



# Concept of *Nafs* in the Alquran

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## Abstract

Psychology is a science that studies human experiences, such as feelings, five senses, thoughts, and will. Islamic psychology studies convey problems regarding human psychology, inner intricacies, and *rubual* solutions that refer to Islamic normative law. The Quran commentary on human physique includes *insane*, *ins*, *nas*, or *some basyar*, and *sons of Adam* or *Adam's descendants*. Meanwhile, mental or psychological studies are broader, starting from *nafs*, *ar-rub*, *al-qalb*, and *al-'aql*. This research aims to explain the concept *nafs* or human *qalb*, *ruh*, *al-qalb*, *'aql*, and its relationship in the Alquran. This research uses a qualitative method with a content analysis approach, all data is taken from various sources originating from psychology books, religious psychology books, the Alquran, theories, and expert opinions. All data that has been collected is then analyzed thematically, in other words, the themes that have been obtained are described comprehensively and in-depth. To make it more interesting, all themes from the results of this research will be discussed with the results of studies by previous researchers and *qalb* issues in the Alquran. This research gets results that concepts and relationships *nafs* (*qalb*) with *ruh*, *qalb*, and *aql* in the structure of human personality which becomes the *rubual* substance in human formation. *Nafs* is an element formed from the entry of the *qalb* into the human body. Because it has elements of the hereafter and the worldly, then the *qalb* tends to do good and bad by using the *aql*. Therefore, man must guide his *qalb* with a clear *qalb*. The implications of this research are to provide reading material that helps readers understand it.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Alquran and Hadith form the basis of Islamic psychology (Faridah, 2016; Mansir, 2018; Hairina & Mubarak, 2020; Sudirman, 2020; Muhammad & Daseri, 2023). In essence, Islamic psychology is an Islamic study that discusses aspects of human psychology and behavior, so that consciously they can form more perfect self-quality and gain glory in this world and the hereafter (Fitri, 2020). In general, Islamic psychology builds psychological science based on the Alquran and Hadith as well as the consensus of the ulama. Islamic psychology is the science of humans and their global interaction patterns, all the rules and instructions that come from the Alquran (Putra et al., 2023).

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The Quran is a source of Islamic teachings, its truth is very important and there is no doubt in it, because it was revealed by Allah SWT as a holy book that contains instructions and explanations for life (Rahmana, 2023). In the Quran, Allah addresses human reason and feelings teaches monotheism to humans, guides humans with various forms of worship, and shows humans things that can bring goodness and benefit to individual and social life (Kunaefi, 2023).

Allah created humans in the most perfect form. The existence of this perfect creature is a big question for many people, especially scientists, and philosophers. Almost all parties do not want to ignore this great phenomenon of creation. Body, *aql*, senses, ruh, *nafs* (self), and *qalb* are the main human components most often discussed in scientific studies (Cholik, 2015; Lubis, 2020). In general, scientific research to date has only been able to determine the physical elements that exist in humans, and even then not completely. However, the elements behind the physical, especially *nafs*, are still a mystery and have long been debated among scientists and philosophers. The truth about this is still difficult to prove concretely.

Developing the human personality and elevating the human self to the level of human perfection. States that psychology in the Quran has four elements, namely, first, *nafs* namely the side that shows humans the potential for good and bad behavior. The second is the *qalb*, which has the characteristic of *rabbaniyah*, purity. Third, namely the *qalb*, is a substance that is subtle and functions to understand the nature of things and can reflect on them. Fourth, namely *the aql* is the power that can acquire knowledge. The *aql* has power over abstract objects captured by the five senses (Hafizallah & Husin, 2019).

Therefore, psychology plays a very important role and determines the results in the teaching and learning process (Chiu, 2022). This role is seen when students have problems in the learning process that require immediate resolution, in conditions like this psychology plays a role. In general, learning is a physical activity that involves several senses. However, if their mental condition is unstable then physically healthy people will not receive optimal lessons, this can be seen from the students' behavior (Baghoori et al., 2022).

## METHODS

This research uses qualitative methods with a content analysis approach, all data is taken from various sources originating from psychology books, the Alquran, religious psychology books, theories and opinions of Islamic psychology experts (Kasmar et al., 2019; Kaputra et al., 2021). The following article will focus more on discussing the psychology of religion in the Alquran: *nafs*, *ar-rub*, *al-qalb*, *al-aql*, and relationships *nafs* with *rub*, *qalb*, and *aql* in the human personality structure (Aziz, 2019; Jamaludin, 2020; Roslan & Zainuri, 2023). According to Downe (1992); Guthrie et al., (2004); Doyle et al., (2020); Engkizar et al., (2021); Febriani et al., (2022) This research approach design can be carried out by discussing certain problems, issues or topics originating from the literature collected as a whole and then selecting themes that are appropriate to the required data. After the author has collected all the data, the next step is to select the required data according to the problems raised in this article. The next step is to discuss the data collected and then use it as a discussion theme. In this article what is meant is personality, psychology, and religion which are the focus of the results and discussion. The method for determining research results with this theme is also by opinions of Hsieh & Shannon, (2005); Anderson, (2007); Asril, (2021); Engkizar et al., (2022) explains that discussing the results using a content analysis approach can be carried out using themes or main reviews that are appropriate to the issues and problems discussed.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Essence of the *Qalb (Nafs)*

It is said that the word *qalb* comes from kata *Nafs*. In the book “*Lisan al-Arab*”, Ibn Manzur explained that the word *nafs* in Arabic it is used in two senses, namely *nafs* in the sense of life, and *nafs* which contains the overall meaning of something and actually refers to an individual. Every human has two *nafs* that is *nafs* feel and *nafs* ruh. Loss of reason *nafs* causes humans to be unable to think but are still alive, this can be seen when humans are asleep. Meanwhile, it disappeared *nafs qalb*, causing loss of life.

In the Big Indonesian Dictionary, *nafs* (lust) is defined as a strong urge to do less than good, even though in the Quran *nafs* doesn't always have a bad connotation. This understanding is in line with what is understood by Sufis (Dickson, 2022). According to al-Ghazali, in the Sufi view, *nafs* is a collection of reprehensible qualities (Sari & Marhaban, 2023). Therefore, for Sufis, the most important jihad is jihad against lust. Meanwhile, in the Quran encyclopedia it is stated that the word *nafs* whose plural forms *anfus* and *nufus* mean *qalb*, personal (person), self (self orselves), *hayat* (life), *qalb*, or *aql*.

Lexicographically, *qalb* is a noun which means the human *ruh*, life, all inner life, the main thing is the *ruh* (Zhabayeva, 2022). According to Asep Usman Ismail said *nafs* judging from its etymology, it has several meanings, namely: first, say *nafs* is lust which means urge, desire, and desire. Second, say it *nafs* is the verb *naffasa* which means to breathe or live. Third, say it *nafs* becomes the verb breath which means to race. Fourth, say it *nafs* to be means valuable, valuable, or important. Fifth, said *nafs* means self, person, person, or individual, say *nafs* (plural) means *qalb*, and word *nafs* means happy well. If the seventh meaning *nafs* are arranged in one complete and comprehensive sentence, then this sentence will give an idea that *nafs* is life that is characterized by breathing, giving birth to the urge, desire, or desire to do something that is considered important by each individual, so they compete to get it and feel happy if they succeed in getting it.

According to Abu Abdillah Fatih Falestin, the essence *nafs* here is the *qalb*, not lust. Ibn Sina said that the *qalb* is the true essence of humans. It is an independent substance that is different from the (physical) body. They emphasize the unity of body and ruh, so that when the body dies, the ruh also dies (He et al, 2022; Chiles et al., 2021). This opinion determines the immortality of the *qalb* (Van, 2020). There is an opinion that says that the *qalb* is the body and essence. It is formed from these two types which are composed of four elements, namely hot, cold, and wet and dry (Vinkesteijn, 2022).

### Truth Al-Ruh

According to Al-Ghazali, the *qalb* has two meanings. First, it is physical which is part of the human body, namely a very subtle substance that comes from the *qalb* (liver), which is the center of all the veins (blood vessels) which are able to make humans live and move and feel various things. Feeling. The ruh can be likened to a lamp that is able to illuminate every corner of the body's organs, this is what is often referred to as *nafs* or *qalb*. Second, the *rubual ruh*, which is the part of the human ruh that has subtle and supernatural qualities. With this *ruh*, humans can know themselves, about God, and are able to achieve various kinds of knowledge (De Castro, 2019). Apart from that, this *ruh* can make humans humane, have noble character, and different from animals.

According to Al-Ghazali Al-ruh is an inner strength emitted by God that cannot be seen by human senses and is not bound by dimensions or matter (Baharuddin & Ismail, 2015). Baharuddin & Ismail stated that ruh is the reason for human life. The word of Allah SWT in Alquran surah Al-Isra' verse 85.

قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۝٨٥ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ

Meaning: *They ask thee concerning the Rub (of inspiration). Say: "The Rub (cometh) by command of my Lord: of knowledge it is only a little that is communicated to you, (O men!)"* (QS. Al-Isra': 85).

From this explanation it is clear that the *rub* is a secret of Allah SWT and only Allah knows the properties of the *rub* and humans can only prove the existence of the *rub* in their body by looking inside themselves. In short, it can be concluded that *rub* is the absolute right and power of Allah. Humans are given very little knowledge about the nature of *rub*s. Furthermore, the *rub* can also be interpreted as true trust in Allah SWT, and complete faith and carrying out all Allah's commands by carrying out what He commands and abandoning what He has forbidden. An intelligent *qalb* can strengthen faith and obedience in carrying out worship only to Allah SWT (Komariah & Nihayah, 2023). This means that *rub* is able to make a person more trustworthy and confident and easier to carry out all forms of orders from Allah SWT. As required by Him.

However, the use of *rub* refers more to the word *nafs* and is also a term for something that causes life, movement, obtains benefits and avoids danger. In the Quran, the *rub* is expressed by the word *nafs* or *qalb*, the meaning of which is not always the same because *nafs* itself does not mean *qalb*, *qalb* and its kind, while *qalb* means *qalb*, the Jibril and revelation. According to Mu'jama al-Wasith, the *qalb* is a person who lives with the *nafs* and the essence of the *rub* is more subtle than the *nafs*. The Quran explains the word *qalb* that Allah gave to humans by using the choice of the words Nafakha, breath, then *qalb*, so it is interpreted and interpreted as breath or life because someone will die if their breath stops and they no longer live.

#### **Fact Al-Qalb**

According to the *qalb* comes from the word equipment which means to change, move, or rotate. Musa Asyari expressed understanding to the *qalb* with two meanings, namely first, the gross or physical meaning is an elliptical lump of flesh, located on the left side of the chest, which is often called the *qalb*. Second, subtle understanding is divine and *rubual*, namely human nature which is able to grasp all understanding, is influential and wise.

According to the *qalb* In Indonesian etymology it is called "*kalbu*" which means *qalb* or the basis of inner feelings. Say *al-qabl* has the same meaning as "*qalb*" in English which means *qalb* according to medical terms. Al-Raghib al-Asfahani explained that the word to the *qalb* means "*al-tasarruf aw sarfu shay'i'an wajb ila wajbor*" a change or transformation of something from one direction to another (Ghofur, 2020).

Called *qalb al-insan* because it goes back and forth from one direction to another or because it is always changing. Besides that, *al-Qalb* also means knowledge and understanding. Context *Qalb al-insan* Here it can mean *qalb* because the *qalb* is always beating or pulsing, expanding then speaking, and so on so it is always changing. If interpreted as the human *qalb* or feelings, then the human *qalb* can indeed change (Parkinson, 2021). Sometimes happy, sometimes sad, smiling, sometimes crying, and so on (Gerrard, 2019).

To the *qalb* according to Ibn Araby, with the *qalb* is a body organ that produces true knowledge, comprehensive intuition, knowing Allah SWT and my divinity. In short with the *qalb* is the organ part of everything that meets the requirements for knowing the occult, in terms *Faridi Al-Qalb* called self-intelligence which means the place of human responsibility *qalb* is the seat of human responsibility. A *qalb* something like this which then mentions the edrasio *qalb* which is in the *nafs*, as the embodiment of the egoistic self, which is the place to actualize all the potential that exists in oneself *Al-Qalbin* in the form of *rubual* power so that it has an impact on deeds or actions. Gawin said that creative physical actions are to express the *rub* (*rubual*) (Karim et al., 2022). Therefore, *al-Qalb* is the *rubual* part of man's cool breeze.

This *qalb* functions as a guide, controller, and operator of other *qalb* structures (Winkelman, 2021). And divine nature (Nurhuda, 2023). Divine nature is a superconscious nature that emanates directly from God. With this nature, humans not only know their physical and social environment, but are also able to know their *rubual*, divine and religious environment (Chandak, 2023).

To the *qalb* it is the essence of someone who can feel, know and also recognize everything that exists on earth. Based on this definition, a conclusion can be drawn to the *qalb* humans have an obligation to be the deepest feelers about everything, both bad and good. To the *qalb* as part of the personality-forming structure, consisting of a physical part that is formed and a *rubual* part that functions as a feeling force such as feelings of fear, sadness, pride and so on, then functions as a creative force and serves as a force of initiative.

### **Fact Al-Aql**

*Al-aql* in terms of language using the word *al-imsak* (hold back), *al-ribat*, (binding), *al-hajr* (restrain), deliberately (forbid), and *man'u* (prevent). Reason is the ability to view humans as a natural trait that humans possess. Thinking is an operational action that encourages active action for the benefit and improvement of human life (Ng & Leung, 2020). In simple terms it can be said that the function of reason is thinking. The definition of reason according to experts such as Harun Nasution, says that Al-Aqlin in Indonesian is common sense. In the Alquran *Al-Aqalub*, *Ya'qiluba*, *Ya'qilun*, *Ta'qilunand* *Na'qilu* which means to understand and understand. Meanwhile, according to Izutzu, the word Aql during the Jahiliyah era was used in the sense of practical intelligence, which in modern psychology terms is called problem solving skills. In the Alquran, the word *aql* is used to mean "something that follows and prevents a person from falling into error or sin". According to the concept of the verses of the Quran, reason means: i) the ability to understand and explain something, ii) moral encouragement, iii) the ability to draw wisdom and conclusions and wisdom (Rahmatiah, 2015; Hidayatullah, 2023).

In the Islamic view, humans are the most perfect creatures created and created, when compared with other creatures created by Allah. The perfection of the emergence and creation of humans as the most beautiful and noble creatures is because humans were given and equipped by God with reason and thoughts. With reason and thoughts given by God, humans can overcome various problems and anxieties related to the life problems they face.

The essence of reason is one aspect of the human *qalb* which functions to bind his desires, like a rope that ties cattle so that the cattle do not run anywhere, human reason will bind them so that they do not get out of control, easily and immediately following their desires. In essence, the *aql* is an organ that exists in humans that other living creatures do not have. It is stated that the *aql* is a tool or source of thinking to understand and know various things in the human brain (Yudiani, 2013; Sahbana, 2022).

The human *qalb* comes from two opposite substances, namely physical substance represented by the body and *rubual* substance represented by the ruh. Objects are human substances consisting of the structure of physical organisms. The human physical organism is more perfect than the physical bodies of other creatures. The ruh is the human psychic substance which is the essence of life. There are also those who call the ruh a subtle body (*jism lathif*), some are simple (*jaubar basith*), and some are *rubual* (*rubual distance*) more characteristic *aradh* (accident) (Busroli, 2019).

In general substance *nthey are similar* consists of two, namely *Al-Qalb* and *Al-Aql*. This nafsani potential is tied to physical and *rubual* laws (Afandi, 2018; Alif, 2020). All potential contained in the nafs is potential, but it can become real if humans try to make it happen. Each existing component has hidden powers that can encourage human behavior. The actualization of nafsani in the human *qalb* is to form

personality. The *qalb* and *aql* are two elements that determine the value and level of human personality, forming human character and providing distinctive characteristics in the *nafs* aspect. Apart from giving privileges to aspects *al-nafs*, *qalb* and *aql* which act as psychological aspects and also give the characteristics of *toal-ruh*, *danal-fitrah*. For example, creatures that are only handled by *nafs* (lust) is an animal. Meanwhile, creatures that are only influenced by *al-ruh* and *al-fitrah* are Jibril. Meanwhile, creatures with a combination of both, namely animalistic and angelic functions and levels, are humans because they are combined with the dimensions of the *aql* and *qalb* in the structure of the human *qalb*.

Al-Ghazali explained that the body is a vehicle for the *qalb* that is fueled by useful knowledge that will produce good deeds, where this knowledge is obtained during life on earth. Because the body is a tool that is easily damaged, the *qalb* has the obligation to care for the body in three ways, namely by eating, protecting it from causes of damage to the body, and with knowledge. When it comes to eating, there are two stories created for the *qalb*, namely the *aql* in the form of lust and the *zahir* in the form of the hands and body parts needed when eating. To protect against the causes of damage, two armies were also created, namely the *aql* which is related to anger and the external part, namely the hands and feet which obey the will of anger. So in this case all members of the body are like weapons for the *qalb* (*qalb*). Apart from that, in protecting the body from damage, elements of knowledge are also created, firstly the inner, namely the knowledge of the senses (hearing, sight, taste, touch and smell), secondly the outer, namely the five senses.

So relationship *nafs* (*qalb*) with *ruh*, *qalb*, *aql* in the structure of human personality is the existence of *ruhual* substance in human formation. *Nafs* is an element formed from the entry of the *ruh* into the human body. Because it has elements of the hereafter and the worldly, the *nafs* has a tendency to do good and bad by using it *aql*. Therefore, man must guide his *qalb* with clarity *qalb*.

## CONCLUSION

*Qalb* or *nafs* is a substance consisting of *ruh*, body and *nafsiah*. The *ruh* is something given by Allah SWT so that humans can move the human body. *Qalb* is the driving force of human activity, the *qalb* as something soft (*Lathif*) is the essence of humans who can understand in order to be knowledgeable and know their Creator, namely humans who are the targets of commands and prohibitions, criticized and demanded or asked to be responsible for their actions. Reason is a tool for thinking and focusing on helping humans to think, which humans have as a differentiator from other God's creatures, one of whose main functions is to strengthen faith in Allah SWT. *Nafs* is an element formed from the entry of the *ruh* into the human body. Because it has elements of the hereafter and the worldly, then *nafs* have a tendency to do good and bad by using *aql*. Therefore, man must guide his *qalb* with clarity *qalb*.

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