UNDERSTANDING SELF-ACTUALIZATION IN THE LIGHT OF ALLAMA IQBAL'S CONCEPT OF SELF

Sophia Sohail
Psychologist, Member Board of Governors,
Child Protection Bureau, Punjab

ABSTRACT: The modern psychology is gradually moving towards Allama Iqbal's philosophy of self. Abraham Maslow (1908-1970), one of the important thinkers of modern psychology, when he proposed the concept of Hierarchy of Needs, he also basically evolved the human personality to reach this goal. It is the construction of self in the words of Allama Iqbal. When Maslow arranged a hierarchy of human needs, the physical (survival) needs were at the bottom, and the more creative and intellectual 'self-actualization' needs were at the top. Maslow argued that survival needs must be met before the individual can satisfy higher needs. The higher the hierarchical stage, the more difficult it is to meet the needs associated with that stage, as interpersonal and environmental constraints inevitably frustrate us. This level emphasizes altruism, spiritual connection, and helping others achieve their potential. Such individuals seek experiences that transcend personal concerns. It aims to achieve a deeper sense of unity, understanding and connection in the wider realm of existence.All the themes of Allama Iqbal are the themes of human welfare, improvement, evolution and achievement of perfection and his philosophy consists of self-construction. There are different stages of self-actualization that a person has

to surrender himself first, then comes the stage of self-control. Modern psychology has done a lot of research on how self-control brings a person to the level of perfection.Self-control is both individual and social. Modern psychology has defined it as the greatest personality that comes into existence as a result of self - actualization. That is, in the light of Allama Iqbal's thought, we can determine the aspects of the completion of human personality towards which modern psychology has progressed step by step.

Allama Muhammad Iqbal is one of our great thinkers whose significance is becoming more prominent with the progress in modern sciences. Among the thoughts of Allama Iqbal, his psychological thoughts are of key importance for the interpretation and understanding of his philosophy of self. Researches in modern psychology are gradually clarifying the importance of Allama Iqbal's psychological ideas.

The modern psychology is gradually moving towards Allama Iqbal's philosophy of self. Abraham Maslow (1908-1970), one of the important thinkers of modern psychology, when he proposed the concept of Hierarchy of Needs, he also basically evolved the human personality to reach this goal. It is the construction of self in the words of Allama Iqbal.

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory consists of a five-level model of human needs, often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid (Maslow, 2013). The five levels of the hierarchy are: physical needs, safety, love and belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization. Lower-level basic needs such as food, water, and safety must be met first before higher-level needs are met. It is believed that few people can reach the level of self-realization, but we can all have moments of great experiences with effort. The order of these levels is not determined as final. For some people, respect is more important than love, while others can achieve self-realization despite poverty. Our behavior is usually influenced by multiple needs at the same time.

When Maslow arranged a hierarchy of human needs, the physical (survival) needs were at the bottom, and the more creative and intellectual 'self-actualization' needs were at the top. Maslow argued that survival needs must be met before the individual can satisfy higher needs. The higher the hierarchical stage, the more

difficult it is to meet the needs associated with that stage, as interpersonal and environmental constraints inevitably frustrate us.

According to Maslow:

1- Physiological needs are biological requirements for human survival, such as air, food, drink, shelter, clothing, warmth, sex, and sleep. Our most basic need is physical survival, and it will be the first thing that motivates our behavior. Once that level is completed, the next level is what motivates us, and so on.

If the physiological needs are not met, the human body cannot function optimally. Maslow considered physiological needs to be the most important because all other needs become secondary until these needs are satisfied. Once an individual's physical needs are met, then the need for safety and security becomes prominent.

2- Security Needs - People want to experience order, predictability and authority in their lives. Safety needs can be met by family and society (police, schools, businesses, and medical care) for example, emotional security, financial security (eg, employment, social welfare), law and order, freedom from fear, social stability, property, health, and well-being (protection from accidents and injury). After physical and safety needs are met, the third level of human needs is social and includes feelings of belonging.

3. Love and affiliation needs refer to the human emotional need for interpersonal relationships, affiliation, belonging and relationship to a group. Examples of affiliation needs include friendship, closeness, trust, acceptance, receiving and giving affection, and love. This need is especially strong in childhood and can override the need for security, as seen in children who cling even to abusive parents.

4- Esteem needs are the fourth level in Maslow's hierarchy and include self-esteem, achievement, and respect. Maslow divides the hierarchy of respect into two categories:

(a) Respect for self i.e. prestige, achievement, skill, independence and

(b) Desire for fame or respect from others eg status, prestige.

The esteem hierarchy represents a common human desire to be accepted and valued by others. People often engage in a profession or hobby to gain recognition. These activities give the individual a sense of contribution or value. Imbalances during this level in the hierarchy can lead to low self-esteem or feelings of inferiority (Maslow, 1981).

According to Abraham Maslow, self actualization (Maslow, 1987) is the highest need of man. The philosophy of Self is actually the philosophy of self-actualization (Maslow, 1943).

Maslow later made modifications to the five-stage model of the hierarchy of needs under the concept of self-realization and self-construction. This includes the seven-stage model and the eight-stage model. Both of these models were developed during the 1960s and 1970s (Maslow, 1943; Maslow, 1954; Maslow, 1970a; Maslow, 1970b; Maslow, 1987).

Here is the description:

1- Biological and physical needs - air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sexual needs, sleep, etc.

2- Safety needs i.e. protection from the elements, security, order, law, stability, freedom from fear.

3- Love and relatedness needs - friendship, closeness, trust, and acceptance, receiving and giving

love and affection, belonging, belonging to a group i.e. family, friends, professional relationships.

4- Esteem needs are classified by Maslow into two categories:

(a) Respect for self eg prestige, achievement, skill, independence and

(b) the need to be recognized and valued by others eg status, prestige;

5- Cognitive needs i.e. need for knowledge and understanding, curiosity, exploration, meaning and predictability. Cognitive needs drive our pursuit of knowledge and understanding. For example, a student's desire to understand complex mathematical concepts, a traveler's curiosity about diverse cultures, or an individual's search for deeper meanings in life all exemplify these needs. Fulfilling these needs facilitates personal growth, understanding, and a deeper understanding of life and its complexities.

6- Aesthetic Needs i.e. appreciation and search for beauty, balance, beauty etc. Satisfying these needs leads to a deeper sense of satisfaction and harmony in life, as individuals seek environments and experiences that are pleasant and resonate with their sense of beauty. It includes the appreciation and exploration of art, music, nature, and other forms of aesthetic expression. Satisfying these needs is not just about physical beauty, but also the emotional and psychological satisfaction that comes from experiencing order and beauty.

7- Self-actualization needs - realization of personal potential, self-fulfillment, search for personal growth, and higher experiences.

8-Transcendental Needs – A person is motivated by values that go beyond personal feeling. They represent the human desire to connect with the self, a higher reality, purpose, or universe.

This level emphasizes altruism, spiritual connection, and helping others achieve their potential. Such individuals seek experiences that transcend personal concerns. It aims to achieve a deeper sense of unity, understanding and connection in the wider realm of existence.

Examples of transcendental needs include mystical experiences and certain experiences with nature, aesthetic experiences, sexual experiences, service to others, pursuit of scientific discoveries, and religious belief.

What Freud conceptualized is the combination of ego and superego. Freud's personality theory (Freud, 1920; Freud, 1923; Pulcu, 2014) divided the human personality into three parts: id, ego, and superego. All these develop at different stages of our life. These are mental systems, not physical parts of the brain or in any way physical organs, but rather hypotheses for understanding important mental functions.

According to Freud's psychoanalytic theory, the id is the primitive and natural part of the brain that contains sexual and aggressive impulses and hidden memories, the superego acts as a moral conscience, and the ego is the realistic part that separates the id and the superego (Carhart-harris RL, Friston KJ., 2010: 133; Freud, 1920; Freud, 1923). Although each part of the personality consists of different characteristics, they interact as a unity and each part plays a role in shaping the individual's behavior.

Here also the concept of self actualization is working so that man realizes his ego and tries to reach the super ego through self actualization. That is, when a person goes through the process of self-actualization by knowing and identifying himself, he discovers the possibilities for himself and for the society that make it possible to create a better person.

Psychologist Abraham Maslow said that active and motivated people are people who seek fulfillment and change through personal development. Self-confident people are those who are accomplished and do everything they are capable of.

Self-actualization (Maslow, 1962) refers to the need for personal growth and discovery that exists throughout a person's life. For Maslow, a person is always "becoming" and never static in these terms. Introspection is a person's search for meaning in life that is important to him. As each individual is unique, the drive for self-realization leads people in different directions (Kenrick, Neuberg, Griskevicius, Becker & Schaller, 2010: 63-67). For some, it is possible to find their own reality through creating works of art or literature. For some, this is possible through sports, in the classroom, or within the corporate system.

Maslow believed that self-actualization can be measured by the concept of peak experiences. It occurs when a person fully experiences the world for what it is, and there are feelings of joy and wonder. It is important to recognize that self-realization is a continuous process of reaching a "happy place" after a perfect state. (Hoffman, 1988)

Maslow offers the following definition of self-actualization:

It refers to man's desire for self-fulfillment, that is, the movement toward the tendency for him to be what he potentially is. The specific form these needs will take will, of course, vary greatly from person to person. In one person it may take the form of wanting to be an ideal mother, in another it may be expressed through sports and in some it may be expressed in photography or inventions (Maslow, 1943: 382-383).

Allama Iqbal has called the same process of self-evolution of man as self-elevation. This is the height

where nature becomes a supporter of man. According to Iqbal:

خودی کو کر بلند اتنا کہ ہر تقدیر سے پہلے

خدا بندے سے خود پوچھے، بتا تیری رضا کیا ہے

(علامہ اقبال،۲۰۱۸: ۳۸۸)

Self-elevation means that a person should increase self-actualization and establish a relationship with God that leads him to success. Allama Iqbal's philosophy is based on self-actualization. Although all people are, in theory, capable of self-actualization, most of them will not do so or only practice it to a limited extent. Maslow estimated that only two percent of people would reach self-actualization. He was particularly interested in the characteristics of people who had achieved their individual potential.

By studying many people (including Abraham Lincoln and Albert Einstein), he understood introspection. Maslow identified fifteen characteristics of a self-aware person:

1- They understand reality effectively and can tolerate uncertainty.

2- Accept yourself and others as they are

3- Spontaneity in thought and action

4- Problem-oriented (not self-oriented) thinking

5- Unusual sense of humor

6- Accustomed to seeing life objectively

7- Very creative

8- Culture-resistant, but not deliberately unorthodox

9- Concerned for the welfare of humanity

10- Able to deeply appreciate basic life experience

11- Build deeply satisfying interpersonal relationships with a few people

12- Peak experiences

13- Eligible for privacy

14- Democratic behavior

15- Strong ethical standards (Maslow, 1970; Maslow, 1970a)

A common fallacy regarding the understanding of Allama Iqbal's philosophy of the self is that the self is usually associated with the ego. Self (ego) is the name to highlight one's good abilities while ego is a negative term. That is, the ego is the aspect of our personality that stands in the way of our moral evolution as an obstacle, even our personality becomes a victim of duplicity and artificiality. While self-esteem is a positive term and when a person's self-esteem is perfect, he never suffers from psychological problems, rather he causes improvement not only for himself but also for the society.

Here Freud's concept of the superego is the moral component of the psyche that represents internalized social values and norms. It conflicts with id desires, guides behavior toward moral righteousness, and creates guilt when standards are not met (Freud, 1923). The superego covers society's values and morals, which are learned from one's parents and others. It develops in around 3 - 5 years during the psychosocial development stage. The superego develops in early childhood (when a child gains identity from a same-sex parent) and is responsible for ensuring adherence to moral standards. The superego operates on the principle of morality and motivates us to behave in a socially responsible and acceptable manner. The superego is seen as a stimulus for rewards (feelings of pride and satisfaction) and punishments (feelings of shame and guilt). It depends on

which part is active. The superego is the part of the unconscious that is the voice of conscience (doing what is right) and the source of self-criticism.

It reflects to some extent the moral values of the society and a person is sometimes aware of his morals and general morality, but the superego contains many rules, or prohibitions, which are mostly unconscious orders and. are issued in the form of "dos" or "don'ts" statements. The function of the superego is to control the impulses of the id, especially those that are forbidden by society, such as sexual deviance and aggression. It also prompts the ego to turn toward moral goals rather than merely realistic goals and to strive for perfection (Askay, 2006:30).

All the themes of Allama Iqbal are the themes of human welfare, improvement, evolution and achievement of perfection and his philosophy consists of self-construction. There are different stages of self-actualization that a person has to surrender himself first, then comes the stage of self-control. Modern psychology has done a lot of research on how self-control brings a person to the level of perfection (Wiener, 1948; Buckley, 1967; Neiser, 1976; Fujita, 2011).

Self-control is both individual and social. Social control theory outlines the social forces that prevent someone from engaging in deviant behavior. It details how a minor can engage in criminal behavior. It is important to recognize when we may be lacking self-control.

However, knowing how to exercise self-control is more effective because it is like a physical exercise. The more it is practiced, the stronger it becomes. Positive psychological interventions may be excellent examples of how to broaden understanding of criminological theories and derive practical principles from them.

An important element of self-control is delaying gratification. Self-control can be improved by avoiding cravings and using self-control strengths. Children should be taught how to appreciate others and to distance themselves from the pursuit of gratification that will serve them well in their youth. Adults who have not learned these qualities can also benefit from this method and practice.

Another important factor is the ability to be cautious. The power of prudence can be used here for self-control. Rather than simply reacting to an impulse, teaching children how to think is where this strength of character can be developed. This practice, better decisions can be made in life (Hirschi, 1969).

Another important factor is cognitive ability. Taking the time to assess your own authority before forming a sound judgment in decision-making is a great example of self-control. Character strengths of curiosity and learning are areas of growth in self-control.

Another element of self-control is the ability to effectively see alternative perspectives. Social intelligence is a strength of character that can be strengthened for self-control. A person with better social intelligence can more easily respond with empathy rather than reacting emotionally to another person's behavior. Incidents will be less violent when someone with self-control adjusts their response to respond appropriately to the threat (Tolle, Benuto, O'Donohue, 2014).

Similarly, self-regulation reduces the intensity and number of stressors and negative environmental influences. Self-control is possible through methods of self-regulation.

Self-control theories can be described under the heading of self-regulation theory. The process of self-regulation poses various challenges. Self-control is one of them. For successful self-regulation it is essential that:

- A person must decide what goals to pursue
- A plan should be made to achieve this goal
- The plan should then be implemented
- The decision to continue or abandon the pursuit of this goal must be accompanied by perceptions of success or failure.

In the brain, the organ system is the controller of the impulses to which the person reacts. When this system is activated, the prefrontal cortex shuts down. Logical and rational thinking is handled by the prefrontal cortex. These parts of the brain do not work simultaneously. Reducing stress allows the prefrontal cortex to activate. Self-regulatory behaviors through different abilities allow for more avenues for goal attainment in addition to inhibition of negative action impulses. When stress is allowed to persist, our immune system produces an overactive response. When stress is properly addressed, it opens the door to higher-level goal attainment.

Self-regulation theory posits that we do not have a constant supply of resources to inhibit strong impulses. During any event these resources are depleted through various forms of decision-making and pressure. Improvements in cognitive self-regulation (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007:115-128) improves the ability to self-regulate, recognize reactions, and change situations.

It is also important to note the role of self-determination theory in the realm of self-regulation. Personal decisions are essential for improvement in behavior change. An autonomous response to behavior does not eliminate bad consequences as easily as using self-control regulation (Ryan & Deci, 2008: 702-717).

Only after self-control is the stage of perfection, which Iqbal called the vicgerency of Almighty Allah. Modern psychology has defined it as the greatest

personality that comes into existence as a result of self actualization. That is, in the light of Allama Iqbal's thought, we can determine the aspects of the completion of human personality towards which modern psychology has progressed step by step.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Allama Iqbal, (2018), *Kulliyat e Iqbal* (Urdu), Iqbal Academy Pakistan, Lahore.
2. Baumeister, R. F., & Vohs, K. D. (2007), Self-regulation, ego depletion, and motivation, *Social and Personality Psychology Compass.*
3. Buckley, W. F. (1967), *Sociology and modern systems theory*, Prentice Hall.
4. Carhart-harris RL, Friston KJ. The default-mode, ego-functions and free-energy: a neurobiological account of Freudian ideas. Brain. 2010;133 (Pt 4):1265-83. doi:10.1093/brain/awq010
5. Freud, S. (1920), *Beyond the pleasure principle*, The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmand Freud, The Hogarth Press, London, 18.
6. Freud, S. (1920), *Beyond the pleasure principle*. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmand Freud, The Hogarth Press, London, 18.
7. Freud, S. (1923), *The ego and the id*. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmand Freud, The Hogarth Press, London.
8. Freud, S. (1923), *The ego and the id*. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmand Freud, The Hogarth Press, London.
9. Freud, S. (1923). *The ego and the id*. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmand Freud, The Hogarth Press, London, 19.
10. Fujita, K., (2011), On conceptualizing self-control as more than the effortful inhibition of impulses,

Personality and Social Psychology Review, 15(4).

11.   Hirschi, T. (1969), Causes of delinquency. University of California Press.

12.   Hoffman, E. (1988), The right to be human: A biography of Abraham Maslow. Los Angeles, CA, Jeremy P. Tarcher.

13.   Kenrick, D. T., Neuberg, S. L., Griskevicius, V., Becker, D. V., & Schaller, M. (2010), Goal-driven cognition and functional behavior: The fundamental-motives framework, Current Directions in Psychological Science, 19(1).

14.   Lauren Woodward Tolle, Lorraine T. Benuto, William T. O'Donohue (Eds), (2014), *Handbook of Adolescent Health Psychology*, Springer New York.

15.   Maslow, A. H. (1943), A theory of human motivation, *Psychological Review*, 50(4).

16.   Maslow, A. H. (1943), A theory of human motivation. Psychological Review, 50(4).

17.   Maslow, A. H. (1943), A theory of human motivation. Psychological Review, 50(4).

18.   Maslow, A. H. (1954), Motivation and personality. New York: Harper and Row.

19.   Maslow, A. H. (1962), Toward a psychology of being. Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company.

20.   Maslow, A. H. (1970), Motivation and personality. New York: Harper & Row.

21.   Maslow, A. H. (1970a), Motivation and personality. New York: Harper & Row.

22.   Maslow, A. H. (1970a), Motivation and personality. New York: Harper & Row.

23.   Maslow, A. H. (1970b), Religions, values, and peak experiences. New York: Penguin, (Original work published 1966).

24.   Maslow, A. H. (1987), Motivation and personality (3rd ed.), Delhi, India, Pearson Education.

25.   Maslow, A. H. (1987), Motivation and personality (3rd ed.), Delhi, India, Pearson Education.

26.   Maslow, Abraham H., (1981), *Motivation and personality*, Harper & Row.

27.   Maslow, Abraham H., (213), *A Theory of Human Motivation*, Start Publishing LLC.

28. Neisser, U. (1976), *Cognition and reality: Principles and implications of cognitive psychology*, Freeman.
29. Pulcu E., (2014), An evolutionary perspective on gradual formation of superego in the primal horde. Front Psychol.
30. Richard Askay, (2006), Apprehending the Inaccessible - Freudian Psychoanalysis and Existential Phenomenology, Jensen Farquhar.
31. Wiener, N. (1948), *Cybernetics or control and communication in the animal and the machine*, MIT Press.

✳ ✳ ✳ ✳ ✳ ✳ ✳ ✳ ✳ ✳ ✳ ✳ ✳ ✳ ✳ ✳ ✳ ✳