

## SELF-ACTUALIZATION IN THE PERSPECTIVES OF HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY AND SUFISM

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### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi konsep pengaktualisasian diri dalam psikologi humanistik dan ilmu tasawuf serta bagaimana kedua perspektif ini dapat diterapkan dalam konteks pengembangan potensi diri manusia. Dengan menggunakan metode eksplorasi dan pendekatan library research, data dikumpulkan melalui penelaahan literatur ilmiah dari berbagai sumber yang relevan. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa walaupun perspektifnya berbeda, kedua konsep ini memiliki kesamaan dalam mengejar pertumbuhan spiritual dan pribadi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif eksploratif dengan teknik analisis data content analysis untuk mendapatkan pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang kedua perspektif ini. Kesimpulannya, integrasi psikologi humanistik dan ilmu tasawuf dapat memberikan wawasan yang lebih komprehensif tentang proses perkembangan pribadi dan spiritual manusia.

**Kata Kunci:** Aktualisasi diri, Psikologi Humanistik, Sufisme.

### ABSTRACT

*This research explores the concept of self-actualization in humanistic psychology and Sufism, as well as how these two perspectives can be applied in the context of human potential development. Using exploratory methods and a library research approach, data was collected through a review of scientific literature from various relevant sources. The results show that although the perspectives differ, both concepts share similarities in pursuing spiritual and personal growth. This study employs an exploratory qualitative approach with content analysis data analysis techniques to gain a better understanding of these two perspectives. In conclusion, the integration of humanistic psychology and Sufism can provide more comprehensive insights into the process of personal and spiritual development.*

**Keywords:** Self-actualization, Humanistic psychology, Sufism.

### INTRODUCTION

Humans as God's most perfect creations are endowed with extraordinary potentials. Developing one's potential is a necessity in the human journey to achieve happiness and perfection in life. In the process of self-actualization, humans face various choices and methods. In an effort to understand and optimize the process of actualizing one's potential, two rich perspectives are considered.

Self-actualization is an important aspect in various disciplines, including psychology and Sufism. Psychology is a discipline that studies humans based on outward aspects, using empirical-experimental methodologies and rational critical reasoning. Sufism, on the other hand, studies humans based on inner aspects using religious normative methodologies grounded in human inner experiences (Maslahat, M. M 2012).

In humanistic psychology, self-actualization aims to lead a person towards a meaningful, happy, and psychologically prosperous life. This can be achieved through the optimal development of self-potential, positive emotional experiences, and the formation of a good personality towards oneself and the surrounding environment (Wong, P. T. 2012). Self-actualization is emphasized in humanistic psychology based on the fulfillment of

hierarchical needs outlined by Abraham Maslow in his hierarchy of needs theory.

On the other hand, Sufism emphasizes self-development through a deeper and spiritual approach with the aim not only to achieve psychological well-being and happiness but also to guide humans towards achieving the status of "insan kamil," or the perfect human, reflecting the attributes of God, having good character towards oneself, the environment, and especially towards God (Hamdani, S, 2012). In Sufism, the method of self-actualization transcends outward and inner aspects, allowing humans to return and unite with their origin, the Pure Spirit.

Although these two scientific approaches have different ultimate goals, both emphasize the importance of self-actualization. Humanistic psychology focuses on the fulfillment of needs and self-actualization based on the hierarchy of needs, while Sufism emphasizes spiritual transformation and the achievement of inner perfection.

This research aims to explore how these two perspectives can be applied in self-actualization. This study uses exploratory methods with a library research approach. Data is collected through the review of relevant scientific literature from various sources, such as academic journals, books, and scientific articles. These sources are selected based on their credibility and relevance to this research.

## **LITERATURE RESEARCH**

### **A. Humanistic Psychology (Abraham Maslow)**

Humanistic Psychology initially emerged in the 1940s as a response to dissatisfaction with the psychoanalytic school, which viewed humans as unhealthy beings needing to be cured, and with behaviorism, which viewed psychology solely based on observable phenomena. According to humanistic psychology, humans inherently possess innate goodness. This view contrasts with the psychoanalytic perspective, which tends to emphasize the darker aspects of human nature. Humanistic psychology also emphasizes that each individual has a unique self-concept and requires recognition and acknowledgment from others for this self-concept to become a reality (Samsara, A, 2020).

Abraham Maslow developed the hierarchy of needs theory, which discusses basic human needs and the motivation to fulfill them. Maslow argued that each individual has a series of needs that must be met to achieve optimal personal development, also known as self-actualization (Farmer, R, 1981). However, in the pursuit of self-actualization, individuals must strive to meet universal needs (Schultz, D, 1991). These needs form a hierarchy, starting from the most basic to the more complex needs.

The basic needs in the hierarchy are divided into: 1) physiological needs, such as food, water, rest, and physical activity; 2) safety needs, including freedom from fear, physical violence, and anxiety; 3) love and belonging needs, including the need for friendship, affection, and strong relationships with others; and 4) esteem needs, such as the need for a positive self-view and recognition from others (Maslow, A. H, 1971).

### **B. Self-Actualization According to Humanistic Psychology**

Maslow proposed self-actualization as the highest achievement in human development. The definition of self-actualization in Chaplin's comprehensive dictionary of psychology is the human tendency to develop one's potential, talents, and capacities (Chaplin, J. P, 1995). The characteristics of individuals who have achieved self-actualization can be seen from several criteria established by Maslow, namely: 1) the individual has surpassed the hierarchy of needs, 2) the individual holds firmly to core values (B-values) or meta-motivation, 3) is free from severe mental and emotional disturbances, and 4) fulfills the need to grow and maximize self-potential (Schultz, D, 1991).

According to Maslow, a prominent figure in humanistic psychology, the tendency to achieve perfection or self-actualization is called growth motivation, where individuals consistently make good choices (progressive choice). Conversely, the tendency to make poor choices is called deficiency motivation, where an individual continually makes regressive choices, which further distance them from self-actualization (Maslow, A. H, 1971).

### **C. Sufism**

In Islam, sufism is the term for mysticism. In Western literature, the term "Sufism" is specifically used for Islamic mysticism. Linguistically, sufism describes a state focused on the purity of the soul, prioritizing the call of Allah, living a simple life, emphasizing truth, and being willing to sacrifice for higher purposes. Ultimately, such a perspective makes a person psychologically strong and capable of resisting various misleading temptations in life (Amin, S. M, 2022).

According to Hamka, Sufism is a continuous effort to adorn oneself with noble character and to cleanse oneself and one's heart from reprehensible traits (Rouf, A., Yakub, M., & Yusoff, Z. M, 2013). Based on the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), sufism aims to achieve a pure heart (ṣafā) through the process of self-purification (taṣfiyah) from various diseases of the heart. Tasawuf is not only about abandoning bad habits; it is also about instilling noble morals and combating desires. In other words, sufism is a way to become perfect and united with Allah (SWT) through the purification of the soul and heart.

### **D. Self-Actualization According to Sufism**

According to Al-Ghazali, the application of the Hierarchy of Needs to achieve the ultimate goal of self-actualization is not different. This process must begin with perseverance in studying knowledge, especially religious knowledge. After reaching the next level, which is a deep understanding of the existence of God and His creations, a person can move to a higher level. In this context, he emphasizes the importance of starting from simple things and gradually developing the mindset of qana'ah (contentment) and zuhud (asceticism). This second stage will lead individuals to always strive to do their best in all good deeds for their personal lives, as well as to distance themselves from unnecessary worldly matters (Gani, K. N. J., Arroisi, J., & Saifuddin, A. F, 2022).

In the perspective of Sufism, self-actualization is not just about fulfilling needs and achieving happiness in the world, but about achieving spiritual perfection or *insân kâmil*, where individuals attain a deep spiritual understanding and the divine dimension is actualized within them. This process of self-actualization is known as *ma'rifat* and requires directed spiritual effort through three stages: 1) *Takhallî*: Cleansing oneself from reprehensible traits and evils, 2) *Tahallî*: Instilling commendable traits and goodness, 3) *Tajallî*: Manifestation of divine qualities within the individual. *Takhallî* is like cleaning a dirty mirror so that the light of truth can be reflected clearly. *Tahallî* is like filling the clean mirror with the light of goodness. And *tajallî* is like the mirror perfectly reflecting the divine light (Khadijah, K, 2014).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employs an exploratory qualitative approach with a literature research type to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of self-actualization in psychology and Sufism. This approach involves analyzing relevant texts and literature. The literature research method enables the researcher to collect data from various published text sources, such as academic journals, books, and scientific articles related to this research topic.

The data analysis technique used in this study is content analysis. This technique allows the researcher to identify, categorize, and analyze patterns or themes that emerge

from the collected textual data. Through content analysis, the researcher can explore and understand various perspectives and approaches related to self-actualization in psychology and Sufism, as well as explain how these two perspectives can be applied in the context of human potential development.

Thus, through an exploratory qualitative approach and the data analysis technique of content analysis, this study aims to gain a better understanding of the psychological and Sufi perspectives on self-actualization and to identify possible applications and practical implications of these concepts in the development of human potential.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study clearly illustrate self-actualization from the perspectives of humanistic psychology and Sufism. In the perspective of humanistic psychology, the process of self-actualization is viewed as the highest achievement in human development, where individuals have achieved their optimal potential and personal growth after successfully fulfilling a series of basic needs that form a hierarchy.

Meanwhile, in the perspective of Sufism, self-actualization is understood as the attainment of spiritual perfection (*insân kâmil*), where individuals reach a profound spiritual understanding and the divine dimension is actualized within them. This process of self-actualization involves stages such as *takhallî* (self-purification), *tahallî* (instilling commendable traits), and *tajallî* (manifestation of divine qualities)

## CONCLUSION

From the results of this study, it can be concluded that the concept of self-actualization in humanistic psychology and Sufism has significant similarities and differences. Although from different perspectives, the concepts of self-actualization in humanistic psychology and Sufism hold important value in the understanding and development of human potential

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