



Research Article

Character Education in Islamic Thought: A Comparative Study of Al-Miskawaih and Al-Ghazali

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Abstract. Character education has long been a central concern in Islamic intellectual tradition, particularly in the works of classical Muslim scholars who emphasised the development of moral virtues and ethical behaviour. This study examines the concept of character education in the thought of Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb Miskawayh and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, two prominent Muslim thinkers who significantly contributed to Islamic ethical philosophy. The research aims to analyse and compare their perspectives on the formation of moral character and the role of education in cultivating virtuous individuals. Using a qualitative library research method, this study examines primary texts such as *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* by Al-Miskawaih and *Ihya Ulum al-Din* by Al-Ghazali, as well as relevant secondary literature. The findings reveal that Al-Miskawaih emphasises a rational and philosophical approach to moral education, highlighting the importance of intellectual discipline and balance among human faculties to achieve virtue. In contrast, Al-Ghazali focuses more on spiritual purification, emphasising the role of faith, self-discipline, and religious practices in shaping moral character. Despite

their methodological differences, both scholars share a common goal of guiding individuals toward moral excellence and social harmony. This study concludes that integrating their perspectives can provide valuable insights for contemporary Islamic education, particularly in developing character-based curricula that combine intellectual development with spiritual and ethical formation.

Keywords: Character Education, Islamic Ethics, Akhlaq, Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb Miskawayh, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role in shaping not only the intellectual capacities of individuals but also their moral character and ethical behaviour. In many modern educational systems, the focus on academic achievement and technical skills has often overshadowed the importance of character formation. However, moral crises, social conflicts, corruption, and ethical degradation in many societies have renewed the global discussion about the need for “character education”. Educational institutions are therefore increasingly expected to cultivate values such as honesty, responsibility, compassion, discipline, and respect among learners. In this context, character education is not merely an additional component of education but rather a fundamental objective that contributes to the holistic development of individuals[1].

Within the Islamic intellectual tradition, the concept of character education has long been a central component of educational philosophy. Islam emphasises the development of “akhlaq” (moral character) as an essential part of human perfection and social harmony. The teachings of Islam encourage individuals to cultivate virtues such as justice, patience, humility, generosity, and sincerity. The Prophet Muhammad is often regarded as the ultimate model of moral excellence, and Islamic education historically aimed to develop individuals who embody these ethical principles in their personal and social lives. As a result, many classical Muslim scholars devoted significant attention to exploring how moral character can be developed through education, spiritual discipline, and intellectual cultivation[2].

Among the influential scholars who contributed to the development of Islamic ethical thought are Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb Miskawayh and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali. Both scholars played significant roles in shaping discussions on morality, ethics, and education within the Islamic intellectual tradition. Although they lived in different contexts and approached ethical questions from different perspectives, their works share a common concern for the cultivation of virtuous individuals and the moral reform of society[3].

Al-Miskawaih is widely recognized as one of the earliest Muslim philosophers to systematically develop a theory of ethics within the Islamic tradition. His famous work, “Tahdhib al-Akhlaq wa Tathir al-A‘raq” (Refinement of Character and Purification of Dispositions), presents a comprehensive discussion of moral philosophy influenced by classical Greek thought, particularly the ethical teachings of Aristotle. In his ethical framework, Al-Miskawaih emphasizes the importance of rational discipline and the cultivation of virtues through education and habit formation. He argues that moral character is not something that individuals are born

with but rather something that can be developed through proper training, reflection, and consistent practice. According to his perspective, the balance between human faculties—reason, desire, and anger—is essential for achieving moral virtue and true happiness (“sa’adah”). Thus, education plays a key role in guiding individuals toward ethical maturity and intellectual refinement[4].

On the other hand, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali offers a different but complementary approach to character education. Known as one of the most influential scholars in Islamic theology, philosophy, and spirituality, Al-Ghazali emphasizes the importance of spiritual purification and inner transformation in the development of moral character. His monumental work, “Ihya Ulum al-Din” (The Revival of the Religious Sciences), provides a detailed exploration of ethics, spirituality, and moral discipline within the framework of Islamic teachings. Al-Ghazali views moral education as a process that involves purifying the heart from negative traits such as arrogance, envy, greed, and hypocrisy while cultivating virtues such as sincerity, humility, patience, and gratitude. For Al-Ghazali, knowledge alone is not sufficient to achieve moral excellence; it must be accompanied by sincere practice, self-reflection, and devotion to God[5].

Although both scholars emphasize the importance of moral character, their approaches reveal notable differences. Al-Miskawaih adopts a more philosophical and rational perspective, drawing heavily from classical philosophical traditions to explain the development of virtue. In contrast, Al-Ghazali integrates ethical philosophy with Islamic spirituality and Sufi practices, highlighting the role of faith, worship, and inner purification in shaping moral behavior. Despite these differences, both scholars share the belief that education should aim at transforming individuals into morally responsible members of society who contribute to social harmony and justice[6].

In the contemporary educational context, the ideas of these classical scholars remain highly relevant. Many educational institutions today seek effective models of character education that integrate intellectual development with moral and spiritual values. The ethical frameworks developed by Al-Miskawaih and Al-Ghazali provide valuable insights for addressing this challenge. Their perspectives demonstrate that character education requires a comprehensive approach that includes intellectual training, moral discipline, spiritual awareness, and practical application of ethical principles[7].

Therefore, this study aims to analyze and compare the concept of character education in the thought of Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb Miskawayh and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali. By examining their key writings and ethical ideas, this research seeks to explore the similarities and differences in their approaches to moral education. Furthermore, the study attempts to highlight the relevance of their ethical philosophies for contemporary Islamic education, particularly in designing educational frameworks that foster both intellectual excellence and moral integrity. Through this comparative analysis, the research hopes to contribute to the broader discussion on character education and demonstrate how classical Islamic thought continues to offer meaningful guidance for modern educational challenges[8].

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of character education has been widely discussed in both classical Islamic scholarship and contemporary educational studies. In Islamic intellectual history, moral education (*tarbiyah al-akhlaq*) is considered a central goal of education, emphasizing the development of virtuous individuals who contribute positively to society. Several scholars have examined the ethical philosophies of Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb Miskawayh and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, highlighting their contributions to the discourse on moral development and educational thought[9].

Studies on Al-Miskawaih often focus on his systematic approach to ethics, particularly as presented in his well-known work *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq wa Tathir al-A‘raq*. Scholars describe his ethical philosophy as one of the earliest comprehensive discussions of virtue ethics in Islamic philosophy. Influenced by classical Greek thinkers such as Aristotle, Al-Miskawaih emphasized the role of rationality in shaping moral character. According to his theory, the human soul possesses different faculties—reason, desire, and anger—which must be balanced through education and discipline. Researchers argue that his ethical framework presents morality as something that can be cultivated through habit, intellectual training, and moral guidance. Consequently, education plays a fundamental role in forming virtuous individuals capable of achieving happiness (*sa‘adah*)[10].

Previous studies also highlight that Al-Miskawaih viewed moral education as a gradual process involving self-control, reflection, and continuous practice of virtuous actions. Modern scholars analyzing his work often emphasize the relevance of his ideas for contemporary character education. His emphasis on habit formation, rational thinking, and ethical discipline aligns with modern educational theories that promote character development through structured learning and ethical guidance[11].

In contrast, much of the literature on Abu Hamid al-Ghazali focuses on his integration of ethics, theology, and spirituality. Al-Ghazali’s approach to moral education is strongly connected to the purification of the soul (*tazkiyat al-nafs*). In his influential work *Ihya Ulum al-Din*, he argues that moral corruption originates from diseases of the heart such as arrogance, envy, and greed. Therefore, the primary goal of education is to cleanse the heart from these negative traits and cultivate virtues like sincerity, humility, patience, and gratitude. Many scholars consider Al-Ghazali’s ethical thought to represent a synthesis between Islamic law, theology, and Sufi spirituality[11].

Contemporary researchers have also examined Al-Ghazali’s educational philosophy, emphasizing his belief that knowledge should lead to moral transformation rather than mere intellectual achievement. According to Al-Ghazali, teachers play an important role as moral guides who help students develop both intellectual understanding and spiritual awareness. His ideas about the teacher-student relationship, moral discipline, and the integration of knowledge with action have been widely discussed in modern Islamic educational studies[12].

Several comparative studies have attempted to analyze the similarities and differences between the ethical philosophies of Al-Miskawaih and Al-Ghazali. These studies generally highlight that while both scholars aim to cultivate virtuous

individuals, their methodologies differ significantly. Al-Miskawaih approaches ethics from a philosophical and rational perspective, emphasizing intellectual discipline and the balance of human faculties. In contrast, Al-Ghazali places greater emphasis on spiritual purification and religious devotion as the foundation of moral character[13].

Despite these differences, scholars generally agree that both thinkers share several important principles. First, both emphasize that moral character can be developed through education and training rather than being purely innate. Second, both recognize the importance of self-discipline and continuous moral effort in achieving ethical excellence. Finally, both scholars believe that the ultimate purpose of moral education is to guide individuals toward happiness, personal perfection, and social harmony[14].

However, although a number of studies have explored the ethical ideas of these two scholars individually, fewer studies provide a detailed comparative analysis focusing specifically on their contributions to character education within the context of contemporary educational systems. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining the concept of character education in the thought of Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb Miskawayh and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali and analyzing how their perspectives can contribute to modern discussions on moral education. Through this analysis, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how classical Islamic ethical philosophy can inform current approaches to character development in education[15].

Table 1: Literature Review of Previous Studies on Character Education in Islamic Philosophy

No	Author	Year	Title / Focus of Study	Method	Key Findings
1	Majid Fakhry	1991	Ethical theories in Islamic philosophy including the thought of Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb Miskawayh	Historical and textual analysis	Shows that Al-Miskawaih developed a systematic virtue ethics influenced by philosophical reasoning
2	Oliver Leaman	2006	Islamic philosophy and moral thought	Philosophical analysis	Explains the role of ethics and rational thought in Islamic philosophical tradition
3	Abu Hamid al-Ghazali studies in Islamic education	2010	Moral and spiritual education in <i>Ihya Ulum al-Din</i>	Library research	Emphasizes purification of the soul and spiritual discipline as foundations of character education
4	Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas	1999	Islamic concept of education and moral development	Conceptual analysis	Highlights the integration of knowledge, ethics, and spirituality in Islamic education

5	Contemporary Islamic education researchers	2018	Character education in Islamic schools	Qualitative educational research	Demonstrates the importance of integrating moral values into modern curricula
6	Comparative studies on Islamic ethics	2021	Comparison of ethical thought between Abū 'Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb Miskawayh and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali	Comparative analysis	Identifies differences between rational ethics and spiritual ethics in character formation

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research approach using the method of library research to examine and compare the concept of character education in the thought of Abū 'Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb Miskawayh and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali. A qualitative approach is considered appropriate for this research because it focuses on analyzing ideas, concepts, and philosophical perspectives related to ethics and character education within the Islamic intellectual tradition. The study aims to explore how both scholars conceptualize moral development and the role of education in shaping virtuous individuals[16].

The research design used in this study is a comparative philosophical analysis. This approach allows the researcher to examine the ethical and educational perspectives of the two scholars and identify similarities and differences in their views on character education. By analyzing their philosophical ideas and interpretations found in their writings, the study seeks to understand how each scholar approaches moral formation and how their thoughts contribute to the broader discourse on Islamic educational philosophy[17].

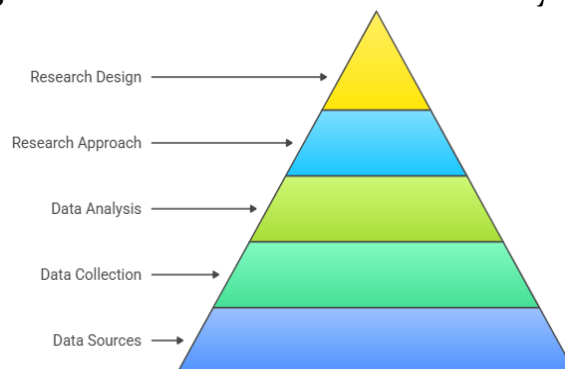
The data used in this research are derived from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources consist of the classical works of the two scholars, particularly *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq wa Tathir al-A'raq* by Abū 'Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb Miskawayh and *Ihya Ulum al-Din* by Abu Hamid al-Ghazali. These works provide fundamental insights into their views on ethics, moral development, and education. In addition, secondary sources such as academic books, journal articles, and scholarly publications discussing Islamic ethics and educational philosophy are also used to support the analysis and provide broader perspectives on the topic[18].

Data collection in this study is conducted through document analysis. Relevant texts, books, and scholarly articles are carefully examined to identify important concepts related to moral education, ethical values, and character development as presented by both scholars. The selected materials are reviewed systematically to extract key ideas that are relevant to the focus of the research[19].

The collected data are then analyzed using descriptive and comparative analysis. First, the study describes the major ideas of character education presented by each scholar individually. After that, a comparative analysis is conducted to highlight the similarities and differences between their approaches, particularly in

terms of their philosophical foundations, methods of moral training, and educational objectives. Through this analytical process, the study aims to provide a clearer understanding of how the ethical and educational ideas of Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb Miskawayh and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali contribute to the development of character education in Islamic thought and their relevance to contemporary educational practices[20].

Figure 1: Character Education Research Pyramid



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the study based on the analysis of the ethical and educational ideas of Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb Miskawayh and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali. The discussion focuses on their perspectives on character education, the methods they propose for moral development, and the similarities and differences in their approaches. Through this analysis, the study aims to highlight how their thoughts contribute to the broader understanding of character education within the Islamic intellectual tradition. Decentralisation of Islamic Authority[12].

Character Education in the Thought of Al-Miskawaih

Al-Miskawaih is recognised as one of the earliest Muslim philosophers to systematically discuss ethics and moral education. In his work *Tahdhib al-Akhlāq wa Tathir al-A‘raq*, he explains that the purpose of education is to cultivate virtuous character and guide individuals toward achieving true happiness (*sa‘adah*). According to Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb Miskawayh, moral character is not fixed or innate but can be developed through education, discipline, and continuous practice[21].

Al-Miskawaih’s ethical philosophy is influenced by classical philosophical traditions, particularly the virtue ethics of Greek philosophy. He argues that the human soul consists of three main faculties: reason, desire, and anger. For an individual to achieve moral excellence, these faculties must be balanced and guided by reason. Education therefore, plays a central role in helping individuals control their desires and emotions while strengthening their rational capacity[22].

From Al-Miskawaih’s perspective, character education involves the cultivation of virtues such as justice, wisdom, courage, and moderation. These virtues are

developed through habitual practice and moral training. Teachers and educational institutions have an important responsibility to guide students in developing good habits and ethical awareness. By consistently practising virtuous actions, individuals gradually form a stable moral character that leads to both personal happiness and social harmony[23].

Furthermore, Al-Miskawaih emphasises the importance of habit formation in moral education. He argues that repeated good actions gradually shape an individual's character, transforming virtuous behaviour into a natural disposition. This process requires continuous guidance, discipline, and self-control. Through consistent moral practice, individuals can internalize ethical values and develop a stable moral personality that reflects virtuous conduct in both personal and social life[24].

In addition, Al-Miskawaih highlights the role of education and social environment in shaping moral character. He believes that family, teachers, and society play significant roles in guiding individuals toward ethical behaviour. A supportive educational environment encourages learners to adopt positive values and avoid harmful habits. Therefore, according to Abū 'Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb Miskawayh, character education must involve both intellectual training and moral guidance so that individuals can develop balanced personalities that contribute to social harmony and ethical living[25].

Table 2: Key Concepts of Character Education in the Thought of Abū 'Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb Miskawayh

Aspect	Explanation
Purpose of Education	To cultivate virtuous character and guide individuals toward true happiness (<i>sa'adah</i>).
Nature of Moral Character	Moral character is not innate but can be developed through education, discipline, and continuous practice.
Human Faculties	The human soul consists of reason, desire, and anger, which must be balanced and guided by reason.
Core Virtues	Justice, wisdom, courage, and moderation are essential virtues for moral excellence.
Method of Character Formation	Character is developed through habit formation, moral training, and repeated virtuous actions.
Role of Education	Teachers and educational institutions guide students in developing ethical awareness and good habits.
Social Influence	Family, teachers, and society contribute to shaping moral character through guidance and environment.
Expected Outcome	The formation of morally responsible individuals who achieve personal happiness and contribute to social harmony.

Character Education in the Thought of Al-Ghazali

In contrast, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali approaches character education from a spiritual and religious perspective. In his influential work, *Ihya Ulum al-Din*, he emphasises that moral corruption originates from diseases of the heart, such as arrogance, envy, greed, and hypocrisy. Therefore, the main objective of moral education is the purification of the soul (*tazkiyat al-nafs*).

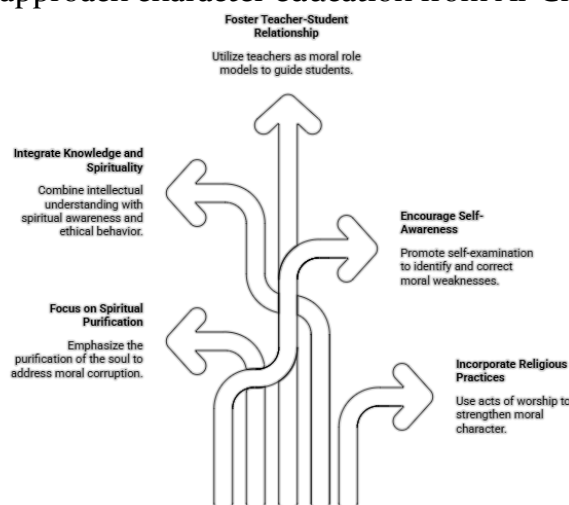
Al-Ghazali believes that true knowledge must lead to moral transformation. Education should not only develop intellectual understanding but also cultivate spiritual awareness and ethical behaviour. According to him, moral development requires self-discipline, reflection, and sincere devotion to God. Practices such as prayer, remembrance of God (*dhikr*), and self-evaluation play an important role in strengthening moral character[26].

Al-Ghazali also emphasises the importance of the teacher–student relationship in moral education. Teachers are expected to serve as moral role models who guide students not only academically but also spiritually. Through proper guidance and sincere effort, individuals can purify their hearts and develop virtues such as sincerity, humility, patience, and gratitude[27].

Furthermore, Al-Ghazali highlights the importance of self-awareness and moral introspection in character development. He encourages individuals to continually examine their intentions and actions to identify moral weaknesses and correct them. This process of self-examination helps individuals recognise the negative traits within themselves and gradually replace them with positive virtues through sincere effort and spiritual discipline[28].

In addition, Al-Ghazali emphasises the role of religious practices and spiritual training in strengthening moral character. Acts of worship such as prayer, fasting, remembrance of God, and seeking knowledge are seen as important means for purifying the heart and nurturing ethical behaviour. According to Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, when education integrates knowledge with spiritual practice, it produces individuals who not only possess intellectual competence but also demonstrate strong moral integrity and a deep sense of responsibility toward God and society[29].

Figure 2 :How to approach character education from Al-Ghazali's perspective?



Comparative Analysis of Al-Miskawaih and Al-Ghazali

Although both scholars emphasise the importance of character education, their approaches differ in several important ways. Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb Miskawayh adopts a more philosophical and rational approach, focusing on the role of reason in guiding moral behaviour and achieving ethical balance. His model of character education emphasises intellectual discipline, habit formation, and the cultivation of virtues through rational reflection[30].

On the other hand, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali emphasises the spiritual dimension of moral development. His approach focuses on inner purification, spiritual discipline, and the transformation of the heart through religious practice. While Al-Miskawaih highlights the balance of human faculties and rational ethics, Al-Ghazali places greater emphasis on faith, spirituality, and devotion as the foundations of moral character[31].

Despite these differences, both scholars share several important similarities. First, both believe that moral character can be developed through education and training rather than being entirely innate. Second, both emphasise the importance of self-discipline and continuous effort in achieving ethical excellence. Third, both scholars agree that the ultimate goal of education is to produce virtuous individuals who contribute positively to society[32].

Furthermore, both thinkers emphasize the importance of ethical guidance and the role of educators in shaping students' character. They view teachers not merely as transmitters of knowledge but also as mentors who guide students toward moral excellence. In their perspectives, education should nurture both intellectual growth and ethical awareness so that learners develop balanced personalities capable of responsible social engagement[33].

Another similarity lies in their recognition of the importance of habit and practice in moral development. Both scholars argue that virtuous character is formed through repeated ethical actions and continuous self-improvement. While Al-Miskawaih focuses on the rational cultivation of virtues through habit formation, Al-Ghazali complements this idea by emphasising spiritual exercises and moral self-reflection. Together, their perspectives offer a comprehensive framework that integrates rational ethics with spiritual development, providing valuable insights for contemporary approaches to character education[34].

Relevance to Contemporary Character Education

The ideas of Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb Miskawayh and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali remain highly relevant to contemporary discussions on character education. In modern educational systems, there is an increasing recognition that academic knowledge alone is insufficient for preparing individuals to face social and ethical challenges. Education must also focus on developing moral values, ethical awareness, and responsible behaviour[35].

The ethical philosophy of Al-Miskawaih highlights the importance of rational thinking, habit formation, and ethical discipline in shaping character. Meanwhile, Al-Ghazali's approach emphasises spiritual awareness, moral self-reflection, and the cultivation of sincerity and humility. Integrating these perspectives can provide a

comprehensive framework for character education that combines intellectual development with moral and spiritual growth. Therefore, the comparative study of these two scholars offers valuable insights for contemporary Islamic education. By integrating rational ethical training with spiritual development, educational institutions can create balanced character education programs that nurture both the intellectual and moral dimensions of learners[20].

Furthermore, the integration of these classical ideas can help address many moral challenges faced by modern societies, such as ethical decline, lack of discipline, and weakening social responsibility among young people. Educational institutions can adopt the rational ethical framework proposed by Al-Miskawaih while simultaneously incorporating the spiritual and moral purification emphasised by Al-Ghazali. This balanced approach enables students to develop critical thinking skills while maintaining strong moral and spiritual foundations[36].

In addition, the thoughts of these scholars guide educators in designing character-based curricula that emphasise values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and integrity. By incorporating both philosophical reasoning and spiritual reflection into the learning process, educators can foster holistic character development. Consequently, the integration of the educational philosophies of Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb Miskawayh and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali offers a meaningful contribution to the development of contemporary character education that balances intellectual excellence with moral and spiritual integrity[37].

Table 3. Relevance of Al-Miskawaih and Al-Ghazali’s Thought to Contemporary Character Education

Aspect	Al-Miskawaih’s Perspective	Al-Ghazali’s Perspective	Relevance to Contemporary Education
Foundation of Character	Character is developed through rational thinking and ethical reasoning.	Character is developed through purification of the heart and spiritual discipline.	Modern education can combine rational ethics with spiritual awareness.
Method of Character Formation	Habit formation, intellectual discipline, and moral training.	Spiritual practices such as self-reflection, repentance, and sincerity.	Schools can use both cognitive learning and spiritual development activities.
Educational Focus	Emphasis on balance of human faculties through reason.	Emphasis on faith, spirituality, and inner moral transformation.	Education should balance intellectual development with moral and spiritual growth.
Role of Education	Education trains individuals to achieve ethical balance and virtuous behavior.	Education guides individuals to purify the soul and strengthen faith.	Educational systems should integrate moral education with academic learning.
Moral Challenges in Society	Rational ethics can guide individuals to act responsibly in society.	Spiritual discipline prevents moral corruption and ethical decline.	Both perspectives help address modern issues such as lack of discipline and ethical crises among youth.
Curriculum Implications	Curriculum should include ethical	Curriculum should incorporate spiritual	Character-based curricula can integrate philosophical

	reasoning and moral philosophy.	reflection and religious values.	reasoning with spiritual values such as honesty, responsibility, and empathy.
Expected Outcome	Development of morally balanced and rational individuals.	Development of spiritually conscious and morally upright individuals.	Creation of holistic individuals with intellectual excellence and strong moral integrity.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the thoughts of Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb Miskawayh and Abu Hamid al-Ghazali on character education and their relevance to contemporary education. The analysis shows that both scholars made important contributions to moral education, although they approached it from different perspectives. Al-Miskawaih emphasized rational ethics, intellectual discipline, and the development of virtuous habits through the balanced use of reason, while Al-Ghazali focused on the spiritual dimension of character formation through purification of the soul, self-discipline, and devotion to God. Despite these differences, both scholars agreed that moral character can be cultivated through education and continuous self-improvement, and that the ultimate goal of education is to develop virtuous individuals who contribute positively to society. Their ideas remain highly relevant today, as modern education increasingly recognizes the importance of integrating intellectual development with moral and spiritual values. Therefore, combining the rational ethical framework of Al-Miskawaih with the spiritual approach of Al-Ghazali can provide a comprehensive model for contemporary character education that promotes both intellectual excellence and moral integrity.

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