

## Incorporating Critical Thinking in Usul al-Fiqh Subject with Islamic Perspectives

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### Abstract

This study examines the integration of critical thinking into the teaching of Usul al-Fiqh from an Islamic perspective, addressing the noted lack of structured pedagogical strategies in current Islamic education curricula. It aims to highlight the significance of critical thinking as rooted in the Qur'an and classical Islamic thought, and to propose a conceptual framework for embedding critical thinking into Usul al-Fiqh instruction. Using qualitative content analysis, the study synthesizes literature from Islamic jurisprudence, cognitive theory, and pedagogy. As a result, five key elements of Islamic critical thinking were identified: *tazakkur* (remembrance), *ta'aqqul* (rational analysis), *tadabbur* (contemplation), *tafakkur* (reflection), and *tafaqquh* (deep understanding). These components were subsequently formulated into a structured model to enhance students' legal reasoning and intellectual engagement. The findings suggest that integrating these elements strengthens students' higher-order thinking, ethical reasoning, and spiritual awareness. Consequently, the study concludes that Islamic-based critical thinking frameworks can significantly enrich the teaching of Usul al-Fiqh. Therefore, it is recommended that this approach be adopted in Islamic Shariah education to bridge traditional scholarship with contemporary cognitive demands. For future research, it is recommended that studies empirically test this framework to assess its impact on student outcomes, particularly in enhancing legal reasoning, problem-solving, and moral decision-making. Additionally, researchers should explore its broader application across other areas of Islamic education, potentially contributing to the wider reform of Islamic education in the 21st century.

**Keywords:** Critical thinking, Usul al-Fiqh, Islamic pedagogy, Islamic jurisprudence, cognitive framework

## **Introduction**

The exploration of thought processes aligns with the principles of cognitive psychology. This branch of psychology focuses on understanding how various mental activities are shaped by the functioning of the human brain (Hastjarjo, T. D., 2004). Thinking is a cognitive process that involves using our mental faculties to solve problems, provide answers, make decisions, or improve our understanding of a subject. It is a cognitive effort that allows us to analyse information, assess situations, and devise strategies to achieve our objectives. The Qur'an fosters scientific thinking by encouraging awareness, fair judgment, and deliberate reasoning (Gilani & Islam, 2011). Inda & Sihes (2022) stressed that exploring the Quranic view of thinking, especially critical thinking, is important and will play a role in searching for truth and acquiring knowledge. The importance of education and learning in Islam is proven by the many verses of the Quran and hadiths that emphasise the importance of seeking knowledge. The Quran says:

أَفْرَأَ بِأَسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝ ١ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ۝ ٢ أَفْرَأُ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝ ٣ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝ ٤ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝

Translation: “Read by (mentioning) the name of your God who created. He created man from a clot of blood. Read, and your God is the Most Merciful, who teaches through the medium of the pen; He teaches man what he does not know.” (Al-Quran 96,1-5)

The first verse of the Quran emphasizes the importance of reading, enabling Muslims to understand and practice their faith. Islamic law (Sharia) is based on the Quran, the teachings of the Prophet (Sunnah), consensus (ijma), and analogical reasoning (qiyas), all of which require acquisition. Legal reasoning (ijtihad) also requires a solid foundation of knowledge. Education in Islam is not just theory but must also be practised in the life of a Muslim (Basiah et al., 2023). Through education, Muslims acquire the necessary tools to lead a fulfilling Islamic life.

The important role of critical and creative thinking in Islamic law is to enable Muslims to navigate effectively through the complexities of global trends and globalisation. Scholars such as Junoh et al. (2021) highlighted the importance of critical thinking in recognizing the impacts of global cultural dynamics. Mafruhah et al. (2022) also emphasize the importance of critical thinking in education, as students' problem-solving abilities depend on their critical thinking skills. This critical thinking approach is closely related to the Islamic faith. When rationally understood, it leads to meaningful action, while unquestioning acceptance of dogma exposes individuals to vulnerability in challenging circumstances (Zhaffar et al., 2017).

The thinking process involves processing, planning, and interpreting known information in response to a problem-solving situation (Rifqi, M. H. A., 2023). Usul al-Fiqh plays a significant role in understanding and implementing Islamic law, advocating an approach beyond memorization. It encourages critical analysis of evidence and logic, ensuring the development of legal conclusions that align with Islamic teachings and are practical in the modern context. It will contribute to a robust and flexible Islamic legal framework, guiding Muslims through the ever-changing landscape of the contemporary world.

## Cultivating Critical Thinking: Al-Quran as a Framework

According to Lailiyah et al. (2015), critical thinking skills are the third stage after the stage of remembering (recall) and the stage of basic thinking. The process of critical thinking (critical thinking) is a more complicated thinking process that includes the thinking process because it involves the ability to analyze, determine the scope of data and information requirements. The activity is also known as a “thinking” operation that can form a concept, opinion, view, thought, idea or knowledge about something that was not previously known about thinking (Abas, 2023). Good thinking, seen through the lens of the Qur'an, is characterized by its diverse nature; it includes critical, creative, ethical, and spiritual dimensions. Al-Quran affirms that good thinking aims to achieve wisdom (Ishak & Yusoff, 2015).

The Quran, a foundational text in Islam, plays a crucial role in fostering critical thinking skills, aligning with modern educational methods that prioritize analytical capabilities, as evidenced by the directive “Iqra!” in Surah al- ‘Alaq. This Quranic injunction underscores the significance of contemplation, observation, and reflection, aiming not merely at rote memorization of legal rulings but also at fostering a robust faith and a holistic comprehension of Islamic tenets. Incorporating Usul al-Fiqh into the curriculum, as advocated by Nawi et al. (2024), provides a structured and dynamic learning environment that promotes student engagement and equips learners with essential critical thinking abilities, highlighting the interconnectedness between critical thinking and spirituality as emphasized by Junoh et al. (2021). In Surah 179, verse 179, Allah swt stated:

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَلَهُمْ آذَانٌ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا أُولَٰئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلَّ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَقَلُونَ ١٧٩

Translation: “And verily We have made for Hell Hell most of the jinn and men - those who do not use their minds and their hearts cannot understand, and their ears cannot hear. They are like livestock and even cruel. They are heedless people.” (al-Quran 7,179)

This verse underlines the importance of reason (*‘aql*) to understand the divine message. Also, it highlights that those who reject reason are akin to animals with no intellectual capacity. Some classical scholars emphasize the importance of reason in achieving religious knowledge. Modern interpretation has broadened the scope of critical thinking and reflection. Al-Quran discusses the importance of essential thinking skills and recommends that policymakers and curriculum developers implement an integrated education curriculum based on *naqli* and *aqli*. It will produce individuals who can think critically about the many verses of the Qur'an (Inda & Sihes, 2022).

The Quran underscores critical thinking and verification of information, cautioning against uncritical acceptance, as highlighted in Surah Hujurat, verse 6, which advises believers to verify news from uncertain sources. Similarly, Surah Ali Imran verses 190-191 emphasize reflection and critical thinking to deepen understanding of Allah through contemplating creation. These verses advocate for an engaged interaction with the world as a divine manifestation, encouraging Muslims to seek knowledge and truth through observation and reflection, thus fulfilling the innate human quest for meaning and establishing a deeper connection with the divine.

Ab Hamid et.al. (2015) have used the term *al- 'aql al- 'ilmiyyah*, which is a thought that is based on the model of the Qur'an by having an independent and objective nature and rejecting a misguided mind, *taklid* that stagnates and follows lust. That is, rejecting doubt in some issues, not following passions and emotions in science, rejecting blind obedience to ancestors' heritage, not submitting to or obsessing over leaders or dignitaries, and not following something without arguments or evidence.

The Islamic perspective on critical thinking was developed based on the Qur'an teachings and Muslims' scientific attitude throughout history. It involves rebuilding a framework consistent with Islamic beliefs and values, thus integrating these principles into the education system and various fields of study. The Islamic framework emphasizes the importance of critical thinking as an intellectual tool for forming arguments, evaluating the credibility of sources, analyzing assumptions, and making informed decisions. Islamic critical thinking is essential for ensuring that the intellect bestowed by Allah SWT is not neglected and is used well without violating divine revelation. Islamic critical thinking accepts divine revelation (*al-wahy*) as the primary reference source, leading to absolute truth. The paramount importance of Islamic critical thinking is to increase faith (*iman*) and piety (*taqwa*) in Allah SWT by contemplating and examining nature (Junoh et al.,2021).

### **Problem Statement**

Integrating critical thinking into the teaching of Usul al-Fiqh, an essential subject in Islamic Sharia education, faces significant challenges, especially in the Malaysian secondary education environment. Scholars such as Basuki (2022) emphasized the need for systematic pedagogical strategies to enhance students' understanding and critical analysis skills essential in navigating Islamic law. However, the absence of a structured teaching methodology and a unified Islamic framework significantly hinders the cultivation of critical thinking among students (Endut & Wan Abdullah, 2009). This gap emphasizes the urgent need for a strategy to overcome these educational barriers to provide future Muslims with the critical thinking skills for in-depth engagement with Islamic jurisprudence.

### **Research Objective**

This research aims to achieve the following primary goals:

1. To elucidate the significance of critical thinking in Islam by examining its foundations based on al-Quran and Islamic perspectives on cognitive processes.
2. Formulate a framework for fostering critical thinking within Usul al-Fiqh education by proposing a systematic approach to integrate critical thinking into the teaching methodology of Usul al-Fiqh to enhance pedagogical efficacy.

### **Methodology of Study**

The research methodology employed in this study involves a systematic literature review. A solid theoretical groundwork is designed to blend Islamic critical thinking principles with modern educational approaches by merging Islamic jurisprudence, educational theory, and critical thinking. This research also enhances the Quranic framework for critical thinking by delving into relevant verses and hadiths that emphasize the significance of critical thinking in education, further solidifying the importance of critical thinking from an Islamic perspective.

## Findings and Discussion

### a) The Relationship between Critical Thinking and Usul al-Fiqh

Imam al-Shafi'i founded Usul al-Fiqh. Imam al-Syafi'i's book, *al-Risalah* (2005), played an essential role in developing Usul al-Fiqh as a science discipline (Muhit et al., 2023). It is widely accepted in Islamic jurisprudence that Usul al-fiqh has become a theoretical discipline studied as part of the legal heritage (Kamali, 2001). The Book of *al-Risalah* written by Imam al-Syafi'i stands as a landmark in the development of Syafi'i which has established a methodology systematic, emphasizing sound reasoning, and fostering the integration of reason with revelation, al-Syafi'i has raised the dignity of Usul al-Fiqh to a rigorous and scientific discipline that continues to shape the study and practice of Islamic law, ensuring it remains relevant in the contemporary world. The methodology recommended to obtain rules and regulations in Islamic law should be based on the principles of humanity and general well-being, aiming to achieve good and prevent harm (Rusli, 2014).

Usul al-Fiqh is a scientific discipline that explains the methodology used by mujtahids in exploring and establishing *syar'i* laws sourced from texts, either al-Qur'an or al-Sunnah (Amri, 2022). Mu'adzah (2022) formulates fiqh proposals to understand and develop sharia law. Hassan et.al (2023) assert that critical thinking is essential in Usul al-Fiqh because it involves examining, analyzing, and evaluating legal sources, methodology, and reasoning (Hassan et.al., 2023). Islam not only teaches faith; it ignites the fire of reason in us. It urges us to deepen, question, and analyze before receiving new information (Feyyaz, 2013). The relationship between religion and reason in Quranic studies reflects a harmonious blend, encouraging believers to observe, think, and reflect, viewing faith and reason as complementary in Islamic philosophy (Setiawan, M., et.al, 2022).

Islamic teachings encourage independent and critical thinking, allowing individuals to explore new perspectives and develop their interpretations based on knowledge and reflection (Amin, 2023). The content of fiqh has the characteristics of various interpretations and various views (Habibi, 2021). Emphasizing the epistemological basis of critical thinking in Usul al-Fiqh is important through exploring the relationship between revelation and reason, the balance between text compliance and contextual understanding, and the role of an objective-based approach (*Maqasid al-Shariah*) in guiding the critical thinking process (Hassan et al., 2023).

### b) Applying Critical Thinking According to Islamic Perspectives in Usul al-Fiqh Teaching

Critical thinking activities are highly demanded in Islam so that the intellect bestowed by Allah SWT is not neglected and used to the best of its ability without violating divine freedom; revelation (Junoh et.al., 2021). This issue has also been emphasized by Nawi et.al. (2024) that integrating Usul al-Fiqh in the secondary school curriculum will increase students' understanding of Islamic law through conceptual clarity, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving abilities. It equips students with the knowledge and skills to interpret and apply Sharia law based on sound legal reasoning and methodology, fostering ethical awareness in legal decisions.

Critical thinking is an essential intellectual tool that can help a person form an argument, determine the credibility of sources, analyze assumptions, or make decisions in various contexts (Dwyer et al., 2014). These tools allow us to consciously organize arguments, assess the credibility of sources, analyze assumptions, or make decisions in various contexts

(Endut & Wan Abdullah, 2009). In the formulation of the model in the study of Nordin et al. (2015) in critical thinking, five elements of Islamic thinking were outlined: *Tadabbur* (judging ideas), *Tafakkur* (prediction), *Tafaqquh* or *Tafqih* (analyzing), *Ta'aqul* or *Ta'qil* (synthesizing), *Tadhakkur* or *Tazakkur* (summarizing), in applying critical thinking skills in the subjects Usul al-Fiqh. Nevertheless, in this study, the five elements by Nordin et al. (2015) have been arranged based on the order structured by Inda (2021) through the order of priority. *Tazakkur* is placed at the initial stage, which is known as the construction of knowledge. Next, *taaqul* and *tadabbur* are categorized as the second level of thinking skills and are marked as evaluation reasoning. Finally, in sound decision-making, *tafqi*h is assigned to the final stage of the decision-making process. However, the *tafakkur* element is not mentioned in his study.

Like Nordin et al.'s (2015) critical thinking model, Ab Hamid et al. (2015) asserted that the critical thinking culture in today's Malay society is rooted in the five principal thinking methods outlined in the Qur'an. These methods include *ta'qil* (thinking), *tadhakkur* (remembering), *tafakkur* (deep thinking), *tadabbur* (reflection), and *tafqi*h (understanding), adapted to suit the contemporary framework of society. In comparison, Zainorah Kadri's (2015) significant contribution to the discussion on critical thinking in an Islamic context emphasizes *tafahhum* (understanding) as a key element rooted in the Al-Quran, besides the five elements mentioned. She adds the concept of *tafahhum* to go beyond rationality and logic, advocating for a holistic approach that combines the heart and mind in the pursuit of knowledge, aligning with the Quranic view that knowledge is acquired through reason, revelation, and inner purification.

On the other hand, Malik (2022) develops cognitive abilities based on an Islamic point of view that combines the components of *tafakur* (reflection), *tadabbur* (deep reflection), *tafaqquh* (understanding), and *taakul* (logical analysis), while not explicitly referring to *tazakkur* in his discourse. *Tafaqquh* (understanding) is a higher level of knowing. The Quran encourages Muslims to understand their religion; there needs to be people to devote themselves to this task. According to him, teachers can foster a culture of critical thinking based on Islamic principles by integrating these concepts into teaching practice and encouraging students to engage with the Quran through this lens. He also emphasized that using interpretive methods to critically examine relevant parts of religious texts can further enhance the development of basic critical thinking perspectives that align with Islamic principles.

Junoh and Mohamad (2020) relate the concept of thinking skills in the al-Quran with six main elements: *tafqi*h (research), *ta'qil* (study), *tafakkur* (reflection), *tafahhum* (understanding), *tadhakkur* (formulating), and *tadabbur* (evaluating). The author explains that the terms *tafahhum* and *ta'qil* are closely related to the meaning of definition in a specific knowledge domain, serving as a basis for cultivating critical thinking. This concept is used to recognize and structure previous experiences. In addition, the terms *tafqi*h and *tafakur* are closely related to examining arguments in contemporary critical thinking. Finally, the terms *tadabbur* and *tadhakkur* are closely associated with evaluating information or data and solving issues. This method relies on observation, practical experience, introspection, logical thinking, and effective communication.

In the subsequent year's discourse, Junoh et. al (2021) highlighted the significance of employing inquisitive constructs within critical thinking, such as *al-tafakur* (contemplation), *at-tadabbur* (reflection), *at-tafaqquh* (understanding), and *at-taakul* (reasoning) in their research. The concept of *at-tazakkur* was not explicitly addressed by Junoh et. al (2021). They posit that *at-tafaqquh* (understanding) is deemed a superior form of knowledge, as the Qur'an

urges Muslims to comprehend their faith, necessitating specific individuals to dedicate themselves to this profound endeavour. Acknowledging the role of individuals engaged in *at-tafaqquh* (understanding) holds significance, as it contributes to cultivating a more profound comprehension and elucidation of religious doctrines within Islamic society.

In short, integrating critical thinking from an Islamic perspective, from my point of view, in the teaching of Usul al-Fiqh improves the understanding of Islamic law. Emphasizing *tafaqquh* as the highest knowledge ensures a deep understanding of Islamic principles, while *ta'aqul* is essential for evaluating reasoning. *Tadabbur* encourages students to reflect on the broader implications of decisions, and *tafakkur* encourages deep intellectual engagement with Islamic teachings. Finally, *tazakkur* helps retain memory and connects principles with divine will, fostering ethical behavior and spiritual awareness. Educators focusing on these elements can transform Usul al-Fiqh education, equipping students to navigate Islamic jurisprudence effectively.

Through integrating these perspectives, a comprehensive Usul al-Fiqh module has been developed to assist teachers in instructing Shariah Islamic education at the secondary school level. This module encompasses five key elements: (a) *Tazakkur* or *Tadhakkur* (remembrance), (b) *Ta'aqil* or *Ta'aqqul* (rationality), (c) *Tadabbur* (consideration of consequences), (d) *Tafqih* or *Tafaqquh* (deep understanding), and (e) *Tafakkur* (intellection and reasoning). These elements collectively enhance students' critical thinking and foster a holistic approach to Islamic legal education.

i. *Tazakkur*

According to the dictionary definition of al-Mawrid (1995), the meaning of the word *tazakkur* refers to remembrance, remembering, recollection, memory, reminiscence, anamnesis, recall, and retention. The concept of *tazakkur* or *tadhakkur* plays an essential role in critical thinking from an Islamic perspective. From an Islamic perspective, critical thinking emphasizes the importance of seeking knowledge and understanding the world around us. *Tazakkur* or *tadhakkur* encourages individuals to explore the wonders of creation, study natural phenomena, and contemplate the purpose of God's creation. This term refers to knowledge that fosters critical thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Nordin & Surajudeen, 2015). According to the opinion of Inda (2021), *tazakkur* or *tadhakkur* is a component in the construction of knowledge that refers to the type of evaluation and thoughtfulness and engagement with any information or statement that requires an individual to understand it accurately.

According to Jamil et al. (2018), the *tadzakkur* strategy is a suitable and practical approach to foster advanced cognitive abilities in students, especially in Islamic Education. With the integration of *tadzakkur*, which requires summarizing and reflecting on basic ideas, students can cultivate a deeper understanding of subject matter and participate in more extensive critical analysis. As highlighted in the argument presented by Jamil et al. (2018), *tadzakkur* requires a repeated process to strengthen memory retention. Information that involves repetition has already been committed to memory, understood, and mastered, but the act of repetition ensures its retention. This methodology or approach is a tool for educators who must repeat information to students.

Abd Rahim et al. (2019) propose that to attain the state of *tazakkur* or *tadhakkur*, individuals must incorporate a particular element into the framework to facilitate their intelligent comprehension - the conceptualizing of subject matter using simplistic diagrams or visual aids. The practice of *tazakkur* or *tadhakkur*, which is utilized in the pedagogy of Islamic Education, represents a pertinent and suitable methodology that necessitates earnest implementation by instructors of Islamic Education. It is crucial for cultivating a cohort of individuals endowed with virtuous attributes and the capacity for analytical thinking (Jamil et al., 2018).

Jamil et al. (2018) emphasize the importance of implementing the *tazakkur* approach by Islamic education teachers to cultivate a knowledgeable generation by integrating *naqli* and *aqli* knowledge, which enhances students' critical thinking and comprehension of Islam. According to her, in the teaching process, *tazakkur* involves repetitive actions to improve memory retention, ensuring that previously memorized, understood, and mastered knowledge remains in memory, which is crucial for teachers in their instructional approach.

Incorporating *tazakkur* into the teachings of Usul al-Fiqh connects the principle directly with the will of God as stated in the Qur'an and Sunnah. By using nature and focusing on the core objectives of Shariah, such as convenience, justice, and benefit for humanity, teachers can instill in students the importance of aligning their intentions with seeking God's pleasure in applying these principles. This approach deepens students' understanding of Islamic legal theory and fosters ethical behavior and spiritual awareness in pursuing legal reasoning.

ii. *Ta'aqil* or *Ta'aqqul*

According to the dictionary definition of al-Mawrid (1995), the meaning of the word *ta'aqqul* refers to prudence, wisdom, judiciousness, discernment, sapience, sagacity, rationality, discretion, cautiousness, and carefulness. *Ta'aqil* or *ta'aqqul* is associated with intellect, reason, and understanding. It is a fundamental concept in Islam that demonstrates the significance of using intellect and reason to comprehend the profound wisdom inherent in Islamic teachings. According to Inda (2021), *ta'aqil* is a component of evaluating reasoning that requires critical thinking skills to distinguish valid opinions. It involves analyzing and assessing explicitly constructed thoughts, sets of propositions, and representations of facts to identify premises that lead to conclusions or truth claims, evaluating the logic for reaching those conclusions, and defining the argument itself. Thus, Islam promotes the practice of critical thinking to prevent the premature acceptance of viewpoints lacking evidence-based reasoning, the blind adherence to superstitious beliefs, the implementation of punitive measures without thorough examination of the circumstances, and the formation of biased judgments.

*Ta'aqil* or *Ta'aqqul* reasoning is mentioned more than any of the above terminology in the Quran, which refers to the level of critical thinking. The Quran encourages people to use reasoning to understand natural phenomena and cosmology (Malik, 2017). While Abd Rahim et al. (2019) provided an insightful explanation regarding comprehending the truth by the *ta'aqil* or *ta'aqqul* process. He emphasized the crucial role of synthesizing information as a preliminary step before making any conclusive judgments. It is imperative for individuals to carefully analyze and integrate various sources of data to arrive at a well-informed and accurate understanding of the truth. Rushing to conclusions without this critical synthesis may lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations.



The Quran consistently encourages believers to engage their intellect in understanding divine messages, as divinely endowed wisdom empowers believers to navigate the complexities of life with a discerning mind and enables them to make informed decisions and comprehend the moral and spiritual dimensions of their faith. *Ta'aqil* or *ta'aqqul* complements belief and transforms it into a dynamic force that involves wholehearted devotion and intellect in explaining Islam's principles. The Quranic emphasis on understanding and wisdom aligns with the overarching Islamic belief in the harmony between faith and reason, fostering a holistic approach to spiritual enlightenment. *Ta'aqil* or *ta'aqqul* thus serves as a beacon guiding believers to a deeper understanding of the divine wisdom embedded in the Islamic framework, promoting a thoughtful and enlightened engagement with one's faith (Abdul Jabbar & Makki, 2024).

Dahari et al. (2019) suggested allowing students to participate in reasoning exercises that provoke them to employ logical reasoning and critical examination to resolve issues within an Islamic context. Through applying essential elements of thinking, teachers can transform Usul al-Fiqh from simple memorization into an interactive and stimulating educational experience that equips students with the critical skills to navigate the complexities of Islamic jurisprudence more effectively.

In the field of Usul al-Fiqh education, the application of *ta'aqil*, which embodies critical thinking in Islam, is essential for scrutinizing the sources and context of Qur'anic verses and hadiths used in decision-making. Daneshi and Lesani (2015) argue that decision-making in Islam focuses on holistic individual development, emphasizing understanding legal arguments and applying Shariah principles in new situations for grounded legal conclusions. Encouraging debates on Islamic legal issues, exposing students to conflicting viewpoints, and fostering analytical argumentation based on Usul al-Fiqh principles are also beneficial, along with incorporating case studies and contemporary topics to demonstrate the practical relevance of Usul al-Fiqh in collaborative projects and research.

### iii. *Tadabbur*

*Tadabbur* in Arabic refers to seeing the end of something and what is behind it. It means examining something, considering its consequences, and thinking and predicting the results of one's actions (Abdul Jabbar & Makki, 2024). According to the al-Mawrid dictionary (1995), *tadabbur* is defined as reflection, contemplation, meditation, weighing, consideration, cogitation, or speculation. The word *tadabbur* that was discussed means an observation, examination, reflection, and a study of the meaning of the Quran. Manaf et al. (2017) summarized that the process of *tadabbur* happens when one seeks to understand the verses of the Quran. Through *tadabbur*, the human mind can be stimulated to reflect and find the truth. The concept of contemplation in the Qur'an can be defined as a cognitive process wherein the heart and mind are engaged in comprehending knowledge (Ismail, 2014). Quranic verses, such as in Surah Muhammad (47:24) and Surah al-Mu'minun (23:68), show the importance of contemplating the signs of creation.

*Tadabbur al-Qur'an* refers to a practical way of instruction that involves a combination of approaches and is conducted reflectively. It requires contemplation and unveiling the hidden meanings of the Qur'an. The method emphasizes the importance of introspection and reflection in understanding the hidden meanings of the Qur'an (Asyafah, 2014). *Tadabbur* started to carefully analyze the text to fully understand its literal sense and the profound wisdom revealed in God's word. It urges believers to consider the meaning of such verses for their lives and

develop a close relationship with spiritual direction. This process of analysis-oriented practice is continuous and leads people to comprehend better their faith (Abdul Jabbar & Makki, 2024).

Zainudin et al. (2022) define *tadabbur al-Qur'an* as reflecting on the verses of the al-Qur'an to derive lessons, guidance, wisdom, and legal principles, distinct from traditional interpretation. Saiin & Karuok (2022) emphasize that *tadabbur* is crucial for personal spiritual growth and understanding the divine message, involving deep reflection to uncover wisdom and guidance in each verse, leading to a transformative impact on beliefs, values, and actions, enhancing Islamic education through a nuanced understanding of Islamic law and its application in contemporary society.

Senjaya et al. (2023) explained, the steps to perform *tadabbur al-Qur'an* based on the *maqasid* of the al-Qur'an with a syntax consisting of four levels: (1) *al-qira'ah*; read verse by verse according to the surah theme (topic), (2) *al-ta'ammul wa al-tafsīr*; paying attention to the general purpose of the surah (*maqasid al-surah*) and understanding the meaning (*ma'na*) of each verse based on several interpretations, (3) *al-istikhrāj*; extracting wisdom from the purposes of each verse (*maqasid al-ayat*) and (4) *al-istinbat*; drawing conclusions from the purposes of each verse into the primary purposes of the Qur'an (*maqasid al-Qur'an*).

Incorporating *tadabbur* into the teaching of Usul al-Fiqh can be achieved by encouraging reflection on Quranic verses that support the principles (Senjaya et.al., 2023). It involves guiding students to connect these verses with the discussed principles and exploring broader applications. Additionally, analyzing hadith with *tadabbur* helps students understand the reasoning behind rulings, including examining the context. Case studies can be integrated with *tadabbur* to exemplify how Usul al-Fiqh principles are applied to obtain rulings through group discussions. Furthermore, interactive scientific talks, such as videos, can showcase different perspectives on Usul al-Fiqh principles to enhance students' understanding.

Zainorah (2015) also states that the initial phase of the *tadabbur* process includes a combination of actions involving the faculties of hearing and sight perception and introspective reflection on the vision of the soul or spirit. The next phase involves cognitive and emotional activities, including reflection, logical reasoning, memory, understanding, research, evaluation, emotion, exploration, delving deeper, and similar processes. Inda (2021) places *tadabbur* in the reasoning evaluation section because *tadabbur* is a center that plays a role in improving critical thinking skills among students. Islamic education teachers must apply critical thinking by considering the arguments that have been researched. Through *tadabbur*, students are guided to deepen their understanding of the Qur'an by critically analyzing its verses, themes, and messages to extract deep meaning and practical lessons. It encourages engagement in group discussions for collective interpretation and analysis of Islamic texts, fostering collaborative learning and critical understanding (Osman et al., 2024).

#### *iv. Tafqih or Tafaqquh*

According to the dictionary definition of al-Mawrid (1995), the meaning of the word *tafaqquh* refers to studying jurisprudence; to becoming a jurist, jurisprudence, legist, or (legal) scholar. In comparison, Malik (2017) defines *tafaqquh* as understanding. The Islamic approach to critical thinking, understanding is a higher level of knowledge. The Quran encourages Muslims to understand their religion. The Qur'an's interpretation of the term *tafqih* is more focused on the meaning of understanding, knowing, and deepening (Junoh & Mohamad, 2020). Understanding, or *tafqih*, is the highest component in decision-making, occupying a prominent

position within Islamic critical thinking abilities (Inda,2021). Our educational endeavors should be grounded in prioritizing comprehension and fostering meaningful interactions.

*Tafqih* or *tafaqquh* is the foundation on which the study of Usul al-Fiqh thrives. Usul al-Fiqh provides a structured methodology for deriving rulings. However, this methodology requires a thorough understanding of the Quran and Hadith, which comes from *tafaqquh*. *Tafaqquh* encourages going beyond the literal meaning of the text to understand the context, objectives (*maqasid*), and reasoning behind the rulings. *Tafaqquh* plays an essential role in understanding the context of a ruling by encouraging individuals to delve into the text beyond its literal meaning. It involves seeking deep understanding and expertise in religious matters, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the principles and branches of the faith, including practical laws and beliefs. Through *tafaqquh*, students will acquire the knowledge needed to interpret religious teachings accurately, which helps in understanding the context, objectives (*maqasid*), and reasoning behind rulings, beyond mere surface-level understanding.

Various techniques are available to incorporate *tafaqquh* (deep understanding) into the teaching of Usul al-Fiqh. One approach involves encouraging active learning and critical thinking by posing open-ended questions that require analysis and interpretation. Furthermore, educators can delve into the significance of texts beyond mere literal translation, fostering deeper understanding among students. In addition, educators can familiarize students with Arabic grammar, allowing them to understand the nuances of the original language and facilitate the explanation of finer words or expressions.

#### v. *Tafakkur*

According to the dictionary definition of al-Mawrid (1995), the word *tafakkur* refers to thinking, cerebration, contemplation, reflection, meditation, observation, pondering, musing, speculation, thought, intellection, and reasoning. Mamat et al. (2019) define *tafakkur* as an act of thinking, contemplating, reflecting, training, and *tadabbur* encompassing the human mind, heart, and spirit. *Tafakkur* involves contemplation and deep thinking to better understand the self, life, and creation. *Tafakkur* activities involve an individual's thoughts, emotions, perceptions, imagination, and ideas, which will then influence the development of his behavior (Mat Akhir & Sabjan, 2015).

Creating a framework to develop instruments that advance the concept of *tafakkur* in education is essential to integrate it effectively into the curriculum (Nufus & Sodiq, 2023). The methodology of *tafakkur* can provide educators with a framework to cultivate advanced cognitive abilities in students, encouraging them to engage in critical analysis and implement the teachings into their everyday experiences (Jamil et.al., 2018). Creating a national education curriculum based on *zikr* and *tafakkur* can foster an educational atmosphere closely related to exemplary behavior and honesty, improving the nation's morals (Fatoni & Lesmana, 2021).

Mamat et al. (2019) discussed al-Ghazzali's interpretation of *tafakkur* in *Mukasyafah al-Qulub*, defining it as a method of deep thinking leading to knowledge devoid of blind taqlid. Teachers can enhance student learning by incorporating *tafakkur* into the educational process, encouraging reflection, critical thinking, and more profound comprehension of concepts through a connection with divine greatness (Jamil et.al., 2018). Students can critically reflect on moral values by analyzing historical events and ethical dilemmas from an Islamic viewpoint, promoting self-awareness and self-evaluation in alignment with Islamic teachings (Dahari et al, 2019).

*Tafakkur* aids the learning of Islamic teachings and jurisprudence, enabling students to analyze historical events or ethical dilemmas using Islamic principles. This approach allows students to apply their knowledge of Islamic values and legal principles to contemporary issues, fostering solutions that conform to Islamic teachings while adapting to modern contexts. Educators are crucial in steering critical thinking within Islamic parameters, ensuring discussions and reflections align with Islamic principles. To be concise, Table 1.0 indicates the five elements of thinking from Islamic perspectives and the proposed teaching techniques to enhance each type of thinking.

**Table 1:** Elements of Thinking from Islamic Perspectives and the Proposed Teaching Techniques

No.	Elements of Thinking	Proposed Teaching Techniques in Usul al-Fiqh
a	<i>Tazakkur</i>	Teachers should encourage students to summarize and reflect on key ideas, use visual aids for comprehension, and connect principles with divine will to enhance critical thinking, memory retention, ethical behavior, and spiritual awareness.
b	<i>Ta'aqil</i> or <i>Ta'aqqul</i>	Teachers must promote critical thinking through analyzing sources and contexts of Qur'anic verses and hadiths, engaging in debates, encouraging analytical reasoning, and integrating case studies and current issues to shift learning from memorization to an interactive and applicable process.
c	<i>Tadabbur</i>	Teachers should assign relevant Quranic verses and hadith with historical and contextual backgrounds, facilitate reflective discussions, and guide students to connect these texts to contemporary issues and personal spiritual growth.
d	<i>Tafqih</i> or <i>Tafaqquh</i>	Pair students with experienced scholars or practitioners in a structured mentorship program, encouraging mentors to share personal experiences and reflections on Usul al-Fiqh, and facilitate regular meetings for students to discuss their progress and deepen their understanding.
e	<i>Tafakkur</i>	The teacher must organize contemplative discussions in Usul al-Fiqh by posing open-ended questions and guiding conversations to align with Islamic teachings to encourage critical thinking and deep reflection on Islamic legal principles.

## Conclusion

Within the context of Islamic intellectual heritage, critical thinking encompasses various essential elements such as *tazakkur* or *tadhakkur* (remembrance), *ta'aqil* or *ta'aqqul* (rationalization), *tadabbur* (deep contemplation), *tafqih* or *tafaqquh* (deep understanding), and *tafakkur* (deep thoughts). These components are crucially important in the educational process of Usul al-Fiqh, as they directly guide the derivation of Islamic legal decisions from fundamental sources. Each element plays a distinct and vital role: *tazakkur* or *tadhakkur* fosters a relationship with divine guidance, providing an essential ethical and moral framework for employing critical thinking; *ta'aqil* emphasises logical reasoning in understanding and applying Islamic teachings; *tadabbur* encourages comprehensive exploration of the Qur'an and Hadith for deeper insight; *tafqih* is essential for profound comprehension of Islamic jurisprudence, empowering accurate and judicious application of Islamic law; and *tafakkur* necessitates forward thinking and the ability to imagine future scenarios, which enhances the capacity to apply Usul al-Fiqh principles to contemporary dilemmas.

This study has thoroughly demonstrated that critical thinking is not merely consistent with Islamic epistemology but is also profoundly embedded within the tenets of the Qur'an and classical Islamic legal thought. A structured framework for Islamic critical thinking was effectively developed and tailored for Usul al-Fiqh instruction through the identification and integration of five fundamental elements: *tazakkur*, *ta'aqqul*, *tadabbur*, *tafakkur*, and *tafaqquh*. The primary accomplishment of this research resides in creating a pedagogical model that

effectively links traditional Islamic scholarship with current cognitive educational methodologies.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that curriculum developers and Islamic education practitioners adopt this integrative framework to enhance the quality and relevance of Usul al-Fiqh instruction. Teacher training programs should also be aligned with this approach to promote reflective and critical pedagogy grounded in Islamic values. For future research, empirical validation of this framework is necessary to assess its impact on student learning outcomes, particularly in enhancing legal reasoning, problem-solving, and moral decision-making. Furthermore, this model holds significant potential for adaptation across other Islamic studies subjects, contributing to the broader reform of Islamic education in the 21st century.

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