, the professional development of middle leaders has emerged as a critical imperative. This systematic review delves into the profound

wisdom of Al Ghazali's theory, offering a holistic framework for nurturing middle leaders' growth and fostering a principled, ethically grounded educational environment.

Al Ghazali's seminal work underscores the profound interplay between ethical leadership and professional development (Al-Ghazali, 2001). His teachings advocate for a balanced approach that harmonizes moral virtues with a shared vision for collective growth, thereby establishing a strong foundation for cultivating principled and transformative leaders (Brendel & Bennett, 2016; Thorpe & Bennett-Powell, 2014). By integrating Al Ghazali's ethical principles into professional development initiatives, educational institutions can foster a culture of trust, collaboration, and continuous improvement, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of middle leaders' development (Rozlee, 2020).

Moreover, this research aligns seamlessly with the theoretical framework proposed by Harun & Ghani, (2024), which emphasizes the paramount need to tailor professional development strategies to address the unique challenges faced by middle leaders within Islamic educational contexts. By leveraging Al-Ghazali's profound insights, educators can develop customized programs that align with the philosophical foundations of these institutions while also embracing their cultural diversity (Saari & Ghani, 2024).

Furthermore, Mitra, (2022) and Samuels, (2023) underscore the pivotal role of middle leaders in shaping instructional practices, fostering professional learning communities, and driving school improvement initiatives. This research posits that Al Ghazali's theory can serve as a catalyst for empowering middle leaders, equipping them with a comprehensive framework to navigate the complexities of their roles while upholding ethical and moral principles (Al-Ghazali, 2001; Gurr et al., 2020).

In essence, this systematic review aims to furnish educational institutions with a roadmap for harmonizing technological progress with the comprehensive development of middle leaders. By scrutinizing the extant literature, this study delineates pivotal themes and strategies for seamlessly integrating the spiritual values espoused by Al Ghazali into professional development programs, thereby empowering middle leaders to navigate the intricate landscapes of their roles while fostering an educational ecosystem that nurtures the holistic growth of students and educators alike (Johnson et al., 2012; Mitra, 2022).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Identification

The initial phase of the systematic review involved the identification of relevant literature, which took place in May - June 2024. This stage entailed the selection of key search terms for information retrieval. The selection process drew on a variety of reputable sources, including encyclopedias, dictionaries, thesauruses, and keywords from existing literature. Additionally, Scopus was utilized to recommend synonyms, related terms, and alternative variations of the term "Al Ghazali and professional development." As a result, 68 documents were obtained from the Scopus database, while the Web of Science (WOS) database yielded 56 documents.

Table 1 : The search string

Scopus	<pre>((TITLE-ABS-KEY (("Al Ghazali" OR "al-Ghazali" OR "alghazali")) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (("professional" OR "competent" OR "efficient" OR "experienced" OR "licensed" OR "qualified" OR "skillful")) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY (("development" OR "advancement" OR "evolution" OR "expansion" OR "improvement" OR "increase" OR "progress")) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (("middle lead*" OR "middle manage*" OR "education leader" OR "teacher leadership")) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY (("edu*"))) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBSTAGE , "final")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE , "j"))</pre>
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continued

WoS

("Al Ghazali" OR "al-Ghazali") AND ("professional" OR "competent" OR "efficient" OR "experienced" OR "licensed" OR "qualified" OR "skillful") OR ("development" OR "advancement" OR "evolution" OR "expansion" OR "improvement" OR "increase" OR "progress") AND ("middle leader" OR "education leader") (Topic) and Article (Document Types) and 2014 or 2016 or 2017 or 2018 or 2019 or 2020 or 2021 or 2022 or 2023 or 2024 (Publication Years) and Article (Document Types) and English (Languages)

Screening

The process of filtering involves including or excluding articles based on specific criteria set by the author using a designated database. This includes establishing eligibility, inclusion, and exclusion criteria to identify articles suitable for inclusion in the systematic review. The first criteria is the time frame, which is set between 2014 and 2024 based on the number of relevant publications available for review. The second inclusion criterion focuses on document type, specifically journal articles containing empirical data. Other document types such as review articles, books, book chapters, and conference proceedings are excluded as they are not considered primary sources. The third criterion pertains to language, with all non-English documents being excluded to avoid confusion and translation challenges in this study (refer to Table 2). After the identification process, 53 articles were removed from the initial 124 documents screened (refer to Figure 2).

Table 2 : The selection criterion is searching

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Language	English	Non-English
Timeline	Between 2014-2024	< 2014
Literature type	Journal (Article)	Conference, Book, Review
Publication Stage	Final	In Press

Eligibility

Determining eligibility involves the meticulous inclusion or exclusion of articles based on specific author criteria. This rigorous process entails a thorough review of articles, resulting in the removal of those that do not align with the specified criteria. Prior to commencing the qualification process, duplicate documents are meticulously identified and eliminated. Subsequently, 2 articles, identified as duplicates across both databases, were expunged, resulting in 69 documents being available for the qualification process. These documents underwent manual screening to ensure alignment with the criteria established during the preceding screening process (inclusion and exclusion criteria) and to emphasize literature about middle leader teacher leadership.

Data Abstraction and Analysis

The process of data extraction encompassed the identification and organization of key themes, concepts, and findings from the selected literature to systematically capture pertinent information relevant to the exploration of Al-Ghazali's theory within the context of professional development for middle leadership. This inclusive process involved thorough data collection, comprehensive analysis of chosen publications, and systematic review of methodologies and findings to gain a thorough understanding of the research landscape. The extraction process facilitated the identification of gaps, patterns, and insights, which informed theme development. Throughout this process, transparency was maintained through documentation of analyses, viewpoints, and reflections. The validation of themes for clarity, relevance, and appropriateness by three subject matter experts enriched the overall quality and validity of the research, thereby refining the themes to align with the study's objectives.

Quality of assessment

The quality of the identified articles underwent evaluation based on established criteria to ensure the trustworthiness and validity of their findings. Three experts, including two specializing in leadership and one in Islamic education, conducted a comprehensive assessment of 15 selected articles, focusing on criteria such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The assessment encompassed scrutinizing the research methodology, data collection, and analytical processes for robustness and reliability. Additionally, it involved assessing the potential generalizability of the findings to other settings, the consistency and repeatability of the study's outcomes, and the impartiality of data interpretation to confirm that the findings were grounded in the data rather than influenced by researcher bias. This rigorous and systematic assessment process involved independent evaluations by the experts, followed by collective discussions to reach a consensus on the quality of each article. The results of this assessment informed the selection of the final 15 articles for detailed analysis and inclusion in the systematic literature review. Through a meticulous approach to data extraction and quality assessment, the research endeavors to offer a thorough and dependable exploration of Al-Ghazali's theory in professional development for middle leadership, thereby contributing valuable insights to the field of educational leadership and management.

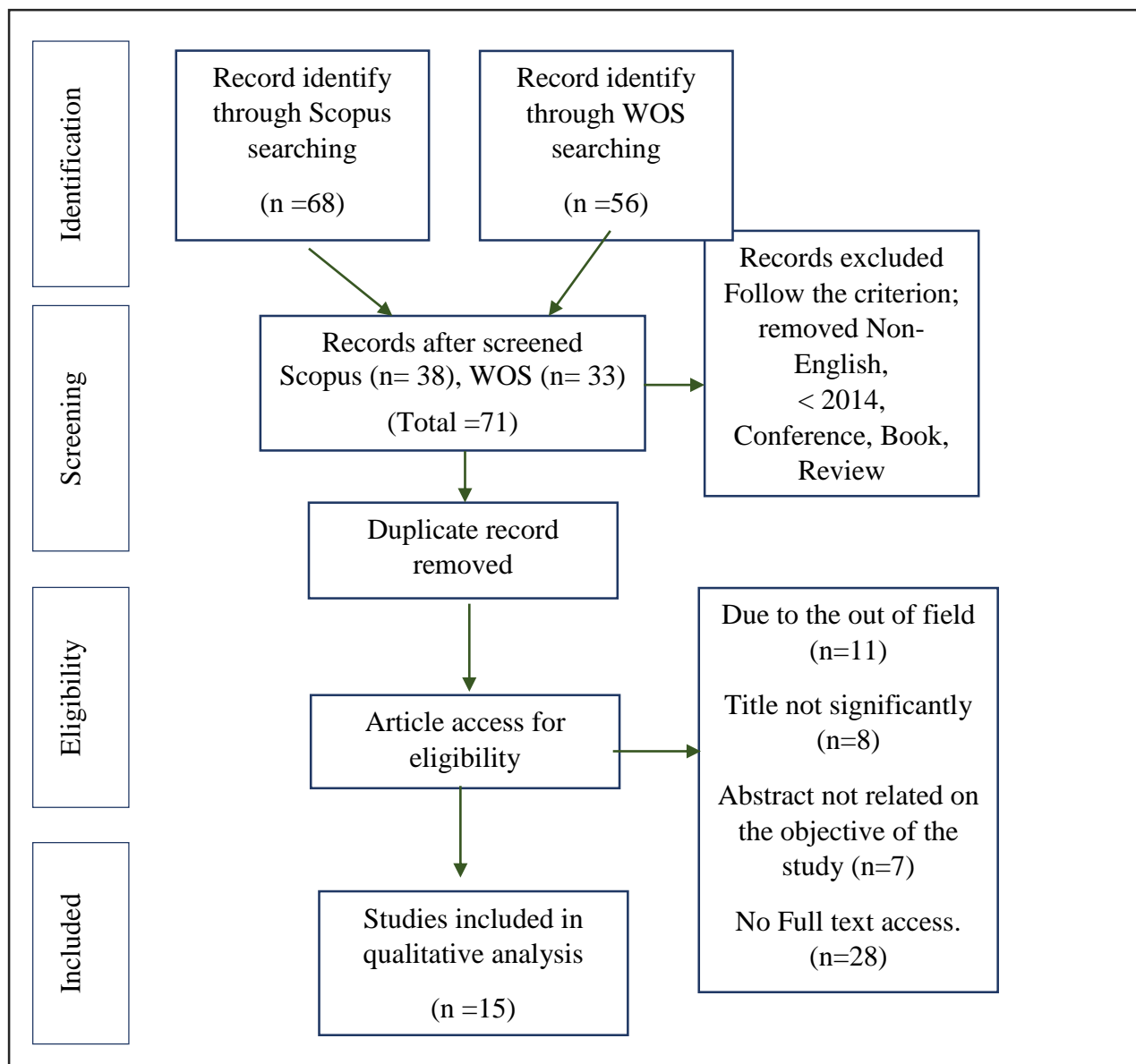


Figure 1. Flow diagram of the proposed search study Adapted from Moher et al., (2009)

DISCUSSION AND FINDING

Al-Ghazali's profound teachings have significantly impacted the field of education, leading to a transformation in professional development and a renewed emphasis on ethics and quality improvement among educators (Si-Rajab et al., 2019) (Musa & Yusoff, 2019; Zakaria & Ismail, 2023). His philosophical insights have also played a pivotal role in shedding light on virtuous leadership, guiding the way towards building exemplary teams and high-performance work environments (Zaim et al., 2021), and have extended their influence into organizational realms, redefining management paradigms aligned with Islamic principles (Mahadi et al., 2023; Orman, 2018).

Al-Ghazali's legacy has also reached middle leadership, empowering individuals to navigate instructional leadership and teacher development (Tang et al., 2022; 2023). His teachings have revealed the transformative potential of positional identities, enabling middle leaders to engage with diverse stakeholders and leverage historical influences for collective growth (Zhou & Deneen, 2020). This discussion emphasizes the role of environmental and contextual factors in shaping educational development trajectories (Sulaiman et al., 2014; Setiawan et al., 2020). Al-Ghazali's teachings advocate a holistic approach, harmonizing spiritual, intellectual, and practical dimensions to create nurturing environments conducive to holistic growth and academic excellence.

Al Ghazali's Influence on Professional Development

The profound ethical teachings of Al-Ghazali have sparked a revival in the realm of professional development, emphasizing a revitalized dedication to values and the enhancement of quality. His philosophy underscores the pivotal role of virtues in raising educational standards, as evidenced by the notable influence of teachers' commitment to reinforcing professional values on the improvement of instructional quality (Yusoff, 2019, Musa & Mohd Yusoff, 2019.; Zakaria & Ismail, 2023). This discourse has led to the identification of the defining characteristics of effective Muslim educators, deeply rooted in Islamic scholarly teachings (Zakaria, & Ismail, 2023). Furthermore, Al-Ghazali's insights have transcended individual growth, extending into the domain of stress management, providing a comprehensive merging of Western and Islamic methodologies (Zawawi et al., 2020). His analogy drawn from the field of medicine elucidates the transformative influence of moral education and virtuous reasoning in nurturing ethical professionals (Vasalou, 2022)

Table 3. Studies of Al Ghazali's Influence on Professional Development

Author	Year	Journal Title	Methodology	Results/Findings
Mahadi, M.H; Kamarzaman, M.H; Kamaruzaman, M.A.S; Jalil, M.H	2023	International Journal of Islamic Thought	Theoretical exploration of al- Ghazali's writings on management	Explores al-Ghazali's perspective on ethical management, emphasizing Tawhid and the principles of planning, organization, supervision, and leadership to promote an ethical and harmonious organizational culture
Zakaria, Z & Ismail, A	2023	Islamiyyat-The International Journal Of Islamic Studies	Qualitative, Content Analysis	Identified characteristics for effective Muslim teachers based on Islamic scholars' teachings
Senin, NB; Khambali, KBM; Ramli, WAB; Misra, MKB	2022	ISLAMIYYAT-The International Journal of Islamic Studies	Document analysis	Explores al-Ghazali's methods for dealing with anthropomorphic verses in the Quran, affirming God's incorporeality.

continued

Vasalou, S	2022	Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie	Theoretical exploration	Explores the medical analogy in al-Ghazali's ethics, highlighting his views on virtue, moral education, and human reasoning.
Zaim, H; Demir, A; Budur, T	2021	Middle East Journal of Management	Empirical study with data analysis	Finds a positive correlation between ethical leadership (based on al-Ghazali's virtues) and team performance, with justice, wisdom, and temperance being significant factors, while courage shows an insignificant relationship
Musa N.B.H. & Yusoff M.Z.M.	2019	Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun	Quantitative	Teachers' willingness to reinforce professional values has a significant influence on improving the quality of teaching.
Zawawi, NIM; Sham, F; Ismail, A	2020	International Journal Of Islamic Thought	Qualitative, Document Analysis	Stress from an Islamic perspective linked to relationship with Allah; Integrates Western and Islamic approaches for stress management
Orman, S	2018	Turkish Journal of Islamic Economics-TUJISE	Presentation, analysis, and evaluation	Discusses al-Ghazali's ideas on justice and social justice, prioritizing social virtues and responsibilities.

Middle Leadership and Instructional Leadership

In light of Al-Ghazali's teachings, contemporary studies have shed light on the pivotal role of middle leadership in fostering teacher learning and instructional excellence. Key research has outlined fundamental practices that empower middle leaders to facilitate teacher development, emphasizing the importance of exploring diverse contexts beyond Western parameters (Tang et al., 2022; Tang 2023). Al-Ghazali's insights have influenced theoretical frameworks that underscore the transformative potential of positional identities and engagement with diverse stakeholders, equipping middle leaders to effectively navigate the complexities of curriculum reform (Zhou & Deneen, 2020). These findings have spurred the creation of comprehensive models that guide middle leaders in aligning departmental visions with institutional strategic goals, cultivating consensus, and driving sustained enhancement.

Table 4. Studies on Middle Leadership and Instructional Leadership

Author(s)	Year	Journal Title	Methodology	Results/Findings
Tang, JJ; Bryant, DA; Walker, AD	2023	Educational Research	Qualitative, Multi-case	Identified core practices of middle leadership in promoting teacher learning
Tang, JJ; Bryant, DA; Walker, AD	2022	Journal Of Educational Administration	Topographic Methodology	Proposed a model for middle leaders' instructional practices; identified need for research in non-Western contexts

continued

Zhou, JM; Deneen, C	2020	Journal Of Higher Education Policy And Management	Qualitative, Thematic Analysis	The theory of figured worlds provides a useful framework for middle leadership training, emphasizing the importance of positional identity and engagement with other actors and historical influences. Building a community of middle leaders can facilitate leadership development and understanding the impact of various discourses.
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Management and Organizational Practices in Educational Institutions

Al-Ghazali's ethical principles have had a profound impact on the operational standards of educational institutions, emphasizing the fusion of spiritual values and cohesive cultures. His teachings have served as a catalyst for strategic planning and organized assessments aimed at fortifying professional ethics and enriching the standard of education (Musa & Mohd Yusoff, 2019). Additionally, his philosophical framework has brought to light the intricate interplay between leadership, exemplary teaching, and favorable learning environments in shaping an institution's standing and accomplishments (Setiawan et al., 2020). Significantly, his wisdom extends beyond abstract concepts, influencing pragmatic approaches for effective public relations management, incorporating meticulous planning, coordination, implementation, supervision, and appraisal (Novianto et al., 2020).

Table 5. Studies on Management and Organizational Practices in Educational Institutions

Author(s)	Year	Journal Title	Methodology	Results/Findings
Tang, JJ; Bryant, DA; Walker, AD	2022	Journal Of Educational Administration	Topographic Methodology	Promoting teacher learning and professional development, supporting teachers to improve their teaching strategies, and facilitating development opportunities for teacher learning.
Novianto A.; Arikunto S.; Husna A.N.	2020	ACM International Conference Proceeding Series	Descriptive- analytical, Qualitative	Effective management of public relations at Nahdlatul Ulama Al Ghazali University includes strategic planning, organizational coordination, meticulous implementation of activities, thorough oversight, and comprehensive evaluation.
Setiawan B.A.; Huda H.; Rofi S.	2020	Jurnal Pendidikan Islam	Principal Component Analysis	Principal, teachers, and learning atmosphere influence school electability at MTs Negeri 5 Jember; Principal, teachers, and infrastructure influence school electability at SMPIT Al-Ghazali
Musa N.B.H. & Yusoff M.Z.M.	2019	Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun	Quantitative	The education administration is drafting strategic plans and conducting systematic reviews to strengthen professional values and ensure the enhancement of teachers' quality.

Environmental and Contextual Influences on Educational Development

Al-Ghazali's comprehensive approach to education emphasizes the pivotal role of environmental and contextual factors in shaping developmental trajectories. His teachings underscore the profound impact of surroundings, including parents, teachers, and physical environments, on child growth and development (Sulaiman et al., 2014). This perspective has prompted in-depth explorations into the intricate interplay between institutional factors, such as principals, educators, learning activities, and school atmospheres, in influencing educational outcomes and institutional effectiveness (Setiawan et al., 2020). Furthermore, Al-Ghazali's philosophy has instigated research into the agency and identity of middle leaders, revealing discernible response patterns arising from conflicting priorities within educational contexts (Zhou & Deneen, 2020). These insights underscore the imperative of aligning departmental visions, goals, and values with overarching strategic directions to cultivate harmonious and conducive environments for holistic growth (Tang et al., 2022).

Table 6. Studies on Environmental and Contextual Influences on Educational Development

Author	Year	Journal Title	Methodology	Results/Findings
Tang, JJ; Bryant, DA; Walker, AD	2022	Journal Of Educational Administration	Topographic Methodology	Proposed: forming a vision, setting goals, aligning department vision and goals with the school's strategic direction, communicating, and sharing values and goals with teachers to form a consensus.
Setiawan B.A.; Huda H.; Rofi S.	2020	Jurnal Pendidikan Islam	Principal Component Analysis	The electability of MTsN 5 Jember was significantly influenced by several factors, including school principals, educators, learning activities, and school atmosphere. Meanwhile, the electability of SMPIT Al-Ghazali was influenced by costs, school principals, facilities, and educators.
Zhou, JM; Deneen, C	2020	Journal Of Higher Education Policy And Management	Qualitative, Thematic Analysis	Researched the influence of environmental and contextual factors on educational development as it pertains to the agency and identity of middle leaders in curriculum reform. Discovered discernible response patterns arising from conflicting priorities in this regard.
Musa N.B.H. & Yusoff M.Z.M.	2019	Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun	Quantitative	The reality of a transformative education towards better quality and world-class standards is set to benefit all parties involved.
Sulaiman A.; Jamsari E.A.; Noh N.C.	2014	Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences	Content Analysis	Environment plays a significant role in child growth and development; Parents, teachers, and surroundings are critical factors

Themes From Al Ghazali's Theory for Professional Development in Middle Leader Teacher (MLT)

The thematic next illustrates the significant impact of Al-Ghazali's teachings on professional values, middle leadership methodologies, ethical management strategies, and the acknowledgment of environmental factors that shape educational advancement.

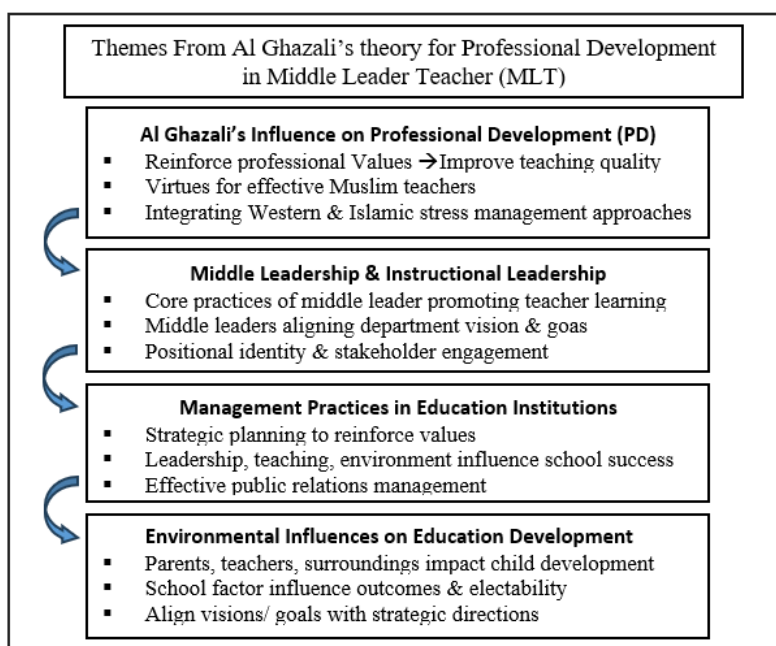


Figure 2. Al-Ghazali's Influence on Educational Domains

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The blending of Al-Ghazali's enduring insights and contemporary research presents a paradigm that transcends traditional boundaries, reshaping the landscape of educational excellence and holistic growth. This analysis sparks a resurgence in professional development, emphasizing the role of virtues and ethical conduct as drivers for enhancing instructional quality and cultivating exemplary educators (Musa & Mohd Yusoff, 2019; Zakaria & Ismail, 2023). Al-Ghazali's teachings underscore the pivotal role of moral education and virtuous reasoning in nurturing professionals imbued with integrity, wisdom, and a deep commitment to personal and societal betterment (Vasalou, 2022).

Additionally, this exploration highlights the transformative influence of middle leadership in advancing instructional excellence and fostering teacher learning. Inspired by Al-Ghazali's teachings on positional identities and stakeholder engagement, contemporary research reveals comprehensive models empowering middle leaders to align departmental visions with institutional strategic directions, foster consensus, and enable continuous improvement (Tang et al., 2022, Zhou & Deneen, 2020). This discussion challenges traditional hierarchical structures and positions middle leaders as change catalysts and agents of collective growth.

Al-Ghazali's ethical management principles have redefined organizational practices within educational institutions, emphasizing the seamless integration of spiritual values and conducive learning environments (Musa & Mohd Yusoff, 2019; Setiawan et al., 2020). His insights have inspired thorough strategic planning, coordination, implementation, oversight, and evaluation to ensure that institutions not only impart knowledge but also foster virtuous character and holistic development (Novianto et al., 2020).

Furthermore, this discourse emphasizes the profound impact of environmental and contextual factors on educational development trajectories (Sulaiman et al., 2014; Setiawan et al., 2020; Zhou & Deneen, 2020). Al-Ghazali's comprehensive approach promotes a balanced interaction among the physical, social, and intellectual aspects, acknowledging the complex

network of factors that influence personal development, institutional achievement, and societal advancement.

CONCLUSION

Al-Ghazali's enduring legacy stands as a testament to the timeless principles that drive educational excellence and holistic growth. The findings of this review suggest that Al Ghazali's teachings emphasize an integrative approach, highlighting the imperative of incorporating ethical values, cultivating virtuous leadership, fostering harmonious organizational practices, and promoting contextual awareness within educational environments. By addressing these components, it aligns with previous studies emphasizing Al-Ghazali's plan to create supportive academic environments for individual and societal growth.

The findings of this review have several implications in today's rapidly evolving educational landscape. Firstly, educational institutions worldwide should consider incorporating Al-Ghazali's elements into their professional development programs. This is because Al Ghazali's philosophy presents a compelling rallying cry for a paradigm shift, calling upon educators, leaders, and policymakers to reevaluate and adopt his enduring wisdom as a guiding light. Secondly, encouraging a departure from traditional siloed approaches, the integration of Al-Ghazali's principles can pave the way for a reimagined educational experience, where knowledge becomes inseparable from virtue, where learning extends beyond the confines of mere academic pursuits, and where educational institutions emerge as catalysts for holistic growth. Future studies should examine the intricacies and obstacles involved in applying Al-Ghazali's theory in diverse cultural and institutional environments.

The results of this finding also contribute a valuable basis for future research in different areas, even with the limitations of this review. The practical use of Al Ghazali's theory is not only for professional development for middle leaders but could also spark the opportunity to shape a future educational institution. Al Ghazali's principles not only impart knowledge but also contribute to ethical development, producing generations of intellectually and morally grounded individuals who can have a positive impact on the world. The transformative approach holds the promise of nurturing individuals who are not only good in academic proficiency but also have good behavior, ethical underpinning, and the ability to bring about meaningful change. In conclusion, by embracing the enduring legacy of Al-Ghazali, encourages us to cultivate a new generation of capable leaders and thinkers dedicated to enhancing our world to be better.

Conceptual Framework: Al-Ghazali's Path to Educational Excellence

Below are the conceptual framework illustrates a holistic paradigm where Al-Ghazali's principles on ethics, moral education, and virtues catalyze professional growth, instructional excellence, strategic organizational practices, and contextual awareness, converging towards educational excellence and holistic development.

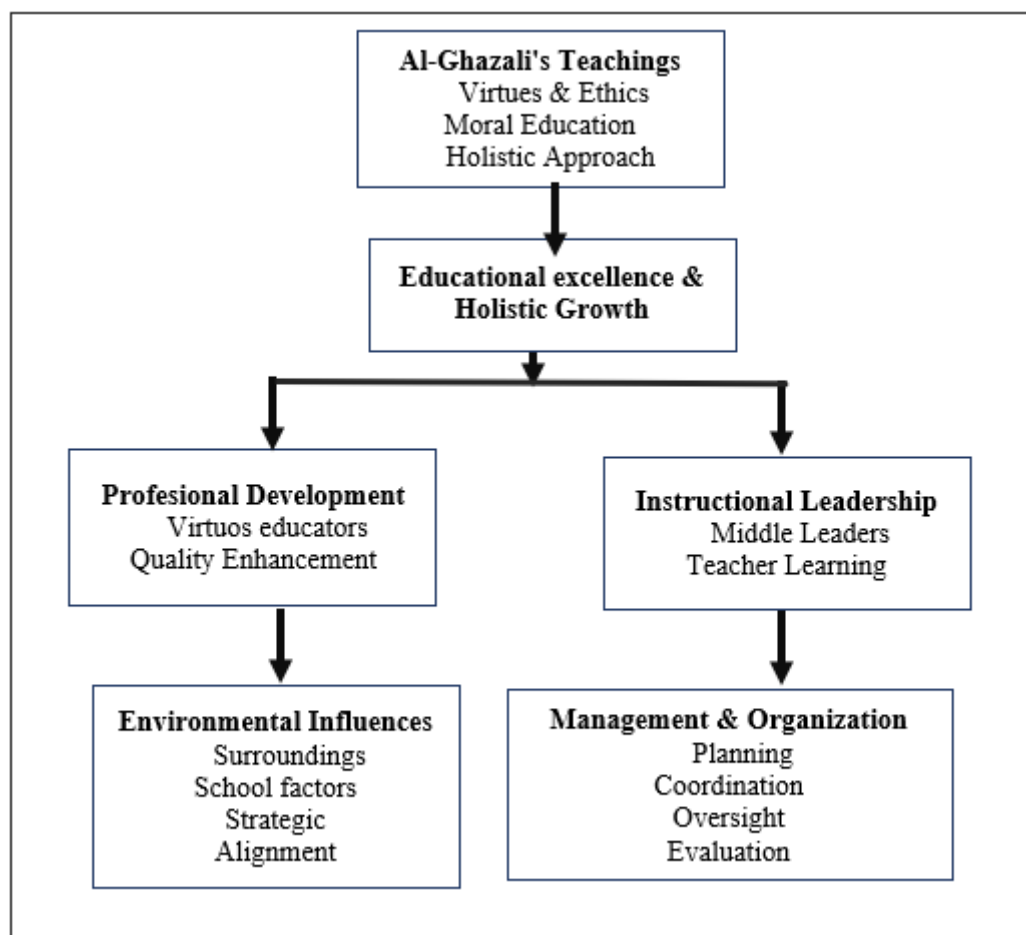


Figure 3 Conceptual Framework: Al-Ghazali's Path to Educational Excellence

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