



## Qur'an-Anchored Competency Framework: Thematic Links Between Value Orientations and 21st-Century Skills

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose of the study:** This study synthesizes how Qur'anic value orientations tafakkur (*Meditation*), ta'āwun (*collaboration*), hikmah (wisdom), and ihsān (excellence/creativity) map onto 21st-century competencies (4C/6C) and articulates a coherent integration framework for Islamic education.

**Methodology:** Adopting a library research design, documents were selected through explicit inclusion–exclusion criteria from databases (e.g., Google Scholar, national portals) and backward reference screening. Eligible sources included scholarly books, peer-reviewed articles, theses/dissertations, regulations, yearbooks, and reputable encyclopedias (print/digital). Data were extracted using a structured matrix and analyzed using qualitative content analysis (NVivo/ATLAS.ti optional). “Measurement” was operationalized as code presence, salience, and co-occurrence patterns across texts. Trustworthiness was supported by expert review of the codebook, intercoder agreement targets (Cohen's  $\kappa \geq .70$ ), triangulation, and an audit trail.

**Main Findings:** The study identifies strong links between Qur'anic values tafakkur, ta'āwun, hikmah, and ihsān and core 21st-century competencies such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity. These connections form a practical Value–Skill–Outcome framework that translates spiritual principles into measurable educational skills, offering a balanced integration of ethical values and modern learning outcomes in Islamic education..

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** The study moves beyond descriptive parallels by offering a concise, Qur'an-anchored framework that integrates classical values with contemporary competency models for Islamic higher education.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary education is being reshaped by rapid advances in information and communication technologies and by the complex demands of Society 5.0. These pressures require graduates who excel in higher-order thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, strong character, and responsible citizenship often summarized as 21st-century skills. In Islamic education, there is a parallel, enduring call to humanize learning, integrate ethics, and cultivate spiritually grounded agency rather than technological determinism. A Qur'anic lens offers normative guidance to align these competencies with values such as tafakkur (reflective reasoning),

ta'āwun (cooperation), hikmah (wise judgment), and ihsān (excellence) [1]. Therefore, the sketch referred to in this study is a concept.

Skills come from the primary word skillful; in English, it is called skills, which means capable, able, proficient, and dexterous in solving problems as needed. According to Tommy Suprpto, skills are the ability to use reason, thought, ideas, and creativity in doing, changing, or making something more meaningful to produce value from work or translate knowledge into practice to achieve the desired work results [2]. This aligns with Moenir's opinion in Solong, which states that skill is a person's ability to do a job with the available equipment [3]. Meanwhile, according to Mintarsih Indriayu et al., skills can be interpreted as a person's ability to do a specific job, where this ability is obtained by learning and developing [4]. In a more contextual sense, Syarifan Nurjan explains that skills are abilities that involve motor movements or are related to nerves and muscles (neuromuscular) to perform, acquire, and master specific physical skills such as sports (gross motor), playing musical instruments (fine motor), repairing electronic goods, and others that require intensive and regular exercises in the learning process [5]. Therefore, a skill possessed by a person can only be included after he participates in educational activities and practices and gains experience. The skills a person owns are not static but dynamic following the development of the culprit. This means that the more knowledge and experience gained, the greater the person's ability.

Referring to the opinions mentioned above, it can be concluded that skills are the technical ability to do something both with the provision of equipment and physical and thinking skills so that they can complete their tasks; in other words, a person can be said to have skills if he can complete a task or job. Meanwhile, what is meant by the 21st-Century refers to the period starting on January 1, 2001, and ending on December 31, 2100. Rapid information and communication technology developments like the internet, mobile phones, social media, and cloud computing have characterized social, economic, political, and technological changes. Science and technology advances have changed how people work, communicate, and live. Significant global challenges include climate change, the energy crisis, economic inequality, and geopolitical conflicts. Environmental sustainability, gender equality, and human rights are also in the spotlight in this Century.

Facing the 21st-Century, the impacts are certainly not easy to overcome or solve, so extra preparation is necessary. One of the essential factors that drive the economic growth and competitiveness of the nation in this era is the educational process with a learning model that is creative, innovative, adaptive, and able to improve graduate competencies by the demands of 21st-Century competency needs (learning and innovations skills). The 21st-Century trend focuses on specific specializations, so the learning process must be directed at shaping the capacity of graduates with skills that align with the dynamics and social life and advances in science and technology in the 21st-Century.

The four 21st-Century skills model known as the 4Cs was initiated by a group of educators who are members of P21 (Partnership for 21st-Century Learning), which developed skills relevant to the 21st-Century, namely critical thinking and problem-solving, creativity, communication skills, and ability to work collaboratively [6]. Critical thinking is analyzing in-depth information, evaluating arguments, and making informed decisions based on logical and rational thinking. Communication is the ability to convey information effectively through various media and interact with others effectively, orally and in writing. Collaboration is working in teams, sharing ideas, appreciating diversity, and achieving common goals through effective cooperation. Creativity is thinking out of the box, generating new ideas, and finding creative solutions to complex problems.

Apart from the 4Cs above, several skills are often added as learning and innovation skills in responding to the demands of 21st-Century needs, the National Institute of Education, Singapore, in a webinar entitled "From 4Cs to 6Cs: What Should Teachers Know and Prepare for Successful Language Learning in the 21st-Century," which provides a view that the mastery of two interpersonal skills, namely character and citizenship. Therefore, Kusuma says 21st-Century skills are applying specific knowledge and skills to solve authentic problems [7]. Redhana states that 21st-Century skills are essential skills that everyone must master to succeed in facing challenges, issues, and life [8]. Meanwhile, Arifin and Setiawan state that 21st-Century skills as a broad set of existing knowledge, skills, work habits, and character are believed to be essential for success in today's world, particularly in college programs and contemporary careers and workplaces, and can be applied in all academic subject areas and all education, employment, and citizenship settings throughout learners' lives [9].

Thus, 21st-Century skills are a set of abilities that everyone must possess to survive life and face the dynamics of global competition due to the rapid advancement of science. These skills are needed because of the desire to produce graduates with higher-order thinking skills as the conception of skill development in the era of society 5.0. In addition, 21st-Century skills need to be carried out to support the creation of a conducive learning climate to optimize student competence during global competition. The advancement of science and technology is currently unstoppable; even with this technology, humans can be replaced in the world of work and other aspects of life in general and personally. Therefore, there needs to be a massive effort, especially in education, to restore the role of humans as caliphs on earth or at least humanize intelligent humans who are different from robots who think because of big data, genetic engineering, and artificial intelligence [10].

The Quran contains many principles and values that can help Muslims develop these skills. Muslims can become more successful by studying the Quran and applying its principles daily. Therefore, according to Wahab, future education should be oriented towards divinity, humanity, and nature in a holistic-integrative manner so that it does not experience secularization, commercialization, and liberalization [11]. In other words, future education and learning must be within the framework of iqra bismi Rabbika al-ladzi khalaqa.

Despite wide adoption of the 4C/6C skill models (critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, character, and citizenship), Islamic educational management often lacks a systematic, text-anchored framework that translates Qur'anic principles into actionable strategies for teaching, leadership, and institutional quality improvement. The central problem addressed in this study is: How can Qur'anic values be systematically integrated with 21st-century skills to guide Islamic educational management and develop globally competitive, ethically grounded graduates? [12]. Prior works typically (1) describe 21st-century skills in general terms, (2) discuss Islamic virtues normatively, or (3) reference selected verses and tafsīr thematically. What remains underdeveloped is an explicit, concept-to-concept mapping that (a) anchors each 21st-century skill in Qur'anic constructs with support from classical and contemporary tafsīr, (b) synthesizes these links into a coherent management framework for curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and leadership, and (c) offers practical implications for institutional effectiveness and graduate outcomes. This study addresses that gap by proposing a Qur'an-based integration model that is both textually grounded and managerially usable.

RQ1: Which Qur'anic values most directly correspond to the core 21st-century skills (4C/6C), and how are these correspondences justified by classical and contemporary tafsīr? RQ2: How can these value-skill correspondences be operationalized into strategies for Islamic educational management (teaching, assessment, leadership, and quality improvement)? RQ3: In what ways might adopting a Qur'an-based integration framework strengthen institutional effectiveness and graduate readiness for global challenges while preserving Islamic ethical integrity?

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a library research design in which the “sample” consists of documents selected through transparent inclusion exclusion criteria. Sources were identified via database searches (e.g., Google Scholar and national portals) and hand-searching of reference lists, using predefined keywords; eligible items included scholarly books, peer-reviewed articles, theses/dissertations, official regulations/decrees, yearbooks, and reputable encyclopedias published in print or electronic form and directly relevant to the topic. Document “sampling” followed criteria on scholarly credibility, topical fit, and recency; duplicates and non-scholarly pieces were excluded. Data were extracted with a structured matrix and analyzed using qualitative content/thematic analysis supported by NVivo/ATLAS.ti to code and synthesize two focal constructs (variables): (1) Qur'anic value orientations (e.g., tafakkur, ta'āwun, hikmah, ihsān) and (2) 21st-century competencies (critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, with optional character/citizenship). “Measurement” was operationalized as code presence, salience, and co-occurrence patterns across texts. Trustworthiness was ensured through expert review of the codebook, intercoder reliability checks (e.g., Cohen's  $\kappa \geq .70$ ), source triangulation (cross-checking multiple document types), and an audit trail maintained with citation managers (e.g., Zotero/Mendeley). Ethical norms for citation and academic integrity were observed.

Furthermore, this research is carried out by analyzing several verses of the Qur'an and Hadith related to 21st-Century skills, then processed and concluded by linking the text to the tafsir reference and context based on the author's understanding. The approach used in this research is descriptive-analytic. This research examines how the Qur'an discusses 21st-Century skills by linking one verse with another to form a complete understanding.

Table 1. 21st-Century Skills in the Quran

| 21 Century Skills                            | Description Qur'an                                                                               | In Qur'an                                                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Skills | Ulul Albab, Tafakkur, and Tabayyun                                                               | Q.S Ali Imran [3]: 191, Q.S Al-Baqarah [2]: 164, Q.S. Al-Hujurat [49]:6, and Q.S. Al-Isra [17]: 36.   |
| Communication Skills                         | Al-Bayan, and Qaulan In The Implementation Mauidhah Al-Hasanah, and Qulu Linnas Al-Husna         | Q.S. An-Nahl [16]:125, Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 83, Q.S. Al-Hujurat [49]: 11, and Q.S. Al-A'raf [7]: 199. |
| Collaboration Skills                         | Ta'awwun Which Is Implemented In Wa Tawa Shaubil Al-Haq Wa Tawa Saubil Ash-Shabr, and Musyawarah | Q.S. Al-Maidah [5]: 2, Q.S. Al-Asr [103]: 3, Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 153, and Q.S. Ali Imran [3]: 159.   |
| Creativity Skills                            | Reflection of Asma Al-Husna Al-                                                                  | Q.S. Al-Hadid [57]: 4, Q.S. Yunus                                                                     |

| 21 Century Skills  | Description Qur'an        | In Qur'an                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                    | Khaliq and Al- Mushawwir  | [10]: 101, Q.S. Qaf [50]: 16, and Q.S. Al-Isra [17]: 19.                                                                                                                                  |
| Character Skills   | Akhlak Karimah, and Ihsan | (Q.S. Al-Ahzab [33]: 21), (Q.S. Al-Alaq [96]:1-5), (Q.S. Al-Mujadilah [58]: 11), and (Al-Hujurat [49]: 13).<br>Qaum is mentioned in the Quran 383 times, and ummah is mentioned 64 times. |
| Citizenship Skills | Qaum and Ummah            |                                                                                                                                                                                           |

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### *Critical thinking and problem-solving skills*

Critical thinking skills are part of the tafakkur command or attitude that every Muslim must have and do because tafakkur involves a necessary thinking process to produce the conceptualization of ideas. Tafakkur in Islam also has a different level of depth from the concept of critical thinking in general, where the fruit of a Muslim's contemplation will not be separated from his understanding and meaning of the nature of his existence and various other life events which are part of the creation of the universe by Allah SWT for him to contemplate, study and tadabbur [13].

This deeper engagement with tafakkur not only enhances critical thinking but also aligns with the Quranic perspective on ethical reasoning and character-building essential for navigating modern complexities [14]. This alignment with tafakkur emphasizes the necessity of integrating spiritual awareness into critical thinking, fostering a generation that is not only intellectually capable but also morally grounded [15]. Thus, the cultivation of critical thinking through tafakkur equips students with the ability to navigate ethical dilemmas, ensuring their decisions reflect both intellectual rigor and moral integrity [16]. This comprehensive approach to education, rooted in the Quranic perspective, ultimately aims to produce individuals who embody both intellectual excellence and ethical responsibility, ready to contribute positively to society [17].

Allah's command for humans to think is found in Q.S Al-Baqarah [2]: 164 and Q.S Ali Imran [3]: 190-191: "Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those who have understanding, (namely) those who remember Allah while standing or sitting or lying down and they think about the creation of the heavens and the earth ...". Allah commands humans to contemplate and think about many things, such as the creation of the heavens and the Earth earth which illustrates the precision and beauty of His arrangements, the alternation of night and day which shows the miracle of the rotation of the Earth earth, the arks in the sea which are a means of transportation for humans, the descent of rainwater as a cycle that supports life, and the diversity of animals that reflect His greatness. All these are signs of Allah's oneness and greatness that humans must live and contemplate with full awareness of His existence as the Creator and Ruler of everything. The senses of reasonable humans can reach everything in the heavens and on earth. With his intellect, man can know the nature of many things clearly and clearly [18]. These verses emphasize the integration of intellect ('aql) and remembrance (dhikr) as essential for understanding divine signs and fulfilling the human role as khalifah (vicegerent) on earth [19], [20]. The Qur'anic concept of intellect encompasses both rational and ethical dimensions, urging believers to contemplate creation and derive lessons from it [21]. Classical and modern interpretations highlight that such reflection is not merely intellectual but also spiritual, requiring the unity of reason and remembrance to fully appreciate Allah's power and wisdom. [22] This approach underpins the Qur'anic encouragement of critical thinking and scientific inquiry [23].

The equivalent of the word critical thinking in the Quran is Ulul albab, which refers to people with the correct thinking and understanding. [24] Ulul albab has several meanings associated with mind, heart, intellect, insight, knowledge, and wisdom. [25] The phrase ulul albab is mentioned in the Quran 16 times, which means a thinking person or a reasonable person. This shows that Muslims are commanded to have critical thinking to evaluate problems to find the best solution to solve them. In the verse, Allah SWT commands humans to look, reflect, and draw conclusions by using their minds on the signs He has given so that they can take lessons from them [26]. In the sentence *وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ* "And they thought about the creation of the heavens and the earth." This means that people should learn from all this creation and believe that no one made it except Allah SWT. In His hands is the ability to make rich and poor, the ability to glorify and humiliate, the ability to give life and death, and the ability to make miserable and happy [27].

A thinking person always remembers Allah (dhikr) under any circumstances. By thinking, humans will find knowledge that leads to faith because the higher human knowledge should increase the remembrance of Allah (dhikr). Therefore, the keywords of this verse are thought and dhikr [28].

#### *Communication Skills*

The potential to communicate in humans is a gift from Allah that has been automatically owned since humans were created, as stated in Q.S. Arrahman [55]: 1-4: "Created man, [And] taught him eloquence." The

Qur'an establishes communication as a divine gift to humanity, as referenced in Surah Ar-Rahman verses 1-4, which states that Allah created humans and taught them eloquence [29]. Islamic communication encompasses various Qur'anic terms including al-bayan, defined as the ability to communicate, and al-qaul, which serves as a key concept for communication ethics [30]. The Qur'an provides specific communication guidelines through terms like qaulan sadida (truthful speech), qaulan ma'rufa, qaulan karima, qaulan layyina, and qaulan baligha, emphasizing honest and beneficial discourse [31]. According to Islamic ethics, effective communication should be concise, clear, free from harmful intentions, educative, and use attractive language to positively impact audiences [32]. This divine communication ability helps humans fulfill interpersonal needs and maintain harmonious relationships, but requires adherence to moral principles to avoid causing harm [33].

Several Quranic terms are synonymous with communication, including al-Ittisal, rooted in the words wasola (convey), iqra (read), balligu (convey), yaktubu (write), hiwar (dialog), ud'u (call out), al-bayan (explain), and qaulan (talk/say) [34]–[36]. However, the Qur'an provides clear communication boundaries to achieve the expected goals and objectives, such as 1) communicating with 'hikmah' or wisdom (Q.S. An-Nahl [16]:125), 2) using good words (Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 83), 3) not mocking (Q.S. Al-Hujurat [49]: 11), and 4) open attitude (Q.S. Al-A'raf [7]: 199).

The Quran portrays human language and communication as a divinely bestowed gift, exemplified by Q.S. Arrahman's reference to "eloquence". This endowment is reflected in a rich array of terms that collectively emphasize the importance of message transmission, preservation, and ethical engagement [37]. Quranic communication is deeply intertwined with theological themes, serving as a medium for revelation, education, and moral development. Linguistic creativity through repetition, parallelism, and phonetic modulation reinforces the text's persuasive and inimitable nature, while gaps remain in understanding its pragmatic effects and translation challenges for modern audiences [38].

The wisdom (hikmah) in question is good communication, using wise words, maintaining ethics, and conveying messages respectfully and constructively so that they have a positive impact [18], [27]. Meanwhile, Wahbah Az-Zuhaili, which is in line with the opinion of Imam Asy-Syaukani, says that wisdom is a definite argument or proof, which brings confidence so that it can prove and explain the truth and remove doubts [39], [40]. Likewise, according to Hamka, hikmah is wisdom anyone, including ordinary people, can practice. Even the most educated people cannot refute the actions taken in wisdom [28]. Wisdom is not only related to words but also involves actions and attitudes of life. Good words can be in the form of thayyibah sentences, and amar ma'ruf nahyi munkar [27].

Insulting, ridiculing, and demeaning others is the same as self-deprecation. When someone reproaches another person or reveals his evil secret, the other person can also reveal the ugliness of the person who reproached him [28]. Respecting human dignity is essential in every communication interaction because those who are made fun of are better than those who make fun of them [27]. In communication, we must prioritize an open attitude, respect other people's opinions, and respond gently. Therefore, Allah SWT ordered the Prophet Muhammad SAW and his ummah to interact with polytheists and, if necessary, forgive their actions without having to use violence against them [27]. Therefore, according to Hamka, there are three essential things in this verse related to communication, namely: 1) forgive the weaknesses and shortcomings of others, 2) Always carry out amar ma'ruf, and 3) Avoid conflict with fools [28].

### ***Collaborative skills***

Collaborative skills are the ability of all group members to complete work together to encourage each member to find various opinions or ideas. Cooperative is the ability to do something together by helping each other as a group, and each individual has their role and responsibility in the group to achieve the same goal. In the Quran, the term collaboration or cooperation is equivalent to ta'awun. Therefore, collaboration is one of the morals of believers, and it is essential to get good together. [41] By collaborating or ta'awun, one can act and contribute good things and calm the heart for oneself and others [42]. The Quran provides essential guidelines for developing good collaboration skills. Several verses serve as a foundation for having practical collaboration skills, among others: mutual help (Q.S. Al-Maidah [5]: 2), mutual advice (Q.S. Al-Asr [103]: 3), patience (Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 153), and gentleness (Q.S. Ali Imran [3]: 159).

The concept of collaboration in Islam is fundamentally rooted in the Quranic term "ta'awun," which emphasizes cooperation among believers for achieving goodness and righteousness. According to Islamic teachings, collaboration involves direct communication, respect for different perspectives, and mutual social relationships that are essential for human life [43]. The Quran specifically requests Muslims to collaborate in their affairs while prohibiting cooperation in illegal activities, as God has enacted mutual rights that can only be fulfilled through collaborative efforts [44]. Key Quranic verses supporting collaboration include Surah Al-Ma'idah verse 2, which emphasizes ta'awun in goodness and piety, and Surah As-Shaff verse 4, highlighting unity and order [45]. The Islamic perspective distinguishes between beneficial ta'awun that leads to good outcomes, which should be encouraged, and harmful ta'awun leading to evil, which must be avoided [46]. This

collaborative principle extends to educational contexts, promoting student-centered cooperative learning through discussion and group work [47].

Collaboration is a fundamental value in Islamic teachings, as strengthening ukhuwah community requires common goals and positive values and emphasizes the importance of mutual assistance in creating goodness and benefits [27]. When Allah forbids us to do wrong, it also commands us to collaborate on virtue and piety regardless of its form [40], [48]. The concept of collaboration in Islam emphasizes the importance of helping each other create goodness and benefits to strengthen piety for Allah. A happy life is a social life that reminds each other of truth and patience. As the proverb says, "Sitting alone is narrow; sitting together is spacious" and lose the one who is alone, who considers the truth only for himself [28].

The key to harmonious collaboration in achieving common goals is the importance of patience, gentleness, forgiveness, inclusiveness, and the ability to exchange opinions in deliberation with others [27]. With this gentle attitude, the Prophet treated the people with patience and compassion and was not quick to anger; even though there were people who made mistakes and negligence in their duties, he corrected them and guided his people towards a stronger faith so that Allah SWT gave two titles to the Prophet Muhammad, namely "Rauf" and "Rahim", which means very loving, merciful, and compassionate [28].

### ***Creativity skills***

Creativity is the ability to create something. It is done by finding, combining, building, composing, designing, changing, or adding something of value. Creativity reflects an individual's ability to use their potential to produce the best and most beneficial things for life. Creating new things is called creative while developing existing ones for the better is called innovative. Islam does not prevent its followers from being creative and innovative as long as it does not violate religious laws or deviate from the area of worship, laws, and obligatory pillars. Islam approves and is open to creative expression and innovation in civilization. Innovative is the process of creating ideas or ideas as an instinct possessed by humans since birth; if it continues to be honed, it will foster creativity. Creativity is viewed as a divine trait endowed to humans, reflecting God's attributes and serving as a tool for societal betterment [49]. Islamic teachings emphasize that creativity is essential for ijtihad, requiring critical thinking to develop fresh approaches to contemporary problems. Historical Islamic civilization demonstrates remarkable innovation across various fields, driven by scholars' religious duty to promote creativity in human existence [50]. The Quran contains numerous verses encouraging critical thinking rather than blind submission, with creativity serving as the key to solving life's problems and spreading development and progress [51]. Islamic education recognizes thinking skills and creativity as crucial 21st-century objectives, with the Quranic methodology providing frameworks for enhancing creative abilities. Even the concept of bid'ah can contribute positively to creating innovative Muslim societies when properly understood [52].

In the Islamic view, creativity reflects the names of Allah, al-Khaliq, and al-Mushawwir. Creativity is the ability to use what one has to produce something that is best and useful for life as a form of sincere devotion to His presence and gratitude for His blessings. Islamic scholarship presents creativity as a divine attribute reflecting Allah's names, particularly al-Khaliq (The Creator) and al-Mushawwir (The Fashioner). Creativity in Islam represents "an awareness of one's faith, to use all one's abilities as a form of gratitude for Allah's favors" to produce beneficial outcomes through sincere devotion [53]. Al-Ghazali's theological framework connects human creative potential to divine attributes like al-Khāliq, al-Bāri', and al-Muṣawwir, emphasizing that humans follow God's creativity in creating creatures [54]. This divine spark enables humans to innovate across various fields while adhering to Islamic teachings [49]. The Quranic foundation supports creativity as essential for societal betterment and problem-solving through ijtihad. Islamic heritage significantly contributes to modern conceptualizations of innovative life, with no Islamic prohibition against technological excellence that benefits humanity while following Quranic principles [50].

Although no verses explicitly discuss creativity, the Quran can be a source of inspiration for developing creativity skills. The following are some of the values and concepts that can be a theological foundation for having creativity skills, among others: Allah is a creative creator (Q.S. Al-Hadid [57]: 4), the wonders of Allah's creation (Q.S. Yunus [10]: 101), understanding oneself (Q.S. Qaf [50]: 16), and innovation is obedience (Q.S. Al-Isra [17]: 19). Islamic scholarship demonstrates that creativity and innovation are fundamental aspects of Islamic education and theology, deeply rooted in Quranic teachings. The Quran emphasizes critical thinking over blind submission and provides methodological frameworks for developing creative thinking skills [51]. Islamic epistemology views knowledge as inseparable from divine affirmation, with the Quran and Hadith serving as primary sources for scientific thinking and creativity development [55]. According to Islamic theology, creativity reflects one of God's characteristics as the ultimate creator (al-badi'), and humans are encouraged to engage in creative endeavors (ijtihad) as acts of worship and service to humanity [56]. Historical Islamic civilization demonstrates that profound religious belief actually promoted creativity and innovation across various fields of human knowledge, with Muslim scholars making remarkable contributions to science and technology [50]. The research indicates that Islamic principles not only support but actively encourage technological advancement and creative problem-solving when aligned with Quranic teachings and prophetic traditions.

As a creative creator, God gives humans the potential to develop their creativity in various aspects of life. By observing God's creation, humans can find inspiration and innovative solutions to multiple problems. In the process of thinking and contemplating, humans can express their creativity by taking inspiration from the greatness of the universe. A believer who uses his creativity to do good solely out of obedience to Allah will get a good reward and forgiveness from Him. Thus, creativity becomes a means for humans to get closer to Allah and realize the potential that He has given [27]. Allah created the heavens and the Earth and everything in them, showing His absolute sovereignty and confirming that Allah knows everything that happens on Earth and in the sky, both hidden and visible. Allah is with His servants wherever they are and pays attention to all their actions [40]. Allah is the all-powerful and all-knowing Creator who is always present and watching everything in the universe [57]. Therefore, recognizing Allah as the Creator can open human hearts and make them more transparent in reasoning, and they will undoubtedly be touched and participate in sanctifying Him [48].

### **Character Skills**

Character skills are essential to daily life and the workplace, reflecting the positive values, attitudes, and behaviors required for success in the 21st-Century skills era. According to the Quran, character education is more than just imparting knowledge about good and evil; it also involves habituation, good example, practice, inculcation, and reinforcement of positive traits and rejection of bad behavior. Character education must include social skills, personal improvement, and comprehensive problem-solving to be effective. In addition, the character reflects the teachings of Allah and His Messenger, so a person's behavior can indicate whether they are a good Muslim. Thus, developing strong character is essential in shaping successful individuals who contribute positively to society.

Character education according to the Qur'an encompasses comprehensive moral development that extends beyond mere knowledge transmission. The Qur'an and Hadith serve as foundational sources establishing values and principles for good character formation, with the Qur'an providing basic guidance while Hadith offers concrete examples [58]. This education functions not only as moral value inculcation but also as guidance for navigating emotional and social challenges, emphasizing values such as honesty, justice, and kindness [59]. The essence of character education refers to Prophet Muhammad's personality, prioritizing good values through strategic implementation in informal, formal, and non-formal educational environments [60]. Effective character education requires processes, exemplary models, and conditioning within school, family, and community environments rather than simple knowledge transfer or skill training [61]. The ultimate goal is developing individuals with noble character (*akhlakul karimah*) who demonstrate moral integrity and contribute positively to society. Islamic character values are the basic concept of Islam itself, which is a religion that makes humans civilized or has good character or *Ihsan*, as stated in Q.S. Al-Ahzab [33]: 21.

*"There has certainly been an excellent pattern for you in the Messenger of Allah for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often."*

The description of the character possessed by Rasulullah SAW, as told by Ummi Salamah RA at the time of the Khandaq war, is the steadfastness and calmness of Rasulullah SAW so that others trust and emulate him [28]. This verse becomes a theological and spiritual foundation for a Muslim to have a character as exemplified directly by His Messenger, starting from the command to learn as stated in Q.S. Al-Alaq [96]: 1-5, and Q.S. Al-Mujadilah [58]: 11. Furthermore, the ultimate goal of the character is *taqwa* as stated in Q.S. Al-Hujurat [49]: 13, namely implementing religious teachings through good manners exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad SAW [28]. So the ultimate goal of Islamic character values is good manners, as the purpose of Islam itself is to perfect morals, as stated by the Prophet Muhammad SAW: "Verily I was sent to perfect morals", which means that Islam is to perfect morals.

### **Citizenship Skills**

Citizenship skills, as 21st-Century skills, refer to the ability of individuals to be active, participating, and responsible members of society or citizens in an increasingly connected global context. These skills include knowledge of political systems and governance and the development of attitudes, values, and behaviors that support positive participation in social and political life. With these skills, societies are becoming more complex and globally connected. Individuals with good citizenship skills can positively shape an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable society. Meanwhile, the citizenship skills emphasized by the Quran include the principles of human rights, brotherhood, equality, justice, and devotion to the state based on the values of *tawhid*, all of which lead to a single goal, namely the worship of Allah [62]. The term in the Quran that implies the meaning of citizens, residents, or society is the word *Qaum*, which is mentioned in the Quran 383 times, and the phrase *ummah*, which is mentioned in the Quran 64 times [63].

Islamic perspectives on citizenship emphasize fundamental principles rooted in Quranic teachings and Islamic jurisprudence. The concept of citizenship in Islam encompasses equality of all human beings, shared access to resources, respect for diversity, and human cooperation as higher Quranic objectives [64]. Islamic

citizenship is acquired through birth, migration, or collective declaration of loyalty with submission to Muslim laws, with Sharia making no distinction between citizens, migrants, and refugees in terms of rights. The Quran identifies civic values including unity, justice, honesty, responsibility, moderation, tolerance, and rule of law, which can contribute to establishing peaceful and prosperous societies [65]. Citizenship education from a Quranic perspective aims to form good citizens who maintain harmonious relationships with God, fellow humans through brotherhood and mutual recognition, and nature through environmental stewardship. Key Quranic terms related to community and citizenship include qaum, ummah, sha'b, and qabāil. [62].

When viewed from the ultimate goal of the skills that humans must possess in the 21st-Century, it is never separated from the goals indicated by Allah SWT in the Qur'an, namely faith, Islam, ihsan, and piety.

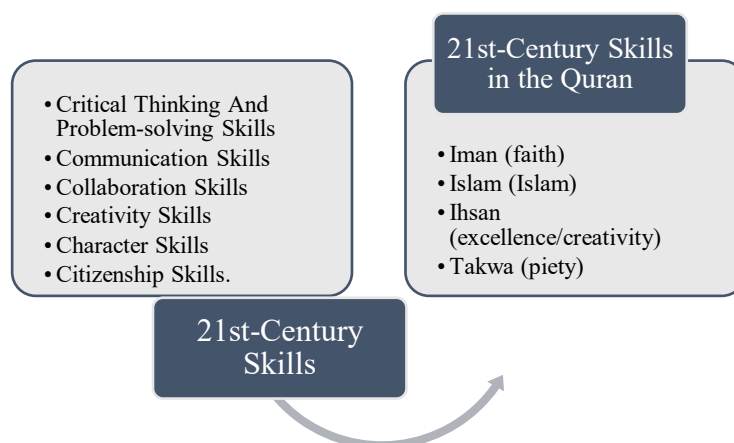


Figure 1. Sketches of 21st-Century Skills in the Quran

Faith, Islam, and Ihsan are inseparable dimensions; if likened to a tree, faith becomes the root, Islam becomes the trunk, and Ihsan becomes the fruit. Faith lies in the heart, Islam lies in the behavior of deeds, and Ihsan is both. These three things are called piety, which refers to an attitude consisting of love and fear, which is even more evident in the awareness of everything about him, and he even feels that Allah SWT always knows his innermost heart. So that he always carries out Allah's commands and avoids all His prohibitions. Integration with theory & prior work: Results cohere with virtue-ethics perspectives (values shape dispositions), Social Cognitive Theory (self-regulation/agency), and 21st-century learning models (skills drive engagement). The study's novelty is a text-anchored, construct-to-construct framework linking Qur'anic values to transferable skills and, in turn, to learning outcomes—extending prior descriptive accounts with quantified pathways. Practical implications: (1) Curriculum—embed tafakkur prompts in problem-based tasks; (2) Pedagogy—design cooperative structures (ta'āwun) and case-based reasoning (hikmah); (3) Assessment—pair performance tasks for 4C/6C with reflective journaling to evidence value internalization; (4) Quality assurance—include QVO-aligned indicators in program review. Limitations: Cross-sectional, self-report design limits causal inference and may inflate associations. Future research: Use longitudinal/experimental designs, incorporate rubric-based performance data, and test moderators (e.g., teaching presence, digital access) and mediators along the value → skill → outcome chain.

The findings reveal that Qur'anic value orientations—tafakkur (reflection), ta'āwun (collaboration), hikmah (wisdom), and ihsān (excellence)—are closely aligned with 21st-century competencies such as critical thinking, communication, creativity, and teamwork. Compared with previous studies, this research goes beyond descriptive connections by presenting a coherent Value–Skill–Outcome (VSO) model that operationalizes Qur'anic ethics into measurable educational competencies. The synthesis suggests that integrating these values into learning design can enhance not only cognitive and creative performance but also moral reasoning and emotional resilience. Thus, Qur'anic principles function as transformative drivers that unify intellectual, ethical, and social dimensions of modern education. This study contributes a novel, text-anchored framework for Islamic education that bridges classical spirituality with global competency paradigms. The implications extend to curriculum design, pedagogy, and institutional quality assurance, offering practical strategies such as reflective learning (tafakkur), cooperative projects (ta'āwun), ethical communication (hikmah), and creative problem-solving (ihsān). Although limited by its qualitative scope, the research opens pathways for empirical validation through mixed-method or longitudinal approaches. Overall, this study strengthens the theoretical and practical integration of Qur'anic values with 21st-century educational models to produce ethically grounded and future-ready graduates.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Qur'anic value orientations tafakkur (meditation), ta'āwun (colaboration), hikmah (wisdom), and ihsān (charity) directly relate to and shape twenty-first-century competencies (4C/6C): tafakkur cultivates critical and reflective thinking; ta'āwun drives accountable collaboration; hikmah guides ethical communication and sound judgment; and ihsān channels creativity toward public benefit. Based on a qualitative synthesis, the article advances a Value Skill Outcome (VSO) model in which cultivating Qur'anic values generates measurable competencies that translate into learning outcomes, character formation, and institutional effectiveness so values are not decorative but constitutive drivers of competence. Practically, embed tafakkur in inquiry and problem-based tasks; structure ta'āwun through cooperative roles and peer accountability; develop hikmah via case-based reasoning and speech ethics (e.g., qaulan sadīdan/layyinān); and channel ihsān into creative projects addressing authentic needs. Assessment should combine performance tasks for 4C/6C with reflective journals evidencing value internalization, while quality assurance incorporates VSO indicators into program evaluation; at the policy level, accreditation instruments, funding incentives, and faculty development can be aligned with this framework. Although limited by its qualitative, literature-based design, the study invites design-based trials, rubric-guided measures of internalization, and longitudinal tracking; nevertheless, the synthesis supports immediate adoption by aligning teaching–assessment–improvement cycles with Qur'anic values to graduate ethically grounded, future-ready learners.

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