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## Understanding *Ruh* as a Source of Human Intelligence in Islam

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# Understanding *Ruh* as a Source of Human Intelligence in Islam

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*Abstract: Various new studies indicate that human intelligence is derived from or divided into Intellectual Quotient (IQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ), and Spiritual Quotient (SQ). Nevertheless, these various forms of intelligence have not been able to clarify the essence of the true source of intelligence. This is a conceptual article discussing the ruh, which is inherent within every human self as a source of intelligence. The ruh, as a source of intelligence, exists in every human being, and it has the ability to feel, which spreads throughout the human senses. This explains the relationship between ruh and al-aql (sense/reason), al-qalb (heart), and an-nafs (self). With its ability to feel, ruh subsequently drives the mind to think through various imaginings that ultimately generates understanding. The mind and thoughts, which develop through imagination resulting in understanding, consequently produce knowledge. Hence, ruh is knowledge that contains wisdom and sapience, that resides in the heart (al-qalb), and it is the grace that Allah blows into every human to complete the process of human creation. Consequently, ruh shall constantly be inclined to voice honesty/truthfulness (siddiq), to be responsible (amanah), to deliver good tidings (tabligh), and to possess intelligence (fathanah). This spiritual phenomenon is what we refer to as Ruhani Quotient (RQ). Ruhani Quotient (RQ), which is essentially grounded on the ruh, may have implications on new studies about Ruhiology, which is a study that does not merely discuss corporeal knowledge, but is an extensive knowledge about wisdom and sapience.*

*Keywords: Emotional Quotient/EQ, Intellectual Quotient/IQ, Ruh, Ruhani Quotient/RQ, Spiritual Quotient/SQ, Spirituality*

## Introduction

**R**uh is an immaterial spiritual entity. As a spiritual phenomenon, *ruh* has particular faculties that can be felt by every human being. One of its ability is to distinguish between right and wrong, or good and evil. According to Skinner (2019), *ruh* functions as the center of Allah's presence within the human self. Accordingly, *ruh* possesses a natural disposition of voicing truth and virtue coming from Allah. Although it is immaterial, *ruh* can subsequently be manifested to reside within the *qalb*. *Qalb*, immaterially speaking, refers to the heart. However, *qalb* and the heart intrinsically exist within different dimensions. *Qalb* exists within a spiritual dimension that is immaterial in nature, while the heart exists in a physical dimension that is material in nature. Hence, Stoddart (2001) supposes *qalb*'s relation with *ruh* resembling a hallowed ground of utmost importance, a place where Allah exists and resides.

Every human being should, ideally, have the awareness for distinguishing between right and wrong or good and evil, which is centered in the *qalb* where the *ruh* resides. Skinner (2019) explains that *ruh* which exists in *qalb* subsequently directs the *aql* (sense/reason). Accordingly, reason controls *nafs* (desires), which is positioned as subordinate to *aql* and *qalb*. Nevertheless, in many things *aql* has always been dominant and is often at the forefront in controlling the human self as it is frequently employed to compose arguments when humans respond to reality beyond their inner self. *Aql* is, consequently, capable of evaluating anything, and in practice it can be guided by wisdom at times. Through wisdom, *aql* can control *nafs ammara*, which refers

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to desires with the proclivity of performing bad and evil conducts, and it is accordingly positioned at the lowest level within the self.

The dominance of *aql* may as consequence replaces *ruh*, which resides in *qalb*, in the process of self-control occurring within every human being, and even in the process of producing intelligence. According to this perspective, intellectual quotient (IQ) can be observed from two points of view. First, intellectual quotient is a distinct and separate concept from other types of intelligence such as emotional quotient (EQ) or spiritual quotient (SQ). Second, intellectual quotient is a description concerning the journey of certain phases starting from intellectual quotient to emotional quotient and ending in the spiritual quotient phase. Both points of view do not involve *ruh* as the center and source of intelligence representing the presence and existence of Allah within the human self.

According to Berger (2011), this is due to the tremendous exposure to ideas of modern thoughts which have an impact on the deterioration of spirituality values through a number of well-known slogans like “God is dead” or “End of the Christian era.” Meanwhile, Boisard (2003) explains this phenomenon as a great loss for humankind of the supernatural, which is the system of morality and values inherent within the human self. Whereas Cox (2017) considers this as the condition of modern human who has neglected needs that are spiritual in nature. These various descriptions indicating the spiritual aspect as a source of intelligence are significant points to be explored. Nevertheless, these descriptions have yet been able to elaborate the essence of which concept of spirituality functions as the source of intelligence in the human self.

The article aims to explain *ruh* that is inherent within every human self as a source of intelligence. We assume that the concepts of IQ, EQ, and SQ have not been able to provide an essence of knowledge that can explain the origin of the source of intelligence. This is a conceptual article that offers ideas about *ruh* as a source and center of production for various human intelligences. By using the perspective of Islam, undoubtedly the elaborations provided mainly refer to *al-nusus* (texts) of the holy Quran or exegeses of Ulama concerning the concept of *ruh* in various classical texts. The information contained in the various references are subsequently categorized into relevant concepts and presented in a descriptive-interpretative manner. In the discussion section of the current article, we propositioned several relevant literary sources from the Western perspective to test our proposed arguments.

## Ruh: Islamic and Etymological Perspectives

According to Macdonald (1932), *ruh* in Arabic was initially a noun. Subsequently, its meaning became equivalent to the Latin word *Spiritus*, which is defined into English as “breath,” “wind,” and “Spirit.” The connotation also includes nouns meaning “rest,” “wind,” and “odor”. Hence, based on this perspective, the definition of *ruh* developed due to correlations with its usage or implications. Macdonald also explained that the development of the word *ruh* can also refer to the Hebrew language, which is similar to the term *ruh* in the Arabic language that means “wind,” “spirit,” and “spiritual” in adjective form.

*Ruh* in Arabic, theologically speaking, is defined as “spirit,” even before Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) used the word in the Quran. This means that the word *r-u-h* or *r-y-h* has always existed in the Arabic language, and it was merely used under the definition of “rest,” “wind,” and “odor”. That is why, if we revisit ancient Arabic verses, authentically speaking, the word *ruh* was not used under the definition of “spirit,” but it was defined as “breath” or as *arwah* which meant “winds.” Nevertheless, an understanding of the word *ruh* had existed since before the Quran mentions the word. This, according to Macdonald, is because the word *ruh* in the Quran does not appear under the definition of soul. There are some words referring to angels mentioned in the Quran that are defined as *ruh*.

Meanwhile, Shellabear stated that the word *ruh* in both the Arabic language and in the Quran is derived from the Hebrew language commonly used among the Jewish people (1932).

Accordingly, he suggested the importance of understanding the word *ruh* in the Hebrew Bible as a key to understand its definition of use in the Quran. Based on etymological perspective, the origin of the word *ruh* can be described as follows:

Table 1: A Comparison of the Word “Spirit” in Hebrew, Arabic, and Latin

Language	Meaning
Hebrew	<i>Ruach</i> : wind, spirit (Adj.) spiritual In Jewish scripture means spirit of God, does not apply to angelic being
Arabic	<i>Ruh</i> : breath, wind, life Noun (Singular) Does not mean soul No plural form Plural noun refers to <i>malaika</i> Understood as 'spirit' as it is the words of Allah that was revealed to Muhammad in the Quran <i>Ruh</i> in old Arabic was not used as Spirit <i>jinni</i> , it meant breath
Latin	<i>Spiritus</i> , Breath, wind, spirit

Source: Shellabear 1932

In addition, to understand *ruh* in the Quran, Shellabear (1932) categorized usages of the word *ruh* in the Quran chronologically into four periods, namely:

- The first Mecca period, before Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) set on a Hijra to Medina. During this period, *ruh* may be defined as *malaika* (angels), particularly the angel Jibreel (QS 78:38; 97: 4; 70: 4).
- The second Mecca period, before Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) set on a Hijra to Medina. During this period, *ruh* may be defined as the creation of Adam (QS 15: 29; 38:72; 32: 8), and also blowing *ruh* into Maria who birthed Prophet Isa (Jesus) AS (QS 21:91; 66:12; 19:17).
- The third Mecca period, leading up to Prophet Muhammad’s (Peace Be Upon Him) Hijra to Medina. During this period, the word *ruh* in the Quran is mentioned four times in relation with *amr* (affair, order, will to act) (QS 17:85; 16: 2; 40:15; 42: 52).
- The Medina period, after Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) migrated (Hijra) to Medina. During this period, the word *ruh* in the Quran is defined as “faithful spirit” (*ruh al-qudus*) that revealed itself to Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) (QS 26:193; 58:22).

In the perspective of Islam, discussion on *ruh* may refer to the word of Allah in the Quran. There are at least twenty-four times that the word *ruh* is mentioned in the Quran spread throughout nineteen surah in twenty-one verses. Out of the twenty-four times *ruh* is mentioned in the Quran, Baqi proposes three categories of associated meanings contained in the word *ruh*, namely assistance, Angel Jibreel, and human being (1981). Despite Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) having said in the Quran “And they ask you, [O Muhammad], about the soul. Say, “The soul is of the affair of my Lord. And mankind have not been given of knowledge except a little.” (QS 17:85), numerous scholars and experts on Islamic esotericism continue to discuss about *ruh*. Their discussions about *ruh* pertain to its definition, understanding or meaning about *ruh* and its relationship with *al-nafs* (soul/self), *aql* (sense/reason), and *qalb* (heart). Meanwhile, Al-Jauziyah suggests the word *ruh* in the Quran has five definitions (1992).

First, ruh can mean Revelation (*Wahy*, (51 :04 SQ) الوحي). Second, ruh can mean aid/assistance and power/authority (QS 58: 22). Third, the word ruh can mean Angel Jibreel (QS 26: 101, 2: 91, dan 16: 102). Fourth, ruh can mean revelation from Allah concerning the day of resurrection on Judgment day (QS 78:38 and 97: 4). Fifth, ruh means al-Masīḥ or holy spirit (QS 4: 171, 89: 37, 75: 2, 12: 53, 6: 93, 91: 8).

According to Al-Rāzī, ruh is the source of life within the human self; and ruh, therefore, has an influence on awareness and feelings found in every human being (2000). Feeling is the key word that is attached to ruh. This implies that sad/happy, joy/sorrow, or other feelings that human beings have can only be experienced given that there is ruh in place. This is why ruh is the living source for mankind. However, due to its immaterial nature, ruh is also a mystery and secret to human life itself. Accordingly, Al-‘Aqād (1969:98) placed ruh as something highly revered; it is real because its presence can be felt. Meanwhile, Abduh (1947) explained ruh as *jism latīf*, which can be understood as something abstract that contains energy capable of instigating changes in human life. Despite being a living source and center that has substantial influence on life, the presence of ruh that is immaterial in nature is untestable and unanalyzable by using something material. Some examples may include analyzing ruh’s form, mass, color, or any other material-related analyses.

According to Al-Bajūrī (2007:136), the essence of ruh is something that cannot be explored too deeply by human being as it is Allah’s secret, and no one is allowed to study too deeply about it. *Ruh* should merely be believed to exist and to be present in life. This is a weak argument, and it refers to the Quran (17:85) which mentions that ruh is the affair of God, but God still gives mankind knowledge to understand about ruh although only little knowledge is given. This implies that ruh may be thought about and studied by mankind. Additionally, as mentioned in a hadith “Reflect deeply upon the creation, but do not reflect upon the essence of the Creator” (Hasan 1995, 1788). This means that although only little knowledge is given about ruh, it can still be studied.

Subsequently Muslim Ulama and experts on Islamic esotericism have been engaged in discussions concerning the relations between ruh and al-naḥs (soul/self), al-aql (sense/reason), and al-qalb (heart). According to Al-Jauziyah, ruh and al-naḥs are a single similar substance; what distinguishes them is their nature. Ruh embodies good characteristic, while al-naḥs embodies bad characteristic (1992). Ruh is *lāhūtiyah* (divine nature) while soul/self is *nāsūtiyah* (human nature). This is why ruh is often defined as the soul. While in fact, the two are in different dimensions, as the word soul in the Quran is al-naḥs, whereas the word spirit (ruh) in the Quran is *al-rūḥ*. Nevertheless, there are people who perceive ruh in its corporeal definition, on account of ruh being present within the physical body of living human beings (Al-Abd, n.d.). This perspective was then used by al-Ishfahani (Al-Abd, n.d.) to describe the presence of ruh within the material physical dimension of humans. This means that ruh is one of the dimensions present within the corporeal being of man, not animals. Both mankind and animal-kind maintain a material physical being. The difference lies in the presence of ruh that mankind has ruh while animal-kind does not. Consequently, a man is an animal with ruh. Since man has a ruh dimension, man has the ability to think. Ultimately, man is considered as a rational animal (*ḥayawan al-natiq*). Ruh with its thinking process serves as a distinction between mankind and animal-kind.

As a rational animal, ruh, consequently, maintains a relationship with *aql* (sense/reason) inherent within every human being. This relationship explains that ruh is the source or center of sense/reason within the human self. Sense/reason is accordingly utilized by man through al-aql. This means that the thinking process in humans is prompted by ruh, not al-aql. Al-aql cannot function if there is no ruh. This condition can be seen when people are asleep or deceased. During sleep or death, humans surely are unable to use their sense/reason. According to Skinner (2019), ruh can teach al-aql to reason in a righteous and virtuous manner, which is in line with ruh’s natural disposition toward being truthful and good. Immaterially speaking, ruh with its

proclivity toward truth and virtue resides in al-qalb (heart). *Ruh* that resides in al-qalb is inseparable from al-aql; yet the two may be at odds. Conflict between the two may occur because al-qalb does not only contain *ruh*, it also accommodates al-nafs.

In this case, the Quran categorizes al-nafs within every human being into three tiers, namely *al-nafs al-muthma'innah*, *al-nafs al-lawwāmah*, and *al-nafs al-ammārah bi al-sū*. *Al-Nafs al-Mutma'innah* refers to the reassured self/soul, as it is steady and strong (*al-Istiqrār wa al-Tsubūt*) (Al-Ishfahani, n.d.). In the Quran it is stated “[To the righteous it will be said], “O reassured soul, Return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing [to Him], And enter among My [righteous] servants, And enter My Paradise.” (89:27–30). In this regard, *ruh* is the reassured self/soul residing within the living human self. Al-Ghazali (n.d.) described *al-Nafs Mutma'innah* as the self/soul that is oriented toward truth (*al-Shawāb*) and filled with divine peace (*al-Sakināt al-Ilāhiyyah*), divine grace that constantly flows into it, and that is why it is reassured and serene by constant remembrance (*zikr*) and comprehension of Allah.

However, after undergoing an interaction process with its environment, the reassured self/soul (*Al-Nafs al-Mutma'innah*) may complain and become restless. At this stage *an-nafs* is at the level of *al-nafs al-lawwāmah*. According to Al-Ghazali (n.d.) *al-nafs al-lawwāmah* still lacks solidity and resoluteness to obey truth and virtues that come from God, and as a result *al-nafs* still has no reassurance or peace. The next one is *al-Nafs al-Ammārah*, which is al-nafs that is inclined toward all kinds of vice such as envy (QS. 2: 109; 48:15; 4:54), tendency to sin (QS 5:30), cruelty (QS 12:54), wickedness (QS 12:18), obscenity (QS 12:23), arrogance (QS 25:21), and miserly (QS 17:100; 4:36-37). Therefore, according to Al-Badwī (1993: 185), *ruh* has an extremely significant role in controlling carnal desires.

## Ruh as the Source of Human Intelligence

Currently, there is a belief among scholars that intelligence comes from the awareness of every human self without referring to “what” or “who” is meant by the “self” inherent within human beings. For instance, such perspective may be referred to by Tirri and Nokelainen (2011) who formulated intelligence as human intellectual ability indicated by complex cognitive achievement and high level of self-awareness and motivation. Self-awareness in humans is something immaterial that is subsequently placed within an abstract space in every human self. Nevertheless, a set of tests can be carried out to manifest the abstract self. Intelligence test functions as one of the methods used to find and measure human intelligence. As a result, human intelligence can be described or manifested differently.

Such perspective is derived from the initial understanding about human intelligence conveyed by Boring (1961). As a psychologist, Boring stated that intelligence is what can be measured through tests. This classical argument on intelligence has been much criticized by other scholars as it is considered to place individual intelligence in stark difference by using a test kit. The difference is stable while intelligence actually changes and develops in accordance with human growth and development (Deary, Penke, and Johnson 2010). A more extensive argument subsequently emerged and agreed upon by at least fifty-two scholars on intelligence who defined intelligence as very general ability of which among others involve the ability to reason, plan, resolve problems, think abstractly, understand complex ideas, learn rapidly, and learn from experience. This definition is not only able to be measured by a set of testing method, but it is also associated with the ability of an individual in responding to their environment, the ability to understand certain things or desire to find out what he/she wants or does (Gottfredson, 1997). Consequently, the definition of intelligence in this perspective is designed to find the psychological aspect of every individual. Hence, Bereiter simply defined intelligence as “What you use when you don’t know what to do” (Jensen 2012, 111).

Due to its more general and broad feature, human intelligence then can be defined as a general mental ability for reasoning, problem solving, and learning. Intelligence became

integrated and interconnected with cognitive functions like perception, attention, memory, language, or planning (Colom et al. 2010). This understanding thoroughly involves the mechanism of the brain, which is considered as the basis of general mental ability in every human being. The most common term for this is known as Intelligence Quotient. Hence, according to this perspective, the brain is considered as the source of human intelligence. This is why studies on functional and structural neuroimaging generally support the frontoparietal network as relevant for intelligence. This perspective discusses cognitive and brain functions related to perception, short-term memory storage, and language as having strong involvement with human intelligence.

Although our understanding on the concept of intelligence has become more complex and abstract, scholars continue their attempt to formulate it in various perspectives. At this stage, various experts proposed various concepts about human intelligence and various means of finding, measuring or anything that may influence intelligence. Ritchie and Tucker-Drob (2018) consider education as the strongest, most consistent, and most enduring method to find and develop human intelligence. Meanwhile, Czepita, Lodygowska, and Czepita (2008) explain that intelligence comes from or at least is related to human genetic factor. In similar vein, Hsu (2014) mentions that a number of single-nucleotide polymorphisms in human DNA correlate with intelligence.

These various understandings on intelligence are rooted in the paradigm of knowledge being based upon science as conveyed by Kuhn (1970). This perspective has remained as a long standing paradigm in scientific knowledge. According to Guba (2018), paradigm is a set of basic beliefs (or metaphysics) that deals with ultimates or first principles; a worldview that defines, for its holder, the nature of the “world.” Paradigm helps us formulate what should be studied, what problems should be solved, and what rules should be followed in interpreting the answers acquired.

Such understanding of paradigm may as consequence replace the position and potential ruh has within the human self as the source of intelligence. Therefore, we agree that the scientific paradigm used to understand human intelligence may ruin ruh’s spirituality as the source of human intelligence. Accordingly, a paradigm shift is required to examine human intelligence. A paradigm shift is a term used to describe the dimension of spirituality in the creative process of human beings when thinking or using ruhani quotient in thinking.

The spirituality dimension of human intelligence is placed in the ruh as the source of intelligence. Ruh is the answer to “what,” “who,” or “self” that is referred to since it exists and resides in every living human being. Despite being immaterial in nature, ruh is the answer to the place and source of all human intellectual potentials. The point we would like to argue is that no matter how smart a human measured by using a set of scientific methods is, he/she will lose his/her intelligence or will not have any intelligence at all when the corporeal being has no ruh or is abandoned by ruh. Thus, ruh is the source and center of human intelligence.

According to the perspective of Islam, ruh has the ability to sense/feel. Feeling is an extraordinary fundamental potential that ruh has. With feelings humans can think using their reason (al-aql), which is kept within the brain. With feelings humans can see through the eyes. With feelings humans can hear through their ears. With feelings humans can smell through their nose. This presumes that there are two dimensions inherent within human beings. First, there is the dimension of sense/feelings within human beings in the form of immaterial energy (ruhaniyah). Second, there is the physical dimension, which is material (jasmaniyah) in nature, such as the eyes, ears, or mouth that can function because of the sense, which is immaterial (ruhaniyah) in nature. The relation between the two explains the origin of man as a corporeal (physical body) being that can only remain alive due to having ruh. Such elaboration, accordingly, places the body as an arena for performance, or even for battle, between the transcendental dimension and the immanent dimension within the human self (Syahputra and Hafiar 2019). According to Lorens (2000), immanence is a concept that emphasizes reflecting



by oneself or subjectively. This terminology was initially proposed by Aristotle meaning the “inner part” of an object or phenomenon. It was subsequently developed by Kant. In Kant’s understanding, God exists and resides within the structure of the universe, including the human self, and consequently God who resides within the human self participates in the process of human life. This is unlike the concept of transcendence that places God as being outside of or separate from the human self thereby requiring humans to worship Him (Kant 1998).

Physically, the material body of humans, according to the Islamic perspective, was created by Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) in the best of form among His other creations. In the Quran, Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) states: “We have certainly created man in the best of stature” (QS. 95: 4). “He created the heavens and earth in truth and formed you and perfected your forms; and to Him is the [final] destination” (QS. 64:3). Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) did not create the human body uselessly, as mentioned in the Quran: “Then did you think that we created you uselessly and that to Us you would not be returned?” (QS. 23:115). In Islam, it is believed that Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) created man through seven phases as stated in the Quran:

And certainly did We create man from an extract of clay. Then we placed him as a sperm-drop in a firm lodging. Then We made the sperm-drop into a clinging clot, and We made the clot into a lump [of flesh], and We made [from] the lump, bones, and We covered the bones with flesh; then We developed him into another creation. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators. (Surah Al-Mu’minun 12–14)

Once the form of the human body is completed in the womb (prenatal), Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) blows ruh in (15:29).

Afterwards, the human body is born and develops outside the womb (postnatal). To complete the process in the creation of man, Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) blows ruh into man. Allah says in the Quran, “Then He proportioned him and breathed into him from His [created] soul and made for you hearing and vision and hearts; little are you grateful” (QS 32:9). Ruh that is blown by Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) into the human body is the inception of life and the end of it. Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He), in the Islamic system of faith, had no beginning and will have no end. Human life, however, has a beginning and an end, which is fundamentally determined by the existence or nonexistence of ruh within every human self.

Ruh that Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) blows into human beings marks the beginning of human intelligence. The reason for this is that the word ruh, as mentioned in the Quran Surah 32 verse 9, is explained to have the function of vision, hearing, and heart, and even up to the neural system centered on the human brain. The heart in that verse is expressed using the word *afidah*, instead of *alqalb*. *Afidah* is a plural form of the word *fuad* in the Arabic language which means heart. Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) sometimes mentions the word heart by using the terms *Qalb* and *Ṣadr*, and He at times uses the word *fuad*. According to Tebba (2007), Ulama define *Afidah* as the mind or the thinking heart. This means that the word *Afidah* may be used to refer to the function of the heart as the thinking *al-qalb*. Thus, *Afidah* is a combination or mixture between the power of *al-aql* and the power of *al-qalb*.

Humans, in terms of the physical form, consist of the brain and other sensory organs such as the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, tongue. Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He), subsequently, blows ruh into the human body, and only then can these human sensory organs function. This explanation will subsequently differentiate the ownership of wisdom/sapience and knowledge. Wisdom/sapience is a property of ruh, while knowledge is a product possessed by the mind/brain. Hence, it can be argued that human intelligence stems from ruh instead of the human mind.

Ruh with its intelligence through its ability to sense/feel, which is spread throughout the human senses, subsequently drives reason to think through various imaginings which then result

in understanding. Reason and thoughts that develop through imaginations leading to such understanding consequently operates to produce knowledge. The potential of ruh residing in the heart (al-qalb) and having the ability to sense/feel that leads to the creation of knowledge is an extraordinary favor of true divine favor and blessing from Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) given to mankind. However, due to human desire and influence of the mind, man often neglects or forgets the divine favor of ruh that resides in the heart (al-qalb). Concerning this matter, Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) in the Quran Surah ArRahman verse 55 has reminded mankind up to thirty-one times, "So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?"

Since ruh resides in the heart (al-qalb) that radiates feelings throughout all the senses including the mind, the heart (al-qalb) will always be inclined to voice honesty/truthfulness (*siddiq*), to be responsible (*amanah*), to deliver good tidings (*tabligh*), and to possess intelligence (*fathanah*). However, the heart (al-qalb) can also be sealed to reject honesty/truthfulness (*siddiq*), responsibility (*amanah*), good tidings (*tabligh*), and intelligence (*fathanah*) as Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) mentions in the Quran: "Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing, and over their vision is a veil" (QS 2:7). Even the heart (al-qalb) can become hard as a rock or even harder, as Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) says in the Quran "Then your hearts became hardened after that, being like stones or even harder" (QS 2:74).

Such may occur as the heart is different from *ruh*. In the spiritual dimension, the heart (*al-qalb*) is a place where the ruh resides in the human self. Ruh itself is a stream of God's divine light as Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) mentions in the Quran "And thus We have revealed to you an inspiration of Our command. You did not know what is the Book or [what is] faith, but We have made it a light by which We guide whom We will of Our servants. And indeed, [O Muhammad], you guide to a straight path" (Q.S. 42: 52). Hence, ruh is also considered as *nur* (light), blown by God to complete the process of human creation as Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) says "Then He proportioned him and breathed into him from His [created] soul and made for you hearing and vision and hearts; little are you grateful" (QS 32:9).

A heart that is sealed, becomes hardened, and rejects honesty (*siddiq*), responsibility (*amanah*), good tidings (*tabligh*), and intelligence (*fathanah*) is a result of the heart (al-qalb) not being utilized by its human self to remember (*zikir*) Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He), while sense/reason (al-aql) and the self (an-nafs) are separated due to external influences. Sense/reason (al-aql) and the self (an-nafs) may become difficult to control as a result of bad influences from man's external conditions Skinner (2019). Ruh is a reality of something that is sacred and supernatural. It possesses a high level of meaning making it difficult to verify; yet it is not falsifiable (El-Aswad, 2019). It is this dimension that we would like to state ruh as the source of spiritual intelligence.

Spiritual intelligence refers to intelligence that stems from ruh as the stream of God's divine light spreading throughout all the senses and thoughts within the human body and self. This emphasizes the psychic experience that can enhance deeper meanings and impressions. As something that contains spirituality, human intelligence derived from ruh possesses an abstract force; it possesses power and drive capable of changing things beyond itself for the better; it has a deep, holistic, and positive aura through profound appreciation and experience, which may be related with divine matters or knowledge. As an abstract concept, spirituality is something that exists, but it is unknown and infinite. Consequently, knowledge can develop perfectly because spirituality exists as energy to open all things unknown into knowledge.

Based on a humanistic perspective, spirituality is a way of being and experiencing within every human self that emerges through awareness of the existence of a transcendental factor (Elkins et al. 1988). Ruh employed as the source of spiritual intelligence will drive reason to think through various imaginations so that it generates understanding to produce knowledge that is good, true, and peaceful or reassuring since it stems from the reassured self/soul (al-nafs al-muthma'innah). Hence, spirituality describes something within the human self with the purpose of peace and belief in the meaning of life. This refers to the way that people find the meaning of

life and express it throughout their every moment or relationship with the universe or others, including in the production of intelligence and knowledge (Puchalski 2009).

### **From IQ, EQ to SQ, and back to RQ**

Previously, three terminologies were identified to explain how intelligence is described, grouped, or set as models to examine various dimensions of intelligence in the human self. The three categories of intelligence are Intellectual Quotient/IQ, Emotional Quotient/EQ, and Spiritual Quotient/SQ. Intellectual Quotient/IQ was introduced by Alferd Binet, a psychologist from France in the early twentieth century. Subsequently, Lewis Ternman from Stanford University attempted to standardize an IQ test that was developed by Binet by expanding the population norm, and accordingly the IQ test was then known as the Stanford-Binet test (Becker 2003; Boring 1959; Girard 2010).

However, it seems that the Stanford-Binet intelligence model is only capable of measuring a person's thinking intelligence, and not intelligence in other fields like behavioral intelligence. Consequently, an individual may have high intellectual quotient, but it is utilized for destructive purposes. Or someone may have highly intelligent thinking but very poor behavior or morals (*akhlaq*). Similarly, in terms of career, people with high intelligence are not guaranteed to have a better career than those with good behavior. For instance, what is the ability of a person who has high intelligence in cooperating with a team of people who have different levels of intelligence? Does the person with high IQ also have the ability to communicate or socialize properly? These various questions subsequently lead to the emergence of another type of intelligence called Emotional Quotient.

The concept of Emotional Quotient was initiated by Daniel Goleman to explain how a person with high Intellectual Quotient can fail in life. This is also a criticism or expansion of the previous concept of Intellectual Quotient. Based on results of studies conducted by neurologists and psychologists, Goleman and Whitener (2012) conclude that every human being has two potential properties, namely the rational and emotional. The rational property is driven by intellectual ability or more popularly known as Intelligence Quotient, while the emotional property is driven by emotions. Emotional Quotient is a series of ability in controlling and employing emotions, as well as self-control, enthusiasm, motivation, empathy, social skills, cooperation, and self-adaptation with the environment.

However, it seems that the concept of IQ and EQ still left a void in the human self. This is based on the fact that there are people with high IQ and good EQ capacity but are still left with a feeling of emptiness, void, loneliness, lack of purpose, dissatisfaction or lacking any sense of peace and serenity in living life. Their life is filled with anger, envy, malice, and ambitions that lead to their losing their self-control. It seems that the rapid advancements in the field of rationalist philosophy and science since the eighteenth century are considered as incapable of fulfilling basic human needs in the aspect of transcendental values.

The various conditions explained above consequently led to the concept of Spiritual Quotient. The concept of spiritual quotient was proposed by Zohar and Marshall (2001). They defined spiritual quotient as intelligence to confront problems related to meanings or values, i.e. intelligence to place our life and behavior within the context of broader and more valuable meanings, intelligence to assess that a person's way of life or actions are more meaningful than others. Accordingly, the concept of spiritual quotient is placed as intelligence within the human self that functions as the foundation necessary to set Intellectual Quotient and Emotional Quotient in motion. A number of Muslim scholars study Spiritual Quotient or human spirituality as an awareness of a belief system in worship, morality, and social responsibility (Bensaid, Machouche and Grine, 2014), purification of the soul, awareness, determination of fate (Hanefar, Sa'ari, and Siraj, 2016), death (Mahsyar, 2016), patience, consistence, character,

and spirituality of human being. This guides individuals to achieve a condition of happiness (Abdullah and Sharif, 2019).

Up to this stage, it can be said that Spiritual Quotient is the peak of human intelligence that is capable of going beyond Intellectual Quotient and Emotional Quotient (Hacker and Washington, 2017). To compare the concepts of Intellectual Quotient, Emotional Quotient, and Spiritual Quotient, Hasan (2006:65) proposes at least 8 perspectives to describe the various differing dimensions of intelligence as shown in the following table:

Table 2: Types of Intelligence IQ, EQ, and SQ

Perspectives	Types of Intelligence		
	<i>IQ</i>	<i>EQ</i>	<i>SQ</i>
The Quran	Dimag (Brain)	Nafs (Soul)	Qalb (Heart)
Modern Psychology	Mind	Soul	Heart
Intelligence Product	Rational	Emotional	Spiritual
Model of Thought	Serial	Associative	Unitive
Philosophical Basis	Newtonian	Humanism	Transpersonal
Happiness	Material	Instinctive	Reflective-Intuitive
Advantages	Logical, accurate, precise, reliable	Recognizes nuances, interactive, meaningful experience	Flexible, creative, transformative, intuitive
Disadvantages	Linear, deterministic, uncreative, inflexible, bound by rules	Inaccurate, slow learning, bound by experience, difficult to share experience	Has no formal logical framework and fluctuates

Source: Hasan 2006

Nevertheless, is it true that Spiritual Quotient is the peak of human intelligence surpassing Intellectual Quotient and Emotional Quotient? If spirituality is a description regarding the presence of being and experiencing within every human self that emerges through awareness on the existence of a transcendental aspect, and if spirituality emphasizes psychic experience that can enhance deeper meanings and impressions (as previously explained), then where is the source of Intellectual Quotient, Emotional Quotient, and Spiritual Quotient originally from?

The various questions we posed subsequently reemphasize the existence of ruh as the source of all intelligence (Intellectual Quotient, Emotional Quotient, and Spiritual Quotient) within the human self. This perspective is concurrently a route back from the Western perspective pertaining to the center of intelligence in human beings. The loss of transcendental values in these various intelligence (Intellectual Quotient, Emotional Quotient, and Spiritual Quotient) ultimately propelled the rise of various forms of new spirituality, such as New Age, Golden Ways, Cyber-Spirituality, Urban Sufism, and it even gave way to various therapy, meditation, or spiritualism based trainings. According to Aburdene (2010), this trend of spirituality is booming and it will become a megatrend not only at the individual level, but it has even reached the level of institutions or corporations. Under such conditions, ruh tends to be perceived as the otherness, instead of the selfness (Sugiharto 2006; Zamhari 2010).

While in fact, ruh in the human self does not only function as the center of life and source of intelligence, it is also the representation of God within the human self. Accordingly, any activity performed by man is driven and can be felt by ruh. Humans see and hear, eat, drink,

read and think using ruh; any other activities all are possible due to the existence and presence of ruh. Humans would not be able to do anything without ruh in the physical body. That is why, when humans die or are asleep, they are unable to conduct any activity such as seeing and hearing, eating and drinking, reading and thinking or other activities. This spiritual phenomenon is what we subsequently call Ruhani Quotient (RQ). The reason for this is that only by using ruh can humans feel. Sense, feel, and taste are all divine favors as they radiate throughout all the human senses including our ability to think. It is ruh that distinguishes between the living and the dead or the person asleep and the person awake. According to the Islamic perspective, the dead and people asleep are similar as their ruh are being held by Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He). In QS Az-Zumar verse 42 Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) says: “Allah takes the souls at the time of their death, and those that do not die [He takes] during their sleep. Then He keeps those for which He has decreed death and releases the others for a specified term. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who give thought”.

This emphasizes that human intelligence, in terms of Intellectual Quotient, Emotional Quotient, or Spiritual Quotient, still places the mind with its brain function as the source that is then considered as the ‘spirit’. While, Intellectual Quotient, Emotional Quotient, or Spiritual Quotient may appear and develop within the human self only if there is *ruh in the physical body*. Accordingly, ruh in this perspective is a completion of the human creation process as Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) says in QS 32:9 “Then He proportioned him and breathed into him from His [created] soul and made for you hearing and vision and hearts; little are you grateful.”

We consider Intellectual Quotient, Emotional Quotient, or Spiritual Quotient as a journey of knowledge pertaining to human intelligence that is centered on ruh. It is considered a journey since the discovery of intelligence developed in a linear manner due to changes that are aligned with human abilities and needs, which are constantly affected by various factors. This indicates that human intellectual capacity is ever-changing and limited. Meanwhile, concurrently, ruh’s intellectual capacity is unlimited because the three quotients are derived from ruh and shall return to ruh.

Nevertheless, Intellectual Quotient, Emotional Quotient, or Spiritual Quotient can also be positioned as separate entities of human intelligence. They are considered as separate entities since Intellectual Quotient, Emotional Quotient, or Spiritual Quotient have their respective dimension, and they use different criteria. Although the three concepts are separated, or even mutually unrelated, each entity will be nonfunctional in the absence of ruh. All three still return to ruh as the center and source of life, which is concurrently also the source of human intelligence. Accordingly, Ruhani Quotient serves as a bedrock and source of all forms and dimensions of human intelligence. Intelligence in the Arabic language is derived from the word *zakā’u* and *zaki*, which means ruh that is strong, astute, clever, and the wise and perceptive heart (Manzūr, 1994). This argument also considers the concept of ruh as different from the concept of soul in the human self. The various concepts of intelligence, be it Intellectual Quotient, Emotional Quotient, or Spiritual Quotient, all are based on bio-psychology, which in the Islamic perspective is called *an-nafs* (self/soul) or *nafsiology* (study concerning the internal aspects of man).

Ruhani Quotient is based upon ruh, so there is potential for it to be expanded into Ruhiology. This is not a study or knowledge about ruh, which assumes that ruh and extensive knowledge (wisdom, sapience) are differing concepts. Ruhiology is a study on ruh that places the concept of ruh as knowledge (wisdom, sapience) itself. Ruh is knowledge (wisdom, sapience), and knowledge (wisdom, sapience) is ruh. Therefore, ruhology does not merely discuss corporeal knowledge, but it is an extensive knowledge about wisdom and sapience. Understanding extensive knowledge must initially be achieved before learning about corporeal knowledge. In the Islamic perspective, extensive knowledge (wisdom, sapience) is ruh, or ruh is the extensive knowledge (wisdom, sapience) that resides in the hearts of men as Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) mentions in the Quran: “Rather, the Quran is distinct verses

[preserved] within the breasts of those who have been given knowledge”. As ruh is blown by God to complete the creation of man (not the human body), then the essence of ruh is truth. Since the essence of ruh is truth, consequently, truth bears the following four criteria of siddiq (honesty), amanah (responsibility), tabligh (good tidings), and fathanah, (intelligent). These criteria of truth come from Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) as He is the source of all truth. As Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) says in the Quran, “The truth is from your Lord, so never be among the doubters” Q.S. 2:147.

Ruh as God’s light containing the truth resides in the heart (al-qalb) that is in the chest of man. According to Yusuf, this is referred to as *kitab* (the book), that is the annals of ruh residing within the heart of man.

The book is revealed at the same time when the Soul was breathed into mankind. As such, we can therefore know that the soul is our spirit, the soul is the book. The soul, the faith, the book, is therefore the light. Because Allah intends to voice His words to mankind through this soul. And it is not directly to mankind or through His messengers. (2015, [page number])

In the Islamic perspective, Ruhani Quotient is bestowed by God since the human body is still in the form of a four months ten days old fetus. At that time, *ruhani* is blown by God to complete the creation of man. Once that is done, they are then bestowed with hearing, vision, and what is in the heart (favors or substance or feeling).

## Conclusion

The understanding of human intelligence that develops in the concept of Intellectual Quotient, Emotional Quotient, and Spiritual Quotient is still rooted in the paradigm of scientific-based knowledge and thoughts. Such understanding is not necessarily accurate, since the absence of ruh will result in man becoming incapable of feeling or sensing anything including intelligence, emotion, and spirituality. Ruh is the answer to the “what,” “who,” or “self” that is referred to because it exists and is present in every living human being. Despite its immaterial nature, ruh is the answer to the place and source of all potential intelligence that exist within the human self.

According to the Islamic perspective, ruh is blown by Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) to complete the process of human creation. Sense or feeling is the basic potential of ruh as a divine favor from Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He). Accordingly, the essence of ruh is truth because it comes from Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He) and resides in the heart (al-qalb) that radiates sense/feelings throughout all the senses including the human mind. Ruh that resides in the heart (al-qalb) is always inclined to voice honesty/truthfulness (siddiq), to be responsible (amanah), to deliver good tidings (tabligh), and to possess intelligence (fathanah).

With feelings as divine favor existing in ruh, humans are able to think using sense/reason (al-aql) from the brain. This subsequently drives sense/reason to think through various imaginings that ultimately generates understanding. The mind and thoughts, which develop through imagination resulting in understanding, consequently produce corporeal knowledge.

Unlike Intellectual Quotient, Emotional Quotient, or Spiritual Quotient, Ruhani Quotient is based upon ruh, wherein ruh functions as the source of all human intelligence as it has the ability to sense and perceive. Sense/perception itself is knowledge that subsequently leads to Ruhiology. Ruhiology places ruh as extensive knowledge that produces several corporeal knowledge. Accordingly, Ruhiology does not merely discuss corporeal knowledge, but it is an extensive knowledge about wisdom and sapience. Corporeal and extensive knowledge become two differing entities found within the human self. Extensive knowledge (wisdom and sapience) refers to the sense/perception favor inherent within ruh, while corporeal knowledge refers to the results brought about by the said sense/perception favor found within ruh.

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