

Ulul Albab: The Concept of Perfect Intelligence in Islam: Theoretical Review and Application in Islamic Psychology

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Ulul Albab; Perfect Intelligence	Allah as the Creator of the universe, including human beings, has bestowed the brain and intellect including the heart (<i>qalibun</i>) to humans as His great gift. This is what distinguishes humans from other creatures in this universe. Man becomes a perfect creature because he can think and feel or have lust (will). Perfection can make the human being the best creature if he can maximize the potential that Allah gives in him. Nevertheless, humans can also become the most despicable creatures even more than animals if they cannot harness this potential in the path of goodness. In maximizing this potential, Allah provides guidance in the holy book of the Qur'an. As a <i>manual book</i> , the Qur'an is the perfect book to be explored and guided in maximizing the power possessed by humans, including the aspect of intelligence. The research uses a qualitative approach with the type of research being literature research. The result of this research is that Ulul albab became a term used by Allah to describe this intelligence. The figure of ulul albab is a Muslim human being who is strong in his thinking in using the potential of his intellect, strong in dhikr in forming spiritual intelligence which will eventually have good emotions or the ability in emotion management or emotional intelligence. Therefore, it is very appropriate to mention that ulul albab is the concept of perfect intelligence.

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1. Introduction

Allah created human beings as perfect creatures with the provision of Allah the Creator that distinguishes them from animals and even angels, namely lust and intellect. In the creation of humans, Allah imposed his destiny that humans were created differently from humans, including what is inherent in it, namely intellect related to intelligence. Therefore, humans have their own levels and types of intelligence.

The discussion of intelligence is an interesting theme in the world of education, especially educational psychology. In his book, John W. Santrock, an expert in the field of educational

psychology, discusses in detail the topics related to intelligence and Islamic educational psychology. Prof. Dr. Jalaluddin, through his book entitled *Islamic Educational Psychology*, also elaborates and discusses intelligence both from the perspective of general psychology and Islamic educational psychology (Jalaluddin, 2018).

Jalaluddin (2018). associate a person's level of intelligence with their behavior. Effective behavior tends to have a positive relationship with a person's intelligence. A person who can act effectively is fast, easy, and accurate if he has good intelligence. This is related to the performance of the brain. The brain, which is the center of intelligence, is considered the source of all activities carried out by humans. According to Jalaluddin, the brain is the most complex organ. Almost all human bodily functions, such as thoughts, emotions, speech, heart rate, breathing activities, sex drive, memory, and mood, are all controlled by the brain. Therefore, the brain functions as the control center and coordinates most of the movement, behavior, and homeostatic functions of the body

Slightly different, Harun Nasution provides a difference between the brain and the intellect. By distinguishing these two, humans become different from animals that are equipped with brains by the Creator. In the Islamic sense, what reason means is not the brain, but the thinking power found in the human soul. Meanwhile, the brain is an organ that is not only found in humans, but also in animals. That is, when people use their brains to work, function, and think, then the working brain is called reason. The brain that functions and is called the intellect is what distinguishes humans from animals, even between fellow humans. As the Muslim philosopher al-insanu Hayawanun Nathiqun said, humans are intelligent animals (Nasution, 2011).

Reason is a gift from Allah, and its indicator is general intelligence (IQ). This intelligence is also related to the hereditary aspect, However, mental and physical health is also intelligence (Tafsir, 2013). It is still a common understanding that what is meant by intelligence is intellectual intelligence only, which is measured in Wechsler scale numbers even though the elements in humans are not only intellect but also hearts that give rise to feelings or emotions, including small hearts or consciences that play a role in personality control (Sensa, 2005).

The Qur'an, a holy book that serves as a guide for Muslims, is full of educational value. The stories of the prophets, messengers, and ordinary people who are righteous or the stories of iniquity against Allah, as well as the cues to learn the signs of Allah's power in the universe, are contained in the Qur'an as things that can be learned and learned for humans. The term *ulul al albab* is one of the terms used in the Qur'an to describe intelligence because it is related to taking lessons from verses or signs of Allah's power (Sensa, 2005).

Thus, it becomes interesting to discuss the concept of intelligence that Allah describes in the Quran more deeply. This is because Allah has given reason to every human being and sent down the Qur'an as a life guidebook, including the concept of building human intelligence into a complete human being.

Research on the concept of *ulul albab* has strong relevance to the goal of Islamic education, which is to form individuals with holistic intelligence, including intellectual, spiritual, and emotional intelligence. Given the importance of this goal, this research can make a significant contribution in developing a more comprehensive and integrated educational curriculum. This research will enrich scientific literacy about *ulul albab* in the context of the Qur'an and its application in education. It is

important to improve the understanding and application of this concept in various aspects of life, especially in education.

The purpose of the research is to identify and elaborate the concept of *ulul albab* in the perspective of the Qur'an as a form of perfect intelligence, analyze how *ulul albab* describes intellectual intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and emotional intelligence in Islam, and explain the relevance of the concept of *ulul albab* to the development of character education and holistic intelligence in the context of Islamic education.

2. Materials and Methods

The method used in this study is library research with a qualitative research approach. The object of study is scientific books and articles relevant to the theme of *ulul albab*. Data collection: Collect data from various identified literature, including books, journal articles, and other documents that discuss intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence in the context of Islamic education. Classify the data that has been collected based on the main themes related to *ulul albab*, such as the concept of intelligence in the Quran, its application in education, and holistic aspects of intelligence. This study uses qualitative data analysis techniques with a descriptive approach; the steps are data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and data verification.

3. Result and Discussion

Variety of Intelligence in Psychology Review

Intellectual Intelligence

Intelligence or *quotient* is a quantitative concept that was initially applied to measure intelligence level. Meanwhile, intellectual is the ability to act in a directed, measurable, rational manner in dealing with their environment effectively (Sarlito, 2004). Wechsler defined intellectual intelligence as the set of a person's capacity to react in the direction of purpose and reason and manage the environment effectively. Crow suggests that intellectual intelligence is often associated with memory, reasoning, and problem-solving (Masaong & Tilome, 2011).

Intellectual intelligence is an ability with three characteristics attached to it: the ability to direct thoughts or actions, the ability to change the direction of action when the action has been taken, and the ability to criticize oneself. Intellectual intelligence is also interpreted as the ability needed to perform various mental activities such as thinking, reasoning, and solving problems (Robbins & Judge, 2008).

Yani in Pasek (2017) stated that intellectual intelligence is an intelligence needed for a person's success. Intellectual intelligence still affects a student's mindset because it is the first intelligence developed that can motivate a student to learn and understand accounting.

Intellectual intelligence also serves to measure a person's speed to learn new things, focus on various tasks and exercises, store and recall information, engage in thought processes, work with numbers, think abstractly and analytically, as well as solve problems, and apply pre-existing knowledge (Herlina & Suwatno, 2018).

In terms of measuring intellectual intelligence, indicators are used that concern three cognitive domains. The three indicators are 1) the ability of the figure, namely the ability and reason in the field

of the form; 2) verbal ability, namely the ability and reason in the field of language; 3) numerical ability, namely ability and reason related to numbers (Wiramihardja, 2003).

Quoting Thurstone, Sholeh and Wahab said that intellectual intelligence (IQ) consists of seven abilities, namely the ability to write, speak easily, the ability to sum, subtract, multiply, and divide, and understand the meaning of spoken words, get an impression of something, be able to solve problems and take lessons from past experiences, accurately see and understand the relationships of objects in space, and recognize objects accurately and quickly (Sholeh & Wahab, 2004).

Emotional Intelligence

Goleman defines emotional intelligence as the capacity to recognize the feelings of oneself and others, to motivate oneself, and to manage emotions well in oneself and in relationships with others. If a person is good at adjusting to the mood of another individual or can empathize, that person will have a good emotional level and will be more likely to adjust to his social and environmental interactions. Goleman also stated that emotional intelligence is more a person's self-motivation ability, resilience in facing failure, controlling emotions and delaying gratification, and regulating the soul. With this emotional intelligence, a person can put his emotions in the right portion, have satisfaction, and regulate his mood. Emotional intelligence requires the ownership of feelings to learn to recognize and appreciate feelings for oneself and others and respond appropriately, effectively applying emotional energy in daily life. Of course, emotional intelligence is not enough to have feelings. Emotional intelligence requires us to learn to recognize and appreciate feelings in ourselves and others and to deal with them appropriately, effectively applying them to information and emotional energy in daily life and work (Goleman, 2007).

Agustian stated that emotional intelligence is the ability to control emotions or control oneself to remain calm and controlled to make decisions. Agustian further translates emotional intelligence as the ability to feel. The key to emotional intelligence is the honesty of the conscience. The conscience should be used as the center of principles that provide security, guidelines, strength, and wisdom (Agustian, 2005).

People whose emotions are in control will be respected and respected, and vice versa. According to Goleman, the indicators of emotional intelligence are as follows: (Goleman, 2007).

- a. Recognizing one's emotions is self-awareness or the ability to recognize feelings as they occur.
- b. Managing emotions is the ability to handle feelings so that they can be expressed appropriately or in harmony until balance is reached in the individual.
- c. Self-motivation, i.e. the ability to organize emotions as a tool to achieve goals.
- d. Recognizing other people's emotions, which is the ability to recognize other people's emotions or also called empathy.
- e. Building relationships, namely being able to recognize each individual's emotions and control them.

Goleman also mentioned that the success rate of a person's performance is more influenced by special skills such as self-discipline, empathy, and initiative than the influence of academic ability. Furthermore, the results of Goleman's research also show that emotional intelligence is the main driver in producing good performance (Goleman, 2007).

Based on the theory mentioned above, emotional intelligence is a person's ability to process and control their emotional state, which includes the ability to recognize self-emotions, manage self-emotions, motivate yourself, recognize the emotions of others (empathy), and foster relationships (cooperation) with others.

Spiritual Intelligence

Khavari (Khavari, 2006) defines spiritual intelligence as a mind that is inspired, encouraged, and effectively inspired by the appreciation of the divine of which we are a part so that it allows a person to feel happy in any circumstance. Zohar and Marshal mentioned that spiritual intelligence is a form of intelligence that rests on the inside of a person who is related to self-consciousness or soul (Zohar & Marshall, 2007). Furthermore, Suyanto said that spiritual intelligence is the intelligence to face and solve problems in front of humans and in the presence of their gods (Suyanto, 2005).

In general, Suyanto mentions the following spiritual values: truth, honesty, simplicity, care, cooperation, freedom, peace, love, understanding, good deeds, responsibility, tolerance, integrity, trust, cleanliness of heart, humility, loyalty, meticulousness, glory, courage, unity, gratitude, humor, perseverance, patience, justice, equality, sincerity, wisdom, and steadfastness (Suyanto, 2005).

Spiritual intelligence as a support for success in business and the world of work is critical because it will encourage him to do his best and make maximum contributions. Sukidi said that at least six values of spiritual intelligence must exist in business and work: honesty, openness, knowing oneself, focusing on contribution, non-dogmatic spirituality, and justice (Sukidi, 2004).

First is honesty, which is the trait that allows a person always to be honest. With his honesty, an employee or businessman will deliver goodness for himself and his institution, making it easy to achieve success or success in the end.

Second, openness, which is an open attitude displayed by employees or businessmen towards their colleagues or colleagues, will eventually have a good impact in the form of the formation of trust. An open attitude will also make it easy for him to interact so that he will anticipate conflicts and, simultaneously, can be an indirect evaluation material as a fruit of this attitude in his association.

Third, knowing oneself is understanding oneself about who one is, what is in him in the form of physical, intellect, and soul, and understanding the abilities and potentials that one can develop. This is the basic capital to be able to help others around them. A person cannot be able to help or invite others to succeed, but he must succeed before he can complete and lift himself up when he is in bad condition.

Fourth, focus on contribution, which is an attitude that must be built by each individual. It becomes taboo when it is more of a right than an obligation. An attitude of being more concerned about their environment or prioritizing giving rather than receiving will make them more sincere and maximally effective in working in their community.

Fifth, non-dogmatic spirituality, spiritualism, does not actually lead to a particular religion. However, spirituality's values are always in line with the values of goodness in all religions. Flexibility in action, being able to face and turn adversity into an advantage, and having a vision and value in their lives are things that will arise from this value.

Sixth is fairness, which is the ability to be fair to all parties under any conditions. This proportional justice will make him an individual who always gives good to those around him, not as

a source of distraction. From the above values, if they are present in a person, they will become a person who has good work integrity, can be flexible, and can face life problems positively inspired by vision and values.

Zohar and Marshal (2007). providing eight dimensions to test the extent of a person's spiritual intelligence quality. The personality barometer used includes:

- a. Self-capacity to be flexible, such as being active and adaptive spontaneously.
- b. Have a high *level of* self-awareness.
- c. The ability to face and utilize suffering.
- d. Ability to face and transcend pain.
- e. Quality of life inspired by vision and values.
- f. Refusal to cause unnecessary *harm*.
- g. Have a holistic perspective by looking at the tendency to interconnect between everything differently.
- h. Have a real tendency to ask: "Why" or "What if" and tend to seek fundamental answers (principles and fundamentals).
- i. To be what psychologists call an independent field is to have the convenience of working against conventions.

As mentioned above, the eight barometers to test spiritual intelligence in daily life generally describe aspects of life wisdom in a meaningful and spiritual way, which are the basis of spiritual intelligence, such as high self-awareness, flexibility, rich vision and values, and a holistic, non-periapiical view of life.

Suyanto (2005) said that if a person's spiritual intelligence is good, it is possible to become creative and change rules and situations. Spiritual intelligence also provides the ability to discern things related to moral reason and adjust rigid rules, accompanied by understanding and love or loyalty. Spiritual intelligence can also provide the ability to analyze unrealized possibilities, and it makes a person truly intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually complete.

Spiritual intelligence is also the ability to make every behavior and activity worth worshipping. This is based on the value of a person's faith in his God, which means that every behavior must be directed at Him. Ratnasari concluded that the quality of good spiritual intelligence can make a whole human being who thinks and behaves in a natural way, that is, who makes the purpose of his life only for his God. In addition, spiritual intelligence is also a transcendental thing (Ratnasari, 2015).

Jalaludin Rahmat in Tebba mentions several aspects of spiritual intelligence as follows: (Tebba, 2003).

- a. Getting to know the deepest motives,
In Islam, the deepest motive in human beings is called *fitrah*.
- b. Have high awareness,
A person with a high level of consciousness means that he can recognize who he really is, or at least he is always trying to recognize who he is.
- c. Be responsive to their conscience
An attitude to always pay attention to the whispers of his small heart or conscience, which is often ignored except when disaster or life is narrow.

- d. Be positive about suffering or adversity,
The attitude is always to be able to take wisdom from every suffering or difficulty they experience, not the other way around, which is to look for a scapegoat to blame.
- e. Stand firm in goodness
The attitude to try to continue to be istiqomah with his stance while in good and beneficial even though it must be different from the majority group or may be judged not in general as believed by people.
- f. Reluctance to harass and hurt
The realization that what he does will essentially return to him so that he will not do negative things that can disturb others or damage nature.
- g. Beragama dengan cerdas dan bijak,
A person who adheres to a certain religion, even though he believes that his religion is correct, will not disturb people of other religions.
- h. Looking at death wisely
The attitude in looking at death is that it is a phase of life that everyone experiences.

If we study more deeply the verses of the Qur'an that are related to several elements possessed by human beings, such as the physical element, the element of life (nafsani), and the spiritual element, then intellectual intelligence (IQ), which is closely related to the physical element is mentioned in the Qur'an implicitly. Nasaruddin Umar explained the three human substances in the Qur'an related to IQ, EQ, and SQ, namely that the three human substances are, First, the physical element that needs intellectual intelligence (IQ) to connect to the intellect. Second, the element of life or nafsani that needs emotional intelligence (EQ) and is connected to the heart or heart. Third, the spiritual element needs spiritual intelligence (SQ) to relate to the spirit or spirit. The three human substances mentioned in the Qur'an that are connected to their respective intelligences for Darvis Hude are a gift from Allah SWT brought by humans since birth. According to him, from birth, every human being carries all the potential of intelligence, such as senses, intellect, instinct or garizah, and conscience or heart (Jalaluddin, 2018).

One example of a Qur'anic verse that states that there are three human substances, which include the physical element, the nafsani element, and the spiritual element, is as in the Qur'an. al-Mu'minun/23:12-14 that the physical elements of human beings mentioned in the above verse are formed from several material elements such as semen, a clot of blood, a clump of flesh, and bones, as well as flesh. Meanwhile, the elements of nafsani and spirituality are implicitly mentioned with other forms of creature expressions. So the meaning of this verse is that Allah SWT has created human beings from the element of soil or their essence in the form of semen, then into a clot of blood, a clump of flesh that wraps around bones. After this physical element is formed, then Allah SWT blows the spiritual element into the physical element. Then, the creation of human beings as creatures that have three substances is perfect, namely the physical element, the nafsani element, and the spiritual element. Integratively and selectively operationalizing the three human substances above, for people with the predicate of ulul albab, is an effort that is Qur'ani. Among the examples of Qur'ani activities carried out by ulul albab in operationalizing their three intelligences is by dhikr and thinking. Verses that are relevant to this context are as in QS. Ali Imran/190-191 (Saputra et al., 2021).

According to Shihab, the two verses above explain some of the characteristics of people called *ulul albab*. According to him, they are people who always remember Allah SWT in any condition and at any time. In addition, they are also people who always think about the phenomena of the universe. With this thinking activity, high awareness of the existence and essence of Allah SWT as the only God Almighty in creating. Shihab added that Allah SWT is the object of *dhikr* or remembering Allah. The object of thought is the universe; everything is a natural phenomenon. Remembrance of Allah uses the heart or heart. While thinking and using reason (Shihab, 2007).

When referring to Shihab's interpretation of QS. Ali Imran/3: 190-191, then it becomes quite clear that *ulul albab* is a group of people with high intelligence that includes some form of intelligence. For example, in terms of *dhikr* carried out by *ulul albab*, it can be said to be part of the form of emotional intelligence (EQ) and heart intelligence because *dhikr* carried out with the heart or heart is in accordance with the capacity that exists in emotional intelligence (EQ) and heart intelligence. Meanwhile, in terms of thinking carried out by *ulul albab*, it is very possible to be said to be part of the form of intellectual intelligence (IQ) because thinking is done with reason in accordance with the capacity of intellectual intelligence. The *dhikr* and thinking activities carried out by *ulul albab* in the context of Islam, both as spiritual worship activities. So that both can be said to be a form of spiritual intelligence (SQ), the three bits of intelligence are selectively operationalized by *ulul albab* as an integrative effort between rationality and spirituality in the form of *dhikr* and thinking activities (Shihab, 2007).

Another opinion from Imam Suprayogo is that *Ulul Albab* is the implementation of *dhikr*, *fikr*, and righteous deeds. Implementing this can lead humans to become superior and physically and spiritually healthy. As a human being who excels above the general, always do the best activities and services to others, " *khair a nas anfa'uhum li annas*. People with extensive knowledge can see and read natural and social phenomena accurately (Munir, 2018).

In line with the opinion above, according to Azis, what is meant by an *ulul albab* person is a person who has four main personality traits including spiritual depth, moral majesty, breadth of knowledge, and professional maturity. This is different from the previous opinion, theoretically in the development of measuring tools regarding the personality of *ulul albab* is:

1. Spiritual depth is the ability of individuals to interpret life and behave based on the existence of spiritual spirits. This ability is characterized by an awareness of God's presence, the ability to admire God's creation, and the fear of God alone.
2. The greatness of morals, namely the ability of individuals to behave nobly in accordance with Islamic teachings so that these behaviors become a characteristic of their personality. This ability is characterized by improving the quality of life through belief, speech, and deeds, being patient in the face of trials, and distinguishing between good and bad.
3. Breadth of knowledge, which is the quality of a person characterized by intelligence and ingenuity in solving problems in accordance with his field of expertise. This ability is characterized by a serious attitude in seeking knowledge, the ability always to use the potential of the mind, and the ability always to use the potential of the heart (feelings of).
4. Professional maturity is a person's ability to work and behave as a professional in their field. This ability is characterized by the habit of acting in accordance with knowledge, the

willingness to convey knowledge, and the willingness to participate in solving people's problems (Aziz, 2012).

In his book *Al-Lubab*, M. Quraish Shihab also describes some of the characteristics and properties of *Ulul Albab*, namely:

1. Fulfilling a promise or not canceling the agreement between the person concerned and Allah SWT with another person or himself.
2. Connecting what Allah SWT. Command to be connected, such as *silaturahmi*.
3. Fear of Allah and fear of facing the reckoning of the day of humanity.
4. Patiently carry out orders, avoid prohibitions, and love to face challenges and disasters (Shihab, 2008).

Those who possess these qualities will have good outcomes. *Ulul Albab* is a human figure who prioritizes *dhikr*, thought, and charity. He has broad knowledge, sharp eyes, an intelligent brain, a soft heart, and a warrior spirit (*Jihad* in the way of Allah) with true struggle. He is not a random human being; his presence on earth is that of a leader who upholds the right and keeps away falsehood (Aziz, 2012).

Ulul Albab is a monotheistic human being. The word *Shahada* is the main handle. "*Asyhadualla Ilaaha Illallah wa asyhaduanna Muhammadan Rasulullah*". As a monotheist, he is of the view that there is no power on this earth other than Allah. For *Ulul Albab*, seeking Knowledge is not limited to obtaining a degree and convenience in finding a job and sustenance. However, for *Ulul Albab*, seeking Knowledge is only to get closer to Allah. Because *Ulul Albab* always believes in the promise of Allah, a person's *rizki* is always under His decision (Shihab, 2008).

The success of life for *Ulul Albab* holders does not lie in the wealth, power, and flattery obtained but in the safety and happiness of life in this world and the hereafter. *Ulul Albab* people always choose the type and way of working that is righteous, meaning that they work in a righteous, straight, sincere, and professional way. *Ulul Albab* believes in the existence of physical and spiritual life, the world, and the hereafter. These two dimensions of life must receive balanced attention, and prioritizing only one is not justified (Rofiq et al., 2022).

The world's luck must positively impact the life of the hereafter and vice versa. This is based on the teachings of the Prophet, who requires Muslims to seek the life of the world as if they will live forever and to seek the afterlife as if death is in sight. To achieve this goal, education must be able to develop *dhikr*, thought, and charity. According to Ahmad Djalaluddin in his book *Tarbiyah Ulul Albab*, the measure of success of *Ulul Albab* education is considered to be achieved when the person formed in the educational process has quality, namely having broad knowledge, being able to see or read natural and social phenomena correctly, and having a high fighting spirit because Allah is the embodiment of righteous charity (Basid, 2012).

If anyone who learns successfully possesses these five strengths, it means that *Ulul Albab's* education has been seen as successful. With these characteristics, a person is expected to have the sturdiness of faith and spiritual depth, the majesty of morals, the breadth of knowledge, and professional maturity.

From the description of *Ulul Albab* above, several operational forms of a measuring instrument are marked by the existence of four powers: Spiritual depth, which is the ability of individuals to interpret life and behave based on the existence of spiritual spirit. This ability is characterized by

awareness of God's presence, admiring God's creation, and fear only by Allah. The greatness of morals, namely the ability of individuals to behave nobly in accordance with the teachings of Islam, so that these behaviors become a characteristic of their personality. This ability is characterized by improving the quality of life through belief, speech, and deeds, being patient in the face of trials, and distinguishing between good and bad (Zainuddin, 2008).

4. Conclusion

As the Creator of the universe, including human beings, Allah has bestowed the brain and intellect, including the heart (qalbun), to humans as His great gift. This is what distinguishes humans from other creatures in this universe. Man becomes a perfect creature because he can think and feel or have lust (will). Perfection can make the human being the best creature if he can maximize the potential that Allah gives to him. Nevertheless, humans can also become the most despicable creatures, even more than animals, if they cannot harness this potential in the path of goodness.

To maximize this potential, Allah guides the holy book of the Qur'an. As a manual book, the Qur'an is the perfect book to explore and guide in maximizing humans' power, including intelligence. Ulul albab is a term used by Allah to describe this intelligence. The figure of ulul albab is a Muslim human being who is strong in his thinking in using the potential of his intellect, strong in dhikr in forming spiritual intelligence which will eventually have good emotions or the ability in emotion management or emotional intelligence. Therefore, it is very appropriate to mention that ulul albab is the concept of perfect intelligence.

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