
INTEGRATING MASLOW'S SELF-ACTUALIZATION THEORY WITH QUR'AN AND HADITH: A FRAMEWORK FOR HOLISTIC GROWTH OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION STUDENTS

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Abstrak

Studi ini bertujuan untuk merumuskan integrasi konsep aktualisasi diri Abraham Maslow dengan perspektif Al-Qur'an dan Hadis dalam konteks perkembangan siswa. Metode yang digunakan adalah penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kepustakaan (library research) melalui teknik analisis isi (content analysis) terhadap karya-karya Maslow. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa teori self-actualization Maslow mengakui dimensi nilai dan pengalaman puncak (peak experience), namun dalam praktik pendidikan modern sering direduksi secara individualistik dan sekuler. Integrasi dengan Al-Qur'an dan Hadis memperluas makna aktualisasi diri menjadi proses pengembangan fitrah yang berorientasi tauhid, penghambaan ('ubudiyah), pembinaan akhlak, dan tanggung jawab sosial. Aktualisasi diri dalam perspektif Islam tidak berhenti pada pencapaian personal, tetapi diarahkan pada terbentuknya insan kamil yang berilmu, berakhlak, dan bermanfaat bagi sesama. Dimana rekonstruksi konseptual ini menawarkan paradigma pendidikan integralistik yang menyatukan dimensi psikologis, spiritual, dan sosial dalam proses tumbuh kembang peserta didik. Kontribusi utama artikel ini terletak pada upaya sintesis konseptual antara teori psikologi humanistik Barat dan nilai-nilai pendidikan Islam yang menghasilkan kerangka teoritik baru tentang aktualisasi diri berbasis tauhid. Selain itu, artikel ini memberikan landasan epistemologis bagi pengembangan model pendidikan yang lebih holistik, sekaligus menjadi rujukan akademik bagi pendidik dan peneliti dalam merancang strategi pembelajaran yang tidak hanya berorientasi pada pencapaian kognitif, tetapi juga pada pembentukan karakter, spiritualitas, dan tanggung jawab sosial peserta didik.

Kata kunci: Aktualisasi Diri, Abraham Maslow, Pendidikan Islam, Integrasi Wahyu, Tumbuh Kembang Anak.

Abstract

This study aims to integrate Abraham Maslow's concept of self-actualization with the perspectives of the Qur'an and Hadith in the context of student development. The method used is qualitative research, employing a library-based approach and content analysis of Maslow's works. The results show that Maslow's theory of self-actualization recognizes the dimensions of value and peak experience, but in modern educational practice, it is often reduced to individualistic and secular. Integration with the Qur'an and Hadith expands the meaning of self-actualization into a process of developing fitrah oriented towards monotheism, responsibility ('ubudiyah), moral development, and social responsibility. Self-actualization in the Islamic perspective does not stop at personal achievements but is directed toward the formation of knowledgeable, moral, and beneficial people who benefit others. This conceptual reconstruction offers an integralistic educational paradigm that unites psychological, spiritual, and social dimensions in the process of student growth and development. The main contribution of this article lies in

the attempt at a conceptual synthesis between Western humanistic psychological theories and Islamic educational values that resulted in a new theoretical framework of monotheism-based self-actualization. In addition, this article provides an epistemological foundation for the development of a more holistic educational model, as well as an academic reference for educators and researchers in designing learning strategies that are not only oriented towards cognitive achievement, but also on the formation of students' character, spirituality, and social responsibility.

Keywords: Self-Actualization, Abraham Maslow, Islamic Education, Integration of Revelation, Child Growth and Development.

INTRODUCTION

Education is increasingly characterized by a structural imbalance between cognitive achievement and the holistic formation of students' personalities (Khan, 2025). Despite expanded access and improved academic performance, students exhibit growing difficulties in meaning-making, value orientation, and self-awareness (Ayob, 2025). This condition reflects a reductionist educational paradigm that prioritizes intellectual competence while marginalizing existential and moral development (Azhari, 2025). Education risks functioning as a technocratic system of performance rather than a transformative process of human formation, widening the gap between its normative ideals and students' psychological realities (Karim et al., 2024).

Humanistic psychology, particularly Maslow's theory of self-actualization has regained relevance as a framework for understanding human development in education (Maslani, Rostika, & Nuraida, 2025). Maslow conceptualizes individuals as intrinsically motivated toward growth, meaning, and the realization of potential (Nisa & Zarkasyi, 2024). His emphasis on value, meaning, and peak experience offers a critical foundation for holistic education (Syafii & Azhari, 2025). However, its contemporary educational application tends to be epistemologically constrained by individualistic and secular interpretations, reducing self-actualization to personal fulfillment while neglecting its ethical and transcendental dimensions (Ayob, 2025).

The existing literature can be broadly categorized into three strands. First, humanistic psychology studies emphasize individual potential but lack a coherent transcendental framework (Zarkasyi, 2024). Second, studies on psychology-spirituality integration acknowledge the importance of meaning and moral orientation but remain largely within secular epistemologies (Gillani & Khan, 2025), (Syafii & Azhari, 2025). Third, research in Islamic education positions the Qur'an and Hadith as normative references, yet often fails to develop them into systematic conceptual frameworks for human development (Aliyar & Rikasa, 2025), (Huta & Waterman, 2020). Collectively, these strands reveal a fragmented discourse in which psychological, spiritual, and theological dimensions remain insufficiently integrated (Aydin, 2023).



This fragmentation points to a significant research gap. Previous studies have predominantly been descriptive or comparative, without advancing a conceptual reconstruction that integrates Maslow's theory with revelation-based epistemology (Sharma & Singh, 2022), (Zarkasyi, 2024), (Gillani & Khan, 2025). As a result, self-actualization remains narrowly framed as an individual psychological objective rather than a multidimensional process encompassing ethical, spiritual, and social accountability (Karim et al., 2024). (Maslani et al., 2025). This limitation weakens the theoretical foundation for understanding student development in a holistic and integrative manner.

This study aims to formulate an integrative conceptual framework of self-actualization by synthesizing Maslow's humanistic psychology with the perspectives of the Qur'an and Hadith in the context of student development. It proposes a reconceptualization of self-actualization as devotion-oriented self-awareness (*'ubūdiyyah*), grounded in moral formation and social responsibility. This study contributes to the advancement of Islamic educational psychology by offering a coherent epistemological synthesis that bridges humanistic and revelatory paradigms and provides a robust theoretical basis for holistic education to address the contemporary crisis of meaning.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design, emphasizing an in-depth and critical understanding of concepts, meanings, and epistemological structures underlying the notion of self-actualization and its integration with Qur'anic and Hadith perspectives. Qualitative inquiry is appropriate for examining theoretical constructions and interpreting relationships between psychological and theological frameworks without relying on numerical data (Creswell & Poth, 2021), (Aspers & Corte, 2019). The focus of this study is on analyzing the ideas, assumptions, and conceptual relationships that shape student development within both humanistic psychology and Islamic educational thought.

The paper adopts a library research approach, utilizing written texts as the primary source of data. The sources are divided into two categories. Primary sources include major works by Abraham Maslow, particularly those discussing the hierarchy of needs, self-actualization, and peak experience. Secondary sources include scholarly literature in humanistic psychology, Islamic education, and relevant scientific studies that discuss the relationship between psychological development and spiritual values. These sources comprise books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and academic documents that provide both theoretical and contextual perspectives.

Data collection was conducted through a systematic literature search and documentation process. Relevant sources were identified using academic databases, library catalogs, and scholarly repositories. The selection criteria

focused on works that directly address self-actualization, human development, and Islamic perspectives on education. All selected materials were then organized and classified based on thematic relevance to ensure analytical coherence.

Data analysis in this study employs content analysis to identify patterns of meaning, key concepts, and thematic structures within the selected texts (Krippendorff, 2022). The analysis was conducted through several stages. First, the researcher identified core concepts in Maslow's theory of self-actualization, including human needs, intrinsic motivation, and peak experience. Second, relevant Qur'anic verses and Hadith concerning human nature, personal development, and moral responsibility were examined. Third, a thematic comparison was carried out to explore conceptual correspondences and differences between the two perspectives. Finally, a process of conceptual synthesis was undertaken to construct an integrative framework that connects psychological and theological dimensions of self-actualization.

The research procedure followed a systematic sequence consisting of four stages: (1) identification and selection of relevant literature, (2) classification of key concepts and themes, (3) thematic and interpretative analysis, and (4) conceptual synthesis. This structured process ensures that the analysis remains coherent, transparent, and academically rigorous, while enabling the development of an integrative theoretical framework for understanding student development from both psychological and Islamic perspectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study generates a conceptual reconstruction of self-actualization by integrating the humanistic psychology framework with the perspectives of the Qur'an and Hadith. The findings demonstrate that self-actualization, as commonly understood in modern educational discourse, requires a fundamental reorientation to accommodate spiritual, moral, and social dimensions that are often overlooked in contemporary interpretations.

The first major finding concerns the reinterpretation of Maslow's concept of self-actualization. While Maslow initially conceptualized self-actualization as the realization of human potential driven by intrinsic motivation, this study finds that his framework implicitly contains a deeper recognition of value, meaning, and transcendence. Concepts such as "being-values" (B-values) and "peak experiences" indicate that self-actualization is not merely psychological fulfillment but involves encounters with higher-order meaning and existential awareness. However, the analysis reveals that modern educational applications tend to reduce this concept into measurable indicators such as academic success, productivity, and individual achievement. This reduction reflects a broader secular and instrumental orientation in education, which separates psychological growth from ethical and



spiritual considerations. Consequently, self-actualization loses its transformative dimension and becomes confined to self-centered development.

The second finding relates to the structural reinterpretation of the hierarchy of needs. Traditionally understood as a linear progression from physiological needs to self-actualization, the hierarchy is often applied rigidly in educational and psychological contexts. However, this study finds that such a linear interpretation does not adequately reflect the complexity of human development. Instead, human needs operate in a dynamic and interconnected manner, where biological, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects interact simultaneously. Empirical and theoretical insights from contemporary literature support the view that meaning, belonging, and even transcendence can emerge even when basic needs are not fully satisfied. This indicates that the hierarchy should be understood not as a fixed pyramid but as a flexible and contextual system. Within this integrative perspective, self-actualization is not the final stage of development but an ongoing process that is continuously shaped by internal and external factors.

The third finding emphasizes the centrality of *fitrah* as a foundational concept in understanding self-actualization from an Islamic perspective. The Qur'anic notion of *fitrah* refers to the innate human disposition oriented toward truth, goodness, and divine awareness. This concept provides an ontological grounding that is absent in secular psychological theories. In this framework, human potential is not neutral but inherently directed toward moral and spiritual realization. Education, therefore, functions as a process of nurturing and actualizing this innate potential rather than constructing it solely through external influences. The integration of *fitrah* with Maslow's concept of potentiality yields a more comprehensive understanding of human development, in which growth is simultaneously psychological and theological.

The fourth finding identifies four interrelated dimensions of self-actualization within the integrated framework. The spiritual dimension positions self-actualization as an expression of devotion (*'ubūdiyyah*) and consciousness of God (*tawhid*), transforming the ultimate goal of development from self-fulfillment to a God-oriented existence. The intellectual dimension highlights the pursuit of knowledge as an essential component of human growth, emphasizing that cognitive development is not merely instrumental but also a form of worship. The moral dimension focuses on the formation of character and ethical integrity, ensuring that normative values guide personal development. The social dimension underscores the importance of contributing to society, framing self-actualization as a process that extends beyond the self toward collective well-being. These dimensions are not hierarchical but operate in a mutually reinforcing relationship.

The final finding of this study is the formulation of an integrative conceptual framework that redefines self-actualization as a holistic process of human

development. In this framework, self-actualization is understood as the realization of human potential in alignment with divine purpose, ethical responsibility, and social contribution. This redefinition shifts the orientation of self-actualization from an individualistic paradigm to a relational and transcendental one. It also provides a theoretical basis for rethinking educational practices, emphasizing that student development must address not only intellectual competence but also spiritual awareness, moral character, and social responsibility.

Discussion

The findings of this study offer a critical contribution to contemporary educational discourse by addressing the limitations of prevailing interpretations of self-actualization. One of the central issues identified is the epistemological reduction of Maslow's theory in modern educational practice. (Hoffman, 2020), (Ghaleb, 2024). Although Maslow's original framework acknowledges the importance of meaning, values, and transcendence, its application has been largely confined to individual achievement and psychological fulfillment (Maslow, 2021). This reduction reflects the dominance of secular and instrumental paradigms in education, which prioritize measurable outcomes over existential and moral development (Karadencheva, 2025), (Saif, 2024). As a result, education tends to produce individuals who are technically competent but lack a coherent sense of purpose and ethical orientation.

The reinterpretation of the hierarchy of needs as a dynamic and integrative system represents a significant theoretical advancement (Tohid, 2024). By moving beyond the rigid pyramid model, this study highlights the complexity of human needs and their interdependence (Ayob, Sham & Alias, 2025). Human development cannot be adequately explained through a sequential model that assumes the fulfillment of lower needs as a prerequisite for higher ones (Hoffman, 2020). Instead, individuals often experience meaning, belonging, and transcendence in conditions of limitation and struggle (Nisa & Zarkasyi, 2024). This insight aligns with both contemporary psychological research and spiritual traditions, which emphasize the role of meaning-making in human resilience (Aliyar & Rikasa, 2025). In the context of education, this implies that the cultivation of values and purpose should not be postponed until basic needs are fully satisfied but should be integrated into all stages of learning (Gillani & Khan, 2025).

The integration of Qur'anic and Hadith perspectives provides a robust epistemological foundation for this reinterpretation (Huta & Waterman, 2020). Unlike secular frameworks that treat human potential as value-neutral, the concept of *fitrah* situates human development within a normative and transcendent orientation (Syafii & Azhari, 2025). This perspective challenges the assumption that self-actualization is solely an individual endeavor and instead emphasizes the relational nature of human existence (Borg, 2024). Humans are understood not only as autonomous agents but also as beings accountable to God



and responsible for the well-being of others (Kallius, 2025). This shift has profound implications for educational theory, as it redefines the purpose of learning from personal success to meaningful and responsible participation in the world.

The four-dimensional model of self-actualization proposed in this study offers a structured and comprehensive framework for understanding student development (Blokker, 2025). The spiritual dimension provides an ultimate source of meaning and direction, ensuring that development is oriented toward a higher purpose (Chen, 2024). The intellectual dimension supports critical thinking and the acquisition of knowledge, which are essential for navigating complex realities (Johnson, 2025). The moral dimension ensures that knowledge and ability are guided by ethical considerations, preventing the misuse of intellectual capacity (Widaninggar et al., 2025). The social dimension connects individual development with collective responsibility, fostering empathy, cooperation, and a commitment to social justice (Ikram et al., 2025). These dimensions form an integrated model that addresses the limitations of fragmented approaches to education.

Another important implication of this study is the recognition of the inseparability of science and spirituality in the process of human development (Widaninggar et al., 2025). Modern education often operates within a dichotomous framework that separates empirical knowledge from spiritual values (Wahdini et al., 2025). This separation contributes to a fragmented understanding of the human being, where cognitive development is emphasized at the expense of moral and spiritual growth (Widaninggar et al., 2025). The findings of this study challenge this dichotomy by demonstrating that science and spirituality can function as complementary dimensions. Scientific knowledge provides tools for understanding and engaging with the world, while spirituality offers a framework for interpreting meaning and guiding action (Chen, 2024). Their integration creates a more holistic approach to education that addresses both the external and internal dimensions of human development (Blokker, 2025).

The comparative analysis between Western and Islamic perspectives of self-actualization further clarifies the nature of this integration. While Western psychology emphasizes autonomy, personal fulfillment, and self-expression, the Islamic perspective emphasizes devotion, moral responsibility, and social contribution (Johnson, 2025). These differences reflect distinct ontological and axiological assumptions about human nature and purpose (Kallius, 2025). However, rather than being mutually exclusive, these perspectives can be integrated to produce a more comprehensive framework (Koenig, 2023). (Pargament et al., 2022). Maslow's emphasis on human potential and intrinsic motivation can be enriched by the ethical and spiritual orientation provided by Islamic teachings (Harrington & Targ, 2022). This integration allows for a

reinterpretation of self-actualization that retains its psychological insights while grounding it in a broader moral and transcendental context, as outlined in Tabel 1. Table 1. Conceptual Differences Between Self-Actualization and Self-Actualization in Islam

Aspect	Western Perspective	Islamic Perspective
Orientation	Self-centered	God-centered (<i>tawhid</i>)
Goal	Personal fulfillment	Divine pleasure and social good
Measure of success	Achievement and satisfaction	Piety and beneficial contribution
Method	Reflection and self-development	Worship, knowledge, moral cultivation
Human role	Autonomous individual	Servant (<i>'abd</i>) and vicegerent (<i>khalifah</i>)

The implications of this integrative framework extend to educational practice. Schools and educational institutions must move beyond a narrow focus on academic achievement and develop approaches that foster holistic growth (Rahim, 2023). This includes creating learning environments that support spiritual reflection, ethical dialogue, and social engagement (Chen, 2024). Curriculum design should integrate cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions, ensuring that students are not only knowledgeable but also morally grounded and socially responsible (Widaninggar et al., 2025). Teachers play a crucial role in this process as facilitators of holistic development, guiding students in the integration of knowledge, values, and action (Arlina et al., 2025).

Furthermore, this study contributes to the ongoing discourse on the crisis of meaning in modern education (Ikram et al., 2025). By redefining self-actualization as a process oriented toward transcendence and responsibility, it offers an alternative paradigm that addresses the limitations of existing approaches (Yusuf, 2023). In a context where students increasingly face existential uncertainty and moral ambiguity, the integration of psychological and spiritual perspectives provides a pathway toward meaningful and sustainable development (Widaninggar et al., 2025). This approach not only enhances individual well-being but also contributes to the formation of a more ethical and compassionate society (Vander Weele, 2022).

The integration of Maslow's theory with Qur'anic and Hadith perspectives represents a significant step toward developing a holistic educational paradigm (Galek et al., 2022). It challenges reductionist interpretations of human development and offers a framework that recognizes the complexity and multidimensionality of human existence (Hood Jr. et al., 2023). By emphasizing the interplay between psychological, spiritual, moral, and social dimensions, this study provides a comprehensive approach to understanding and facilitating student development in contemporary educational contexts (Widaninggar et al., 2025).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study affirms that Maslow's concept of self-actualization significantly contributes to understanding human potential, motivation, and life meaning. Yet, modern education often adopts it in a reductionist way, detached from moral and transcendental orientations, reducing actualization to personal success. Integration with the Qur'an and Hadith repositions self-actualization within *fitrah*, *tawhid*, and human responsibility as *'abd* and *khalifah*, where growth involves knowledge, worship, *tazkiyah*, and social contribution. Maslow's hierarchy remains analytically useful but requires epistemological reconstruction beyond anthropocentrism. In student development, this synthesis promotes a holistic paradigm viewing learners as biological, social, intellectual, and spiritual beings. Education thus cultivates competence alongside moral awareness and social responsibility, offering an integral model that addresses the contemporary crisis of meaning and aligns humanistic psychology with Islamic educational thought.

This study proposes several recommendations. First, Islamic education practitioners should design curricula that integrate cognitive growth with spiritual and character formation, directing self-actualization toward *tawhid* awareness and social responsibility, rather than merely academic success. Second, future research should empirically test Qur'an-Hadith-based integrative models using quantitative or mixed methods to examine impacts on motivation, resilience, and well-being. Third, Islamic institutions need to strengthen an anthropocentric paradigm within policy and school culture, overcoming the science-religion dichotomy through evaluation systems and reflective learning environments. Finally, further studies should develop operational models and assessment instruments to implement revelation-based self-actualization across educational levels.

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