

The Human Concept in Qur'anic Education Based on Tafsir Tarbawi Study of Q.S. Al-'Alaq 1–5 and Its Educational Implications

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Abstract

This study aims to explore and analyze the concept of human beings in Qur'anic education based on a tafsir tarbawi analysis of Q.S. Al-Alaq verses 1 to 5 and to formulate its educational implications for contemporary Islamic education. The research employs a qualitative design using a literature review approach. The primary data source is the Qur'an, specifically Surah Al-Alaq 1 to 5, supported by classical and contemporary tafsir tarbawi interpretations. Secondary data consist of scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and relevant academic studies related to Islamic education and the human concept in the Qur'an. Data were collected through documentation techniques and analyzed using qualitative content analysis to identify key themes, meanings, and educational values contained in the verses. The findings of this study reveal that the Qur'an conceptualizes human beings as learning creatures endowed with intellectual, spiritual, and moral potentials. The command iqra in Surah Al-Alaq emphasizes that education in Islam is a holistic process that integrates intellectual development, character formation, and spiritual awareness. Humans are portrayed as servants of Allah and as khalifah on earth who are responsible for continuously seeking knowledge and implementing divine values in real life. The study concludes that Islamic education must be grounded in the integration of revelation and reason, resulting in an educational paradigm that is spiritually oriented, intellectually dynamic, and morally transformative. These findings provide theoretical contributions to Islamic educational philosophy and practical implications for the development of curricula and learning models based on Qur'anic values.

Keywords: Human Concept, Qur'anic Education, Tafsir Tarbawi, Islamic Education, Q.S. Al-Alaq

Introduction

Education is a fundamental element in the development of human civilization. The role of education is not only limited to the transfer of knowledge, but also includes character formation, moral strengthening, and the development of individual potential so that human beings are able to contribute positively to society. In Islam, the importance of education has been explicitly affirmed in Surah Al-Alaq verses 1 to 5, which constitute the first revelation revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. These verses mark the starting point of Islamic propagation and at the same time demonstrate the great concern of Islam for knowledge and learning. Through the command Iqra,

which means read, Allah directs human beings to begin the learning process as a way to recognize themselves, understand the universe, and draw closer to Allah. Therefore, education in Islam possesses very broad dimensions, covering both spiritual and intellectual aspects (Firnanda, Syibly, & Junanah, 2025).

One of the important aspects discussed in the Qur'an is the creation of human beings and the process of human development. According to Quraish Shihab, the verses concerning human creation in the Qur'an do not only contain spiritual and theological dimensions, but also include scientific messages that can be understood through interpretative approaches and modern scientific perspectives. Understanding these verses is highly relevant in formulating an Islamic educational model that is based on divine values and that encourages integration between revelation and human reasoning (Ambiani & Yusuf, 2025). The Qur'an provides an example of the educational process as illustrated in the first revelation of Surah Al-Alaq. This surah serves as the foundation for the implementation of education for human beings, forming the philosophical and ideological basis of Islamic education. The main framework of Surah Al-Alaq consists of divine values and the Sunnah of the Prophets, both of which become the fundamental basis for the implementation of education (Ayuni, Sujarwo, & Rambe, 2024).

The search for the nature of human beings that relies solely on subjective human perspectives is considered insufficient. This is because the understanding of human nature is often viewed only from the human point of view as an object of study that is separated from the Creator, thus neglecting the perspective of the Creator. In fact, the perspective of the Creator regarding His creation is a very fundamental aspect in understanding the true essence of human beings (Ardiansyah & Handrianto, 2025). In the Qur'anic worldview, humans are entrusted as khalifah who are commanded to build a practical life system in all aspects in order to implement Islamic values and norms in real life. Consequently, Islamic education is built upon the foundation of tauhid as its main pillar. Humans are given the freedom to be creative in carrying out educational practices in various aspects without neglecting the fundamental Islamic values.

In the contemporary era, Islamic education faces various challenges that demand a more comprehensive understanding of human beings. Education is expected not only to produce individuals with intellectual competence but also to shape noble character and spiritual awareness. Several previous studies have examined the educational messages contained in Surah Al-Alaq, yet most of them remain at the level of textual interpretation and have not elaborated their practical implications for modern Islamic education. This condition indicates the existence of an academic gap concerning how the concept of human beings in Q.S. Al-Alaq 1 to 5 can be systematically translated into applicable educational formulations.

Recent studies in Islamic education emphasize the importance of integrating religious values with character development and educational

management. Fauzi (2023) explains that Islamic education should be directed toward the formation of holistic human beings who possess balanced intellectual, spiritual, and social competencies. In another study, Fauzi (2024) asserts that the development of religious and moral character must become the core of Islamic educational practices so that education is not merely oriented toward cognitive achievement but also toward value internalization. These perspectives strengthen the urgency of reexamining the concept of human beings in Qur'anic education, particularly through the tafsir tarbawi approach, in order to produce educational formulations that are relevant to current educational needs.

Based on this background, an in-depth study on the human concept in Qur'anic education through the analysis of Q.S. Al-Alaq 1 to 5 is highly important. Although numerous studies have discussed this surah from theological and exegetical perspectives, research that specifically analyzes it from the perspective of Islamic educational philosophy and its practical implications is still limited. This study seeks to fill this gap by offering a systematic interpretation of the human concept contained in the surah and by formulating its implications for Islamic education.

This study aims to explore the concept of human beings in Qur'anic education through an analysis of Q.S. Al-Alaq 1 to 5. It is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of Islamic educational philosophy and practical contributions to the formulation of a more holistic Islamic education curriculum based on divine values. Furthermore, this study also seeks to analyze the relevance of Q.S. Al-Alaq 1 to 5 to the concept of human beings in Qur'anic education so that it can become a reference for educators and researchers in designing more contextual and spiritually oriented learning materials.

Method

This study employs a qualitative research design based on the literature review method to collect, analyze, and interpret data from various relevant academic sources. The literature review approach is considered appropriate because the main focus of this research is the Qur'an as the primary source of educational concepts related to the development of human potential. Such a focus requires an in-depth theoretical and conceptual exploration rather than empirical field measurement. The literature review method enables researchers to systematically examine, synthesize, and interpret previous studies in order to build a comprehensive understanding of the research topic (Creswell, 2014).

The sources of data in this study consist of primary and secondary data. The primary data source is the text of the Qur'an, specifically Surah Al-Alaq verses 1 to 5, along with authoritative interpretations derived from tafsir tarbawi literature. The use of tafsir tarbawi as the main analytical lens is intended to explore the educational meanings contained in the verses from the

perspective of Islamic educational philosophy. Secondary data sources include academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and scholarly opinions that are relevant to the themes of Islamic education, Qur'anic studies, and the concept of human beings in Islamic thought.

Data collection was conducted through documentation techniques. This process involved identifying, selecting, reading, and recording important information from various academic references related to the research topic. The identification of literature sources was carried out using several academic databases and credible scientific publications in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the data. After the relevant literature was collected, the data were organized and categorized thematically based on key concepts related to the human concept in Qur'anic education.

The data analysis technique applied in this study is qualitative content analysis. Content analysis is a systematic method used to interpret textual data in order to identify specific themes, meanings, and conceptual patterns (Krippendorff, 2018). Through this method, the researcher analyzed the content and meanings of Qur'anic verses as well as the interpretations of classical and contemporary Muslim scholars within the framework of Islamic education. The analysis process involved several stages, namely data reduction, thematic categorization, interpretation, and conclusion drawing.

Furthermore, this research applies an analytical-descriptive approach in interpreting the findings. The descriptive-qualitative approach is aimed at explaining and elaborating the educational meanings contained in Surah Al-Alaq 1 to 5 in a comprehensive and systematic manner. The interpretative process refers to the principles of qualitative document analysis, which emphasize critical reading, contextual understanding, and conceptual synthesis (Bowen, 2009). This approach allows the researcher to connect Qur'anic concepts with contemporary educational theories in order to formulate relevant educational implications.

To ensure the credibility of the analysis, this study utilizes source triangulation by comparing various interpretations from different tafsir references and academic studies. The use of multiple sources is intended to minimize subjectivity and to strengthen the validity of the research findings. In addition, theoretical triangulation is also applied by integrating perspectives from Islamic educational philosophy and modern educational theory so that the analysis becomes more comprehensive and academically robust.

Through these methodological procedures, this study seeks to produce a systematic, valid, and academically accountable analysis of the human concept in Qur'anic education based on the tafsir tarbawi study of Q.S. Al-Alaq verses 1 to 5. The methodological framework is expected to provide a solid foundation for exploring the educational values contained in the Qur'an and for formulating their implications for contemporary Islamic education.

Results and Discussion

The Human Concept in Qur'anic Education

Human beings, as creations of Allah, possess a unique and special position in the universe. The Qur'an provides numerous indications regarding the nature, role, and purpose of human existence. The verses of the Qur'an that discuss the creation of humankind contain both explicit meanings and implicit messages that require deep interpretation in order to understand the true essence of humanity. All functions and responsibilities of human beings as creatures of Allah are comprehensively informed within the divine scripture (Ardiansyah & Handrianto, 2025).

The Qur'an clearly portrays human beings as creatures endowed with the potential to learn and to develop. Surah Al-Alaq verses 1 to 5 emphasize the importance of reading, knowledge, and intellectual exploration as the fundamental basis of education. This indicates that from the very beginning of creation, humans have been directed to become learning beings who continuously seek knowledge and wisdom. Previous studies confirm that these verses contain essential foundations of Islamic education that place knowledge acquisition and learning as integral components of human life (Ambiani & Yusuf, 2025).

From an intellectual perspective, the Qur'an describes humans as the best of creations who are granted reason and intellect. Through this intellectual capacity, humans are able to study, analyze, and develop various branches of knowledge. This ability distinguishes human beings from other creatures. In addition, from a sociological perspective, the Qur'anic term al-insan is often associated with the word an-nas, which emphasizes the social dimension of human life. Humans are essentially social beings who interact and cooperate with others in building civilization. Linguistic studies reveal that the term al-insan appears 65 times in the Qur'an, while related terms such as al-insu and an-nas appear more than 300 times, indicating the significant attention of the Qur'an to the social and educational roles of humans (Sihombing & Yasin, 2024).

The privileged position of human beings in the sight of Allah is not only reflected in their physical form but also in the intellectual and spiritual faculties granted to them. Through the integration of reason and conscience, humans are able to fulfill their dual roles as servants of Allah and as khalifah on earth. These roles require humans to optimize all the potentials bestowed upon them, both spiritual and physical, in order to carry out their responsibilities effectively. Although humans are born without knowledge, the Qur'an emphasizes that through learning and education they are able to develop their capacities and fulfill their sacred duties (Ardiansyah & Handrianto, 2025).

Exegetical Analysis of Q.S. Al-Alaq Verses 1 to 5

Classical and contemporary Muslim scholars generally agree that the first five verses of Surah Al-Alaq constitute the earliest revelation received by the Prophet Muhammad. These verses emphasize that Allah is the ultimate source of all knowledge and that learning is a fundamental command for humankind. The command to read, expressed through the term iqra, signifies that human beings are encouraged to explore not only written texts but also the signs of Allah manifested in the universe and in human life itself ('Afifah & Yahya, 2020).

The findings of this study indicate that the command iqra in Surah Al-Alaq has a very broad educational meaning. Reading in the Islamic perspective is not limited to textual literacy but also includes the processes of observing, reflecting, analyzing, and understanding the realities of life. The concepts of iqra and qalam in these verses function as the main pillars of Islamic education. They underline that the pursuit of knowledge must be carried out through both intellectual effort and spiritual awareness (Anggraini & Pratama, 2024).

The following verses explicitly illustrate the divine command:

إِقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ خَلْقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ إِقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ الَّذِي عَلَمَ بِالْقَلْمَنْ عَلَمَ
الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ

"Recite in the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clinging substance. Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous. Who taught by the pen. Taught man that which he knew not."

These verses clearly indicate that education in Islam is deeply rooted in divine revelation. Education is not merely a process of transferring knowledge, but a spiritual activity aimed at strengthening faith, developing character, and guiding humans toward moral excellence. The family environment is also emphasized as the first and most important educational institution where fundamental Islamic values are initially cultivated (Ayuni, Sujarwo, & Rambe, 2024).

Historical interpretations of these verses reveal that Surah Al-Alaq holds a central position in Islamic educational philosophy. According to Ibn Kathir, these verses demonstrate Allah's mercy and compassion toward humankind by granting them knowledge that was previously unknown. Quraish Shihab also explains that these verses were revealed on the seventeenth of Ramadan and represent the starting point of the Islamic intellectual tradition. Such exegetical insights confirm that the Qur'an places learning and knowledge as the primary foundation of human development (Anggraini & Pratama, 2024).

Relevance of Q.S. Al-Alaq Verses 1 to 5 to the Concept of Human Beings in Islamic Education

Surah Al-Alaq 1 to 5 provides a strong theological and philosophical basis for understanding human beings as educational creatures. The command to read in the name of Allah teaches that the learning process must always be grounded in sincerity and devotion to the Creator. Abdullah Nasih Ulwan emphasizes that Islamic education must begin with the internalization of tauhid values, since faith in Allah forms the foundation of all educational activities (Sihombing & Yasin, 2024).

Human beings are essentially created with two main responsibilities, namely as servants of Allah and as khalifah on earth. These responsibilities require continuous learning and intellectual development. Through the process of qira'ah, which includes reading, studying, and reflecting, humans are able to gain true knowledge and wisdom. The Qur'an and the Sunnah function as the most authentic sources of values that guide human education and civilization (Handoko, Saputra, & Zulheddi, 2018).

The educational implications of these verses are highly relevant to contemporary Islamic education. Education should not only emphasize cognitive mastery but must also nurture spiritual awareness, moral character, and social responsibility. Recent studies in Islamic education highlight the importance of integrating religious values into educational practices. Fauzi (2024) asserts that Islamic education must prioritize the internalization of religious character and moral values so that learning becomes a holistic process. In another study, Fauzi (2023) emphasizes that effective Islamic education requires the integration of spiritual, intellectual, and social dimensions in order to produce balanced and noble individuals.

Furthermore, Fauzi (2024) explains that the development of religious culture within educational institutions plays a crucial role in shaping students' character. These perspectives are in line with the message of Surah Al-Alaq, which views education as a spiritual process aimed at forming human beings who are knowledgeable, faithful, and morally upright.

In summary, Q.S. Al-Alaq verses 1 to 5 affirm that human beings are essentially learning creatures who possess a natural inclination toward knowledge. The learning process in Islam is not merely an intellectual activity but also an act of worship and a means of drawing closer to Allah. Education, therefore, must be understood as a holistic process that integrates intellectual development, character formation, and spiritual growth (Destiani et al., 2025).

The novelty of this study lies in its systematic formulation of the human concept in Qur'anic education through a focused tafsir tarbawi analysis of Q.S. Al-Alaq verses 1 to 5. While previous studies have generally discussed these verses from theological or general exegetical perspectives, this research offers a more specific and structured educational interpretation by positioning the verses as a philosophical foundation for Islamic educational theory. This study does not merely describe the meanings of the verses textually, but

reconstructs them into an integrated conceptual framework that explains humans as learning beings endowed with intellectual, spiritual, and moral potentials. By emphasizing the interconnection between the concepts of iqra, qalam, and the nature of human creation, this research provides a new perspective that bridges classical Qur'anic interpretation with contemporary educational discourse.

The contribution of this study is both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it enriches the discourse of Islamic educational philosophy by offering a comprehensive conceptualization of human beings based on Qur'anic principles and tafsir tarbawi analysis. This study formulates a holistic understanding of education that integrates intellectual development, character formation, and spiritual awareness as inseparable dimensions of human learning. Practically, the findings of this research provide relevant implications for the development of Islamic education curricula, learning models, and character-building programs in modern educational institutions. By grounding educational practices in the Qur'anic concept of human beings, this study contributes to the formulation of a more contextual, value-based, and spiritually oriented educational paradigm that responds to the challenges of contemporary Islamic education.

Conclusion

The concept of education in Islam, as analyzed through Q.S. Al-Alaq verses 1 to 5, emphasizes that learning is the fundamental element in the formation of complete and balanced human beings. The Qur'an portrays humans as special creations of Allah who are endowed with intellect and the capacity for reasoning, enabling them to develop knowledge, wisdom, and noble character. The command iqra in Surah Al-Alaq serves as a strong motivation for human beings to continuously read, study, and explore, not only written texts but also the signs of Allah in the universe and in human life. From this perspective, education in Islam is not merely a process of transferring knowledge, but a comprehensive endeavor that integrates intellectual development, moral strengthening, character formation, and the internalization of divine values and prophetic teachings in daily life.

Furthermore, this study affirms that effective education begins within the family environment, since the family is the first institution where individuals receive foundational values and moral guidance. As servants of Allah and as khalifah on earth, human beings are entrusted with the responsibility to optimize all the potentials granted to them, both spiritual and physical, in order to become knowledgeable, faithful, and morally upright individuals. Consequently, Islamic education is essentially built upon the integration of revelation and reason, resulting in a holistic learning process that aligns with the true nature and purpose of human creation according to the Qur'an. This integration provides a strong philosophical and practical foundation for the development of contemporary Islamic education that is spiritually oriented, intellectually dynamic, and socially relevant.

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