

**CONSTRUCTING AN ETHICAL MODEL FOR PERSONAL BRANDING:  
A THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE QUR'ANIC CONCEPT OF REPUTATION**

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**ABSTRACT**

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The emergence of modern digital self-imaging (the phenomenon of digital personal branding) is generally framed by a secular-pragmatic paradigm that views reputation primarily as the simulated management of one's image in pursuit of cyber metrics. This study aims to deconstruct this model by developing a new theory of reputation based on sacred texts through a thematic analysis of verses from the Qur'an. This study is an exploratory descriptive qualitative research using a systematic content analysis design that examines a corpus of 23 Qur'anic verses obtained from the analyzed manuscripts and processed through three rounds of qualitative coding (open, axial, and selective coding). The results reveal the formation of a Transcendental Ethical Reputation Model based on authenticity that is, the alignment between verbal expression and reality in actual behavior (Q.S. Ash-Shaff: 2–3). Based on the analysis, four typologies of approach styles were identified: Spiritual Branding (QS. Fatir: 10), Humility-Based Branding (QS. Al-Furqan: 63), Gentle Power (QS. Ali 'Imran: 159), and Claim to Authority based on Respect (QS. Al-Hajj: 30). This model is reinforced by the triadic persuasive communication method (Q.S. An-Nahl: 125) in conjunction with (Q.S. At-Taubah: 105) to build social proof and affirm superiority (Q.S. Al-Qashash: 26). Theoretically, this model should represent a radical improvement upon Erving Goffman's theory of impression management while simultaneously complementing and offering a theocentric (*ahsān taqwim*) alternative paradigm to Abraham Maslow's theory of self-actualization (Q.S. At-Tin: 4) and Albert Bandura's description of self-efficacy (Q.S. Ali 'Imran: 139), which has implications for the resilience of an individual's psychological dignity (Q.S. Al-Baqarah: 273).

**Keywords:** ethical personal; digital personal branding; structured thematic analysis;

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's modern era, personal branding is an important thing. The importance of personal branding, not only in the digital realm such as social media, but in real life also requires personal branding. However, personal branding is not only about promoting, displaying or getting a positive self-image perception from the public (Ahmad Anif Syaifudin 2023), but there needs to be guidelines, strategies and principles in self-branding. This is necessary so that fake personal branding does not occur that triggers the loss of image and the collapse of self-reputation. Furthermore, in a rapidly evolving era when digital media meets information governance, creative self-monitoring of one's reputation is used as a strategic necessity in the professional and educational systems (Hanif et al. 2023). Theoretically, this phenomenon means that there should be a structured process for finding, conveying, and communicating unique values in order to create a competitive advantage.

Nevertheless, the superiority of sovereignty over the secular-pragmatic order in the creation of the personal today provides a conceptual loophole, namely a neglect of the transcendental ethical dimension or the value of the principles of the Qur'an and internal psychological stability. The empirical reality is that an egocentric orientation towards external performance gives birth to unusual symptoms, such as a rhetoric-action gap, acute narcissism, portfolio fabrication, and the erosion of moral authenticity due to detachment from spiritual anchors (Susilawati and Asbari 2023) There are very few theoretical models that combine the demands of modern professionals with holistic moral regulation.

Departing from that, this research aims to build an alternative model based on the structuring of the structure of self-image with Quranic values. Namely, this research is aimed at developing an ethical personal branding framework through thematic analysis of conceptual reputation texts in the Qur'an. This focused exploration of theological texts not only maps the basic principles and typologies of style, but also discusses the functional benefits as well as the psychological impact of qura'ni-based reputations. Thus, religious texts are epistemologically neutralized as a potential solution to the crisis of human identity in society and public space.

Several previous studies have examined the topic of personal branding of the Qur'an. First, Moh. Wafiq Ulinnuha and Shofia Zahro Rosyidatus Tsani discuss Personal Branding in the Perspective of the Quran with Analysis with the Ma'nā Cum Maghẓā Approach,".(Ulinnuha 2025) This research seeks to explore the values of personal branding contained in QS. Yusuf [12]: 55 and QS. Al-Taubah [9]: 105. Second, Rafi Dinilhaq et al. (2024) entitled "Al-Zamakhshari's Lexical Semantic Analysis of the Phrase 'Personal Branding' of the Prophet Moses (AS) in the Quran," which examines the verses about the story of the Prophet Moses.(Dinilhaq 2024) Al-Zamakhshari's semantic theory is used to analyze linguistic features, while Peter Montoya's "Eight Laws of Personal Imagery" is applied to classify aspects of the Prophet Moses' personal branding. Third, Bela Agustin et al. discuss flexing as personal branding in the Quran with the approach of the theory of tafsir maqāṣid Abdul Mustaqim, by presenting verses that are relevant to flexing and personal branding, namely QS. Al-Qashash [28]: 76, Al-Isra' [17]: 37, Yusuf [12]: 55, Luqman [31]: 18, and Al-Ahzab [33]: 21. Fourth, Nurhafid Ishari discussed the concept of Spiritual Personal Branding:

Integration of Transcendent Values in Identity Construction in the Digital Era," (Ishari 2025).

Although the study of *personal branding* from the perspective of the Qur'an has attracted the interest of a number of scholars in the past, the works available today tend to be limited to normative exploration of prophetic characters, ethics of public communication in general, or historical reconstruction of specific Islamic figures. However, this research was submitted with the aim of making a more systematic theoretical and applicable contribution. The uniqueness of this research lies in the development of an ethical model for *personal branding* that makes authenticity as a fundamental pillar. The goal is to create harmony between verbal expression and actual behavioral reality, by making QS. As-Saff: 2-3 as its main theological basis.

In contrast to the general literature that tends to simplify because it focuses on visual manipulation to satisfy market algorithms, this study presents a substantive novelty through the formulation of four typologies of approaches in the formation of public image. The four typologies include; *Spiritual Branding* (referring to QS. Fatir:10), *Humility-Based Branding* (referring to QS. Al-Furqon:63), *Gentle Power* (referring to QS. Ali 'Imran:159), and *Respect-Based Authority* (referring to QS. Al-Hajj:30). By utilizing this integrative approach, this research succeeded in producing practical solutions that psychologically have a positive impact on the achievement of self-actualization (QS. At-tin:4), the maintenance of inner self-esteem (the concept of 'affah in QS. Al-Baqarah:273), as well as increasing self-confidence (QS. Ali 'Imran: 139). Therefore, the self-development model proposed in this article can serve as a powerful epistemological means to meet the fundamental needs of modern humans in the digital age.

Based on this background, this study proceeds from the assumption that the concept of personal branding cannot be reduced to mere image management practices but must be understood as a construction of reputation built through the integration of authenticity, moral integrity, and a focus on the common good. Therefore, this study is not intended to directly "Islamize" modern personal branding theory, but rather to develop an ethical model based on the value structure of the Qur'an that can engage in dialogue with contemporary communication practices.

## METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach by referring to structured thematic analysis and applying descriptive-analytical methods. The type of data in this study is qualitative data which is not statistical numerical data. The primary source in this study is the verses of the Qur'an which are relevant to the theme of construction of the ethical model of personal branding through a structured thematic analysis of the verses of conceptual reputation in the Qur'an. As for secondary sources in this study, namely a number of articles related to the theme of discussion and scientific literature books.

The data collection technique is carried out through thematic analysis, both directly on a number of verses and through a verse search engine that correlates with the theme of the discussion studied through library research. The data analysis technique is carried out in stages, namely through the process of inventory, classification and interpretation. Then the results of the interpretation are analyzed so that they can be discussed to a conclusion. The

data codification process is carried out in stages through three interrelated phases, including open coding (open coding to identify initial concepts), axial coding (axial coding to establish relationships between categories), and selective coding (selective coding to unite categories into a centrist theory).

The operationalization of this method is based on 4 main analysis units, namely; 1). Qur'anic verses related to reputation, self-image, competence, and communication; 2.) The concept of personal branding in modern communication literature; 3). The structure of relationships among coding categories; 4). Formulation of an ethical model for personal branding. The collection of verses (textual data) was specifically limited to 23 selected verses that met the inclusion criteria, namely those that discuss the character development of figures/prophets, their proven morality, and their capabilities. General law verses or cosmological verses relating to communication behavior are excluded.

Then data analysis is carried out through 6 stages, namely; 1). Determination of the operational concept of personal branding; 2). Search and selection of verses; 3). Open coding of themes; 4). Axial coding to establish relationships; 5). Selective coding to generate a model; 6). Conceptual validation of the interpretation results. Given these limitations, this study succeeded in formulating a conceptual framework as an alternative paradigm. However, there are limitations because this model has not undergone empirical testing of its effectiveness in the field, nor does it encompass an interpretation of all verses related to reputation found in the Qur'an.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Mapping of Verses and the Structure of Personal Branding Themes

Based on a structured thematic analysis conducted through three coding phases (open coding, axial coding, and selective coding), this study successfully identified 23 data corpora from verses of the Qur'an that empirically form the conceptual architecture of reputation. The data distribution was rigorously classified into the following table to prevent conceptual overlap and to meet scientific data presentation standards:

**Table.1 Classification of the theme of the ethical capital construction of personal branding**

Main Cluster	Conceptual Sub-Category / Code	Qur'an Verses Data Corpus
<b>Existential Foundations: Authenticity and Integrity</b>	Authentic Self, Authentic Value, Brand Identity Matrix, Narrative Identity	QS. Ash-Shaff (61): 2-3, QS. Ar-Ra'd (13): 17, QS. Al-An'am (6): 162, QS. Yusuf (12): 111
<b>Ethical Principles of Qur'anic Personal Branding</b>	Prophetic Integrity & Charismatic Exemplar, Kredibilitas Aksi, Kompetensi Objektif, Kendali Internal, Kesadaran Diri, Konsistensi Platform, Keselarasan Nilai	QS. Al-Ahzab (33): 21, QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 44, QS. Al-Isra (17): 35, QS. An-Najm (53): 39, QS. Adz-Dzariyat (51): 21, QS. An-Nisa (4): 82, QS. Ali 'Imran (3): 103

<b>Typology of Personal Branding Styles</b>	a. Karakter Persona (Spiritual, Humility, Gentle Power, Respect Authority) b. Citra Profesional (Professional Image, Strategic Presentation)	QS. Fathir (35): 10, QS. Al-Furqan (25): 63, QS. Ali 'Imran (3): 159, QS. Al-Hajj (22): 30, QS. Luqman (31): 18, QS. Yusuf (12): 55
<b>Mechanisms for Strengthening Reputation</b>	Produktivitas, Transparan, Komunikasi, Edukatif-Persuasif	QS. At-Taubah (9): 105, QS. An-Nahl (16): 125
<b>Psychological and Social Implications</b>	Manfaat Fungsional (Competence Appeal) & Dampak Psikologis (Self-Actualization, Personal Resilience, Mentalitas Percaya Diri)	QS. Al-Qashash (28): 26, QS. At-Tin (95): 4, QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 273, QS. Ali 'Imran (3): 139

### Existential Foundations: Authenticity and Integrity

This section discusses the ontological foundations of reputation-building, focusing on self-authenticity and internal moral responsibility to God (integrity) before such reputation is expressed in the digital public sphere. The first criterion is the Authentic Self, derived from Surah Ash-Shaff (61): 2–3. This verse establishes clear boundaries against cyber manipulation. The phrase *kabura maqtan* (a great wrath from Allah) theologically condemns the discrepancy or gap between the external presentation of identity and internal moral reality (“*lima taquluna ma la taf’alun*”). M. Quraish Shihab, in his Tafsir Al-Misbah emphasizes that the discrepancy between the outward and inward aspects constitutes the most severe form of existential moral corruption, which in the contemporary digital context manifests as the phenomenon of split personalities or the creation of false identities to gain public attention (see the tafsir of Al-Misbah Q.S. Al-Baqarah Q.S. Al-Baqarah:8-9 [Volume 01] on the falsehood of faith and Q.S. Al-Munafiqun [63] (volume 14) which discusses the theme of falsehood between speech and heart).

The dimension of authenticity is reinforced by the substantive value, or Authentic Value, found in QS. Ar-Ra'd (13): 17. The Qur'an explains that substantive value (*al-haq*) is likened to pure water that floods the earth and provides tangible benefits to the social ecosystem. Conversely, a manipulative, false image is likened to foam (*jufa'an*) that floats on the surface and eventually vanishes over time (Muhammad, Setiawan, and Nietarahmani 2024). In the context of the digital ecosystem, personal branding that is not supported by genuine value will merely become an artificial commodity that quickly becomes obsolete due to shifting algorithmic trends.

Furthermore, the Theocentric Identity Matrix, which refers to Quranic Surah Al-An'am (6): 162, shifts the focus of one's reputation from being self-centered to being God-centered. This is achieved through a commitment to the unity of life, namely “*lillahi Rabbil 'Alamin.*” Ibn Katshir states that this verse calls for a fundamental purification of motivation (ikhlas). Sociologically, the implication is that an individual upholds noble values not to seek digital

recognition such as praise, the number of followers, or superficial validation in the virtual world but rather as an expression of spiritual accountability as a servant before the Creator.

This foundation is reinforced by Narrative Identity, as reflected in Surah Yusuf (12): 111, which emphasizes the importance of historical coherence in an individual's life journey. The Qur'an underscores that the stories of the past contain valuable lessons (*ibrah*) for those who possess understanding, implying that one's personal historical record must demonstrate the validity, integrity, and consistency of an authentic character, free from fabricated narratives (*ma kana haditsan yuftara*). A credible narrative of identity is built upon a consistent life trajectory, not on the basis of misleading, momentary selections.

### Ethical Principles of Qur'anic Personal Branding

Once a solid internal spiritual foundation has been established, the Qur'an outlines seven principles of practical ethics that guide the manifestation of Personal Branding character traits in concrete actions in the public sphere:

1. Prophetic Integrity & Charismatic Exemplarity (QS. Al-Ahzab [33]: 21): A Muslim's authentic appeal is built through the dimension of Uswatun Hasanah, which is deeply ingrained in the person of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. Fakhruddin al-Razi, in his Tafsir al-Kabir, states that this exemplary character is *mutlaqah* (universal) (Fatih 2022). This kind of appeal grows naturally from consistent personal moral steadfastness, which is fundamentally different from contemporary marketing strategies that often rely on an image engineered by public relations.
2. The Credibility of Actions / Actions Speak Louder Than Words (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 44): This relates to the communicator's integrity, as it is connected to what is rhetorically rebuked: "...*wa tansawna anfusakum...*". Al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him) highlights in Al-Jami' li Ahkam Al-Quran that this verse criticizes the loss of sound judgment on the part of any communicator who, despite having preached goodness to the audience behind the scenes, gradually forgets how to be good. Thus, the moral legitimacy of their message is essentially nullified by the principles they fail to apply.
3. Competence from an objective perspective (Quran 17:35): Manifested as a religious framework to maintain balance in accordance with justice (*wazinū bil-qistāsilmustaqīm*). When showcasing professional expertise in the digital world, the presentation of portfolios, certificates, and personal capabilities must be clear, honest, and appropriate without exaggeration (hyperbolic claims).
4. Internal Control / Locus of Internal Control (QS Al-Najm [53]: 39): To ensure that one's true reputation is determined solely by one's own efforts and *reality* (*wa an laisa lil-insani illa ma sa'a*). Thus, this value serves as a guide for individuals to develop genuine competencies, rather than deceiving an algorithm to achieve instant success.
5. Self-Awareness, QS: Adz-Dzariyat [51]: 21): The command to engage in introspection (*Wa fi anfusikum afala tubsiroon...*) necessitates an honest internal audit of one's innate potential. Mature self-awareness protects people from the epidemic of false identity syndrome in the digital world.

6. Consistency Across All Platforms (QS. Surah Al-Nisa [4]: 82): This requires the absence of contradictions in one's "message" (*"lawajadu fihi-khtilafan katsira"*). This rule demands that one's narrative across all social media platforms used remain consistent within a fragmented digital space, without identity dissonance from one account to the next.
7. Alignment of Values (QS. Ali 'Imran [3]: 103): Mandates collective engagement in relation to personal values (core values) and higher theological self-interest; the courage to remain visible and integrate the well-being of the broader community (*"wa'taṣimū biḥablillāhi jamī'ā"*). A sense of individual identity must be in harmony with the desire to assimilate and with collective morality in cyberspace.

### Typology of Personal Branding Styles

Based on an in-depth textual analysis, the Qur'an offers a dual taxonomic framework regarding the representation of self-identity, designed adaptively so that it can be implemented in accordance with the dynamics and needs of contemporary social contexts.

#### Persona-Based Approach

This first orientation focuses on articulating an individual's moral and spiritual attributes in public interactions through four main pillars. First, this approach manifests as Spiritual Branding, which emphasizes the production of transformative and positive content to promote virtue (Quran 35:10). Second, Humility-Based Branding reflects emotional maturity in mitigating provocation and hate speech in cyberspace through soothing responses or *qālu salāmā* (QS. Al-Furqan [25]: 63). Furthermore, the Gentle Power dimension employs empathetic and gentle communication patterns as the primary tool to touch the hearts of the digital audience (QS. Ali 'Imran [3]: 159). Finally, Respect-Based Branding Authority is employed to build authentic public credibility by avoiding all forms of information distortion or fake news in order to foster genuine public trust (QS. Al-Hajj [22]: 30).

#### A Professional Image Management-Based Approach

This second dimension focuses on projecting technical competence and professionalism in the public sphere, which is regulated through professional image management. The Qur'an explicitly prohibits visual representations that are elitist, arrogant, and detached from societal reality through the verse *wa lā tushha'ir khaddaka lin-nas* (Quran 31:18), and instead calls for an inclusive and populist attitude. This typology is empirically illustrated through the actions of Prophet Yusuf (AS) in QS. Yusuf (12): 55 via a transparent declaration of competence, namely *"Inni ḥafīẓun 'alīm"* (Indeed, I am one who is trustworthy and knowledgeable). Referring to the explanation in the Tafsir *Jalālāin*, such an articulation of one's expertise before the public is an action that is valid under Islamic law and holds high ethical and altruistic value provided that the activity is oriented as a form of humanitarian responsibility aimed at overcoming the nation's macro-socioeconomic crisis, rather than being driven by egotistical narcissism or personal arrogance.

## Mechanisms for Strengthening Reputation

Unlike conceptual ethical frameworks, the mechanisms for strengthening ethical reputation in the Qur'an operate through two driving forces that are empirical, practical, and applicable in social reality. First, the Mechanism of Transparent Productivity (QS. At-Taubah [9]: 105) affirms that the strengthening of one's self-image is not constructed through visual manipulation or artificial optimization, but rather through concrete actions (*"T'malū..."*). This verse indicates that an individual's professional track record will be openly assessed by Allah, the Messenger, and the social community (*al-mu'minūn*), so that the accumulation of genuine public trust is built upon the volume of transparent productivity that benefits humanity not merely as a commodity of digital promises. Second, the Educational-Persuasive Communication Mechanism (QS. An-Nahl [16]: 125) provides a standardized framework for disseminating messages in the public sphere, driven by three main pillars: *ḥikmah* as a methodological-epistemological foundation based on factual truth; *mau'izah ḥasanah* as a communicative narrative that gently addresses the affective-psychological realm; and *jādilhum billatī hiya aḥsan* as a space for dialectic discourse that upholds the ethics of mature thinking, empathy, and sound argumentation.

## Psychological and Social Implications

### 1. The Dimension of Functional (Social) Benefits

The interdisciplinary application of this model is capable of significantly restructuring the social order through the establishment of "Competence Appeal," as described in QS. Al-Qashash (28): 26. In modern interactive spaces, particularly within the digital ecosystem, recognition of a person's professional reputation is no longer measured by artificial image-building but is objectively assessed through the twin parameters of human resource management: technical capacity (*Al-Qawīy*) and a track record of trustworthy moral integrity (*Al-Amīn*). This harmonious synchronization between professional competence and noble character, in turn, gives rise to authentic, solid social legitimacy that is deeply rooted within the cyber community.

### 2. The Dimension of Psychological Impact

On the individual's internal level, the internalization of this model leads humans to the pinnacle of the actualization of their innate human potential (Self-Actualization) in order to achieve the best possible form (*aḥsan taqwīm*), in accordance with the guidance in Surah At-Tin (95): 4. In line with Sayyid Qutb's perspective in *Fī Zilālil Qur'ān*, the perfection of this latent potential must be constructively actualized in order to elevate human existence to the highest degree of humanity.

The psychological implications of discovering this innate nature manifest in the form of independent self-esteem resilience (Personal Resilience), thereby making the individual's mindset resilient unlikely to be fragile, anxious, or dictated by fluctuations in digital metrics or the phenomenon of public attention addiction (as analogized in the psychological context of QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 273). This inner transformation ultimately

yields a firm sense of self-efficacy in driving social change without being plagued by a sense of cyber inferiority, for existential nobility always accompanies those committed to the values of faith (“*wa antumul-a’lawna in kuntum mu’minin*”), as affirmed in Surah Ali ‘Imran (3): 139.

### **Synthesis of the Ethical Model**

As the culmination of these scientific findings, all data clusters were integratively consolidated into a holistic concept known as the Transcendental Ethical Reputation Model. The construction of this model positions divine approval as the central axis, the authenticity of one’s inner nature as the internal foundation, ethical operational rules as the medium for articulating behavior, various prophetic styles as the medium of representation, and tangible productivity as the pillar strengthening reputation. This formulation successfully addresses the need to deconstruct the fragility of contemporary secular image-building models which tend to be manipulative and artificial by offering an alternative in the form of dual accountability that balances horizontal responsibility in the social and humanitarian realm with vertical responsibility before the eschatological and divine.

### **From Impression Management to Ethical Reputation**

In today’s communication landscape, personal branding is typically understood as nothing more than the practice of impression management, which was famously mapped out by Erving Goffman through one of his dramaturgical approaches (Mokos and Salehudin, 2025). Using the analogy of an actor in a performance (frontstage), Goffman views individuals in the digital public sphere as skillfully managing information, narratives, and images to project an ideal self-representation aligned with what the audience wishes to see (Parawansah, 2026). Research within the (Ethical Principles) cluster represents a radical challenge to this secular-pragmatic paradigm. Through the axial coding of QS. Al-Baqarah: 44 and QS. Al-Ahzab: 21, the Qur’an states that one’s image and reputation must not be shaped by visual kaleidoscopes or deception, but must be grounded in Uswatun Hasanah (the credibility of actual actions in life). The phrase “*...wa tansawna anfusakum...*” (while you forget yourselves) in QS. Al-Baqarah: 44 reinforces this premise: the legitimacy of a digital communicator will crumble whenever there is a discrepancy or a wide gap between their on-screen statements and the moral reality of their personal character. in their daily actions not through visual packaging or social image-building (Nisa and Az’zahra n.d., 2025).

### **Personal Branding as a Construction of Authenticity**

In conventional theory regarding how brand image works, authenticity is one of the tools available to companies seeking to market their products in a distinctive way. In the digital space, authenticity is often reduced to a marketing tactic aimed at creating an artificial emotional connection with consumers or followers (Dyah, Kurniawati, and Masnita 2024). The Qur’anic perspective in Subsection (Existential Foundations) radically expands this

theory of authenticity by moving beyond economic-commercial logic toward an existential-ontological foundation. And that is what we explore sonically through the natural metaphor in QS. Al-Ra'd:17).

The Qur'an distinguishes between the essence of true value (*al-haq*) which is eternal and universal and performative falsehood (*al-bathil*). Taufiq warns that substantive truth is like clear water that falls on solid ground, continuing to flow and bringing tangible benefits to the human ecosystem; whereas deceptive image-engineering floats like foam (*jufa'an*) on the surface before eventually vanishing without a trace, eroded by time (Muhammad et al. 2024).

This theoretical point affirms that the Authentic Self, as described in QS. Ash-Shaff: 2–3, is not merely a matter of how a person chooses to communicate, but rather the embodiment of humanity as a servant (*'abd*) before its Creator. Through sociological analysis, we can observe a believer who produces a Theocentric Identity Matrix. This fosters an awareness of the meaning of "*lillahi Rabbil 'Alamin*" (QS. Al-An'am 6:162), which serves as their narrative identity as described in Quran (QS. Yusuf 12:111) and will be preserved within the framework of a valid and legitimate life story one that possesses a history of coherence trusted by the public, without the need for cyber deception (Martha 2024).

### **The Dialogue Between Qur'anic Values and Modern Branding**

By providing a new paradigm for exploring the connections between classical religious texts and contemporary insights in psychology and communication, this work facilitates the development of an integrated research agenda across various academic disciplines. Traditional Western psychological theories, such as Abraham Maslow's Self-Actualization Theory (Umam and Yazidurrahma 2024) or Albert Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (Minarni, Ahmad, and Ali 2023), are largely constrained by anthropological frameworks and internalized secularism, in which the validation of individual success is measured primarily by material possessions, social capital, or hegemonic resilience (MS and Gumilar 2025).

The ethical model offered by the Qur'an dismantles this reliance on such metrics by introducing *Ahsan Taqwim* (the best of creation) through a fully theocentric lens, in which Allah is central (QS. 95:4; Al-Baqarah: 29). At-Tin: 4. Sayyid Qutb, in *Fi Zhilalil Qur'an*, through critical analysis, asserts that human nature (*fitrah*) is the highest form of spirituality and the self most liberated from materialistic constraints. Does a Muslim achieve the pinnacle of self-actualization when they accumulate digital validation in the form of click counts, instant popularity, or empty praise from an audience? On the contrary, the most ideal manifestation is when a person can demonstrate their best competence (*Al-Qawiy*) in their profession, built upon nobility of heart (*Al-Amin*), as mentioned in QS. Al-Qashash: 26 (Dinilhaq 2024).

Independent psychological resilience, based on Quranic verses 3:139 and 2:273, states that people who possess self-efficacy rooted in their beliefs will not be easily influenced by the dynamics of cyberspace or experience digital anxiety resulting from a syndrome which is widespread today that is not without significance, when public sentiment has become one of the main parameters of electoral success, and hearts are infiltrated only by worldly success that can satisfy sympathy through emotional comforters stemming from the emotional impact

of accurate social media platforms where the anchor of their self-assessment is transcendent *ridhā* and never based on social media platform algorithms.

### **Implications of the Model for Digital Communication**

The conceptualization of the Transcendental Ethical Reputation Model has important practical and normative implications for the governance of modern digital communication practices. Indeed, amid the looming threats of disinformation, cyberbullying, information asymmetry, and cultural toxicity displayed on social media platforms (Martha 2024) which are analogous to Apple's Terms of Service and Quality Rules, this model serves as an ethical roadmap to help mitigate efforts to reshape user behavior within that metaworld.

Researcher will address the implications suggested by this model for dismantling systems that drive digital content production in terms of moving away from visceral glorification toward transparent mechanisms of labor productivity in accordance with what defines as social utility in empirical terms (QS. At-Taubah: 105). Every content creator or cyber professional must fundamentally understand that their digital footprint entails a dual responsibility that will be made clear before Allah, His Messenger (saw), and the public; thus, even on a subconscious level, this serves as a deterrent against divisive or deceptive displays.

Second, the dissemination of information and related online interactions must employ communication procedures that are methodologically educational and persuasive, based on the principles found in the Quran. An-Nahl: 125. The dissemination of digital messages must be based on three main pillars: wisdom, manifested in the form of data accuracy and scientific truth; *mau'izhah hasanah*, which embodies a narrative approach to communication that touches upon ethical sensibilities with gentleness, as previously illustrated; and *jadilhum billati hiya ahṣan*, which implies providing space for online discussion and dialectic that upholds mature thinking without tarnishing the dignity of fellow social media users. Thus, the macro-level impact of this model is: transforming the digital ecosystem from a transactional-individualistic one into a healthy civil society and a spiritually significant cyberspace, filled with transcendent worship.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study successfully developed, in a comprehensive and systematic manner, a new theoretical model the Divine Ethical Reputation Model derived from a structured thematic analysis of a corpus of 23 Qur'anic verses. By applying three stages of strict qualitative coding (open, axial, and selective coding) to the data collected, this study concludes that reputation or self-image must rest on theological-communicative pillars that are intertwined in a sustainable manner. The second dimension of this model is divine satisfaction as the central axis; the Authentic Self and Authentic Values represent the anchoring of the internal foundation; Ethical Principles enable operational ethical rules to serve as intermediaries for articulating actual behavior in the public sphere; Style Typology as the choice of prophetic style as a medium of representation along with transparent and communicative real-world productivity, positions itself as a pillar for the reputation-strengthening system. Collectively, these findings scientifically confirm that the Qur'an rejects self-representation as a

narcissistic, opportunistic commodity, and instead treats it as a form of horizontal social reciprocity paired with vertical eschatological responsibility.

From a theoretical and methodological perspective, this study contributes to three interdisciplinary fields simultaneously. First, for the field of contemporary thematic exegesis, this research adds value to the body of exegetical literature by conducting a new form of cyber-contextualization of classical religious texts, linking the perspectives of exegetes in educational institutions with the realities of today's digital culture. Second, this study can establish ethical standards for the dissemination of information in the digital space by drawing on three operational pillars set forth by the Qur'an: hikmah (accurate data), *mau'izhah hasanah* (affective and courteous narratives), and *jadilhum billati hiya ahsan* (healthy cyber-dialectics). Third, this research represents a radical revision of Erving Goffman's theory of Impression Management as applied in conventional Western media communication studies and psychology.

Although this study has successfully formulated a robust conceptual-ethical model based on religious texts, this has been achieved only at the level of textual exploration, theological interpretation, and macro-theoretical conceptualization; consequently, there are substantial limitations. However, these limitations open up valuable opportunities for future research agendas to empirically test the validity of applying this Transcendental Ethical Reputation Model in real-life contexts. Future studies are needed to conduct reception analyses among active social media users, Muslim influencers, or digital communication practitioners to assess how the values of authenticity and integrity are internalized into daily digital behavior. In addition, another research pathway is also possible: the development and validation of the Qur'anic Personal Branding Index as a new quantitative measurement tool to assess the level of purity, validity, and morality of an individual's communication in the public sphere.

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