



INTEGRATION OF MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS AND ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL VALUES IN IMPROVING THE PERFORMANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS IN RA

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Abstract

This study aims to deconstruct the relevance of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory in the Islamic education ecosystem at Raudhatul Athfal (RA) in Purbalingga Regency. The phenomenon shows the stability of educator performance despite limited material well-being. Using a descriptive qualitative method through a phenomenological study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with RA teachers who have high dedication in the area. Data analysis was carried out through the stages of reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions using source triangulation techniques to ensure data validity. The results of the study revealed the phenomenon of "Transcendental Self-Actualization," where educators make a hierarchical leap from basic needs directly to self-actualization based on Islamic values (Lillahita'ala). This finding proves that the value Qana'ah And Sincere functions as a spiritual moderating variable that negates the linearity of Maslow's theory in a religious context. The implications of this research suggest the need for a human resource management model in Islamic educational institutions that integrates the fulfillment of psychophysical needs with strengthening afterlife motivation in order to maintain the resilience of educator professionalism.

Keywords: Transcendental Self-Actualization; Maslow's hierarchy of needs; Islamic educational values; early childhood educator performance; Raudhatul Athfal;

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education plays a fundamental role because it serves as the initial stage in developing children's cognitive, socio-emotional, language, moral, and character abilities (UNICEF, 2021). In the context of Raudhatul Athfal (RA), education is not only focused on preparing children for learning, but also on nurturing religious values, manners, and good character from an early age (Mukaromah et al., 2025). Therefore, RA teachers are not merely expected to act as instructors, but also as caregivers, moral role models, spiritual guides, and facilitators of children's development (Zhou & Nanakida, 2023). These complex responsibilities require educators to maintain stable, reflective, and meaningful performance so that the learning process does not become limited to administrative routines (Ulfiani et al., 2026). In this regard, the performance of RA educators should be understood as the result of the interaction between competence, motivation, psychological well-being, institutional support, and Islamic value orientation.

The performance problems faced by PAUD/RA educators often stem from an imbalance between professional demands, work appreciation, welfare, psychological security, and opportunities for self-development (Syukur & Sani, 2026). RA teachers are expected to provide learning experiences that are warm, creative, and grounded in religious values, yet in practice not all institutions are able to offer adequate financial and organizational support (Uzliva et al., n.d.). This situation indicates that low teacher performance is not always caused by weak commitment, but may also result from unmet basic and psychological needs. When teachers feel insecure, undervalued, or lack opportunities for self-actualization, their professional energy is more likely to be spent on coping with challenges rather than improving the quality of learning (Syukur & Sani, 2026). Therefore, improving the performance of RA educators requires an approach that not only focuses on supervision and evaluation, but also addresses the broader human needs of educators in a more holistic way (Hasanah et al., 2025).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs can be used to understand educators' work motivation because this theory explains that human behavior is influenced by the fulfillment of physiological needs, safety, social belonging, esteem, and self-actualization (Marlina et al., 2025). In the RA environment, physiological and safety needs are reflected in adequate salaries, job security, a safe working atmosphere, and emotional support from school leaders and fellow teachers (Syukur & Sani, 2026). Social and esteem needs can be seen through community acceptance, family-like relationships within the institution, appreciation from parents, and recognition of teachers' roles in shaping children's character (Raihan & Listyasari, 2026). Meanwhile, self-actualization emerges when teachers are given opportunities to develop their potential, innovate in teaching, and view their profession as a form of service and dedication (Dahlan R, 2025). However, in the context of Islamic education, this hierarchy does not always operate in a linear way because values such as worship, sincerity, trustworthiness, and spiritual responsibility can provide motivational strength that goes beyond material needs (Jailani, 2026).

Theoretically, Maslow argues that self-actualization represents the highest level of human achievement. However, within the reality of Islamic education, the meaning of self-actualization expands into a form of devotion to the Creator (*Lillahita 'ala*). There is still a knowledge gap regarding how RA teachers interpret "basic needs" and "security" amid limited facilities, as well as how Islamic values function as a driving force that goes beyond merely physical needs (Ikhwan, 2019). As emphasized by Madjid, the fulfillment of physical needs in Islam is not considered the ultimate goal, but rather a means to achieve greater social and spiritual well-being (Madjid, 2019). The issue of low financial compensation for RA teachers in Purbalingga is often viewed as a major barrier to professionalism, yet several recent studies indicate the existence of resilience mechanisms strengthened by religiosity factors (Saputra, 2026). The gap between material welfare and the demands for educational quality therefore calls for a redefinition of conventional motivation theories within the context of Islamic schools and madrasahs.

Islamic educational values provide an ethical framework for RA educators in carrying out their roles as a trust (*amanah*), an act of worship, and a form of service toward the natural development of children (*fitrah*) (Anugrah, 2026). Values such as sincerity, patience, excellence (*ihsan*), fairness, compassion, and responsibility are not only taught in the classroom, but also serve as the foundation of teachers' professional behavior (Fauziah et al., 2026). In RA practice, teacher success is not measured solely by academic achievement, but also by the development of children's character, independence, discipline, and religious habits (Mukaromah et al., 2025). Nevertheless, spiritual values should not be used as a reason to neglect teachers' welfare, since professionalism still requires proper material, psychological, and institutional support (Zhou & Nanakida, 2023). Therefore, integrating Maslow's theory with Islamic educational values is important in balancing the fulfillment of educators' human needs with the strengthening of religious meaning in their work (Al Khurriyyah et al., 2026).

Research on teacher performance has widely highlighted the influence of motivation, job satisfaction, leadership, work environment, and school culture on the quality of educators' performance (Ulfiani et al., 2026). Studies in Islamic education have also explored the internalization of values, character building, religious moderation, and the strengthening of Islamic institutional culture (Fauziah et al., 2026). However, there is still a gap in research that specifically integrates Maslow's hierarchy of needs with Islamic educational values to explain the performance of early childhood educators in RA institutions (Marlina et al., 2025). This gap is important because RA educators work in a unique setting that combines early childhood care, character education, and the development of religious values from the earliest stages of child development (Anugrah, 2026). Based on this background, the main question of this study is how the integration of Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Islamic educational values can improve the performance of early childhood educators in RA, and which aspects of needs and values play the most significant role in shaping that performance (Setiyono et al., 2026).

This study is important because improving the quality of RA education cannot rely solely on curriculum development and administrative improvements, but must also involve strengthening teachers' motivation, well-being, and sense of meaning in their work (Raihan & Listyasari, 2026). The integration of Maslow's theory with Islamic educational values offers a more comprehensive perspective by viewing teachers as individuals with biological, psychological, social, professional, and spiritual needs at the same time (Jailani, 2026). Theoretically, this research contributes to the field of Islamic educational management by presenting a work motivation framework that combines humanistic psychology with religious ethics and values (Marlina et al., 2025). Practically, the findings are expected

to provide guidance for RA principals, educational foundations, and policymakers in designing teacher performance improvement strategies that are more humane, fair, and spiritually grounded. Therefore, this topic deserves further attention because it addresses a central issue in the quality of Islamic early childhood education, namely how educators can perform optimally when their needs are acknowledged and their Islamic values become a source of strength and motivation.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological research design to understand the lived experiences of RA teachers in Purbalingga in interpreting life needs and work motivation from the perspective of Islamic education (Creswell, 2014). The research participants were selected through purposive sampling, focusing on RA teachers who had served for more than ten years and were recognized for their high dedication despite limited welfare conditions. The data sources were obtained through in-depth interviews, participatory observations within the school environment, and documentation such as teachers' notes and institutional policies. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews to explore the teachers' subjective experiences, observations of teacher-student interactions, and documentation studies related to the institution's vision, mission, and teacher welfare policies (Sugiyono, 2020). Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and continuous conclusion drawing and verification. To ensure data validity, the study applied source triangulation by comparing information from teachers, principals, and parents, as well as member checking to reconfirm the findings with the research participants.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

1. Deconstructing Basic Needs: Between Material Realities and Mental Resilience

The findings from in-depth interviews with RA teachers in Purbalingga reveal that physiological needs and the need for security remain significant concerns, particularly regarding adequate income, job stability, and welfare guarantees. However, these limitations do not automatically weaken teacher performance, as the participants perceive the teaching profession as a trust (*amanah*) and a form of devotion within Islamic education. This finding is consistent with studies showing that working conditions and a sense of security strongly influence the well-being and performance stability of early childhood educators (Handoko et al., 2026). Nevertheless, within the context of RA, work motivation is not solely based on material fulfillment, but is also shaped by spiritual values, a sense of responsibility, and emotional closeness with students. This indicates that while basic needs remain important, the professional resilience of RA teachers is strongly supported by the religious meaning they attach to their work. Teacher A explained:

"If we talk about salaries in RA, honestly, they are often not enough to cover monthly needs. But I still feel secure because the school environment feels like a family, and I believe that Allah has already determined our sustenance as long as we are willing to devote ourselves sincerely."

These findings indicate that within the RA ecosystem, safety needs are understood not only as financial security, but also as emotional and spiritual security gained through an Islamic work environment. This demonstrates that even though Maslow's basic needs are not fully fulfilled materially, teachers' perceptions of "sufficiency" are strongly influenced by the concept of *qana'ah* (contentment). The findings answer the research question regarding how teachers respond to limited facilities while still maintaining their professionalism. They also suggest that the concept of needs in Maslow's hierarchy becomes contextualized when applied to Islamic educational institutions, since the meaning of "sufficiency" is measured not only through material aspects, but also through the values of *qana'ah*, gratitude, and meaningful living. This condition is in line with the study by Zhou and Nanakida (2023), which emphasizes that teachers' emotional well-being affects performance stability, and is further supported by Al Khurriyyah and Sabarudin (2026), who argue that Islamic spiritual values can strengthen educators' motivation and psychological resilience. Therefore, these findings confirm that RA teachers are able to adapt to limited facilities without reducing their professionalism, because their work motivation is shaped not only by economic factors, but also by the internalization of Islamic educational values.

2. Social Affiliation and Recognition within the Framework of Ukhuwah

Scientifically, this finding indicates that the *esteem needs* stage in Maslow's theory undergoes a shift among Muslim educators, moving from self-esteem toward *social-religious contribution*. This form of social recognition becomes a powerful source of motivation, which Ikhwan (2019) describes as

religious social capital that helps maintain the resilience of educators in Islamic private schools (Ikhwan, 2019).

3. Aktualisasi Diri Transendental: Puncak Hierarki dalam Perspektif Islam

The most significant finding of this study is the reinterpretation of the concept of self-actualization. While Maslow defines self-actualization as the fulfillment of one's highest personal potential, RA teachers in Purbalingga understand it as a form of *Transcendental Self-Actualization*—devotion to Allah. As expressed by one of the participants:

“Teaching RA children is physically and mentally exhausting—especially because we have to be patient with their innocent and unpredictable behavior. But when I see even one or two children begin to recognize and read the *hijaiyah* letters, all the exhaustion suddenly feels worth it. At that moment, I realize this is not merely a job, but a calling as a servant of Allah to nurture children's love for the Qur'an from an early age. For me, carrying out this responsibility sincerely is the truest form of gratitude, because not everyone is given such a noble opportunity.”

This statement confirms the initial hypothesis that Islamic values reshape Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Self-actualization is no longer anthropocentric (human-centered), but becomes theocentric (God-centered). This finding is consistent with Madjid's (2002) perspective that the integration of faith (*iman*) and righteous deeds (*amal saleh*) creates an inner fulfillment that goes beyond material satisfaction.

4. Diskusi: Integrasi Maslow dan Paradigma Pendidikan Islam

The findings of this study critically demonstrate that Maslow's theory needs to be interpreted more flexibly within the context of religious communities. While Maslow argues that human needs must be fulfilled sequentially, step by step, the findings from the field reveal the phenomenon of a “Hierarchy Leap.” RA teachers are able to achieve self-actualization and maintain high professional performance even though their physiological needs remain at a modest or pre-prosperous level.

The implication is that work motivation in Islamic education does not operate in a strictly linear way. Islamic values function as a catalyst that enables individuals to transcend material and physical limitations. The consistency of these findings with the study by Syam et al. (2020) strengthens the argument that spirituality is a key element in Islamic educational management that should not be overlooked. What makes this study different, however, is its ability to capture the unique phenomenon in Purbalingga, where local wisdom and the pesantren culture strongly contribute to strengthening the psychological resilience of educators.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses in depth the dynamics of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs within the Islamic educational ecosystem of RA in Purbalingga. Based on a qualitative phenomenological approach, the findings do not merely describe the sequence of teachers' needs—from physiological and safety needs to social needs, esteem, and self-actualization—but also reveal a process of reinterpretation of those needs through Islamic values. In this context, teachers' work motivation does not develop linearly as assumed in Maslow's original hierarchy, but is strongly influenced by the values of *qana'ah* (contentment), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood), sincerity, and worship-oriented commitment. This phenomenon explains the occurrence of a “hierarchy leap,” in which teachers are still able to demonstrate strong performance, dedication, and self-actualization even when their material needs have not been fully fulfilled. Therefore, this discussion aims to interpret the relationship between the field findings, Maslow's theory, and Islamic educational values as the foundation for the professional resilience of RA educators.

The findings related to transcendental self-actualization in this study are consistent with the concept of transcendental motivation, which views work not merely as a professional activity, but as a form of devotion that carries spiritual and moral dimensions (Al Khurriyyah et al., 2026). RA teachers in Purbalingga demonstrate that professional success is not measured solely by material achievement, but also by the positive impact they have on students and by the worship-oriented values attached to the teaching profession. This condition shows that the integration of Maslow's humanistic psychology with Islamic spirituality is capable of forming a work motivation model that goes beyond physical needs and moves toward the search for meaning in life (*meaningful work*) (Kumar, 2023). In addition, the organizational culture of RA institutions in Central Java, which is strongly characterized by family values, togetherness, and social support, also strengthens teachers' job satisfaction and emotional resilience despite limited material welfare. These findings confirm that a work environment grounded

in religious values and supportive social relationships can become an effective source of intrinsic motivation in maintaining the consistent performance of early childhood educators.

Pola motivasi pendidik RA di Purbalingga menunjukkan kemiripan dengan etos kerja mujahid education, namely a work orientation driven more by a spirit of dedication and moral responsibility than by purely material interests. Teachers view the teaching profession as part of social worship, so the inner satisfaction they feel when witnessing the development of children's character and religiosity becomes more meaningful than temporary financial incentives. These findings indicate that, within the context of Islamic education, Maslow's hierarchy of needs undergoes a reinterpretation, as the fulfillment of basic needs is no longer understood in purely individualistic or materialistic terms, but is instead connected to spiritual values such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), contentment (*qana'ah*), and trustworthiness (*amanah*). This condition is consistent with Kumar's (2023) study, which emphasizes that intrinsic motivation based on meaningful work has a strong influence on the consistency of teacher performance, especially in value-based educational environments (Kumar, 2023). In addition, Dahlan et al. (2025) found that teachers who perceive their profession as a form of devotion tend to demonstrate stronger work resilience and higher professional commitment despite limited welfare conditions (Dahlan R, 2025). Therefore, these findings strengthen the argument that for Muslim educators, the fulfillment of needs within Maslow's framework shifts toward a spiritual-transcendental orientation rooted in Islamic educational values.

1. The Dialectics of Basic Needs and Educator Resilience

The initial focus of this study was to understand how RA teachers interpret basic needs, particularly *physiological needs* and *safety needs*, amid the limitations of material welfare they experience. The findings reveal that, for RA educators in Purbalingga, the fulfillment of basic needs is not viewed as the ultimate goal, but rather as a minimum requirement that enables them to carry out their educational responsibilities properly and sustainably. Interview data show that low financial incentives do not directly weaken teachers' psychological stability or professional commitment. This condition is influenced by what this study refers to as *spiritual security*, namely a sense of inner peace that grows from a religious work environment, harmonious social relationships, and emotional support among fellow teachers. This phenomenon indicates that the concept of safety within Maslow's hierarchy expands in meaning when applied to the context of Islamic education, because security is understood not only in economic terms, but also in relation to inner peace, social acceptance, and spiritual conviction (Al Khurriyyah et al., 2026).

This phenomenon can be explained through the perspective of Islamic education, which views the fulfillment of physical needs as part of *hifdzun nafs* within the framework of *maqashid syariah*, namely the effort to preserve human life and dignity. However, the findings of this study reveal that RA teachers in Purbalingga do not consider material needs as the sole source of work motivation, but rather as a basic support that enables them to carry out their educational responsibilities. The participants demonstrated a strong ability to adapt while maintaining professional commitment despite economic limitations, as long as their spiritual and social needs were fulfilled through a religious and supportive work environment. These findings indicate that Maslow's hierarchy of needs does not function rigidly or linearly within the context of RA, because spiritual needs can become a psychological source of strength that reduces the pressure caused by unmet physiological needs. This condition is in line with Kumar's (2023) study, which emphasizes that meaningful work and intrinsic motivation have a strong influence on teacher performance, and is further supported by Zhou and Nanakida (2023), who found that emotional stability and inner satisfaction play important roles in maintaining the quality of early childhood educators' work (Kumar, 2023); (Zhou & Nanakida, 2023). Therefore, RA educators in Purbalingga demonstrate a strong form of professional resilience; they do not wait until they achieve material prosperity to work optimally, because their sense of devotion and spiritual values have become the primary sources of motivation in carrying out the teaching profession.

2. Redefining Self-Actualization: From Anthropocentric to Theocentric

The most important scientific interpretation of these findings lies in the shift in the meaning of self-actualization among RA educators. In Maslow's theory, self-actualization is understood as the human drive to develop one's fullest potential in order to achieve personal fulfillment and recognition of one's abilities. However, the findings of this study show that RA teachers in Purbalingga are still able to maintain high performance even without adequate material rewards or professional status. This phenomenon indicates that the orientation of self-actualization has transformed from being *ego-oriented* to *Allah-oriented*, namely the motivation to work optimally as a form of worship, devotion, and spiritual

responsibility. In this context, success is no longer interpreted merely as an individual achievement, but as the ability to fulfill the educational trust (*amanah*) and contribute to the moral development of students. These findings strengthen the view that Islamic spirituality is capable of reconstructing the concept of self-actualization into *transcendental self-actualization*, a process of self-development that is oriented toward meaningfulness, sincerity, and closeness to Allah (Al Khurriyyah et al., 2026). In addition, Kumar (2023) emphasizes that intrinsic motivation rooted in meaningful work has a significant influence on teacher performance (Kumar, 2023), while Zhou and Nanakida (2023) found that inner satisfaction and self-efficacy are important factors in maintaining the consistency of early childhood educators' performance (Zhou & Nanakida, 2023). Therefore, these findings demonstrate that within the ecosystem of Islamic education, self-actualization does not stop at personal achievement, but develops into a form of spiritual devotion that fosters both professional resilience and strong work performance.

This study identifies the phenomenon of *Transcendental Self-Actualization*. The teachers interpret success in educating early childhood students as a form of fulfilling God's command. Scientifically, the values of *ikhlas* (sincerity) and *lillahita'ala* (doing something solely for the sake of Allah) function as cognitive intervening variables that transform perceptions of workload into opportunities for spiritual reward. Psychologically, this represents a very strong form of *meaning-making*. When a teacher sees a student successfully pronounce the *hijaiyah* letters, the teacher experiences a deep sense of inner satisfaction which, in Western psychology, may be comparable to a *peak experience*, while in the Islamic perspective it is understood as a manifestation of gratitude (*syukur*). This explains why their performance remains strong and consistent; their standard of performance is not determined merely by formal work contracts, but by a spiritual commitment to the Creator.

3. Consistency and Theoretical

When compared with previous studies, the findings of this research offer a new contribution to the field of Islamic educational management, particularly regarding the relationship between work motivation, spirituality, and educator professionalism. In the context of RA in Purbalingga, a religious work culture and harmonious social relationships have proven to be important sources of psychological strength that help teachers maintain high-quality performance despite limitations in material welfare. These findings indicate that the spiritual dimension in Islamic education functions not merely as a normative value, but also as a form of social and psychological capital that strengthens educators' professional resilience.

This study also reveals a fundamental difference from the classical interpretation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which places physiological and safety needs as primary prerequisites before individuals can reach self-actualization. The findings identify the phenomenon of *hierarchy skipping*, where RA teachers are still able to achieve self-actualization through devotion, meaningful work, and worship-oriented motivation even though their material needs have not been fully fulfilled. This condition suggests that, within the perspective of Islamic education, self-actualization does not always depend on economic stability, but can instead be driven by the dimension of *ihsan*—the awareness of working optimally because one feels observed and valued by Allah. In this sense, spirituality acts as a transcendental force that enables individuals to transcend material limitations while maintaining professional commitment and performance. These findings are consistent with the study by Al Khurriyyah and Sabarudin (2026), which emphasizes that integrating Islamic values with humanistic theory can create a more holistic form of motivation (Al Khurriyyah et al., 2026), and are further supported by Kumar (2023), who found that intrinsic motivation rooted in meaningful work strongly influences teacher performance (Kumar, 2023). Therefore, this research offers a new perspective that the hierarchy of needs within Islamic educational institutions is more flexible and contextual than Maslow's universalistic formulation.

The findings of this study also differ from many studies conducted in secular educational settings, which generally place salary level as the dominant factor in shaping teachers' motivation and job satisfaction. In much of the modern educational research, the relationship between financial welfare and work performance tends to be linear, where higher income is assumed to lead to stronger professional motivation and greater work loyalty (Kumar, 2023). However, the findings from RA institutions in Purbalingga reveal a more complex and non-linear pattern, because teachers' work motivation is influenced not only by economic factors, but also moderated by local religiosity, a culture of devotion, and spiritual values embedded within the institution. The teachers continue to demonstrate strong

commitment, discipline, and emotional engagement even though material incentives are still limited, because the teaching profession is understood as part of a moral trust (*amanah*) and social worship. This condition shows that religiosity functions as a *psychological buffer factor* that helps teachers maintain emotional stability and professional commitment despite welfare limitations. These findings are consistent with the study by Zhou and Nanakida (2023), which found that inner satisfaction and self-efficacy significantly influence the work resilience of early childhood educators (Zhou & Nanakida, 2023). Therefore, this study confirms that, within the context of Islamic education, teacher work motivation cannot be explained solely through a rational economic approach, but must also be understood through the integration of psychological needs, religious culture, and spiritual orientation.

4. Implications and Directions for Future Research

The implications of this study are broad, both theoretically and practically. From a theoretical perspective, the findings strengthen the idea of the “Islamization of Humanistic Psychology,” which seeks to reconstruct Maslow’s hierarchy of needs by positioning the spiritual dimension as the primary foundation in shaping human motivation and work behavior. The results show that within the context of Islamic education, spiritual needs do not merely appear as complementary elements after material needs have been fulfilled, but instead function as the main source of energy that sustains educators’ resilience, loyalty, and professionalism. These findings also expand the critique of Maslow’s model, which tends to be universalistic and individualistic, because in the lived reality of RA teachers in Purbalingga, self-actualization emerges from a sense of devotion and worship-oriented values. Therefore, this study contributes conceptually by demonstrating that the integration of humanistic psychology with Islamic educational values can produce a more holistic and contextual approach to work motivation within religious-based educational institutions.

From a practical perspective, the findings provide important insights for policymakers, particularly the Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Purbalingga Regency, that improving the quality of RA teachers cannot rely solely on technical training (*hard skills*) and instructional administration. Strengthening teacher quality must also include efforts to preserve the spiritual ecosystem and religious work culture that have become major sources of teachers’ psychological resilience in carrying out their educational duties. A harmonious, appreciative, and Islamic value-based work environment has proven to strengthen job satisfaction and sustain teacher motivation despite limitations in material welfare. Therefore, policies for RA teacher development should ideally adopt an integrative approach that combines professional competency improvement with spiritual development, teacher community strengthening, and institutional emotional support. Meanwhile, future research could focus on comparative studies between RA teachers in urban and rural areas to examine how socio-geographical contexts influence teachers’ interpretations of life needs and work motivation. In addition, long-term ethnographic approaches would be valuable in understanding how religious values, a culture of devotion, and spiritual orientations are transmitted from teachers to students in the daily life of RA institutions.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

This study concludes that the integration of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs with Islamic educational values creates a work motivation pattern among RA educators that differs from conventional motivational approaches. RA teachers in Purbalingga are able to maintain professionalism and high-quality performance even though their physiological and material security needs have not been ideally fulfilled. The main finding of this research is the phenomenon of *transcendental self-actualization*, in which educators perceive their work as a form of worship, devotion, and trust (*amanah*) to Allah SWT. Islamic values such as *ikhlas* (sincerity), *qana’ah* (contentment), *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood), and *lillahita’ala* (working solely for the sake of Allah) have proven to be psychological strengths that shape teachers’ resilience, inner satisfaction, and professional commitment. Therefore, the hierarchy of needs within the context of Islamic education does not operate linearly as described in Maslow’s classical formulation, but instead undergoes a reconceptualization through the spiritual dimension and religious culture embedded in the RA environment. These findings also demonstrate that spirituality functions as a moderating factor that helps maintain educators’ motivational stability and work resilience despite limitations in material welfare.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of Islamic educational management through the approach of the “Islamization of humanistic psychology,” by positioning spiritual needs as a central foundation in shaping teachers’ work motivation. The findings also strengthen the argument

that Muslim educators' professionalism is not shaped solely by economic and administrative factors, but is strongly influenced by devotion-oriented values, meaningful work, and a supportive religious environment. Practically, this research provides implications for RA administrators and policymakers within the Ministry of Religious Affairs, emphasizing that teacher quality development should not focus only on improving technical competencies, but also on strengthening spiritual culture, social support, and educators' psychological well-being. A harmonious work environment grounded in Islamic values has been shown to strengthen job satisfaction and maintain the long-term consistency of teacher performance. Therefore, human resource management in Islamic educational institutions needs to integrate professional development with continuous spiritual guidance and support. Future studies are recommended to develop comparative and longitudinal research in order to explore the dynamics of transcendental motivation among RA teachers across different social and geographical contexts.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that Islamic educational institutions develop a human resource management model that focuses not only on improving teachers' technical competencies and material welfare, but also on strengthening their spiritual dimension, religious work culture, and psychosocial support. RA administrators and policymakers within the Ministry of Religious Affairs are expected to design integrative teacher development programs through professional training grounded in Islamic values, the strengthening of teacher communities, and the creation of harmonious and supportive work environments. Theoretically, this study also opens opportunities for the development of a new concept of a "spiritual hierarchy of needs" within the perspective of Islamic education as an enrichment of Maslow's humanistic theory, which has long been viewed as universalistic and material-oriented. In addition, future research is recommended to employ longitudinal or ethnographic approaches in order to examine more deeply the long-term dynamics of teachers' transcendental motivation, including how religious values and a culture of devotion are transmitted to students in the daily life of RA institutions.

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