

# Exploring Similarities and Synergies between Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Maqasid Shari'ah, and Sustainable Development Goals, and their Relevance to Zakat Distribution

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## Abstract

This study examines the similarities and synergies between Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Maqasid Shariah, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to enhance the distribution of *zakat*. It utilizes a qualitative methodology, thoroughly examining existing material and systematically analyzing recurring themes. The data was gathered by doing a comprehensive analysis of the available literature. The collected data was subjected to theme analysis to discover fundamental concepts and linkages. The research identifies shared characteristics and interactions among these frameworks by analyzing the literature and conducting a thematic analysis. The findings indicate that integrating these models can amplify the effectiveness of *zakat* distribution in advancing human dignity, social justice, and sustainable development. This comprehensive approach addresses immediate financial needs and promotes holistic human development, ethical and sustainable progress, and culturally relevant practices, ultimately contributing to a fairer and more just society. Future research should focus on practical applications and empirical studies to validate the synergy and effectiveness of these integrated frameworks in various contexts.

**Keywords:** Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Sustainable Development Goals, *zakat* distribution.

## Introduction

Human well-being and societal growth have been focal points in several philosophical, theological, and developmental frameworks. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, *Maqasid Shariah*, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the most impactful frameworks. Every framework provides a distinct viewpoint on human needs and societal objectives, but they all have a shared aim: improving the quality of life for individuals and communities.

According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, human motivation is determined by satisfying needs in a particular sequence: physiological, safety, love/belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. *Maqasid Shari'ah* is an Islamic legal framework that delineates the aims of *Shari'ah*: safeguard religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property. The SDGs, created by the United Nations, consist of 17 global objectives to tackle several aspects of sustainable development, such as poverty, health, education, and environmental sustainability.

This study examines the connections between these frameworks and how they might be used in the distribution of Zakah. It emphasizes how these frameworks can work together to enhance and support each other in pursuing holistic human development.

## Literature Review

### *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a psychological theory introduced in the 1940s and 1950s. According to the theory, humans possess a hierarchical structure of needs that must be satisfied in a specific sequence to attain self-actualization and personal fulfilment. Based on the literature, Maslow's hierarchy consists of five levels: physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization needs.

Physiological needs, such as food, water, shelter, and sleep, form the foundation of the hierarchy. They are the fundamental requirements that must be fulfilled to ensure survival. After satisfying their basic physiological needs, individuals strive to attain safety and security. This encompasses not only the protection of one's physical well-being but also the assurance of financial stability and the preservation of good health. Once individuals have their safety needs met, they seek love, affection, and a feeling of belonging. This encompasses establishing connections with acquaintances, relatives, and intimate companions (Zakaria & Malek, 2014).

The fourth tier of the hierarchy pertains to the requirement for self-esteem and the regard of others. This encompasses emotions of achievement, acknowledgement, and esteem. At the highest level of the hierarchy lies self-actualization, which encompasses realizing one's complete capabilities, pursuing personal development, and attaining self-fulfilment.

Maslow's idea has significantly influenced diverse domains, including psychology, education, and business. It has been utilized to comprehend motivation, goal-setting, and human conduct (Noltemeyer et al., 2020). Detractors of the idea contend that it is excessively reductionist and fails to consider cultural or individual variations in demands. Notwithstanding these concerns, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a widely accepted paradigm for comprehending human motivation and development.

### *Maqasid Shari'ah*

The *Maqasid Shari'ah*, or the Objectives of Islamic Law, is a concept in Islamic jurisprudence that aims to preserve and promote the well-being of individuals and society. It goes beyond the literal application of Islamic legal rulings and principles to consider Islam's broader principles and values. The *Maqasid* framework emphasizes the higher objectives of the *Shari'ah*, which include the preservation of religion, life, intellect, progeny, and wealth (Auda,

J. 2008; Zakaria & Malek, 2014). Studies examining zakat's role in achieving Maqasid Shari'ah include Amalia et al. (2020) and Haji-Othman (2020).

Scholars and jurists have long debated the concept of *Maqasid Shari'ah* and its application in Islamic law. One key aspect of the *Maqasid* framework is its ability to provide flexibility and adaptability in Islamic jurisprudence, allowing for the principles of Islam to be applied to new and changing circumstances. This approach is vital for addressing contemporary global challenges and issues Muslim communities face.

#### *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), endorsed by the United Nations in 2015, consist of 17 interconnected objectives that serve as a comprehensive plan to attain a more prosperous and enduring future for everyone. The goals encompass a broad spectrum of concerns: poverty, hunger, health, education, gender equality, clean water, and climate action. The primary objectives encompass eradicating poverty, eliminating hunger, promoting optimal health and well-being, ensuring high-quality education, and achieving gender equality. The SDGs highlight the interdependence of social, economic, and environmental sustainability and promote the use of integrated strategies for development (Zakaria & Malek, 2014; Hasan, 2020). Studies that examined *zakat* distribution in connection with the SDGs include Asmalia et al. (2018), Hudaefi et al. (2020) and Adebayo (2020).

#### *Zakat Distribution*

*Zakat*, a fundamental tenet of Islam, is an obligatory charitable donation with great significance in Islamic economic and societal structures. It entails the allocation of a fraction of resources to individuals who are in need, intending to advance social equity and mitigate poverty. *Zakat* distribution adheres to precise criteria delineated in Islamic teachings, encompassing designated groups of eligible beneficiaries such as people experiencing poverty, the needy, those indebted, and travellers, as well as the specific forms of wealth that are subject to *zakat* such as savings, investments, and agricultural produce (Haji-Othman, 2016).

Studies by Haji-Othman et al (2020a), Haji-Othman et al (2021), Haji-Othman et al (2020b), examined the distribution of *zakat* to comprehend its influence and efficiency in tackling poverty and inequality throughout Muslim societies. The literature review on the distribution of *zakat* encompasses a wide range of factors, such as principles and guidelines, *zakat* collection and management, impact assessment, and contemporary issues.

#### **Methodology**

This study utilizes a qualitative methodology to examine the connections between Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, *Maqasid Shari'ah*, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and how they might be used to distribute *zakat*. The process includes a thorough examination of existing material and a systematic analysis of recurring themes. The sources encompass scholarly journals, books, and official reports issued by pertinent institutions. The study reveals recurring patterns, complementary aspects, and prospective collaborations among the three frameworks and applies these findings to the distribution of *zakat*.

The data was gathered by analyzing the available literature on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, *zakat*, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the distribution of *zakat*. The sources utilized encompassed scholarly articles, novels, and official publications from esteemed international organizations such as the United Nations and Islamic financial institutions.

The gathered data was subjected to theme analysis to discover fundamental concepts and linkages. The analysis entailed comparing each framework's fundamental concepts and goals and examining their intersections and complementarities. Subsequently, the acquired knowledge was utilized to analyze the process of *zakat* distribution, determining how these frameworks can improve its efficiency.

### Findings

This study uncovered notable intersections and synergies between Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, *Maqasid Shari'ah*, and the SDGs, as well as their relevance to the distribution of *zakat*. The findings and discussions are grounded in the subsequent themes:

#### *Human Dignity and Well-being*

Each of the three frameworks places a high importance on human value and welfare. Maslow's emphasis on psychological and self-fulfilment requirements, *Maqasid Shari'ah*'s focus on safeguarding basic human interests, and the SDGs' holistic approach to development highlight the significance of improving quality of life. Also, the three frameworks place a high value on human dignity and well-being, emphasizing the significance of enhancing the overall quality of life for both individuals and communities. By adhering to these guidelines, the distribution of *zakat* can better cater to the requirements of the poor and needy.

#### *The Interconnectedness of Needs and Goals*

The hierarchical organization of Maslow's needs aligns with the comprehensive nature of *Maqasid Shari'ah* and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The essential physiological and safety needs correspond to the *Maqasid Shari'ah* principle of protecting life and the objectives of the SDGs, which aim to eliminate poverty and promote good health. This highlights the interconnectedness of various areas of human development. This comprehensive approach to the distribution of *zakat* can efficiently address multiple needs simultaneously.

#### *Ethical and Sustainable Development*

Both *Maqasid Shari'ah* and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) promote the inclusion of ethical issues in the development process. Property preservation in *Maqasid Shari'ah* is in accordance with the SDGs' emphasis on sustainable economic growth and environmental conservation. When adhering to these principles, the distribution of *zakat* can significantly contribute to achieving long-term sustainable development.

#### *Comprehensive Human Development*

By combining the psychological principles of Maslow's hierarchy, the ethical framework of *Maqasid Shari'ah*, and the practical objectives of the SDGs, a holistic method to *zakat* distribution can be developed. A holistic approach to human development can be achieved by combining Maslow's psychological theories, *Maqasid Shari'ah*'s ethical principles, and the practical goals of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This integrated approach aims

to fulfil the needs of both individuals and society as a whole. While Maslow's hierarchy of needs focuses on personal satisfaction, *Maqasid Shari'ah* offers a more comprehensive approach that considers the welfare of the community and society as a whole, thereby complementing the global viewpoint of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

#### *Cultural Relevance*

*Maqasid Shari'ah* offers culturally relevant guidelines for Muslim-majority contexts, enhancing the acceptance and implementation of SDG-related initiatives in these regions, which helps to promote the acceptance and execution of plans for distributing *zakat* in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

#### *Implications for Zakat Distribution*

Integrating Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, *Maqasid Shari'ah*, and the SDGs into the distribution of *zakat* can significantly enhance its impact. This approach ensures that *zakat* alleviates immediate financial needs and addresses broader aspects of human well-being, social justice, and sustainable development. Implementing a holistic framework can lead to more efficient and effective *zakat* distribution, ultimately contributing to the overall development of communities.

#### *Recommendations for Future Research*

Future research should focus on practical applications of these integrated frameworks in diverse contexts to further validate their synergy and effectiveness. Empirical studies examining the impact of *zakat* distribution strategies informed by these frameworks can provide valuable insights into their practical implications and outcomes. Additionally, exploring the role of technology and innovative approaches in enhancing *zakat* collection and distribution processes can further strengthen the effectiveness of *zakat* in promoting human dignity, social justice, and sustainable development.

#### **Conclusion**

This study explores the similarities and synergies between Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, *Maqasid Shari'ah*, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically in relation to the allocation of *zakat*. The analysis emphasizes notable similarities and synergies across these frameworks, demonstrating how they collectively contribute to a complete and efficient approach to the distribution of *zakat*. Examining Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, *Maqasid Shari'ah*, and the Sustainable Development Goals reveals significant resemblances and harmonies. By integrating these principles, the allocation of *zakat* can optimize its capacity to promote human dignity, cultivate social equity, and facilitate sustainable progress. By utilizing the shared characteristics and synergies between Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, *Maqasid Shari'ah*, and the SDGs, the allocation of *zakat* can be converted into a potent instrument for promoting human dignity, social equity, and sustainable progress. This integrated approach provides a thorough framework for tackling the complex concerns of poverty and inequality, ultimately leading to a fairer and more just society. Additional research is required to explore how these integrated frameworks can be effectively implemented in different contexts to verify their compatibility and effectiveness.

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