

HUMANISTIC PERSONALITY THEORY ACCORDING TO ABRAHAM MASLOW AND ITS RELEVANCE TO ISLAMIC VALUES

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ABSTRACT:

Abraham Maslow's personality theory is a key concept in humanistic psychology that emphasizes a positive view of humans as beings with the potential for optimal development. This theory explains that individual motivation and behavior are influenced by a hierarchy of needs, ranging from physiological needs to self-actualization. This article aims to examine the basic concepts of Maslow's personality theory, analyze the hierarchy of human needs, and explain its implications for individual personality development. The research method uses a literature review with reference to relevant literature sources, such as psychology textbooks and scientific articles. The results of the discussion indicate that fulfilling basic needs is a prerequisite for achieving higher needs, especially self-actualization. Maslow's theory contributes significantly to understanding human motivation, behavior, and personality development, although it has limitations in its universal application. Thus, Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory remains relevant as a foundation for the study of personality psychology and self-development.

Keywords: Abraham Maslow, self-actualization, hierarchy of needs, humanistic, Islam.

INTRODUCTION

In everyday life, humans certainly have various needs that must be met. These range from the simplest needs, such as food and shelter, to higher needs, such as appreciation and self-development. These needs indirectly influence how a person acts and makes decisions in their life. This can also be seen in the workplace, where people work not only to earn money but also to seek security, comfort, and inner satisfaction. Abraham Maslow, a figure in humanistic psychology, viewed humans as beings with fundamental potential for



development (Stefano, 2023). Unlike previous theories that emphasized behavior or subconscious drives, Maslow emphasized the positive side of humans. Through his hierarchy of needs theory, Maslow explained that humans have needs that are arranged in stages and are interrelated. As long as the most basic needs are not met, humans will focus more on them than on higher needs.

Maslow's theory is also interesting to discuss because it remains relevant to today's life and can be linked to Islamic values. Islam itself views humans as beings with not only physical and social needs but also spiritual ones (Khairul Ummam, 2023). Therefore, a discussion of Maslow's theory, its application in real life, and its relationship to Islamic values is important to understand, especially through simple examples like Budi's case study.

METHOD

This study employed a literature review method by collecting various references relevant to the research topic. The data sources were obtained from scientific journals, books, conference proceedings, and other academic publications accessed through databases such as Google Scholar , ScienceDirect , and ResearchGate . The research process consisted of identifying, collecting, selecting, and analyzing literature related to the focus of the study. The selected literature was evaluated based on its relevance, publication year, and source credibility. Furthermore, the collected data and information were analyzed descriptively to identify concepts, theories, and findings from previous studies that support the discussion of this research. This method aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic being studied and to serve as the basis for developing arguments and drawing conclusions in the research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Humanistic Personality Theory According to Abraham Maslow

Abraham Harold Maslow (1908–1970) was an American psychologist known as the founder of humanistic psychology. He was born on April 1,



1908, in Brooklyn, New York, to Russian-Jewish immigrants. Maslow completed his undergraduate studies in scientific psychology at the University of Wisconsin in 1930 and earned his doctorate in 1934. Early in his career, Maslow was heavily influenced by John B. Watson's behaviorism, but his interests shifted after reading Gestalt psychology and Freudian theory. He served as an assistant to Edward L. Thorndike at Columbia University, then returned to New York and became a professor at Brooklyn College. In 1951, Maslow left Brooklyn College and in 1962, with Carl Rogers, founded the American Association for Humanistic Psychology. Maslow also served as president of the American Psychological Association (APA) and received the Humanist of the Year award from the American Humanist Association (Anisyah, 2023).

His main contribution was the hierarchy of needs theory, depicted as a pyramid ranging from physiological needs to self-actualization, which emphasized human positive potential and intrinsic motivation. This theory was introduced in his work "A Theory of Human Motivation" (1943) and other books such as "Toward a Psychology of Being" (1968). Maslow died on June 8, 1970, leaving a legacy in psychology that emphasized human growth rather than pathology.

Basic Concepts of Abraham Maslow's Theory

Abraham Maslow's personality theory is known as part of the humanistic school of psychology. This school emerged because Maslow and others felt that previous psychological theories, such as psychoanalysis and behaviorism, overemphasized the negative side of human nature. These theories often viewed humans as creatures controlled by subconscious drives or environmental influences. In contrast, Maslow viewed humans as individuals with the potential to develop and improve. The main basis of Maslow's theory is the concept of a hierarchy of needs. According to Maslow, human behavior is influenced by various needs arranged in stages. A person will usually try to fulfill the most basic needs first before considering higher



needs. Maslow depicted this hierarchy of needs in the form of a pyramid consisting of five levels, ranging from physiological needs to self-actualization.

all humans possess these needs . However, the way each person fulfills these needs can differ, depending on their background, environment, and living conditions. Furthermore, this theory emphasizes that humans naturally desire to continuously grow, develop, and become the best version of themselves. The dynamics of human personality are driven by efforts to reduce tension caused by deficiencies (deficit motivation) and the drive to achieve noble values such as truth and beauty (metamotivation). Personality dynamics are how humans move or are motivated. Maslow described two main types of motivation, namely:

- a. Deficit Motivation : A person moves because they feel something is missing (for example, looking for food because they are hungry or looking for friends because they are lonely). This is aimed at achieving balance or calm (homeostasis).
- b. Growth Motivation /*Metamotivation* : A dynamic that occurs in people who are already prosperous. They are driven not by hunger or fear, but by a drive for truth, justice, beauty, and uniqueness. This is what drives a person to continue learning and creating (Sari, 2024).

In his theory, Maslow also divided human motivation into two types: deficit needs (*D-Needs*) and fulfillment needs (*B-Needs*). Deficit needs arise from a lack of something, such as hunger, insecurity, or a lack of appreciation. Fulfillment needs, on the other hand, arise when basic needs are met, prompting a person to develop themselves, channel their creativity, and seek meaning in their life.

The concept of D-Needs and B-Needs

a. *Deficiency Needs (D-Needs)*

D - Needs are needs that arise from a lack of fulfillment. People will feel uncomfortable, anxious, or even depressed when these needs are not met. As long as these needs remain unmet, people will continue to be



driven to fulfill them. Some human needs included in *D -Needs* are physiological needs, safety, love and belonging, and esteem. These needs significantly influence a person's psychological state. If *D-Needs* are not met, a person can experience stress, frustration, low self-esteem, or even internal conflict. However, when these needs are met, these drives will diminish or even disappear.

b. *Being Needs (B-Needs)*

B-Needs are needs that don't stem from a lack of self-worth, but from a drive to grow and improve. These needs emerge when basic needs are relatively met. *B-Needs* are related to self-actualization, namely the desire to develop potential, find meaning in life, and become the best version of oneself. Fulfillment of *B-Needs* is never truly complete. The more a person develops, the greater the drive to continue learning, creating, and contributing. If *B-Needs* are not met, a person can feel empty, lose direction, or feel that their life is meaningless. Maslow stated that individuals who are able to fulfill *B-Needs* tend to be more creative, independent, and have a broader outlook on life (Pratama, 2022).

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Concept

According to Maslow, every individual has needs arranged hierarchically from the most basic to the highest level. Each time a need at the lowest level is met, a higher need emerges. Maslow's overall motivational theory is based on the idea that human needs can be classified into five hierarchies: physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, *esteem needs*, and self-actualization needs (Anisyah, 2023).

a. *Physiological needs*

Physiological needs are the most basic and directly related to human survival. These needs include food, drink, air, sleep, clothing, and shelter. Maslow considered physiological needs to be the primary foundation because without their fulfillment, humans cannot function normally. These needs are considered fundamental not only because



everyone requires them continuously from birth to death, but also because without the satisfaction of these various needs, a person cannot be said to live a normal life. Therefore, physiological needs are the top priority and must be met first.

b. The need for safety (*Safety needs*)

Once physiological needs are met, humans begin to seek safety. Safety needs relate not only to physical security but also to psychological and emotional security. In the context of modern life, safety needs can include having a stable job, health insurance, a conducive environment, and fair treatment. If someone feels threatened or insecure, their focus will be on self-preservation, rather than personal growth.

c. and Love *needs*

Humans are social creatures, so the need to be loved and connected to others is crucial. This need encompasses affection, friendship, family relationships, and acceptance within social groups. At this stage, humans begin to seek emotional closeness and a desire to belong to a community. If these needs are not met, a person can feel lonely, isolated, or unappreciated, which can ultimately impact their mental health and personality (Khairun Nisa, 2024).

d. Esteem *needs*

Esteem needs relate to self-worth and recognition. Maslow divided these needs into two: self-esteem and esteem from others. Self-esteem encompasses self-confidence, competence, and independence, while esteem from others encompasses status, achievement, and social recognition. Fulfilling esteem needs can make a person feel valuable and confident. Conversely, if these needs are not met, an individual may feel inferior, insecure, or dependent on the judgment of others.

e. Self -*Actualization* Needs

Self-actualization is the highest need in Maslow's hierarchy. At this stage, humans are driven to develop their full potential and become the



best version of themselves. Self-actualization no longer focuses on fulfilling deficiencies, but on growth and achieving meaning in life. Each person exhibits a different form of self-actualization. Some express it through creativity, education, social work, or specific achievements (Kurniawan Erik, 2024). According to Maslow, individuals who achieve self-actualization tend to have mature, creative personalities and are able to accept themselves and others.

Physiological needs and the need for safety are internal needs, and the only person who can feel fulfilled is the individual. Only the person themselves can feel that they are full, that they are comfortably dressed, and likewise, only they can judge that they are safe and comfortable. Others can see from the outside, but the only one who feels it is themselves. Two other needs—the need for love and affection and the need for self-esteem—are obtained through gifts from others. Without others, these needs cannot be felt fulfilled. Meanwhile, another need, the need for self-actualization, is a need that embodies the goal of humans as human beings who can develop each of their unique potentials.

There are several principles that need to be understood regarding Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory which can be used as a reference in its application, namely:

- a. Motivation ceases when needs are met. This suggests that motivation arises when a person seeks to fulfill their needs.
- b. Unfulfilled needs can cause stress, frustration, and even trigger conflict. This indicates that the motivation initially stemming from stress can lead to turmoil and out of control.
- c. Maslow assumed that everyone has a need to grow and develop. As long as humans have hope, they will always strive to fulfill higher-order needs. Although fulfilling hierarchical needs is true for some people and not for others (Anisyah, 2023).



The Relevance of Abraham Maslow's Theory to Islamic Values

Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory can be viewed from an Islamic perspective, and there are many points of agreement. Maslow viewed humans as beings with hierarchical needs and a drive for growth. This view aligns with Islam, which also views humans as beings with potential and a purpose in life. The difference lies in the direction and ultimate goal of fulfilling these needs. In Islam, fulfilling human needs is not only aimed at worldly well-being but also directed toward achieving God's pleasure and happiness in the afterlife. Therefore, Maslow's theory, initially secular in nature, needs to be enriched with spiritual values to better align with Islamic perspectives (Khairul Ummam, 2023).

When linked to the concept of Maqasid Syariah, physiological needs and a sense of security in Maslow's theory can be understood as part of efforts to safeguard life and property. Islam strongly emphasizes the importance of preserving human life, health, and security. In fact, fulfilling basic needs such as food and drink in Islam is not only biological but also constitutes acts of worship if done with the right intention (Redi Irawan, 2022). The need for love and belonging also aligns with Islamic teachings on compassion, brotherhood, and togetherness. Islam teaches the importance of maintaining good relationships within the family, community, and community. Healthy social relationships not only provide emotional comfort but also strengthen humanitarian values and social solidarity.

The need for esteem in Maslow's theory is related to the concept of maintaining dignity and self-esteem in Islam. Islam teaches that every human being has a dignity that must be protected. However, Islam also reminds us that human worth is determined not only by social recognition but also by devotion to God. Problems begin to emerge when self-actualization is positioned as the ultimate goal in Maslow's theory. In Islam, self-development remains important, but not as the ultimate goal. Islam views humans not only as being required to develop their potential but also to use that potential for worship



and to benefit others. Through the Maqasid Sharia approach, human needs in Islam are not arranged in a rigid pyramid. These needs are interrelated and can coexist. Under certain circumstances, maintaining religion can become a top priority, even when physical needs are not fully met. This demonstrates the crucial role that spiritual needs play in human life.

Islam also recognizes the division of needs into three levels: daruriyat, hajiyat, and tahsiniyat. Daruriyat needs are very basic and must be met for life to run smoothly. Hajiyat needs function to facilitate life, while tahsiniyat needs aim to beautify and perfect the quality of human life (Khairul Ummam, 2023). When Maslow's theory is combined with Islamic values, the ultimate goal of fulfilling human needs no longer stops at self-actualization, but leads to the achievement of insan kamil. Insan kamil is a depiction of a human being who is balanced between physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs. Humans not only develop for themselves, but are also aware of their role as servants of Allah and caliphs on earth.

Case study

This case study tells the story of an employee named Budi, whose career path can be linked to Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. Early in his career, Budi focused solely on meeting basic living needs, such as food and shelter. At the time, Budi was a contract employee with a limited salary, so his work motivation was primarily driven by economic needs. After some time, Budi's status changed to permanent. With a permanent contract, Budi began to feel more secure, having job security and a clearer future. This sense of security made Budi less anxious about the economy and his job.

Budi's hard work subsequently paid off with awards and recognition from the company. He received recognition for his achievements, which boosted his self-confidence. Subsequently, Budi chose to take on new, more challenging projects. This decision wasn't solely for bonuses or material rewards, but rather for a desire to test his abilities and gain inner satisfaction.



An In-depth Study of Abraham Maslow's Theory with Case Studies

Budi's case demonstrates that a person's motivation to work doesn't immediately arise from major concerns like self-development, but rather stems from the simplest needs. The changes in Budi's working conditions led to a shift in his motivational direction over time. This aligns with Maslow's view that human motivation develops gradually.

1. Fulfillment of physiological needs

Early in his career, Budi was motivated by meeting basic needs like food, clothing, and shelter. This aligns with Maslow's theory that physiological needs are the most basic and must be met before other needs arise.

2. Fulfillment of the need for a sense of security

After becoming a permanent employee, Budi felt more at ease because he had job security and a future. This indicated that his need for security was starting to be met, allowing him to focus on other things.

3. Fulfillment of social needs (sense of belonging)

Budi began actively socializing with his coworkers to feel accepted in his work environment. This aligns with Maslow's social needs theory, where humans desire to feel part of a group.

4. Fulfillment of the need for appreciation

Awards and recognition for his work achievements boosted Budi's self-confidence. This demonstrates that his need for recognition, both from others and from himself, is being met.

5. Self-actualization

Budi took on challenging projects not for material rewards, but because he wanted to develop his skills and feel inner satisfaction. This demonstrates that Budi has reached the stage of self-actualization, as per Maslow's theory.

CONCLUSION



Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory explains how human motivation develops gradually, starting with the fulfillment of basic needs and progressing to self-actualization. This theory suggests that humans are not immediately driven to develop themselves, but must first fulfill physiological and safety needs before moving on to social, esteem, and self-development needs. The application of Maslow's theory to Budi's case study demonstrates that changes in living conditions and work can influence the direction of a person's motivation. Budi, who initially worked to fulfill basic needs, then evolved to seek challenges and inner satisfaction, in accordance with Maslow's stages of needs.

When linked to Islamic values, Maslow's theory has many parallels, particularly regarding the fulfillment of basic and social needs. However, Islam places the purpose of human life not only on achieving self-actualization, but also on devotion to God and providing benefits to others. Therefore, Maslow's theory can be understood as a more complete depiction of human motivation when combined with Islamic spiritual values.

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