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The Doctrinal Principles and Their Impact on Developing Creative Thinking Skills: An Educational Foundational Study

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the impact of doctrinal (creedal) principles on the development of creative thinking, by clarifying the concept of these principles, establishing their foundation in Islamic law (Sharia), and identifying the creative thinking skills derived from them. The research employed inductive, analytical, and deductive methodologies to achieve its objectives. The study reached several key findings, the most significant of which are as follows: After thoroughly examining the topic of doctrinal principles and their role in fostering creative thinking skills, the study revealed that these principles contribute to the development of various creative thinking skills such as analysis, induction, comparison, problem-solving, critical thinking, concept mapping, and realistic representation. Furthermore, the integration of doctrinal principles into educational and training programs was found to enhance balanced, structured thinking and strengthen the ability to comprehend and apply concepts to real-life situations. The findings affirmed that the relationship between Islamic creed ('Aqidah) and creative thinking is one of harmony and integration, not contradiction. This relationship fosters conscious faith and establishes steadfast religious commitment built upon evidence, reasoning, and understanding. The researchers recommended the necessity of systematically incorporating doctrinal principles into Islamic education curricula and linking them to thinking skills in order to deepen students' understanding of Islamic creed. They also emphasized the importance of conducting applied studies that combine doctrinal principles with creative thinking to demonstrate the transformative role of sound faith in shaping conscious and innovative minds.

Keywords: Doctrinal Principles, Creative Thinking.

Introduction

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, who has honored humankind with intellect and distinguished them above all other creations. He has made reflection and contemplation among the greatest acts of worship. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, alone with no partner, who commanded His servants in His noble Book to reflect upon His creation and ponder His signs. I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger—the teacher of humanity—whom Allah sent as a guide and nurturer of minds and hearts. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, his family, his companions, and all those who follow them in righteousness until the Day of Judgment.

Creative thinking represents one of the most distinguished features of the human intellect, and it has received particular attention within Islamic thought. The Holy Qur'an repeatedly calls for

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the use of intellect, reflection, and contemplation, considering these acts as essential pathways to understanding divine laws, discovering the realities of the universe, and achieving worship of Allah with insight and awareness. More than fourteen centuries ago, Islam laid solid foundations for nurturing creative thinking by encouraging observation, contemplation, reasoning, and intellectual engagement. Indeed, Allah Almighty made such intellectual processes among the signs of true faith and repeatedly warned against neglecting them throughout His divine revelation.

Among the most significant intellectual foundations contributing to this endeavor are the doctrinal (creedal) principles, which form the comprehensive framework of the Islamic worldview. These principles cultivate a mindset of intellectual freedom bound by the guidelines of Shariah, liberating individuals from rigidity and blind imitation. Belief in the Oneness of Allah, His knowledge, power, wisdom, and justice equips the Muslim mind to be balanced and critical, one that seeks causes, explores relationships, and contemplates outcomes.

In light of the rapid changes and increasing challenges facing the world today, the need to reconnect creative thinking with foundational Islamic doctrine has become more urgent than ever before. It is no longer sufficient for an individual to be merely creative in thought; rather, such creativity must be governed by the ethical framework of Islamic law and harmonized with its higher objectives. Only through this integration can creative thinking serve as a means of uplifting and refining human character, enabling individuals to contribute meaningfully to humanity and society in alignment with Islamic civilizational values.

Accordingly, this study aims to shed light on the role of doctrinal principles in fostering creative thinking skills and shaping the personality of the innovative believer. It also highlights how these principles can be effectively integrated into the educational process to prepare generations capable of thinking creatively while remaining firmly grounded in commitment to Islamic teachings.

Research Problem and Questions:

The research problem is defined through addressing the central question of the study: *What is the impact of doctrinal (creedal) principles on the development of creative thinking skills?* From this main question, the following sub-questions emerge:

1. What is the concept of doctrinal principles, and what is their significance?
2. What is the Islamic foundation of doctrinal principles, and what are their characteristics that influence human thought?
3. What is the concept of creative thinking, and what are its skills derived from doctrinal principles?

Objectives of the Study

This study seeks to answer its research questions by fulfilling the following objectives:

1. To define the concept of doctrinal principles and highlight their significance.
2. To explore the Islamic foundations of doctrinal principles and their distinctive features that influence human thought.
3. To clarify the concept of creative thinking and identify its skills as derived from doctrinal principles.

Significance of the Study:

It is expected that this study will benefit the following groups:

1. **Researchers and specialists in Islamic studies:** The study will provide an academic and foundational exploration of the relationship between doctrinal principles and creative thinking within an educational framework.
2. **Educational and academic institutions:** By guiding younger generations toward adherence to sound Islamic creed, which serves as a strong foundation for broader horizons of renewal, scholarly effort (ijtihad), and creativity.
3. **Curriculum developers and educational experts:** By offering a clear vision of how doctrinal principles can be employed to enhance creative thinking among individuals, while also identifying potential obstacles stemming from misconceptions or doctrinal deviations, along with suggesting suitable educational solutions.

Terminology and Operational Definitions

- **Islamic Creed ('Aqeedah):** “Definitive belief that is beyond objection or doubt, concerning the unseen matters conveyed through the verses of the Holy Qur’an and the authentic prophetic traditions, including belief in Allah the Exalted, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and divine decree—its good and evil, its sweetness and bitterness—all from Allah, the Almighty” (Al-Ashqar, 2005, p. 209).
- **Doctrinal Principles (Qawa'id 'Aqadiyyah):** “A general doctrinal rule that applies to numerous particular issues within one or more areas of Islamic belief” (Al-Najjar, 2016, p. 14).
- **Creative Thinking:** Defined by Musa and Salama (2004, p. 97) as “a complex and purposeful mental activity, driven by a strong desire to search for solutions or to reach original outcomes that were previously unknown.”

Previous Studies

These studies constitute a significant foundation for understanding the scholarly background of doctrinal (creedal) principles, and for identifying the contributions of previous researchers. The most prominent of these studies include:

1. **Baqees (2024)**, *"Doctrinal Principles among Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah: The Principle of 'Prophethood is Sealed by Our Prophet Muhammad' as a Model."* This study aimed to establish the doctrinal principles of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah and apply them to the principle of the finality of prophethood with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The researcher employed an analytical foundational methodology that encompassed defining doctrinal principles, their historical development, and an explanation of the selected principle along with its evidences and refutation of opposing claims. The study concluded by affirming the authority of doctrinal principles derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah, emphasizing that the finality of prophethood is among the essential creedal fundamentals that must be believed in, while also addressing the deviations of sects claiming prophethood after the Seal of the Prophets ﷺ.
2. **Al-Salami (2021)**, *"The Effectiveness of an Educational Program Based on Reasoning and Doctrinal Principles in Consolidating Correct Concepts and Developing Doctrinal Reasoning Skills in the Tawheed Curriculum at Secondary Level in Scientific Institutes."* This study sought to design an educational program rooted in doctrinal principles and reasoning,

measuring its effectiveness in reinforcing creedal concepts and developing reasoning skills among secondary school students. The researcher adopted an experimental methodology using a one-group pretest-posttest design. The study demonstrated the program's effectiveness in improving students' understanding of creedal concepts and enhancing their reasoning abilities, recommending its implementation in scientific institutes.

3. **Nahwa (2019)**, "*Doctrinal Principles and Their Impact on Intellectual Reform and Civilizational Development*." This study aimed to clarify the role of doctrinal principles in reforming Islamic thought and contributing to the civilizational advancement of the Ummah. The researcher utilized an analytical-inductive approach involving the study of doctrinal principles and their influence on thought and behavior. The study emphasized the importance of these principles in guiding Islamic thought toward moderation and balance, and called for compiling these principles into a comprehensive encyclopedia to serve as a reference for scholars and thinkers.

4. **Al-Harbi (2017)**, "*Doctrinal Principles in the Works of Sheikh Ibn 'Uthaymeen: A Theoretical and Applied Study*." The study aimed to extract doctrinal principles from the works of Sheikh Muhammad ibn Salih al-'Uthaymeen and clarify his methodology in systematizing doctrinal issues. It followed a descriptive-analytical method, combining theoretical study with practical applications from Ibn 'Uthaymeen's works. The findings revealed that the Sheikh utilized doctrinal principles to simplify complex creedal matters, adopting a precise scholarly methodology that facilitates understanding and application for students and researchers alike.

The current study aligns with previous studies—such as those by Baqees (2024), Nahwa (2019), and Al-Harbi (2017)—in recognizing the significance of doctrinal principles in establishing sound Islamic belief and shaping the believer's proper understanding of faith. Moreover, these studies unanimously emphasized the necessity of basing doctrinal principles on the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the understanding of the righteous predecessors (Salaf al-Salih). However, these studies varied in their methodologies and focal points; some focused on theoretical foundations, like Al-Harbi (2017), while others concentrated on educational applications, such as Al-Salami (2021).

Some of these studies stood out by connecting doctrinal principles to educational contexts and highlighting their role in promoting systematic thinking among learners. Nevertheless, most of the previous research did not explicitly address the impact of doctrinal principles on the development of *creative thinking skills*—a distinctive contribution of the present study.

Chapter One: The Concept and Significance of Doctrinal Principles

To clarify the concept of doctrinal principles, it is essential to begin by exploring the linguistic and terminological definitions of both *principle* (qā'idah) and *creed* ('aqīdah), before elaborating the technical definition of doctrinal principles, their significance, and examples.

1. The Concept of Qā'idah (Principle): Linguistic and Technical Definitions

Linguistically, *qā'idah* (principle) is derived from the trilateral root (ق-ع-د), meaning "to sit," as in *qa'ada* (he sat), referring to the act of sitting. The word *qa'dah* (قعدة) denotes a single instance of sitting, while *qi'dah* (قعدة, with a kasrah) denotes the posture of sitting. The plural form is *qu'ūd*, and the feminine is *qā'idah* with its plural *qawā'id*. The verb may also be used transitively with a causative form, *aq'adtuhu* meaning "I made him sit." The term *maq'ad* refers to a seat or sitting place. The term may also imply preparedness or engagement in an affair (*qa'ada li-*

amrin). Another meaning involves refraining from action (*qa'ada 'an amrin*), as seen in the Qur'anic verse: {وَقَعَدَ الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ} [At-Tawbah: 90]. One of the well-known meanings is *qawā'id al-bayt* (foundations of the house), singular *qā'idah* (Mustafa et al., 1989, Vol. 2, p. 748).

Ibn Faris elaborates: “*Dhu al-Qa'dah* is a month in which the Arabs refrained from traveling, *qa'dah* refers to an animal prepared for riding, *qawā'id al-hawdaj* are the four wooden supports of the litter” (Ibn Faris, 1979, Vol. 5, p. 109). Thus, *qā'idah* denotes the foundation and base upon which something rests, whether tangible—like the foundations of a house—or abstract, like the foundational principles of religion or jurisprudence (Al-Zamil, 2001, p. 8).

Technically, a *qā'idah* is defined as: “A universal proposition applicable to all its particular instances” (Al-Jurjani, 1992, p. 219). Al-Kafawi also defines it as: “A universal proposition that potentially encompasses the rulings of all particular instances within its subject matter, called branches, from which individual rulings are derived” (Al-Kafawi, 2010, p. 728).

Scholars have debated whether a *qā'idah* is necessarily universal or mostly so, stemming from whether exceptions are permitted within its application (Bajseer, 2017, p. 29).

2. The Concept of Islamic Creed ('Aqīdah)

Linguistically, *'aqīdah* stems from the trilateral root (ع-ق-د), carrying meanings of firmness, binding, and confirmation (Ibn Manzur, 1992, p. 683). It denotes a binding agreement (*'aqd*), the plural of which is *'uqūd*, and it is the most solemn of covenants. The term *i'tiqād* (belief) derives from this root, conveying strength and certainty of attachment (Mustafa et al., 1989, p. 614).

Technically, Islamic creed refers to: “Definitive belief that is not subject to rejection or speculative debate concerning unseen matters revealed in the Qur'an and authentic prophetic traditions, particularly the belief in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and divine decree—its good and evil, its sweetness and bitterness—all from Allah, the Exalted” (Al-Ashqar, 2005, p. 209).

In broader terms, Islamic creed represents the set of ideas and beliefs upon which a Muslim's conduct and actions are founded, including the fundamentals of faith and the rejection of any form of polytheism or doctrinal deviation (Al-Nahlawi, 1979, p. 69). Allah, the Almighty, says: “*The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and so have the believers. All of them have believed in Allah, His angels, His books, and His messengers. [They say], 'We make no distinction between any of His messengers.' And they say, 'We hear and we obey. [Grant us] Your forgiveness, our Lord. To You is the [final] destination.'*” (Al-Baqarah: 285)

3. The Concept of Doctrinal Principles

Regarding the nature of doctrinal principles related to belief (*'aqīdah*) and monotheism (*tawhīd*), scholars have generally applied a broader conception than the technical definitions used for legal or jurisprudential principles. For them, any intellectual proposition upon which multiple theological matters are built can be termed a *principle* (*qā'idah*), and they often use the term *aṣl* (foundation) interchangeably (Bajseer, 2017, p. 30).

Ibn Taymiyyah said: “These principles are comprehensive statements and foundational axioms upon which these matters and others are built. We have mentioned summarizing points as far as

space permits for those learning the fundamentals of religion” (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1995, Vol. 31, p. 40).

A doctrinal principle is defined as: “A universal theological ruling that applies to numerous particular cases in one or more areas of belief” (Al-Najjar, 2016, p. 14).

In light of the above, doctrinal principles can be described as: “Foundational axioms and comprehensive propositions upon which theological matters and rulings are constructed—whether essential, without which faith is invalid, or secondary, contributing to the obligatory perfection of faith, which none should remain ignorant of” (Bajseer, 2017, p. 31).

4. The Importance of Doctrinal Principles (Qawā'id 'Aqadiyya)

The significance of doctrinal principles can be summarized in the following key points:

- **Conciseness of Expression, Comprehensiveness of Meaning:** These principles are characterized by their brevity in wording yet comprehensiveness in meaning. Studying and mastering them supports the learner in grasping numerous doctrinal matters systematically and coherently, reducing confusion and inconsistency in understanding (‘Al-Najjar, 2016, p. 122).
- **Comprehensive Frameworks Derived from Islamic Texts:** These principles represent general, foundational rules encompassing numerous detailed sub-issues. As such, they gather vast amounts of doctrinal knowledge under concise expressions and succinct phrases, mirroring the characteristics of the Sharī‘a texts from which they were derived. This aligns with the Prophetic statement: “I have been sent with concise speech (Jawāmi‘ al-Kalim),” meaning that the Prophet ﷺ expressed abundant meanings in few words, encouraging deep reflection and scholarly derivation (‘Bajaseer, 2017, p. 38).
- **Integrative Understanding of Creed:** Doctrinal principles provide a comprehensive framework that unifies various aspects of ‘Aqīdah, offering cohesion rather than fragmentary treatment of individual issues. They systematically organize dispersed details, identify similarities among related issues, and facilitate differentiation between superficially similar matters. Ibn Rajab highlights this advantage in his introduction to *al-Qawā'id*: “These are important principles and abundant benefits that consolidate for the scholar the fundamentals of the school of thought, reveal the roots of jurisprudence otherwise concealed, organize scattered issues into a unified structure, capture the fleeting, and bring the distant closer” (‘Ibn Rajab, 2010, p. 3).
- **Criterion for Distinguishing Truth from Falsehood:** These principles serve as a standard by which deviant ideologies and erroneous beliefs can be identified and measured against orthodox Islamic creed. Ignorance of these principles leads to misguidance and deviation. As the scholars of Najd assert, “Ignorance of these foundational principles leads to destruction and deviation; one’s Islam is incomplete without knowing the fundamental contents of these principles” (‘Ulamā’ Najd, 1996, vol. 11, p. 365).
- **Refutation of Doubts and Deviant Ideologies:** Doctrinal principles form an effective intellectual defense, providing scientifically grounded frameworks to refute erroneous ideologies and intellectual deviations. By anchoring subsidiary matters to foundational truths, these principles instill correct comprehension in the mind, helping the believer engage with issues thoughtfully, fairly, and justly. Ibn Taymiyyah emphasizes: “It is essential for a person to have comprehensive principles (uṣūl kullīyya) to which specific details can be referred, enabling speech based on knowledge and justice. Without these principles, one falls into ignorance and

falsehood regarding particulars, and into ignorance and injustice regarding generalities, resulting in tremendous corruption” (‘Ibn Taymiyyah, 1995, vol. 19, p. 203).

- **Foundation for Character Development and Practical Behavior:** Al-Nabhānī (2003) argues that Islamic creed forms the foundation of a Muslim’s intellectual, behavioral, and ethical personality. This is why the Meccan revelations primarily focused on instilling faith in the hearts of believers, as it represents the essential foundation upon which practical rulings of the Sharī‘a are later established. Allah says: *“Then is one who laid the foundation of his building on righteousness [with fear] from Allah and [seeking] His approval better or one who laid the foundation of his building on the edge of a crumbling cliff so it collapsed with him into the Fire of Hell?”* (al-Tawbah: 109). True faith in Allah constitutes a foundational element in the construction of the believer’s character, encompassing intellectual, ethical, and behavioral dimensions. The reflections of one’s creed manifest in both words and actions, requiring the believer to actively engage in study, reflection, and contemplation to attain certainty and deep conviction in these foundational tenets.

- **An Effective Educational Tool:** Doctrinal principles function as a powerful pedagogical tool, facilitating the understanding and teaching of Islamic creed. They contribute to developing balanced, well-founded personalities grounded in correct faith, fostering upright conduct, conscious awareness, and disciplined behavior. Through mastering these principles, individuals come to recognize the purpose of their existence, cultivate an internal moral compass guiding their relationship with God, themselves, and their community. These principles also reinforce Islamic identity, providing intellectual immunity against doubts and deviations, while fostering a sense of ethical and social responsibility, enabling believers to become positive contributors to their societies based on a holistic divine framework.

chapter Two: The Islamic Foundation of Doctrinal Principles and Their Impact on Human Thought

To elucidate this section, it is first necessary to explore the Islamic foundations of doctrinal principles as established in the Qur’an and the Sunnah. Then, their influential characteristics on human thought will be highlighted, as detailed below:

First: The Islamic Foundation of Doctrinal Principles and Their Examples

Recent studies have addressed doctrinal principles, their definitions, foundations, and applications, such as the works of Al-Saeedan (2023), Hassan (2018), and Al-Najjar (2016). These studies have drawn upon the Qur’an, Sunnah, and the scholarly consensus of the Islamic tradition. Among the most prominent of these principles are:

Principle 1: Worship Is the Ultimate Purpose for Humanity

This principle is derived from Allah’s saying: *“And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.”* (Adh-Dhariyat: 56), and His saying: *“O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, that you may become righteous.”* (Al-Baqarah: 21). This principle establishes that the primary objective of human creation is the worship of Allah alone. It unifies human pursuits under one divine objective, protecting individuals from fragmentation and contributing to the development of a coherent, disciplined personality. This principle is the cornerstone of Islamic belief (‘Aqidah).

Principle 2: Matters of the Unseen Cannot Be Comprehended Independently by Reason

The basis of this principle is Allah’s saying: *“Knower of the unseen, and He reveals His unseen*

⁴⁸⁸ *The Doctrinal Principles and Their Impact on Developing Creative to no one.*" (Al-Jinn: 26) and: "None in the heavens and earth knows the unseen except Allah." (An-Naml: 65). The Prophet ﷺ said: "When predestination is mentioned, withhold." (Reported by At-Tabarani with a sound chain, Hadith No. 10448).

Thus, the unseen cannot be grasped by reason alone but must be taken from revelation. Human intellect has boundaries it cannot surpass.

Principle 3: Any Belief Based on Conjecture or Imagination Is Invalid

Allah says: "They follow not except assumption and what their souls desire, and there has already come to them from their Lord guidance." (An-Najm: 23). The Prophet ﷺ said: "Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is the most untruthful of speech." (Reported by Al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 6064).

True belief ('Aqidah) is built on certainty (yaqīn), not on conjecture, assumptions, or fantasies.

Principle 4: All Relevant Texts Should Be Gathered and Applied Collectively After Verification

Allah says: "Do they not reflect upon the Qur'an? If it had been from [any] other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction." (An-Nisa': 82). The Prophet ﷺ said: "I have left among you two matters by holding fast to which you shall never go astray: the Book of Allah and my Sunnah." (Reported by Malik, Hadith No. 899).

This principle teaches that apparent contradictions in texts disappear when all evidence is collected and properly understood—a methodology adopted by the Salaf (pious predecessors).

Principle 5: Reconciling Authentic Revelation with Sound Reason

Allah says: "It is not for a believing man or woman, when Allah and His Messenger have decided a matter, to have any choice in their affair." (Al-Ahzab: 36). The Prophet ﷺ said: "Indeed, Allah will not allow my Ummah to agree upon error." (Reported by At-Tirmidhi, Hadith No. 2167). There can be no true conflict between sound reason and authentic revelation. If such a conflict seems to exist, either the reasoning is flawed, or the transmission is unauthenticated.

Principle 6: Belief in All That Has Been Revealed in the Qur'an and Sunnah

Allah says: "The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers—all of them have believed in Allah, His angels, His books, and His messengers." (Al-Baqarah: 285). The Prophet ﷺ advised: "I urge you to fear Allah, listen and obey, even if a slave Ethiopian is appointed over you. For whoever among you lives after me will see much disagreement. So, adhere to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the rightly guided Caliphs; cling to it with your molar teeth. Beware of newly invented matters, for every innovation is misguidance." (Reported by Abu Dawud, Hadith No. 4607).

Thus, faith is holistic and cannot be selectively applied; all revelation must be accepted in full.

Principle 7: The Qur'an and Sunnah Contain All Fundamental Doctrines of the Religion

Allah says: "This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you." (Al-Ma'idah: 3). The Prophet ﷺ said: "Whoever introduces into this matter of ours that which is not from it, it is to be rejected." (Reported by Al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 2697). The fundamentals of religion are complete in revelation; any claim of addition outside of it is false.

Principle 8: There Is No Abrogation in Informational Texts or Doctrinal Fundamentals

Allah says: *"No change is there in the words of Allah."* (Yunus: 64), and: *"And this is My path, which is straight, so follow it."* (Al-An'am: 153).

This principle safeguards the purity and permanence of Islamic doctrine, distinguishing between what is constant and what may vary in application.

Principle 9: The Foundations of Faith Are Constant, and All Prophets Are Equally Affirmed

Allah says: *"We make no distinction between any of His messengers."* (Al-Baqarah: 285). The Prophet ﷺ said: *"I am the closest of people to Jesus, son of Mary, in this world and the Hereafter. The prophets are paternal brothers; their mothers are different, but their religion is one."* (Reported by Al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 3443).

All Prophets came with one unified message, requiring universal acceptance by believers.

Principle 10: The Names and Attributes of Allah Are Solely Determined by Revelation (Tawqif)

Allah says: *"And to Allah belong the best names, so call upon Him by them."* (Al-A'raf: 180). This principle means that Allah's names and attributes cannot be assigned by human reason but must be established strictly through authentic revelation.

Principle 11: Every Attribute of Perfection Belonging to Creation Belongs to Allah in the Most Perfect Sense, and Every Deficiency Is Impermissible for Allah

Allah says: *"There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing."* (Ash-Shura: 11).

Every perfection ascribed to created beings belongs to Allah in its most complete, infinite form, while every deficiency unbecoming even of creation is entirely negated from Allah.

Principle 12: The Natural Instinct (Fitrah) Testifies to the Existence of the Creator

Allah says: *"So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. [Adhere to] the natural disposition of Allah upon which He has created [all] people."* (Ar-Rum: 30). The Prophet ﷺ said: *"Every newborn is born upon the natural disposition (fitrah), but his parents make him a Jew, Christian, or Magian."* (Reported by Al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 1385). Recognition of Allah's existence is innately embedded within human nature, deviated only by external influences.

Principle 13: The Realities of the Hereafter Cannot Be Measured by the Standards of This World

Allah says: *"No soul knows what has been hidden for them of comfort for eyes as reward for what they used to do."* (As-Sajdah: 17). The Prophet ﷺ narrated from Allah: *"I have prepared for My righteous servants what no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and has never crossed the mind of any human being."* (Reported by Al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 3244).

This principle emphasizes that matters of the Hereafter transcend worldly comprehension and must be accepted on the basis of divine revelation.

After presenting these selected doctrinal principles and their related evidences, it becomes evident how significant this subject is in ensuring proper theological understanding. These principles serve not merely as abstract theories but as intellectual and spiritual frameworks that enable the believer to comprehend divine guidance comprehensively. They are practical

mechanisms for aligning thought and conduct with revelation. The aforementioned principles are but a glimpse of a vast and profound field, extensively discussed in the works of the scholars, with variations in form and application depending on the topics they address.

Second : Characteristics of Doctrinal Principles (Qawā'id 'Aqadiyya) Influencing Human Thought

Since doctrinal principles form the theoretical and intellectual foundation of Islamic creed ('Aqīdah), providing comprehensive frameworks that regulate understanding and belief, and connecting detailed doctrinal issues through intellectual and methodological links, they exert a profound influence on shaping human thought. They help to discipline reasoning, direct it toward truth, and protect it from deviations. Among the defining features that demonstrate this influence are:

1. Elevating the Intellect Towards Certainty (Yaqīn)

Doctrinal principles cultivate the intellect upon a precise methodological framework, shielding it from arrogance and empty conjecture, while guiding it toward sincere, rigorous inquiry grounded in authentic revelation (Naql) and sound transmission. The significance of this feature lies in its role as the foundation of all other aspects of Islamic knowledge. It directs individuals toward the paths of salvation by acquainting them with their Creator (Allah, the Exalted), and answers the fundamental existential questions that perplex human minds: Who am I? Where did I come from? Why was I created? Islamic doctrine provides comprehensive and satisfactory answers that remove doubt, addressing even unseen realities that may preoccupy the human mind (Ismail, 2017).

2. Establishing a Balance Between Revelation (Naql) and Reason ('Aql)

3. Rather than favoring one at the expense of the other, doctrinal principles foster a harmonious, integrated relationship between revelation and reason, encouraging disciplined, coherent thought that avoids internal conflict. Faith in Allah (Imān) produces positive effects in the life of the believer, constructing a sound perception of the Creator, the universe, life, and humanity. This leads to tranquility of the heart, emotional stability, moral uprightness, and a deep sense of responsibility before Allah (Melhem, 2005). The impact of this balanced approach extends from personal conduct to broader social dynamics.

4. Promoting Intellectual Stability

Through doctrinal consistency and resistance to excessive ideological fluctuation, a believer attains inner harmony and coherence in navigating life. The divine methodology (al-Manhaj al-Rabbānī) combines rational analysis with revealed knowledge, offering a balanced, moderate approach. It is neither purely rationalistic, elevating intellect to the level of deification, nor overly traditionalist to the point of neglecting intellectual faculties altogether (Markaz Qirā'āt, 2017).

5. Combating Intellectual Deviations

Doctrinal principles function as an intellectual safeguard against distortions such as superstition, extreme rationalism, esoteric interpretations, or sectarian isolationism. They provide both intellectual and cultural immunity.

Ibn al-Qayyim (1996, p. 186) states: "You will never find two people, one obedient to Allah and

the other disobedient, except that the mind of the obedient is more complete, his thought more accurate, and his judgment more sound.” He further elaborates that intellect (‘aql) is so named because it restrains its possessor from ruin; it is not merely theoretical but a practical faculty that compels one toward righteous deeds. Accordingly, knowledge devoid of action does not qualify as intellect (Al-Tal, 2005, p. 38).

6. Fulfilling the Purpose of Human Stewardship (Istikhlāf) Through Tawhīdic Awareness

When creed becomes the reference point for both knowledge and behavior, the believer reconstructs their life upon a framework of servitude (‘ubūdiyyah), achieving balance between material pursuits and spiritual elevation.

The Qur’an highlights various capacities of the intellect, including interpretation (ta’wīl), reflection (tadabbur), comprehension (fiqh), reasoning (tafkīr), and wisdom (ḥikmah). These faculties, once understood and internalized, manifest in one’s social reality. For example, the Qur’anic notion of interpretation refers to connecting theoretical knowledge with practical application, while reasoning involves employing all intellectual skills to reach the truth (Al-Kilani, 1991, p. 53). Allah says:

"Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding—those who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], ‘Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire.’" (Āl ‘Imrān: 190–191).

7. Affirming the Essential Role of Intellect in Human Life Through the Integration of Thought, Knowledge, Action, and Methodology

Intellect (‘Aql) can only be deemed essential (darūrī) when it comprises four foundational elements: critical thinking, knowledge, practical application, and a structured methodology. Without these, an individual is closer to the category of cattle than to the status of true humanity, as indicated in Allah’s statement:

"Or do you think that most of them hear or reason? They are not excepting like cattle. Rather, they are [even] more astray in [their] way" (al-Furqān: 44). Thus, the necessity of intellect = critical thinking + knowledge + action + methodology (Markaz Qirā’āt, 2017). These elements regulate the intellectual pursuits of individuals, ensuring that their inquiries and research are guided by methodical frameworks. Without such principles, intellectual efforts remain disjointed and prone to error. Moreover, these elements cannot yield their intended benefits unless they are anchored in divine revelation (Naṣṣ al-Waḥy). Through their integration, one attains comprehensive, accurate, and beneficial knowledge, fostering success both in this world and the hereafter.

chapter Three: The Concept of Creative Thinking and Its Skills Derived from Doctrinal Principles

Creative thinking is considered one of the most significant intellectual skills required by human beings to face the challenges of modern life. Islam has placed great emphasis on nurturing this type of thinking, as both the Qur’an and the Sunnah have urged the use of reason, reflection, and contemplation upon the signs of Allah, whether in the universe or in revelation. In this regard,

the doctrinal principles in Islam represent one of the most fundamental foundations contributing to the development of creative thinking. These principles provide a reference framework that guides the mind toward sound and innovative thinking. To elaborate on this topic, it is necessary to present the following:

1. The Concept of Creative Thinking

• Linguistic and Terminological Definitions of Thinking

Linguistically, the term *tafakkur* (thinking) is derived from the Arabic root (ف-ك-ر), meaning "to engage the mind on a matter." Al-Jawhari explains that *tafakkur* denotes contemplation and deep reflection, and its verbal noun is *fikr* or *fikrah* (Ibn Manzur, 1412 AH, p. 159).

According to Al-Fayoumi (1417 AH, p. 248), *fikr* in linguistic convention refers to "the heart's repeated deliberation in seeking meanings, by arranging matters mentally to attain knowledge or probable belief."

From these linguistic definitions, it becomes clear that the root *f-k-r* was used in the Arabic language to convey several meanings, including contemplating something, engaging mental faculties in analysis, and mentally organizing concepts to reach true knowledge or plausible understanding—all of which are intended in this research.

As for terminological definitions, multiple definitions have been presented. Edward de Bono (1989, p. 11) defines thinking as "the process through which intelligence engages with experience; it involves the ability to employ innate intelligence and actualize it in reality."

Similarly, Saadeh (2008, p. 40) defines it as "a complex concept composed of three elements: advanced cognitive operations such as problem-solving, simpler ones such as understanding and application, in addition to specific subject matter knowledge and various personal dispositions."

• Linguistic and Terminological Definitions of Creativity

The word *ibda'* (creativity) refers to bringing something into existence without prior example. Philosophically, it denotes creating something from nothing, and is considered more specific than creation (*khalq*) itself (Mostafa et al., 1989, p. 43). In *Lisan al-Arab*, *ibda'* comes from *bada'*, meaning to originate or initiate. The Qur'an uses the term in: "Say, I am not a new messenger among the messengers" (Al-Ahqaf: 9)—i.e., not the first to be sent (Ibn Manzur, 1412 AH, p. 341).

Various scholarly definitions have been offered, such as Khairallah et al. (1985, p. 21) who describe creativity as: "producing something new in formulation, even if its components were previously known."

Al-Awaji (1406 AH, p. 95) defines it as "a process evolving from imitation and development to authentic innovation. Creativity may be artistic, productive, or organizational and may occur individually or collectively. It is a continuous process across all stages of human life." Al-Harhi (1999, p. 12) also defines it as "a process resulting in a novel product accepted by a group as useful."

• Definition of Creative Thinking

Al-Obaidi et al. (2010, p. 138) define creative thinking as: "the process of inventing something new that takes tangible form in the creative process; it is a fundamental necessity for any creative achievement."

Shahata and Al-Najjar (2003, p. 124) describe it as: “a form of thinking requiring intellectual abilities, social, and psychological environments surrounding the individual, producing distinct behavior.”

Mousa and Salama (2004, p. 97) define it as “a purposeful, complex mental activity driven by a strong desire to search for solutions or to arrive at original outcomes that were previously unknown.” Khalil (1431 AH) summarizes it as: “a purposeful and complex mental process governed by legitimate foundations and principles, leading to the production of expressions, ideas, and both tangible and intangible innovations marked by originality, modernity, and value for both the individual and the community.”

2. The Educational Significance and Characteristics of Creative Thinking

Thinking is one of the highest characteristics distinguishing humankind, honored by Allah and preferred over all other creatures. Thinking is, in fact, an Islamic obligation, as Allah the Almighty has repeatedly commanded humanity to ponder His creation in many Qur’anic verses. Allah

says:

“Say, I do not tell you that with me are the treasures of Allah, nor do I know the unseen; nor do I say to you that I am an angel. I only follow what has been revealed to me. Say, are the blind and the seeing equal? Will you not then reflect?” (Al-An‘am: 50)

By virtue of reason, Allah distinguished humankind from other beings, making the intellect the foundation for accountability and stewardship on Earth. Allah endowed human beings with intellectual capabilities unmatched by any other creation, entrusting them with the responsibility to reflect, reason, and comprehend. Allah states: *“It is He who spread out the earth, placed therein firm mountains and rivers, and created in it all kinds of fruits in pairs. He causes the night to cover the day. Surely in these things are signs for those who reflect.”* (Ar-Ra‘d: 3)

Creative thinking forms an essential pillar in shaping human identity, social integration, and achieving success in life. It propels personal growth, adaptive learning, problem-solving, and ultimately manifests the honor Allah has granted humankind.

Throughout human history, from primitive eras to modern civilization, humankind has confronted increasingly complex challenges. These challenges have demanded constant judgment, critical analysis, and innovation, thereby making the development of creative thinking a pressing necessity.

Hence, education, as part of its noble mission, has sought to stimulate latent intellectual and creative potentials within students. Educational efforts have focused on activating these potentials through the renewal and diversification of curricula (Al-Mushaeqqe, 1420 AH), aiming to cultivate creative learners capable of independent and critical thinking, generating novel solutions, addressing issues with innovation, and contributing to comprehensive development.

As Daoud and Abdulrahman (1990) affirm: “The civilizational progress we witness in contemporary life stems from the accumulated thinking of successive generations of humankind.”

Creative thinking is thus a fundamental human need, enabling individuals to make informed decisions and solve emergent problems, facilitating their adaptation to their societies. Creative thinking is characterized by several features that foster generations of conscious thinkers capable

of constructive engagement with life's challenges. These features, as identified by Al-Suwaidan and Al-Adlouni (2000), include:

- The ability to discover, extract, and articulate new relationships between ideas.
- Utilizing these relationships to achieve novel objectives.
- The variability of creative ability among individuals.
- Creativity is an experimental and theoretical science, never absolute or final.
- The creative person not only seeks new solutions but also senses emerging problems, notices contradictions, and generates diverse resolutions.
- Creativity relies on holistic thinking, acknowledging multiple possible solutions.
- Creative thinking is grounded in evidence and rational proofs.
- It emphasizes the correlation between causes and effects.
- Creative thinking involves higher-order cognitive processes.

Third: The Relationship Between Doctrinal Principles and Creative Thinking

Since doctrinal principles establish firm and stable concepts that grant the Muslim mind a balance between faith and contemplation, between submission and reflection, between unwavering beliefs and intellectual openness, and since they set the mind free in realms of contemplation, observation, and connecting between cosmic and legislative phenomena, it follows that they open wide horizons for creativity—but within a framework that protects it from deviation or excess.

Thus, the connection between doctrinal principles and creative thinking is not merely an intellectual luxury; rather, it is an educational and intellectual necessity for building a believing, thoughtful, balanced, and well-grounded personality. Among the aspects of this relationship are the following:

1. **Doctrinal principles direct creativity toward righteousness and goodness:** These principles provide a moral framework that guides creativity to serve humanity and achieve goodness, rather than becoming a means of corruption or frivolity. For example, a Muslim researcher who innovates in medical technologies does so not merely for fame or profit, but driven by a doctrinal motivation to serve humanity and seek divine reward.
2. **Islam calls for contemplation and reflection:** Many Qur'anic verses invite reflection on the self and the universe, thereby expanding the horizons of the mind and nurturing imagination and free inquiry—both of which are foundational to creative thinking. An illustrative example is Allah's saying: "*Say, 'Observe what is in the heavens and the earth.' But of no avail will be signs or warnings to a people who do not believe.*" (Yunus: 101). Here, humans are urged to observe and discover, which is a gateway to scientific creativity.
3. **Doctrinal principles achieve balance between faith and intellect:** Some may mistakenly believe that Islamic creed restricts creativity, yet in reality, it regulates it without negating it. As demonstrated by the aforementioned doctrinal principles, there is no contradiction in using the intellect; rather, Islam encourages it, provided that boundaries are observed to prevent deviation or misuse.

4. **The creed provides a comprehensive worldview:** A creative individual requires a “grand vision” to understand life and the universe. Doctrinal principles provide this vision: Why are we here? What is our purpose? What is our destination? What is our role? Such a comprehensive perspective enriches creativity and protects it from superficiality or aimlessness.

5. **Doctrinal creativity produces innovative solutions to contemporary issues:** Creative thinking stemming from doctrinal principles does not settle for merely imitating the West or past traditions but seeks new solutions derived from Islamic values. This approach generates *authentic creativity*, not merely an importation of foreign ideas.

It can thus be said that the Islamic creed energizes the intellect, nourishes its spirit, and governs it with values. Creativity, in turn, activates the intellect to produce new solutions and ideas. In summary: doctrinal principles provide meaning, while creative thinking produces the means.

Fourth: Creative Thinking Skills Derived from Studying Doctrinal Principles

Doctrinal principles serve as an effective educational means for developing creative thinking skills among learners. When students study these principles through interactive teaching methods, they learn how to compare, analyze, infer, and connect general and specific concepts, thereby enhancing their higher-order thinking skills and strengthening their ability to build a solid doctrinal understanding.

Among the effective creative skills that learners acquire through studying doctrinal principles are the following:

1. **The Skill of Induction and Analysis:** This involves training learners to trace evidence from the Qur’an and Sunnah to understand a particular doctrinal principle. Doctrinal principles teach Muslims how to think methodically about religious texts, God’s actions, and His names and attributes. The process involves three key steps:

- **Gathering Evidence (Induction):** The learner collects examples of perfect attributes in creation (such as mercy, knowledge, wisdom...).
- **Analyzing Relationships:** The learner examines whether these attributes are perfect, whether they contain deficiency, and their origins in the texts.
- **Drawing Conclusions (Inference):** The learner concludes that these complete attributes must be affirmed for Allah in a manner befitting His majesty, not resembling His creation. For example, a creature may be described as knowledgeable, but his knowledge is limited, whereas Allah’s knowledge is complete, preceded by no ignorance and followed by no forgetfulness.

2. **The Skill of Connecting Universals with Particulars:** This refers to the ability to understand a general principle (universal) and apply it to specific examples (particulars), and vice versa. It involves presenting a universal principle, followed by doctrinal examples branching from it, and having students apply the principle to those examples. This nurtures disciplined rational interpretation.

- **Example:** The principle: *“Belief in Allah includes belief in His existence, Lordship, Divinity, and Names and Attributes.”* Applying this to particulars:

- **Part 1:** Belief that Allah is the Creator falls under: *Tawheed al-Ruboobiyyah* (Oneness of Lordship).

- **Part 2:** Belief that Allah alone deserves worship falls under: *Tawheed al-Uloohiyyah* (Oneness of Divinity).

- **Part 3:** Belief that Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing falls under: *Tawheed al-Asma' wa al-Sifaat* (Oneness of Names and Attributes).

- All of these particulars connect to the overarching universal principle.

3. **The Skill of Comparison and Critique:** Comparison refers to the ability to highlight similarities and differences between two ideas or doctrines. Critique refers to evaluation based on clear criteria to distinguish between right and wrong, acceptable and rejected. This can be effectively activated by comparing the doctrine of Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah with deviant sects on specific issues, developing the student's ability to differentiate between truth and falsehood through analysis rather than mere memorization.

- **Example:** The principle: "*Sound intellect never contradicts authentic revelation; rather, it agrees with and supports it.*" Some sects, such as the Mu'tazilah, prioritized reason over revelation, leading to:

- Denial of some of Allah's attributes.

- Rejection of authentic hadiths.

- Contradictions between their rational interpretations.

- By contrast, Ahl al-Sunnah believe that sound reason cannot contradict authentic revelation, holding that Allah gave humans reason to be guided by divine revelation—not to oppose it.

- This comparison equips students to distinguish correct doctrine from erroneous ones, analyze ideas and sects based on legitimate criteria, and develop scientific—not emotional—critique, establishing clear standards for distinguishing truth from falsehood.

4. **The Skill of Problem-Solving in Doctrinal Matters:** This refers to the student's or researcher's ability to handle doctrinal problems or doubts (e.g., divine attributes, predestination, the unseen, faith...) using sound intellectual tools and methodologies to arrive at correct understanding or appropriate responses.

- This skill is honed by presenting intellectual challenges or doctrinal doubts and requiring the student to refute them based on doctrinal principles—a highly effective strategy for developing critical and creative thinking skills.

- **Example:** A common doubt is whether reason can contradict revelation regarding matters of the unseen (e.g., punishment in the grave, the scale, the bridge over Hellfire). The student applies the principle: "*Sound intellect never contradicts authentic revelation,*" arriving at three critical understandings:

- The intellect is limited and cannot independently comprehend the unseen.

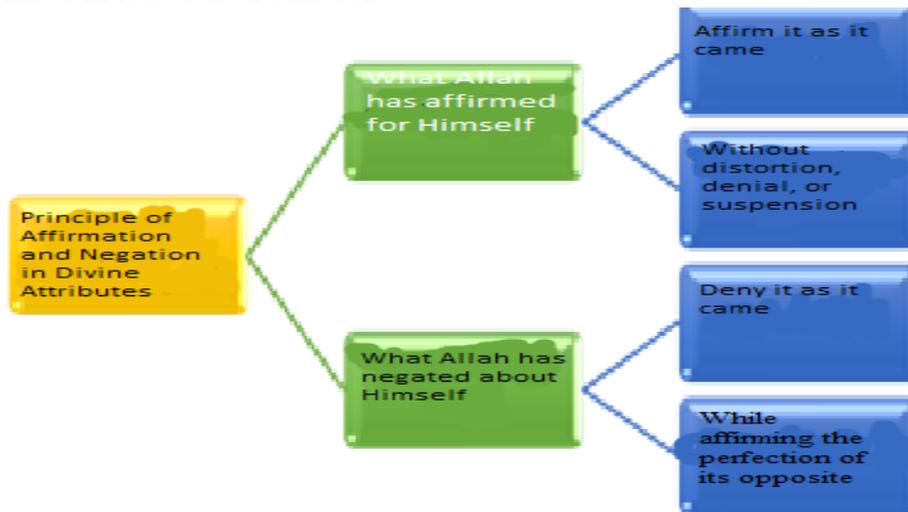
- Revelation is the supreme authority regarding unseen matters.

- The intellect must submit to revelation in these domains while operating in areas of comprehension and deduction.

5. **The Skill of Using Concept Maps:** This refers to a visual method used to organize information, connect concepts logically or hierarchically, and facilitate understanding, analysis, and retention. By creating concept maps linking doctrinal principles, illustrating their branches, or supporting integrative comprehension and holistic thinking between principles, students develop cognitive structuring skills essential for advanced analytical thought.

Applied Example: The principle, "Whatever Allah affirms for Himself, we affirm without anthropomorphism, and whatever He negates, we declare free from deficiency while affirming the perfection of its opposite."

6. Skill of Illustration and Inference



This refers to the learner's ability to use real, conceptual, or tangible examples to clarify doctrinal concepts, relate them to daily life, and derive practical implications from them. This skill is developed by encouraging students to provide contemporary examples that embody doctrinal principles, such as the impact of belief in divine predestination (Qadar) on dealing with crises.

The educational objective of this skill is to cement faith in practical behavior, strengthen internal conviction in unseen realities, and demonstrate that creed is not merely theoretical but has a tangible effect on the individual and society.

Applied Example: Understanding the principle of faith in divine predestination, both its good and bad aspects, instills tranquility and submission to Allah. The Prophet ﷺ said:

"Know that what misses you was not going to miss you, and what hits you was not going to miss you." (Reported by al-Tirmidhi, Hadith No. 2516)

To illustrate this, consider two scenarios:

- **Scenario One:** Losing a job or financial loss
 - *The believer in Qadar* says: "It was decreed for me, and Allah willed good for me," accepting causes with a content and faithful heart.

○ *The denier of Qadar* might collapse, despair, resort to envy, or reject reality, manifesting spiritual ailments.

• **Scenario Two:** A pandemic or disaster (such as earthquakes, COVID-19)

○ *The believer in Qadar* connects the trial to Allah's wisdom, seeks reward, and asks for forgiveness.

○ *The denier of Qadar* becomes resentful, blames others or fate, without religious awareness or understanding.

After this exposition, it becomes evident that such skills, among others, confirm that correct creed is not a restriction on reason but rather a launchpad for disciplined thinking and responsible creativity within Shariah boundaries. If learners are nurtured on these principles and trained in their application, they will develop a balanced, faithful personality that integrates deep understanding, practical conduct, and conscious intellect.

Conclusion and Recommendations

After studying the topic of doctrinal principles (al-qawā'id al-'aqdiyyah) and their impact on developing creative thinking skills, the main findings can be summarized as follows:

• Doctrinal principles constitute a set of general rules upon which matters of faith and monotheism are based, derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah. They contribute to establishing correct understanding of creed, protecting the faith conception from deviation, extremism, or negligence. They also play a crucial role in regulating thought, unifying references, and facilitating the teaching of creed in a systematic way.

• The study shows that these principles are rooted in the texts of revelation and based on the understanding of the Companions and righteous predecessors, granting them legitimacy and credibility. Their nature balances submission to the texts and harmony with sound intellect, making them effective in guiding human thought. They have proven their capacity to face contemporary intellectual challenges by building a clear methodology for understanding and responding to doubts.

• The research revealed that doctrinal principles nurture many creative thinking skills such as analysis, induction, comparison, problem-solving, critique, concept mapping, and practical illustration. Integrating these principles in education and training enhances balanced, organized thinking and strengthens the ability to understand and apply knowledge in reality. The relationship between creed and creative thinking is complementary, not contradictory, achieving conscious faith and firm religiosity based on evidence and comprehension.

Recommendations

1. Emphasize the centrality of divine revelation in constructing creed, highlighting the harmony between text and intellect to refute contemporary intellectual doubts.

2. Incorporate doctrinal principles systematically into religious curricula, linking them with thinking skills to deepen understanding of creed.

3. Prepare applied studies that combine creed and thinking to demonstrate the impact of correct faith on developing a conscious and creative mindset.

4. Conduct training workshops for students on creative thinking skills in light of doctrinal

principles, to enhance skills in critique, analysis, problem-solving, and encourage teachers and educators to use concept maps, practical illustrations, and applied methods in teaching doctrinal principles.

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