



Contextualization of Humanistic-Based Qur'anic Education for Adults in Palangka Raya

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Abstract

This study explores the implementation of humanistic principles in the teaching of the Qur'an for adult learners. Adopting a qualitative research approach, the study aims to understand how humanistic theories, such as those proposed by Maslow and Rogers, are applied within the context of Qur'anic education and how they influence the personal and spiritual development of adult learners. The subjects of this study were 20 adult learners from several institutions and 5 educators from local Islamic education institutions. Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation analysis, with a focus on capturing the lived experiences of participants and the dynamics of the learning process. Triangulation of data and member checking will be employed to ensure validity and credibility of the findings. The study found that applying humanistic education in Qur'anic learning enhanced adult learners' engagement, reflection, and personal connection to the text. It fostered deeper, more meaningful learning by prioritizing personal growth and relevance to daily life. This research shows that humanistic principles can enrich Qur'anic education, offering a transformative model that supports adult learners' spiritual and personal development in modern contexts.

Keywords

Contextualization; Qur'anic education; Humanistic-based; Adults



Introduction

Qur'anic learning for adults requires a more holistic and context-based approach, recognizing the complexity of adult life compared to that of children or adolescents (Amalia, 2021). Adults bring richer life experiences, carry greater social, familial, and professional responsibilities, and often face a wide range of personal and spiritual challenges (Zuhri, Sarnoto, & Amalia, 2023). Therefore, in guiding adults to better understand and apply the teachings of the Qur'an, it is essential to adopt an approach that respects self-awareness, individual potential, and self-actualization—all core elements of humanistic educational theory.

Humanistic educational theory, pioneered by figures such as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, emphasizes the importance of honoring individual potential and fostering learner-centred experiences (Wulandari & Mafariech, 2025). In the context of adult Qur'anic learning, this theory offers a more personal and reflective approach, enabling learners to connect with the spiritual values of the Qur'an in deeper, more relevant, and applicable ways. This learning is not solely aimed at memorization or textual comprehension but also focuses on nurturing self-understanding, spiritual awareness, and the development of personal character through the Qur'anic message.

For adults, who are often burdened with worldly responsibilities and life's demands, the Qur'an can serve as a source of moral and spiritual equilibrium. It offers inner peace that helps in facing challenges such as job-related stress, complex social interactions, and personal difficulties. This aligns with Maslow's concept of self-actualization as the highest human need, attainable through discovering life's deeper meaning and a strong moral compass. Accordingly, within the humanistic framework, Qur'anic learning emphasizes not just the mastery of the text but the pursuit of balance, inner peace, and fulfilment (Maslow, 1954).

In this approach, learners are not passive recipients of religious teachings. Instead, they actively seek out the meaning behind Qur'anic messages, making the process more impactful and transformative. Rogers emphasized that humanistic education views learners as autonomous individuals capable of exploring, understanding, and integrating knowledge into their lives (Rogers, 1983). Thus, Qur'anic learning becomes an opportunity for adults to reflect on themselves, apply Islamic values to real-life scenarios, and see how those values influence their problem-solving, interpersonal interactions, and adaptability to life's changes.

In this context, self-awareness becomes a vital component of Qur'anic learning. Adults are encouraged to understand themselves in relation to their faith and connection with God. Reflection through the Qur'an can awaken latent potential,



help them recognize personal strengths and weaknesses, and motivate ongoing self-improvement. Maslow noted that self-actualization is closely tied to deep self-awareness and the pursuit of one's fullest potential (Maslow, 1954). Qur'anic education supports this process by encouraging reflection, self-recognition, and the cultivation of relationships with both God and fellow human beings. The teachings of the Qur'an-emphasizing compassion, honesty, and social justice-also contribute to stronger interpersonal relationships, aligning with the humanistic principle that sees learning as a comprehensive process of spiritual and social development (Goldon, 2016).

Moreover, a humanistic approach to adult Qur'anic learning supports a learner-centered process. In this framework, learners are seen as active participants, while educators or facilitators act as guides who assist them in exploring the Qur'an in ways that are personal and aligned with their life context. This gives learners a sense of ownership and agency, which is a key tenet of Carl Rogers' humanistic theory (Rogers, 1983).

This research focuses on exploring how a humanistic educational approach-emphasizing intrinsic motivation, personal growth, and reflective inquiry-can enhance the effectiveness and relevance of Qur'anic education for adult learners. In this model, intrinsic motivation plays a central role; adults are not solely driven by religious obligation but are internally motivated to engage with the Qur'an because they perceive lasting personal and spiritual benefits. This aligns with Deci and Ryan's theory of motivation, which asserts that intrinsic motivation emerges when learning resonates with an individual's personal values. When Qur'anic education centres on personal growth, it provides learners with a sense of fulfillment and peace through the application of Qur'anic teachings in daily life (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Moreover, a humanistic approach to Qur'anic learning recognizes that adults often carry doubts and critical questions as part of their spiritual journey. Therefore, effective learning environments must create space for honest inquiry and open dialogue regarding the relevance of Qur'anic messages in a modern context. This process validates learners' experiences and supports deeper spiritual development. Rooted in the belief that true learning is internal and self-directed, humanistic theory encourages individuals to internalize values and construct meaning, rather than passively receive information. As a result, adult learners not only grasp the intellectual content of the Qur'an but also engage with its emotional and spiritual dimensions-fostering enduring transformation in how they understand themselves, others, and the world (Deci & Ryan, 1985).



Method

This study uses a qualitative approach to explore adult learners' experiences in Qur'anic education based on humanistic principles (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A case study design was chosen to focus on a specific group of adult learners in a Qur'anic program that integrates concepts such as self-actualization, personal growth, and reflective learning (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018). This design allows for an in-depth examination of how humanistic principles influence learners' spiritual and personal development within a real-life educational context (Merriam & Tisdell, 2009). Participants included 20 adult learners and 5 educators from a local Islamic educational institution. Their inclusion reflects the characteristics of adult learning (andragogy), where learners are self-directed and shaped by life experience (Knowles, 1986). Educators in this setting act as facilitators who create a supportive and empathetic learning environment (Rogers, 1983).

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, including lesson plans and learner reflections (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Merriam & Tisdell, 2009). These methods provide multiple perspectives and allow for data triangulation to enhance credibility (Denzin, 2009). Thematic analysis is used to identify key patterns, such as self-actualization, reflective learning, and the practical application of Qur'anic teachings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Findings will be interpreted using humanistic education theories from Maslow and Rogers, and member checking will be applied to ensure that participants' voices are accurately represented (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Table 1. Research Stages Implementation of Humanistic-Based Qur'anic Education for Adults

No.	Research Stage	Description
1	Subject Selection	Identifying learners and educators involved in the study, specifically adults participating in Qur'anic learning based on humanistic theory.
2	Data Collection	Gathering data through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and documentation to capture information about the learning experience.
3	Data Coding & Categorization	Identifying themes and patterns from the collected data and organizing them into categories based on emerging themes.
4	Thematic Analysis	Analyzing categorized data to explore relationships between themes and gain deeper insights into Qur'anic learning.



5	Data Interpretation	Interpreting the results of the analysis to understand how humanistic principles are applied in adult Qur'anic education.
6	Conclusion & Recommendations	Drawing conclusions from the research findings and providing recommendations for the future development of humanistic-based Qur'anic learning.

Results and Discussion

1. Qur'anic Learning and Adult Learners

Adults possess richer life experiences compared to children, which can significantly enhance their understanding of the Qur'an. This aligns with David Kolb's experiential learning theory, which asserts that adults learn more effectively through real-life experiences (Kolb, 1984). Therefore, Qur'anic learning for adults becomes more meaningful when it is connected to their personal life contexts-such as work, family, social relationships, and moral challenges. This form of learning should not be limited to cognitive knowledge alone, but should also foster emotional and spiritual development. According to Abraham Maslow's theory, one of the core elements of humanistic education is self-actualization-the realization of one's fullest potential (Maslow, 1954). In this context, Qur'anic learning for adults aims to support their journey towards self-actualization by cultivating a deeper understanding of Qur'anic teachings, which they can then apply in their daily lives. The focus of Qur'anic education is not merely on textual comprehension but also on the internalization and application of its moral and spiritual values to shape character and improve life quality. This strengthens the relationship between the teacher and participants and creates a more holistic and inclusive learning atmosphere (Irmayanti, 2021). Based on research conducted using a humanistic theoretical approach to Qur'anic learning among adults, several important findings have emerged, which are explained in the following section.

Enhancement of Self-Awareness

Qur'anic learning that focuses on the principle of self-awareness has a significant impact on the learners. Adults participating in this learning report an increased awareness of the life values contained in the Qur'an (Suroso et al., 2023). They become more capable of reflecting and evaluating their behaviors and relationships with others based on the teachings of the Qur'an. For example, values such as patience, honesty, and forgiveness begin to be applied in daily life, whether in family, work, or social relationships. This is further reinforced by an interview excerpt:



I feel more aware of myself. Before, I often felt overwhelmed with work and my personal life, but after learning and reflecting on the values of the Qur'an, I started to feel more at peace. For example, I became more patient in facing problems and wiser in making decisions. I also feel more connected to God because I now understand a deeper meaning in what I do (Interview 1).

The interview with Andi shows that the humanistic-based learning approach enhances self-awareness and the practical application of Qur'anic teachings in real life. This indicates that the humanistic approach not only deepens intellectual understanding but also promotes character development and emotional well-being. This finding is consistent with research that found that linking learning material to personal experiences can increase engagement and understanding (Sarifah, Hamdanah, & Surawan, 2025). In addition, according to Maslow's perspective, this approach helps students achieve self-actualization through understanding and applying values in their daily lives (Maslow, 1954). The humanistic approach is also relevant to everyday life, facilitating positive changes in the way students interact with their surroundings (Jennah, Safitri, Noormila, & Surawan, 2025).

Self-Actualization

Self-actualization is the final stage of human needs that must be fulfilled. At this stage, individuals begin to demonstrate and prove to their environment that they can develop their potential to the fullest. To ensure that the fulfilment of self-actualization needs is successful, individuals need opportunities and training to develop their potential (Malisi, Fauziyah, & Surawan, 2023). In Qur'anic learning, self-actualization-based approaches help learners discover and nurture their inner potential. Many participants in Qur'anic education express a deepened sense of purpose and clarity in life after engaging with verses that promote meaning, purpose, and inner peace. As explained by Fauzan (27), a college student who joined a Qur'anic writing workshop:

Before, I never thought I could write something meaningful. But after learning how to reflect on Qur'anic verses and express my thoughts, I found confidence not only in writing but in voicing my ideas. It's changed the way I approach my studies and personal goals (Interview 2).

This highlights how Qur'anic learning can extend beyond recitation into skill-building areas such as writing, which are essential for both academic and personal development (Lutfi, Surawan, & Zanuba, 2024). Learners also report increased confidence in facing life's challenges due to feeling spiritually supported. The alignment between personal development and divine values creates a strong foundation for resilience and purpose-driven behavior. Risma (34), a participant in a weekly interpretation class, shared:



Studying the Qur'an helped me understand that my life has value beyond routine activities. I feel more prepared to handle difficulties because I see them as part of a bigger spiritual journey. I've become more patient, more purposeful (Interview 3).

The process of self-adjustment that leads to self-actualization involves various stages-personal experiences, learning outcomes, and psychological readiness-all influenced by social interaction and environmental demands. Qur'anic learning facilitates this through structured exposure to values, reflection, and moral development. Learners are not only encouraged to read and understand but to apply and express these teachings, integrating them into their identity. These testimonies reveal that Qur'anic learning is an effective medium for fostering self-actualization. It bridges spiritual insight with practical growth, enabling individuals to discover their strengths, adapt to social demands, and move closer to realizing their full potential.

Relevant and Personalized Learning Experience

In the implementation of humanistic theory, learners are given the opportunity to connect their Qur'anic learning with their personal experiences. This is reflected in the use of teaching methods that involve group discussions, reflective interviews, and hands-on practice. Learners feel more engaged and motivated when they can relate Qur'anic verses to their everyday situations, whether in work or social life. This is supported by an interview result:

I feel this learning experience is different from what I've experienced before. Usually, Qur'anic learning is just about reading or memorizing the verses, but this time we were given the opportunity to discuss and share perspectives. We were encouraged to think about how the verses of the Qur'an can be applied to our daily lives, such as in our jobs, family relationships, or even how we face problems. For example, when learning about patience, I understood the importance of patience in my high-pressure job. So, it's not just intellectual understanding, but also practical application in life (Interview 4).

These interview findings are consistent with research stating that a humanistic approach to religious education encourages students to connect learning material with their personal experiences (Sarifah et al., 2025). This increases engagement and provides a deeper understanding of religious values. This approach allows students to develop a more holistic understanding, which includes not only intellectual aspects but also practical and applicable aspects in their daily lives.

Furthermore, this view supports Carl Rogers' theory, which emphasizes the importance of direct experience and personal reflection in learning. Rogers argues that personalized learning, in which students actively participate in reflection and



application, deepens their understanding and gives greater meaning to their lives (Rogers, 1983). Al-Qur'an learning that integrates reflection and group discussion is in line with the concept of humanistic learning that prioritizes respect for individual experiences and needs in their social context. In addition, other studies show that learning that is contextual and relevant to daily life is more easily accepted and applied by students. In this regard, Qur'anic education that connects religious values with the challenges of daily life becomes more effective in supporting the character development and well-being of students (Jannah et al., 2025).

Application of Qur'anic Values in Daily Life

One significant outcome of this learning is the strengthening of the students' character. Many students reported experiencing positive behavioral changes, such as being more caring towards others, appreciating others more, and becoming more forgiving of mistakes. The practice-based and reflective learning approach has enriched their understanding of Qur'anic values and helped them apply these values in their social and work lives. This is supported by the following interview:

I feel more aware of myself. Previously, I often felt stressed by my work and personal life, but after studying and reflecting on the values of the Qur'an, I began to feel more at peace. For example, I became more patient in facing problems and wiser in making decisions. I also felt more connected to God because I started to understand the deeper meaning of what I was doing (Interview 5).

The interview with Andi indicates that humanistic-based learning enhances self-awareness and provides practical applications of Qur'anic teachings in real life. This suggests that the humanistic approach not only improves intellectual understanding but also encourages character development and emotional well-being. From this awareness, religiousness is born, which in turn fosters the development of a religious character. A religious character is a value that reflects one's relationship with God through thoughts, words, and actions based on religious teachings (Husniah, Hamdanah, & Surawan, 2025). This demonstrates that religious education can be effectively carried out, even in a diverse setting (Febrianti, Alviani, Rahmawati, Huda, & Zulkarnain, 2024; Sumantri & Ahmad, 2019).

2. Application of Humanistic Principles in Qur'anic Learning for Adults

The application of humanistic principles in Qur'anic learning for adults aims to create learning that is more meaningful and relevant to the lives of learners. Humanistic theory, developed by figures such as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, emphasizes respect for individual potential, self-awareness, and self-actualization (Joseph, 2021). In the context of Qur'anic learning for adults, the application of humanistic principles aims to optimize learners' potential both



intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. Here are some ways of applying these principles in Qur'anic learning:

Appreciation of Individual Potential

Humanistic theory emphasizes the importance of respect for individual potential. Learning the Qur'ān for adults according to this principle allows them to identify and develop their potential in understanding and practicing the teachings of the Qur'ān. This can be done by providing space for self-reflection, so that adults can better realize the role of the Qur'ān in shaping their character, morality, and social relationships. To develop their potential, humans need to have spiritual strength, self-control ability, good personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills that are beneficial to themselves (Safitri, Ningsih, & Surawan, 2025). For example, in a study of the Qur'an and character, it was found that the teachings of the Qur'an were able to form individuals who were more patient, fair, and careful in making decisions, which were directly related to their self-actualization (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This is reinforced by the interview results:

I was interested because this approach is more personalized and I felt more valued. Usually, in religious learning, we are just asked to follow the rules without asking many questions or understanding the context. However, in this learning, we were given space to talk about our personal experiences and how the Qur'anic verses relate to our daily lives. This really helped me understand religion in a deeper way (Interview 6).

The group discussion and case study methods demonstrate how Qur'anic learning can be adapted to the life experiences of the students. Students are given the opportunity to share their thoughts, which strengthens the impression that the learning process is centered on their personal needs and experiences. This approach allows for a more meaningful and contextual understanding of Qur'anic teachings, as students can relate the lessons to real-life situations they face. It not only enhances their engagement but also promotes deeper reflection on how Islamic values can be applied in their everyday lives. In addition, other studies have shown that an andragogical approach to reading the Qur'an for adults encourages the use of methods based on actual needs, such as repetition, reinforcement of motivation, and reflection on meaning (Halili, 2022).

Self-Awareness and Reflection

The Qur'anic learning with a humanistic approach provides adults with the opportunity to better understand themselves. As Carl Rogers stated, self-awareness and direct experience are key elements in effective learning (Rogers, 1969). Qur'anic learning facilitates this process by encouraging students to reflect and analyze how the values in the Qur'an relate to their lives. This is crucial because adults often face



challenges in life and need a deeper understanding to lead a more meaningful existence. This is reinforced by an interview:

I feel closer to the Qur'an and find it easier to practice its teachings. For example, when we study verses about compassion and peace, I start applying them in my relationships with my family. I am more patient with my children and understand better how to approach them. I feel happier and more at peace in my daily life (Interview 7).

The interview with Siti indicates that the humanistic approach promotes personal character development, enhances social relationships, and facilitates the application of Qur'anic values in family life. It also suggests that this type of learning has a positive impact on mental and emotional well-being, which minimizes factors such as individual anxiety levels and personal experiences (Jannah, Surawan, & Widiastuty, 2024). Based on the interviews with students, it can be concluded that the humanistic approach in Qur'anic learning helps them recognize themselves more clearly. The reflection process in this learning allows participants to better understand themselves and how the teachings of the Qur'an can guide them in achieving inner peace, thereby reducing stress. Stress can manifest in both positive (eustress) and negative (distress) forms (Alvanajati, Hamdanah, & Surawan, 2025). This becomes a challenge for educators to maintain consistency and rekindle their motivation, especially when learners face life problems that disrupt their concentration in learning (Tobroni, Saefulloh, Faridi, Nalus, & Surawan, 2024).

Self-Actualization

Qur'anic learning is closely related to self-actualization, the process of becoming the best version of oneself. In this context, the Qur'an serves as a life guide that not only helps individuals grow personally but also encourages them to contribute positively to society. Teachings in the Qur'an—such as justice, compassion, kindness, and forgiveness—can be translated into concrete actions that benefit others, aligning closely with Maslow's theory of self-actualization. This connection is clearly reflected in the experiences of learners. Rina (32), a mother of two who actively participates in Qur'anic study sessions, shared:

I used to lose my temper easily and often felt overwhelmed with my children. But after consistently studying the Qur'an and understanding the meaning of patience, I've become much calmer and more in control of my emotions (Interview 8).

Her experience illustrates how Qur'anic values such as patience and compassion are internalized and used as tools for personal development in everyday life. Independent learning plays a vital role in this process. It fosters perseverance, discipline, responsibility, and a strong desire for growth, particularly in the realm of Qur'anic knowledge (Lutfi et al., 2024). When values like sincerity,



justice, and self-restraint are consistently practiced, learners are empowered to reach their highest potential. Andi (38), a professional in the finance sector who studies the Qur'an in his personal time, explained:

My job comes with a lot of pressure, but I've learned from the story of Prophet Yusuf about resilience and integrity. It has made me stronger and more patient, even when my efforts don't yield immediate results (Interview 9).

His reflection emphasizes that Qur'anic learning contributes to emotional resilience and ethical behavior in professional life. These personal accounts show that Qur'anic learning is not merely theoretical-it is highly applicable and transformative. The internalization and practice of Qur'anic teachings foster not only individual growth, but also social responsibility, forming individuals who are spiritually grounded, emotionally balanced, and ethically driven. Additionally, since adult learners' motivation can fluctuate, it is crucial for educators to sustain and reignite their enthusiasm for learning (Aida, Ahmadi, & Surawan, 2025).

Conclusion

Qur'anic learning for adults, based on humanistic theory, aims not only to understand the text but also to develop self-awareness, self-actualization, and the application of Qur'anic teachings in real life. By valuing life experiences, individual potential, and reflective needs, Qur'anic education for adults becomes more meaningful and applicable. This approach aligns with humanistic educational theory, which emphasizes respect for personality, moral development, and spirituality as integral parts of continuous learning. The modification of humanistic theory in Qur'anic learning for adults in Palangka Raya has proven to significantly improve the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. This approach provides space for learners to study actively, independently, and in accordance with their needs and life experiences. By focusing on personal, spiritual, and emotional aspects, the learning process becomes more meaningful and relevant to daily life. The flexibility of the methods, respect for the diversity of learners' backgrounds, and the creation of an inclusive and supportive learning environment have fostered increased motivation, active participation, and a deeper understanding of the Qur'an. Therefore, modifying humanistic theory can be an appropriate alternative approach in adult religious education, especially in efforts to ground the values of the Qur'an in the community.



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