

SELF-ACTUALIZATION IN IWAN SIMATUPANG'S NOVEL ZIARAH

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Abstract

A person should achieve maximum satisfaction in life and achieve balance between physical, emotional, social and spiritual aspects as the manifestation of self-actualization. This research aims to reveal that an individual who experiences a self-actualization process is able to recognize and develop their talents, abilities and values. The entire research is carried out using a qualitative descriptive method to reveal that self-actualization can be used as a guide to achieving harmony between all elements of the environment. In the data collection procedures, all the data with a focus on self-actualization are gathered from the novel, covering a comprehensive data selection to meet the objectives of the study. The selected data are then sorted out to be conformed with the types of self-actualization as the points of analysis. For the data analysis, deductive frequency method of analysis is applied, going from general to specific analysis. All the types of data needed are classified, coded and interpreted comprehensively based on the focus of the study. The main data source is obtained from the novel above and subsequently from other related references. By using a humanistic psychology approach with the concept of the process of self-understanding which is then generated with the theory of human needs by Abraham Maslow, with a formulation of the levels of human needs starting from the most basic to gaining self-understanding, it is found that the novel contains the concept of self-actualization in the form of free will, responsibility and self-awareness.

Keywords: *free will; responsibility; self-actualization; self-awareness*

1. Introduction

Self-actualization is a need for everyone and closely related to a person's existence. Both self-actualization and recognition of one's existence are basic psychological needs (Farimani & Shahri, 2020). Everyone wants to be recognized, respected and accepted by their environment and this is an absolute natural thing. The intensity of this need varies between individuals; tailored to the needs and satisfaction of each individual. Recognition of one's existence encourages a person to discover or increase self-actualization, a peak phase of individual development that describes the achievement of one's potential (Gawel, 2019; Andrew, Daniel, Jason, Smith & Huang, 2019; Deckers, 2018)

From a psychiatric or personality perspective, an individual can gain emotional and psychological well-being. Individuals who experience achieving their full potential tend to have higher levels of happiness and lower levels of stress. The process of self-actualization

allows a person to overcome internal obstacles, develop self-confidence, and build strong mental resilience. Furthermore, self-actualization promotes positive contributions to society and the world around them. When someone reaches the peak of their potential, they tend to have a positive influence in their social environment. This may take the form of contributions through works of art, scientific research, community development, or other forms of empowerment that bring collective benefit (Eleonora, Saeed & Niki, 2022; Abbas, 2020).

In literary works, self-actualization is depicted in the characters going on a life journey to achieve their full potential, which can also be colored by self-transformation through various obstacles or conflicts they face. Themes such as the search for identity, personal achievement, and the search for the meaning of life are often at the heart of stories in literary works. Literature provides a platform for exploring various human dimensions, including aspirations and the journey towards self-actualization. Literary works are not just entertainment but are also a means to understand the human journey towards self-actualization, through realistic and imaginative representations offered by writers (Ştefan, Popa & Albu, 2020; Navy, 2020).

A novel that provides a significant picture of self-actualization is the novel *Ziarah* by Iwan Simatupang in Yogyakarta by Djangkat in 1969. Iwan Simatupang is a national literary figure who has a big name on the Indonesian literary scene with works that are always presented naturally, based on objectivity; the storyline in his work just flows without bias. The novel *Ziarah* tells the story of the journey of a man named Puntoh who tries to find the meaning of life and truth. This journey can be interpreted physically, but it also has spiritual and philosophical dimensions. During his journey, Puntoh meets various characters and faces various situations that help him explore life and the meaning of his existence. Meeting these figures makes Puntoh more mature in thinking and at the same time have wider insight into the real world and the spiritual world.

The storyline in this novel is multi-layered and filled with philosophical symbols. Iwan Simatupang uses a rich and complicated language style to describe the main character's inner journey. This novel not only invites readers to reflect, but also creates an atmosphere of a literary world full of questions. With a writing style that leads to an existential flow, which refers to existing reality, the author has become a legendary figure in the world of Indonesian literature.

The novel *Ziarah* by Iwan Simatupang is worthy of analysis, among other things, because of its creative and innovative writing style, namely a provocative presentation to the reader through new ideas such as not being biased towards a conventional moral message. Furthermore, the use of symbols and metaphors allows the reader to become immersed in reflection to obtain the meaning of life and human existence, a deepening of philosophy. The rich and poetic language style creates a special atmosphere, while the in-depth characterization of the major character, adds depth to the narrative. This novel also invites readers to be actively involved in the interpretation and understanding of literary works and also the world of spirituality, in this case self-actualization.

The research is focused on self-actualization, from the major characters because the entire storyline focuses on them. Self-actualization is a person's process of becoming themselves and developing their unique psychological traits and potential according to what they are born with. The process of self-actualization involves a deep understanding of strengths, talents, values, and life goals. A person who experiences self-actualization has high self-awareness, can overcome obstacles, and takes full responsibility for their life. It

involves skill development, personal growth, and discovery of the meaning of life. This concept, proposed by psychologist Abraham Maslow, emphasizes the importance of fulfilling basic needs before a person can reach the level of self-actualization. On the journey towards self-actualization, a person develops a balance between personal needs and contribution to society. This process can include self-exploration, skill development, emotional management, and the creation of meaningful relationships. Self-actualization is not an endpoint, but rather a lifelong journey that involves constant reflection and ongoing growth. There are three discussion points related to self-actualization in this research: , responsibility and self-awareness and self-actualization is the generic theory of humanistic psychology then used as the approach in this research.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Humanistic Psychology

Self-actualization or the process of obtaining self-actualization is found in the Hierarchy of Needs theory initiated by Abraham Maslow; Individuals will focus on satisfying higher level needs only after lower level needs have been met. This concept helps explain human motivation and behavior in achieving satisfaction and personal growth. This theory is basically centered on humanistic psychological theory as an umbrella for cognition, meaning that an understanding of basic human needs will be obtained after understanding humanistic psychological theory; referring to an approach in psychology concerned with mental processes and the way individuals obtain, store, process and use information including all forms of mental activity, perception, understanding, memory, problem solving and decision making (Farimani & Shahri, 2020; Hamendi, 2018).

Humanistic psychological theory emphasizes understanding and appreciating the positive aspects of human development. This theory views individuals as unique and complex entities, with a primary focus on understanding their full potential and the psychological needs that drive growth (Lestari, Waluyo, Wardani, Nugraheni, 2019; Friedman & Brown, 2018). One of the main concepts in humanistic theory is "self-actualization", describing the process of individuals reaching their maximum potential and becoming the best version of themselves. The leading figures in humanistic theory are Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. Maslow developed the Hierarchy of Needs, which lists various levels of human needs ranging from physiological needs to self-actualization needs. Rogers, on the other hand, contributed the concept of unconditional positive regard, which emphasizes the importance of unconditional support and appreciation for individuals for optimal psychological growth. Humanistic theory highlights the importance of concepts such as freedom, responsibility, and subjective experience in the formation of personality. Humanists also view individuals as beings who are active in the process of growth and forming their identity, not simply reactive to the external environment. Humanistic therapy approaches, such as Client Centered Therapy developed by Carl Rogers, focused on empathic listening, understanding, and the individual's encouragement of personal growth (Stephen, 2021). By emphasizing positive and constructive aspects, humanistic psychological theory makes a significant contribution to understanding and supporting holistic human development (Bland & DeRobertis, 2020; Roshida, 2020).

2.2 Hierarchy of Needs

The Hierarchy of Needs theory, proposed by Abraham Maslow, presents a view of human motivation and the urgent needs that shape individual behavior. This theory

organizes human needs into five hierarchical levels, starting from the most basic needs to the highest. At the lowest level, there are physiological needs such as food, water, and shelter. After physiological needs are met, individuals move to the level of security needs, including aspects of protection and stability. Next is the social need or affiliation need, where individuals seek social relationships and affection. The fourth level is the need for esteem or respect, including self-respect and recognition from others. At the highest level is the need for self-actualization, which involves striving to reach your full potential and become the best version of yourself. According to Maslow, individuals tend to satisfy lower level needs first before focusing on higher level needs. The Hierarchy of Needs Theory provides a basis for understanding motivational dynamics and guides understanding of an individual's developmental journey towards personal growth and self-fulfillment (Carduci, 2020; Rojas, Mendez & Watkins-Fassler, 2023; Lussier, 2023; Gawel, 2019).

2.3 Self-Actualization

Self-actualization theory, initiated by Abraham Maslow, is an important part of the Hierarchy of Needs Theory. The main focus of this theory is on the concept of self-actualization, the desire of humans to reach their full potential and become the best version of themselves. According to Maslow, self-actualization is the top level in the hierarchy of human needs, reflecting the drive for personal growth, creativity, and the achievement of meaningful personal goals. Individuals who experience self-actualization create authentic lives and fulfill their internal calling for personal growth and exploration of full potential. This process involves the pursuit of meaningful goals, creative problem solving, and deep self-exploration. Self-actualization theory emphasizes that to reach this level, individuals must have fulfilled needs at lower levels in the hierarchy, such as physiological, safety, social, and esteem needs. Therefore, self-actualization can be viewed as the highest achievement in personal development, where a person reaches the peak of his or her potential and experiences a life that is meaningful and fulfilling to the full (Navy, 2020; Compton, 2018; Shipunova, Berezovskaya & Smolskaia, 2019; Eleonora, Saeed & Niki, 2022; Dohlman, DiMeglio, Hajj & Laudanski, 2019).

2.3.1 Aspects of Self-Actualization

Based on a person's development process to obtain self-actualization, Maslow states:

1. Creativity: traits related to this aspect of creativity include flexibility, spontaneity and courage. This third sub-aspect, courage, is related to a person's attitude in speaking and acting which is not limited by conventional provisions, especially biased provisions.
2. Morality: related to the ability to see and interpret life clearly, understanding everything according to reality.
3. Self-acceptance: self-actualized individuals can note and observe what is happening, without debating the issue or demanding it. Self-actualized people tend to look at humans, nature within themselves and other people.
4. Spontaneity: related to an individual's ability to act naturally, without being burdened by external constraints or pressure. In the process of self-actualization, spontaneity emerges when a person feels free to express themselves without unnecessary obstacles or limitations, all of which are included in the act of free will. It involves the ability to act in accordance with internal drives, personal desires, and intrinsic values, without feeling bound by external norms or societal expectations.

5. Problem Solving: also related to creativity where individuals try to find unconventional and innovative solutions. In addition, free will and personal responsibility play an important role, as individuals do not only rely on external solutions, but also explore their own internal resources and capabilities (Winston, 2018; Mylashenko & Lavrinenko, 2019; Hansen, 2020).

2.3.1.1 Free Will

Free will refers to the ability to act or change without restriction. Something is said to be free will if it can change easily and is not limited by current circumstances. In philosophy and religion, free will is associated with having independence and existence without undue or unjust restrictions, or slavery, and is an idea closely related to the concept of freedom. Free will also means standing alone, free-spirited, unbound, independent, a reflection of a person's attitude not to choose anyone's side in doing something. From a political perspective, free will refers to a person or party who is not affiliated with any political party. free will is a mental attitude and actions that are impartial, cannot be influenced, and do not depend on other parties or anyone (Pereboom, 2022; Griffith, 2021; Darby, Burke & Fox, 2018; Caruso, 2021).

2.3 1.2 Responsibility

Responsibility refers to human awareness of behavior or actions, whether intentional or unintentional. Responsibility means a situation where all actions or deeds or attitudes are the embodiment of moral values and noble values of decency. An attitude of responsibility makes an individual plan and act more carefully and will be stronger and tougher to face a problem. An individual who is able to put all his knowledge and energy into practice in an action that is effective and useful for others can be said to be a responsible person and responsibility is part of self-actualization where a person is able to recognize and understand his potential in terms of responsibility. In connection with responsibility in the realm of self-actualization, responsibility can take the form of responsibility to God, oneself, society, family, nation and state. Responsibility makes someone able to make appropriate and effective decisions; appropriate in the sense of the ability to make the best choice within normal social limits and expectations and effective refers to achieving goals that are not only useful for oneself but also beneficial for other parties (Code, 2020; Harris, 2020; El Zein & Hertwig 2019).

2.3.1.3 Self-awareness

Self-awareness is one of the aspects in self-actualization, a person's ability to understand feelings, thoughts and self-evaluation so helping a person understand the strengths, weaknesses, drives and values that exist within themselves and others. In the psychological corridor, self-awareness is also called metacognition, a person's awareness of their thought processes and awareness of their own emotions. The existence of a metacognitive process can enable a person to control all their cognitive activities. This can direct the individual to choose the right situation and strategy for themselves in the future. Self-awareness causes people to evaluate their behavior based on standards and carry out an adjustment process to meet the standards. Self-concern causes people to compare themselves to standards, such as physical appearance, intellectual performance, physical strength, or moral integrity (Carden & Passmore, 2022; Rasheed & Sundus, 2018; Peacocke, 2023; Rubens, Schoenfeld, Schaffer, & Leah, 2018).

Similar studies have also been carried out by several previous researchers and their findings are then used as supporting references for this research.

The research on self-actualization was also conducted by Hamendi (2018) from the novels *Robinson Crusoe* by Defoe and *Walden* by Thoreau. Both Daniel Defoe and Henry David Thoreau describe the development and achievement of self-actualization. In the novel *Robinson Crusoe*, the protagonist follows the five stages of the hierarchy of human needs initiated by Abraham Maslow and the achievement of self-sufficiency occurs periodically; while Thoreau illustrates that achieving self-reliance or self-actualization can be carried out directly from one stage to another so that a long period of time is not needed as long as humans can recognize their potential. For Defoe, free will in recognizing one's potential as a starting point for self-actualization is a means; while for Thoreau independence manifested from free will is another name for self-actualization and is used as a target.

In the research conducted by Schoofs, Hornung & Glaser (2022), self-actualization is reflected in a person's position at work or in a community which is a place to recognize one's potential. Recognition and awareness of one's potential is the starting point for achieving self-actualization through eudemonic activities or ways of life. Personality development and human satisfaction with something to be achieved are central aspects. In line with the theory of satisfaction in the hierarchy of human needs, the mediating role of satisfaction of basic psychological needs, both combined and separately, is an indicator of self-actualization. The point is that self-actualization can be achieved when an individual can recognize and understand their own potential, without being limited by time and space, meaning that a person can achieve self-actualization wherever they are and whatever social status they have.

The research conducted by Hoffman (202) illustrates the theory of the hierarchy of human needs initiated by Abraham Maslow and has become an inseparable part of humanistic psychology theory. This is the basis for other researches which shows that a person's achievements, whatever their field of activity is, cannot be separated from understanding one's potential as the beginning of self-achievement towards self-actualization.

3. Research Method

This research is carried out with a qualitative descriptive design by describing the facts obtained from the novel *Ziarah* by Iwan Simatupang, then followed by explanation to the stage of providing understanding and explanation based on the research focus related to aspects and disclosure of self-actualization. This research is also intended to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, and actions holistically and by means of descriptions in the form of words and discussions. The data sources in this research are the novel *Ziarah* by Iwan Simatupang, published by the Djangkat publisher, Yogyakarta in 1969; meanwhile, the data in this research are quoted texts which are related to the research focus, the aspect of self-actualization in the novel *Ziarah* by Iwan Simatupang.

The data collection technique used is library technique. Library study is a series of activities related to methods of collecting library data, reading and taking notes and processing research materials, reading the novel above and books related to research on self-actualization. Next, the process of arranging the data sequence is carried out, organized into a pattern, category and basic description unit tending to the data analysis procedure in this research. The data collected are classified based on type and then analyzed using a

descriptive analytical approach. This analysis is intended to reveal aspects of self-actualization in the related novel and to support the research and in addition interactive analysis techniques are also used. The data analysis is then directed towards the stages of data reduction, simplification and data organization; data display, simple presentation of data to facilitate understanding and interpretation; conclusions, drawing interpretations of emerging findings and verifying data, ensuring the reliability of the findings.

4. Result and Discussion

The data obtained from the novel *Ziarah* by Iwan Simatupang are in the form of quotations related to the study of self-actualization consisting of three discussion focuses: free will, responsibility and self-awareness. The novel is full of issues related to self-actualization, then can be recommended as a guide novel for understanding more about the roles, functions and benefits of self-actualization.

4.1 Free Will

Data 1:

A dialogue goes on between the superintendent's father, the Master, and the Mayor. The father of the superintendent feels that his handsome and intelligent son is not suitable to work in a cemetery. There is a stereotype developing in the society regarding a graduate having to work in a good place, such as working in a government office. Moreover, the superintendent's well-known status makes his father oppose his decision outright. The father thinks that the cemetery is a bad place because the father thinks that the superintendent would not get anything by working there. But apparently, the superintendent has got different thoughts, he feels that he has the freedom and free will to choose to work anywhere, including in the cemetery as working in a cemetery is a new experience for him. He likes working there and no one can bother him. This shows that he has freedom and free will because he really understands the abilities he has. This makes him free to make choices in his life (Simatupang, 1969: 76-77).

Data 2:

When the former painter is still in his career, he gets a lot of criticism about his paintings, and he really hates them. He does not want comments from others because he wants to feel free. What he wants is when he makes a painting the choice of what he paints should come from himself. He is very fed up with praise and criticism from others. For him, criticism is just a very useless thing, like trash that he does not want to see or smell. He is not affected by criticism from others. He really believes that his personal choice is more valuable than anything else (Simatupang, 1969: 112).

Data 3:

According to local people, the superintendent is free from any religious matters. No one around the superintendent knows what religion he adheres to. He does not come to church or mosque, he has dedicated his life to the cemetery. The superintendent does not want to be bound by any institution, including religion as he believes that he can determine his own freedom in religion and belief in himself, so he does not need to look for religion or conventional beliefs elsewhere. He believes in himself not in others; only he himself can control his beliefs (Simatupang, 1969: 205).

The descriptions above taken from three data from the novel show that the superintendent, the painter and also the grave cleaner prioritizes free will over other things in his life. He does not want to be ruled by anyone and also does not want to know the meaning of any rule.

4.2 Responsibility

Data 4:

The former painter has a responsible attitude when carrying out his duties. Even though the work is related to things he does not like, he still carries out his duties well. He is asked to paint the cemetery walls and he carries it out with a high sense of responsibility; he does the painting for three days continually (Simatupang, 1969: 28).

Data 5:

An attitude of responsibility is also shown by the editor-in-chief, another significant character, who initially speaks ill of the painter. However, it seems that the painter feels offended by the news. The editor-in-chief feels guilty for making embarrassing news about the painter, he apologizes and offers compensation to the painter. Here it is clear that the editor-in-chief has a form of responsibility. Being responsible is certainly not an easy thing because it requires self-awareness. Many people cannot do things like this. However, here, the editor-in-chief is a mature person because he realizes his mistakes and is ready to take responsibility for the mistakes he has made (Simatupang, 1969: 116).

Data 6:

Though the whole town does not want to accept the painter and his wife, he remains responsible for him and his wife setting up a hut and living on the beach and buying food for his wife. Here he is clearly seen as the head of the family, who takes responsibility upon his family. Even though no one accepts him, he remains trying to fulfill his responsibilities as a husband; Here it is illustrated that there is an attitude of great responsibility towards the family, which is an aspect of self-actualization (Simatupang, 1969: 126).

Data 7:

All the townspeople do not want to accept the painter because they think that the painter is only causing problems for them; on the other hand, many foreign guests want to meet the painter through the mayor. Finally, the mayor shows his sense of responsibility to solve this problem. The mayor takes the painter and his wife to stay in his house (Simatupang, 1969: 127).

The descriptions above give ideas of the responsibility practiced by the painter, when painting, the editor-in-chief apologizes to the painter for the slanted news he has given to the painter and the mayor who allows the painter to stay in his house when others refuse the painter.

4.3 Self-awareness

Data 8:

The mayor is known as a good and responsible person and is a role model for officials in the Municipality. He also accepts his election and appointment as Mayor because he intends to eradicate poverty. He wants to make people in this city able to live equally. For the mayor, poverty and hunger are his biggest enemies; here it is clearly illustrated how the

mayor has self-awareness about his environment and tries to do the best for the community (Simatupang, 1969: 40).

Data 9:

The mayor is formerly a civil servant; his good nature makes his colleagues suspicious and wants to overthrow him. They try to investigate the mayor from all the angles, but they get nothing but a clean slate of dirty activities. He is then appointed Mayor for his good performances. From the criticism and efforts of a few people who want to bring him down, the mayor realizes that being a leader is not an easy thing. He is increasingly strengthening himself to do the best for society and what he has done is a stage of self-introspection towards self-awareness (Simatupang, 1969: 44).

Data 10:

The mayor seems aware of all his actions. Starting from his ambition for tomorrow he is able to get better things, leading him to his current position. However, he finally realizes that the idea of tomorrow makes him consumed by mere ambition which makes him tired. Even though he comes from the civil service, at heart he is romantic and illusionist. Here it is seen that humans can never feel satisfied. Humans always want more than what they say and the mayor realizes that he has been completely consumed by his ambition. Self-awareness is what ultimately makes him able to solve all the problems (Simatupang, 1969: 45).

All the data above related to self-awareness are focused on the mayor through his life journey. He keeps on thinking about improving the welfare of the society because he realizes that poverty is a disaster and initially he is also ambitious to get a position, then finally he realizes how difficult it is to be a leader.

5. Conclusion

The novel *Ziarah* by Iwan Simatupang is an enticing literary work, filled with depictions of the process of self-actualization. In the storyline, readers are invited to follow the journey of the major characters as they undergo a spiritual journey and search for the meaning of their lives. The novel describes a journey into the human self, explores internal conflicts, and highlights existential questions. The symbolic approach used by Iwan Simatupang in *Ziarah* gives depth to every scene and dialogue, allowing readers to reflect and absorb the meaning behind every word. The storytelling is complex and full of layers of meaning, making this novel a work worth studying. With a distinctive language style, the author succeeds in describing the characters' spiritual journeys deeply and authentically. The novel is not simply a story, but also a reflection on life and the meaning of human existence.

Of the ten data obtained in the research findings, there are three data showing the independent and free will attitude shown by the painter. The painter leads an independent and care-free life and never deviates from his principle of independence. The attitude of responsibility can be seen from the four data obtained. Two data related to responsibility are shown by the painter himself when he is given the task of painting the cemetery walls; then, the painter continues to show his responsibility towards his wife when he does not have a place to live. He builds a hut for his wife on the beach and then tries to get food for her. One data is shown by the editor-in-chief who bravely, openly and with a sense of responsibility apologizes for the negative accusations he has given to the painter. The next data is shown by the mayor who gives the painter a place to stay when all the residents

reject him. Next, three data are obtained related to self-awareness. These three data come from the mayor who is aware of the importance and difficulty of being a leader, prioritizing the interests of the people. He realizes that excessive ambition will not produce results.

Through this novel, Iwan Simatupang offers readers a space to reflect and explore the meaning of life, spirituality and the journey of self-actualization. This novel can be a source of inspiration for readers who are looking for direction in life or are on a journey of self-discovery. With complex characters and a story full of meaning, the novel is able to attract the attention of readers who are looking for literary works that are more than just entertainment.

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