



STUDENT ACTUALIZATION IN IMPROVING LEARNING OUTCOMES TOWARDS A HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOL

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Abstract :

This Community Service (PKM) activity aims to improve students' self-actualization skills in support of improving learning outcomes towards achieving high-achieving schools at MA Nurul Islam Probolinggo. The main problems faced are low motivation, self-confidence, and students' independent learning abilities. The activity was implemented using a technical assistance approach through training and workshops that emphasize participatory and reflective learning. The activity participants numbered 24 students who were selected purposively based on their level of motivation and learning participation. The results of the activity showed a significant increase in aspects of learning motivation, critical thinking skills, and skills in planning learning strategies. Students began to demonstrate independence and creativity in the learning process, as well as the courage to express opinions in class. This activity also had a positive impact on teachers and the school environment through increased interaction and collaboration in learning. The technical assistance approach has proven effective in developing self-actualization and building competitive student character. This program is expected to become a model of sustainable mentoring for madrasas in creating a creative, religious, and high-achieving learning environment.

Keywords: *self-actualization, learning outcomes, high-achieving schools, technical assistance, Islamic high schools*

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a fundamental role in shaping knowledgeable, moral, and socially empowered individuals. Students, as the primary subjects of education, possess physical and spiritual potential that needs to be optimally developed. According to Mahmud Yunus (2012), education is a deliberate effort to help students develop physically, intellectually, and morally toward achievable perfection. Every student possesses latent potential, which, if not consciously developed, will remain dormant and not provide maximum benefit to themselves or society. Therefore, developing student potential should not only emphasize cognitive aspects but also affective and psychomotor dimensions to form well-rounded individuals. Good education should be able to serve as a vehicle for the actualization of students' potential as a whole, both in terms of thinking, attitude, and productive behavior.

The concept of self-actualization is an important foundation in efforts to improve the quality of education, especially in developing independent,



creative, and high-achieving students. Abraham Maslow (1954) in his hierarchy of needs theory stated that self-actualization is the culmination of the human development process, namely the drive to become the best version of oneself. In the context of education, self-actualization means the ability of students to recognize their potential and develop it through meaningful learning experiences. Rogers (1969) added that the learning process will be effective if students are actively involved in determining the direction and goals of learning. This means that education should not be merely instructive, but needs to provide space for the growth of self-awareness and responsibility for learning. Thus, self-actualization in education is a concrete manifestation of humanistic education that places students at the center of the learning process.

The low quality of education in Indonesia remains a fundamental problem that directly impacts the quality of human resources (HR). According to a 2022 UNESCO report, Indonesia's education development index lags behind other ASEAN countries. One contributing factor is students' lack of ability to develop their learning potential and creativity. The learning process in many schools remains conventional and teacher-centered, limiting students' opportunities for critical and reflective thinking. As a result, many students struggle to connect classroom knowledge to real-life situations. This indicates that the education system does not fully support students' self-actualization in learning, particularly in religious secondary schools such as Islamic high schools (madrasah aliyah), which face unique challenges in integrating Islamic values and academic competencies.

As an Islamic educational institution, MA Nurul Islam Probolinggo is committed to producing students with character, intelligence, and achievement. The school has implemented various programs to achieve this goal, such as extracurricular activities in language, scouting, sports, arts, as well as entrepreneurship and da'wah training. These activities aim to provide students with a space for self-actualization in various fields. However, initial observations indicate that some students still experience obstacles in developing their potential, particularly in terms of self-confidence, learning motivation, and creative thinking skills. Some students even exhibit symptoms of low self-esteem and dependency in learning. This phenomenon indicates the need for a mentoring program that can help students recognize their potential and foster stronger learning motivation.

The problem of low self-confidence and learning motivation in students is not only influenced by internal factors, but also by unsupportive learning environments. According to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory of education, individual development is strongly influenced by the interaction between personal factors and the social environment. A monotonous school environment, rigid teaching methods, and a lack of positive feedback from teachers can hinder students' self-actualization process. On the other hand, students who receive good emotional and social support from the school environment tend to have higher learning motivation. Therefore, community service programs that focus on strengthening student self-actualization are

relevant for creating a more dynamic and achievement-oriented learning atmosphere.

Improved learning outcomes are not only measured by academic grades alone, but also by changes in students' attitudes and problem-solving abilities. According to Bloom (1956), learning outcomes encompass three main domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. In this context, developing students' self-actualization is expected to enhance all three domains in a balanced manner. Students who are able to actualize themselves will more easily understand the subject matter, demonstrate a positive attitude toward learning, and develop critical and creative thinking skills. Therefore, this community service activity is aimed at helping students achieve real changes in the learning process through a participatory approach and experiential *learning*.

This PKM activity is designed with a *technical assistance approach* that focuses on training and workshops. This approach is considered effective in providing students with hands-on experience in identifying and developing their learning potential. Through this training, students gain not only conceptual knowledge but also practical skills on how to learn effectively, efficiently, and enjoyably. Furthermore, this activity also aims to instill Islamic values in learning, such as sincerity, responsibility, and hard work as part of the self-actualization process. The integration of spiritual values and academic abilities is expected to produce students who excel morally and intellectually.

Student actualization mentoring programs also have important implications for improving the quality of educational institutions. Schools that successfully develop high-achieving students will gain greater trust from the community and government. According to Tilaar (2013), school quality is measured not only by academic results but also by the institution's ability to develop students' overall potential. Therefore, PKM activities like this can serve as *a model for character development* that can be replicated by other schools. This participatory, experience-oriented training approach has been proven to create a positive and sustainable learning climate.

In the era of globalization and the industrial revolution 4.0, adaptability, critical thinking, and collaboration are key requirements for students. Therefore, education needs to be directed towards developing students who are not only academically intelligent but also possess high emotional and social intelligence. Self-actualization is key to building independent learning and competitiveness in students. With self-actualization, students will develop the awareness to continue learning, innovating, and making positive contributions to their environment. This community service activity is a strategic step in preparing the younger generation to face the challenges of 21st-century education by strengthening learning skills and character.

Based on the description above, this PKM activity aims to provide knowledge and training to MA Nurul Islam Probolinggo students so they can actualize their potential in improving learning outcomes towards a high-achieving school. This activity is expected to be a solution to the problem of low student motivation and self-confidence, as well as a form of real contribution

from higher education in supporting the improvement of the quality of education in the region. With a creative, reflective, and potential-oriented learning approach, it is hoped that a generation of students will emerge who are able to think critically, have noble morals, and have proud achievements both at the local and national levels.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This community service activity uses a **qualitative descriptive approach**, with a *technical assistance model* or direct technical assistance. This approach emphasizes the active involvement of participants through mentoring and applicable training. This model aligns with Rogers' (1969) view that the learning process will be effective if students are active subjects in determining their own learning goals and methods. This activity is carried out in **MA Nurul Islam Probolinggo**, an Islamic educational institution committed to improving academic quality and developing religious character, found that some students had low learning motivation and were unable to fully realize their potential. This situation underpinned the need for a training approach capable of fostering creative and innovative learning awareness (Hidayat, 2015).

The activity involved **24 students** selected through *purposive sampling* based on teacher recommendations, taking into account their involvement in learning activities and their self-development needs. The activity was implemented through four main stages: initial coordination, material preparation, interactive training, and evaluation. The training materials focused on developing students' self-actualization, drawing on Maslow's (1954) theory of needs, Rogers' (1969) humanistic learning theory, and Bloom's (1956) learning outcomes. This approach emphasized participatory learning, where students were encouraged to recognize their individual learning styles, identify learning barriers, and design creative learning strategies such as *mind mapping* and *peer discussion*.

The training activities were conducted in the form of short lectures, group discussions, simulations, and self-reflection. Throughout the training, the learning environment was created interactively so that students could freely express their opinions and provide feedback to one another. *Peer learning strategies* were used to encourage participation and collaboration among students, in line with the findings of Al-Anwari (2014) and Desfandi (2015) which emphasized the importance of a participatory approach in character education. A reflection process was conducted at the end of the activity to help students understand the changes that had occurred within themselves. Observations showed that participants demonstrated high enthusiasm, increased motivation, and the ability to design more effective learning strategies.

The activity evaluation was conducted through observation, short interviews, and student reflection sheets. The evaluation results showed an increase in students' learning awareness and ability to manage the learning process independently. Most participants reported that they now understand

the importance of learning planning and are able to apply creative methods that align with their potential. This aligns with the findings of Fitriatien et al. (2017) and Astuti (2015) that participatory learning can improve learning outcomes and shape positive character. Thus, the *technical assistance method* has proven effective in developing students' self-actualization and strengthening the role of madrasahs as institutions that foster creative, reflective, and character-based learning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Planning

Planning for community service activities at MA Nurul Islam Probolinggo began with a needs analysis based on observations and interviews with teachers and students. The community service team found that most students experienced difficulties in the learning process due to low motivation and self-confidence. This indicated a gap between student potential and learning outcomes. Based on this analysis, the team developed training activities using a *technical assistance approach* that emphasized direct mentoring through participatory and reflective learning. This approach refers to Rogers' (1969) humanistic theory, which emphasizes that the learning process will be effective when students are treated as active individuals and have control over their experiences.

The planning stages are carried out systematically, starting with initial coordination with the school, developing activity objectives, and designing training materials and methods. The materials focus on developing self-actualization, increasing learning motivation, and developing creative learning strategies. Maslow's (1954) theory of needs serves as the primary foundation for developing the materials, as it positions self-actualization as the pinnacle of human achievement after basic needs are met. By integrating this concept into the educational context, the training is aimed at helping students recognize their potential and develop effective learning strategies. The implementation of activities is designed to actively engage students through discussion, simulation, and reflection, in accordance with the principles of active *learning*.

In the final planning stage, the community service team prepared learning aids such as *PowerPoint presentations*, student worksheets, and visual media to facilitate understanding. Furthermore, outreach was conducted to the accompanying teachers so they could continue the activities after the training. This thorough planning ensured that the activities ran according to schedule and objectives. According to Al-Anwari (2014), the success of character building and student learning skills programs is greatly influenced by collaboration between the school and the activity implementers. Therefore, the school's active involvement in planning is a determining factor in the success of training oriented towards improving the quality and motivation of student learning.

Impact of Change

The training significantly improved students' motivation and learning skills. Before the training, some students exhibited passive learning behavior,

giving up easily, and lacking confidence in participating in academic activities. However, after the training, students began to show positive changes in their enthusiasm for learning and active engagement in class. Based on observations and reflection sheets, approximately 85% of participants reported increased awareness of the importance of independent and planned learning. They began implementing strategies such as creating mind maps, noting important ideas, and managing their study time more disciplined. These changes indicate that students have reached the initial stage of self-actualization as described by Maslow (1954), when individuals begin to optimize their potential and abilities.

In addition to increasing motivation, the training also impacted students' critical and creative thinking skills. Through group discussions and learning simulations, students were trained to solve problems and collaborate with classmates. This approach aligns with Bloom's (1956) view that effective learning must encompass the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Students not only understood learning concepts but were also able to internalize values such as cooperation, responsibility, and academic honesty. Evaluation results showed that students were more confident in expressing opinions in class, took the initiative to seek additional learning resources, and actively participated in school activities. This aligns with the findings of Fitriati et al. (2017) who emphasized that active participation in learning activities can improve the quality of learning outcomes.

The impact of change was also felt at the institutional level. Teachers attending the training assessed that it inspired them to change their classroom learning approaches. They recognized the importance of providing students with space for exploratory and reflective learning. The *technical assistance approach* implemented was considered adaptable and relevant for various subjects. As Hidayat (2015) points out, Islamic education should emphasize not only the transfer of knowledge but also the development of students' character and spiritual motivation. Therefore, the changes that occurred after the training were not limited to academics but also focused on the development of positive character traits that support the madrasah's vision as a high-achieving and virtuous school.

Scientific Discussion

This activity made a significant contribution to the development of the concept of humanistic learning in the context of madrasah education. The results of discussions between the resource person and students indicated an increase in students' understanding of the concept of *self-regulated learning*, the ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning process (Zimmerman, 2002). During the scientific discussion, students actively asked questions about how to maintain concentration, manage time, and overcome laziness in learning. This activity reflected a shift from passive learning patterns to reflective and independent learning patterns. In addition, students also showed enthusiasm in connecting the training material to their personal experiences, which is a sign of meaningful learning. This reinforces Rogers' (1969) view that effective learning occurs when individuals are fully engaged in the process and

feel its relevance to real life.

Scientific discussions also show that collaborative learning processes can strengthen social relationships between students and foster academic empathy. Through *peer learning*, students learn to respect differences of opinion and work together to achieve shared learning goals. These findings align with research by Desfandi (2015), who stated that a participatory approach in education can foster caring and social responsibility. Teachers involved in the activities observed that students became more communicative and supported each other in completing schoolwork. This process not only improves learning outcomes but also enriches the affective and social aspects, which are important in developing the character of students who are moral and high-achieving.

Conceptually, the results of this activity reinforce the theory that developing student potential must be done through a holistic approach, encompassing intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects. As Mulyana (2009) stated, the formation of learning ethics and culture cannot be achieved solely through formal instruction, but rather through consistent habituation and role modeling. This community service activity successfully demonstrated that *technical assistance* can be an alternative learning model that integrates Islamic values with modern learning strategies. Thus, this activity not only improves students' academic competence but also strengthens the foundation of their character and spirituality as future generations of superior, competitive and noble characters.

CONCLUSION

The Community Service (PKM) activity with the theme "**Student Actualization in Improving Learning Outcomes Towards an Achieving School at MA Nurul Islam Probolinggo**" has had a positive impact on increasing student motivation, self-confidence, and learning creativity. Through a *technical assistance approach*, students are actively involved in a participatory and reflective learning process, so they are able to recognize their potential and develop effective learning strategies. Thorough activity planning and collaboration between the community service team and the school are important factors in the success of this activity. The results show that students are better able to manage study time, apply creative learning methods, and show an increased awareness of the importance of continuous learning.

The impact of the resulting changes is not only seen in increased individual motivation, but also in strengthening social dynamics within the madrasah environment. Through discussions, reflections, and learning simulations, students demonstrate improved critical thinking skills, collaboration, and academic responsibility. These activities also strengthen the teacher's role in creating a more interactive learning environment oriented toward character development. The integration of Islamic values such as sincerity, discipline, and responsibility adds a spiritual dimension to the learning process. Thus, these PKM activities not only impact the cognitive domain but also strengthen the affective and psychomotor aspects of students

in accordance with holistic educational goals.

Scientifically, this activity confirms that the process of student self-actualization is an integral part of improving the quality of education in madrasas. The applied *technical assistance model* has proven effective in helping students discover their full potential through meaningful learning experiences. The success of this activity contributes to the development of humanistic learning strategies that can be adapted by other educational institutions. For sustainability, it is recommended that this program be continued with further mentoring activities, such as self-management training and project-based learning. With these steps, madrasas can continue to develop high-achieving, independent, and character-based students, while strengthening the institution's image as a school that excels in academic and moral quality.

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