CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS CONCEPT OF DHIKR AL-GHAZALI AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFIT

According to al-Ghazali, there are four phases progress must be passed in dhikr. Every progress indicate different characteristic in psychological aspect.¹ These phase are training phase, habitual phase, religious transformation phase (ecstasy), fana’ and baqa’ phase as spiritual experience. This progress can be described like progress in human psychologist, that be started by childhood, adolescent, and parental.

A. Al-Ghazali’s Dhikr Concept

1. Training Phase

Progress of dhikr according to al-Ghazali, must be started by training phase. In this first phase, murid (student who have concern to Allah as purpose of live) must effort to train and do dhikr, effort to pressure herself with dhikr, and also murid must sponge out the feeling of doubt which grown in the heart when do dhikr to Allah. In other word, dhikr activity has linear development and growth in attitude and habit.

The kind of training was proposed by al-Ghazali is an important step of progress in the next phase. Like children, training has significant contribution in maturity of perfect dhikr.² Training also becomes lowest structure that should be possessed by subject/murid as fundamental characters. Murid or subject when do dhikr bil lisan (dhikr by mouth/ oral) at same time must be in maqam

² Ibid , p 52
taubat (spiritual degree which be reached by return to direction of Allah), in the same word, *murid* try to control bad desire and just do good and precious activity.

Practice of training method has special purpose that is continuity. Based on training, *murid* or subject hopes to Allah swt in order to do *dhikr* continuously. *Dhikr* continuity is like Allah said in Qur’an “do *dhikr* to Allah like as what was be instructed”. And also it can bring to peaceful feeling, and as result of continuity of *dhikr*, seed of love will appear to Allah in the heart.

Basically, training *dhikr* with the certain number and tend to be forced is ones of method to make *dhikr* continuity. It can increase attitude and habit of *dhikr*, but it is important to know that this method must be balanced by ability of control, especially control bad desire, keep away from bad evil, and always do positive attitude. As conclusion, although training phase is a basic phase and lowest structure in progress phase of *dhikr*, but this phase can bring subject or *murid* into attitude of *dhikr* and continuity of *dhikr*. And also can bring subject/*murid* into goodness and alertness.

2. Habitual Phase

The next step is habitual phase. This phase appear because love (in the beginning *dhikr* continuity and be forced and then become love and habit), result of training phase. *Dhikr* by mouth/oral (*dhikr bil lisan*) or training phase not always bring *murid* to next level of *dhikr* progress, sometimes in the middle way, *murid* cannot

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3 Q.S. al-Baqarah[2]: 198
pass from several obstacles (like riya’, sum’ah, and takabbur). This statement like Abraham Maslow said in psychology of human progress, every human have capacity of progress become health. But not all human can be ideal, even just little who can reach it. It is caused by conflict of two powers in human self that are scare and self-confident.⁵

According to al-Ghazali there are two inner potential powers in human self. These potential powers have different interest and fight each other. The first is Aql (interest and tend to desire of physic of world) and the second is qalb (tend to transcendent and more religious aspect, it also called as divine dimension or ruh al-ila>hiyah). So, the relation these concept and dhikr is when murid belong to habitual phase, murid will face two of potential power (aql and qalb). Here, there are two choices, when murid choose the aql, it will bring stagnation of progress in dhikr phase. In contrary, qalb will bring to next progress.

The description about choices (aql and qalb) is a barometer to decide quality of dhikr, whether murid follow the power of potential aql or the power of potential qalb. More and more decision tend to potential aql would make far distance to actualization of dhikr. On the other way, when murid decide to follow qalb, it will bring to Allah.

As explanation above, potential qalb that be based on divine dimension (ruh al ila>hiyah) is source of human power and energy. It can be access when murid do dhikr continuously and actualize as

⁴ Ghazali, al-Arba’in Fi> Usju>l al-Di>n, p 62
source of all attitude and habit in this live. And finally become
perfect like what be expected, \textit{tah\textaship alluq} in the name and attribute
of Allah. \textit{Tah\textaship alluq} according to Ibnu Arabi is manifestation of \textit{dhikr}
in good attitude and habit which is appropriate with Allah’s wishes.\footnote{Ibnu Arabi, \textit{Futuhat al-Makiyyah}, (Kairo: Dar al-Fikir al-Ilmiyyah, 2001), p 68}

More than all of it, continuity of \textit{dhikr} is the one of way to
open the divine secret, so that \textit{murid} can see the angles and hidden
world. All of that become motivation and belief to \textit{murid} in order to
obey command of Allah and keep away the bad habit. This is the
condition \textit{murid} and Allah have special relation and there is no
obstacle or barrier both of them.

Al-Ghazali said that this condition is core of \textit{dhikr}, when
\textit{dhikr} became one and permanent in the heart, where \textit{dhikr} became
unity. In other side, \textit{dhikr} must be implicated in daily activity, so will
appear substances of \textit{dhikr}. Happiness and interest in material aspect
is temporary, eternal happiness is spiritual happiness.

Maslow argues that human with the perfect characteristic of
\textit{dhikr} (\textit{wara'} , \textit{zuhud and faqr}) can apply all attitude and ideas never
based on motif for an individual advantages, but always have ideas
for public profit and have long term aspect. It mean that who reach
until this condition always think eternal profit and useful for society.
They always place an individual profit under public interest. And
also they never do useless matter.\footnote{Maslow never give statement directly to maturity of \textit{dhikr} like Ghazali perspective, but implicitly there is similarity Ghazali perspective with concept of self actualization. Human who can actualize their self able to see reality more efisien. It means that they will do something when it is useful, and all of activity and attitude wouldn’t be refered on temporary profit. Also they will choose clearly between truth and false matter.}
For that reason, human who want to keep purity of soul and belief, must take dhikr always become attitude in all aspect of life. When dhikr continuously spoken in mouth, it will appear reflection of dhikr. So, vibration of heart will keep the tone until emitted through all body. From here, people able to internalize names and attributes of Allah in their self. Finally, people can influence attitude, thought, and acts of human being religiously, based on vertical relation to Allah.

3. Religious Transformation (ecstasy)

Religious transformation or change of religious quality usually in psychology of religion was known as religious conversion. This is phenomena of an individual experience with the dramatic progress in religiosity (ideas and attitude). This phenomenon can be known by three manifestations. First, change of religious affiliation where an individual move on from one religion to other religion. Second, integration of religious is an individual who have not concern and belief to religion become an individual who care and respect to religiosity. Third, change of commitment value and religious belief (on similar religion context).

Trimingham argues that dhikr as core of mysticism in Islam, can be instrument to soul purifying and healing for all kind disease of it. Moreover, dhikr can be method to change mainstream of soul from

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8 James, Varieties of Religious Experience, (New York: Longman,1990), p 148
9 Subandi, Psikologi Dhikr, (Yogyakarta: Pustaka pelajar, 2009), p 48
physic orientation to hereafter, change to unity of soul and finally to religious of life.\textsuperscript{10}

The narration of al-Ghazali life and experience is one of sample for this theory and concept. Where \textit{dhikr} become mystical power of Islam bring to religious transformation. He is one of Islamic theologies and philosopher. When he was young, he felt the internal conflict to look for real of truth, until the feeling of doubt covers his knowledge. His life became useless and he was in condition existential depression. And then he decided to follow Sufi’s way, he leave all of position in this world, then gone to one country to another country include Syria and Makah.

As long as his travel, al-Ghazali always do \textit{dhikr} by his self intensively under the command of \textit{mursyid} (spiritual teacher). The spiritual experiences of al-Ghazali in this traveling bring to religious transformation. After finished this spiritual journey Ghazali came back to first profession as a teacher and became more productive.\textsuperscript{11}

Based on change of al-Ghazali’s religion conversion, Thouless argued that al-Ghazali was be in phase of mystical conversion that is dramatically change of religious from usual belief to mystical dimension in the similar religion aspect.\textsuperscript{12} Even though it is true according to Thouless, but mystical experience is not scientific incident as phenomenon that can be predicted. Moreover, this is happen as a result of spiritual discipline and practice.

\textsuperscript{11} Subandi, \textit{Psikologi Dhikr}, p 59
\textsuperscript{12} Thoules, R.H, \textit{An Introduction to The psychology of Religion},(London: Cambridge University Press, 1990)
It is also occur in al-Ghazali’s experience, as an effect of dhikr activity. Dhikr activity that be combined with contemplation, At the first time he will get the unity of soul, after that he will give over his soul as symbol of glorious sacrifice to Allah, and finally he gets fana’ and baqa’ condition. So, he never feels disparate with Allah.  

Dhikr also bring to the truth formulation of thinking. While as iradah, dhikr become truth order, and the effect of dhikr for qalb and belief is become single synthetic. In the process soul purity and effort to become near with Allah, dhikr often bring to mystical experienced or Altered States Consciousness (ASC) that is one of consciousness where this is different from normal consciousness.

The conclusion, dhikr continuity that was be classified by al-Ghazali, give side effect or influence to religious orientation, from general orientation (‘amm) that be characterized by superficiality of ritual and egocentric orientation to mystical religion or in this term called by religious transformation.

Most of people, who premature in religious life, implicate their religion on society with tend to superficial, ritualistic, and conventional life. So in this period being a Moslem is different with being with other Moslem. On contrary, people who mature in religion have the good and near relation to Allah, so the existence of Moslem is being with God.

4. Fana’ and Baqa’ as Spiritual Experience

13 Ghazali, al-Arba’in Fi> Usj u> al-Di>n, p 52
14 Ummu Salamah, Tradisi dan Akhlak Pengamal Tarekat, (Bandung: yayasan al Musadadiyah, 2001), p 172
15 Subandi, Psikologi Dhikr, p 58
Final result of dhikr classification by al-Ghazali is the condition fana’ and baqa’. According al-Qusyairi fana’ is the spiritual condition where all bad attributes an individual disappear and going to baqa’ (establishment of good attribute in an individual) as a result of Sufi’s way to reach God consciousness.\textsuperscript{16} It is clearly different with concept of fana’ and baqa’ in other religion (Buddha, Jewish, Christian) as final of spiritual journey.

Abdul Muhaya cited, fana’ and baqa’ are the Arabic word, come from verb faniya means passed or destroyed. In other hand fana’ in tasawwuf tradition mean situation or condition of an individual where the consciousness of ego and self-destroyed or disappear, and baqa’ come from verb baqiya means permanent, constant or life.\textsuperscript{17} So, the condition of fana’ and baqa’ mean the death of bad attributes sector and the live of goodness aspect.

According Ghazali an individual who do dhikr and be in fana’ condition, never see something what pass a cross in front of him, although both of eyes opened, he become forget everything even himself, it is caused by the sincerity of dhikr and give attention and passion to what he love and what he call and mention. He sinks in God fantasy and consciousness. So an individual feel there is no existence except God existence.\textsuperscript{18}

fana’ and baqa’ is the final result of dhikr, the beginning is dhikr by mouth/oral (dhikr bil lisan), and the next dhikr by heart (dhikr bil qalb), and then dhikr by heart and habit, and the final is

\textsuperscript{16} Al-Qusyairi, Risalah Qusyairiyah, p. 67
\textsuperscript{17} Abdul Muhaya, Integration of Sufism and Transpersonal Psikology, Laporan hasil Penelitian Doktoral Research, (Semarang: IAIN Walisongo,2013), p.82
\textsuperscript{18} Ghazali, Kitab Arbain Fi Ushul al-Din, (Bairut: Dar al-Jalil, 1998), p. 35
fana’ and baqa’, where object of dhikr mastered and dhikr it’s self-vanished. May be it become the secret of Rosulullah “dhikr khoﬁ (hidden dhikr) is more valuable than dhikr was done by hafazjah (angle who record the activity) as more valuable seven times. 19

In short explanation, fana’ and baqa’ condition as result of journey of dhikr from one phase to other phase is one of the spiritual experience in altered state of consciousness. This condition is resulting of inner experience self beyond ego and human personalities. 20 Because of that this experience cannot be tested except who reach it. So al-Ghazali suggest to all murid to effort until maqam musha>hadah because words and news is different from directly seeing.

As a comment of condition fana’ and baqa’, Abdul muhaya argued that there is unique phenomenon in fana’ and baqa’ in tasawuf tradition. According to him, fana’ is not the final of spiritual journey (nirvana), but it is one of inner condition (condition of soul) to development and perfection of soul. 21

The actualization concept of progress and perfection of soul actually was well-known in scientist of humanistic psychology, like Abraham Maslow, 22 he described in western society, people who have characteristic clearly than other become useful than other. But, until now western psychology unable to conceptualize how is people can reach that position or condition.

19 Ibid, p. 55
20 Abdul Muhaya, Integration of Sufism and Transpersonal Psychology, p. 87
21 Ibid, p.81
22 Maslow is one of humanistic psychologist, he was born in Brooklyn, New York, USA at 1 april 1908.
Many transpersonal psychologist discussed about techniques to reach the condition of perfect characteristic, but until now days there is no record of literature in psychology method succeed to reach “self-actualization” concept. Western psychology is as if doesn’t know how to reach this purpose. 23 Tasawwuf, as mystical dimension in Islam, made first the concept about human characteristic that can actualize itself. 24 Furthermore, tasawwuf require Islam people or Moslem effort to reach this condition and position with dhikr.

Human is perfect creation, which has more potential and special ability than other creation. Human have given the power of freewill and the power of thinking as control of truth way. This potency can be dug and optimized by know and dhikr to Allah.

Al-Ghazali, with the concept of dhikr progression as have described in chapter three effort to bring moslem to self-actualization, near and feeling controlled by God. So, everything what be done as instruction of dhikr itself. More description, dhikr bring to commitment with Allah physically and psychologically, able to keep from subhat, self-control in greedy. Dhikr also can bring an individual to ma’rifat.

Dhikr doesn’t just meaning and function of mouth/oral activity or heart sincerity, but it have more meaning and function even it have correlation to Allah in all activity and attitude physically.

24 See, Hasyim Muhammad, Dialog Antara Tasawuf dan Psikologi, he suggest and gave explanation about similarity concept and characteristic self actualization in sufi’s opinion and psychology. Hasyim Muhammd, Dialog Antara Tasawuf dan Psikologi,(Yogyakarta:Pustaka Pelajar,2002)
and psychologically in order to obey all God order and effort to keep away from all God prohibition and also expect to God willingness. So, dhikr without appearing of obedient to Allah is not the real dhikr.

People characteristic as result and consequence of dhikr was expected by al-Ghazali is clear. An individual able to see reality as clear as possible, accurate, appropriate, and see everything without tend to something, because the purpose that be expected is just God willingness (accept all of God decision, bad and good, so will appear sabr, tawakkal, and qana’ah). But although, there are special characteristics that can be seen, but it is subjective. Because, the depth of human spirituality just can be seen by an individual who tested it. So an individual must effort to taste dhikr experience, spiritual experience.

B. Psychological Benefit in Concept of Dhikr According to Al-Ghazali

1. First Phase

The first kind of dhikr progress that be formulated by Ghazali is the preparation step towards the next level progression. As a child of murid, training phase have significant role in order to be perfect in dhikr. Training phase as the lowest step of dhikr form the basic character that should be attributed to murid. Person who performs dhikr by mouth/oral (dhikr bil lisan) in the same time must be at maqam taubat which is still done dhikr limited verbal method, and seeks to have the ability to control the stability of lust and just do good and worth things.

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25 Ghazali, al-Arbain Fi Ushul al-Din, p 52
26 Hasyim Muhammad, Dialog Antara Tasawuf dan Psikologi, p 119
In this first phase, usually the level of brain waves at a rate of 3.5 to 7 Hz, because at this stage the brain is always sent the information through *dhikr* by mouth/oral. It is like the situation of a child aged 3-6 years old, so the message easily stored in cortex. *Dhikr* in this phase more be emphasized at filling and strengthening the memory. This state commonly called the theta state. It is different from person who doesn’t perform *dhikr*, the brain waves of this person is delta on the rate between 0.5 to 3.5 Hz /second.²⁷

*Dhikr* in a certain amount and tend forced is basically a method in order to increase the habit for *dhikr*. However, it is important to know, *dhikr* must also be balanced with the ability to control desire, keep and reduce the devil potential, and always just do something that is positive, all of this expected to be ones of way to be better person. So, *dhikr* can be practiced, although still in basic structure (*dhikr* by mouth/oral), and also able to take over results of goodness and wakefulness.

2. Second Phase

The description of second phase is appropriate with the state of teenagers between the ages of 7-14 years. In this phase, the state of *dhikr* brain wave rate 8-13 Hz /second, this type is called alpha condition.²⁸ It is identical by Maslow statement in developmental psychology “the capacity to grow in a healthy manner possessed by every human being, but not all of them can reach a certain ideal maturity, even a few people who can achieve it”. This is caused by in

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²⁷ Abdul Muhaya, *Integration of Sufism and Transpersonal Psychology*, p. 42
²⁸ Ibid.p 43
humans; there are two strengths of attraction. The first is fear while the second one is the confidence.²⁹

Maslow argued that the structure of ideal characteristic in this phase will bring an individual at the next level, so he became *wara’, zuhud and Faqr*, all actions and ideas are no longer motivated by self-interest, but rather motivated by the public interest and the long-term aspects. Value becomes barometer of happiness for individuals who arrive at this maturity. In other words, someone who arrives at this level will not do anything that does not contain the value of the benefit.³⁰ But, if the person unable to keep from something’s bad he will not reach this result of *dhikr*.

3. Third Phase

Religious transformation or change of religious quality in the psychology of religion is usually known as religious conversion. It happens when an individual experience a phenomenon that is characterized by the development of religious and changes dramatically, either by ideology or religious behavior.³¹ These changes can be manifested in three ways. First, changes in religious affiliation where someone move from one religion to another. Second, the increase in religious appreciation (people who previously

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³⁰ Maslow never spoke directly but he described explicitly about the characters are attached to someone with a maturity of *dhikr* in Ghazali perspective, at least it have the same character with someone who is able to actualize its self in Maslow’s view, where a person with the ability to actualize themselves able to see reality more efficiently. It means that he was just going to do something that was supposed to be done, not on the basis of certain interests that are temporary. As well as explicitly choose between truth and error. Maslow, Motifasi dan Kepribadian, terjemah: Nurul Iman, (Bandung: Pustaka Binaman Pressindo, 1993), p 6

did not care about religion or do not believe in religion became a very religious person). Third, change or increase in commitments and religious beliefs in the context of the same religion.  

This phase is like the level of development in adulthood, where person has maturity in *dhikr* performance. The rate of the brain wave when performing *dhikr* is 13.5 to 30 Hz/second, caused by the condition of the brain activity concentrate on *dhikr*, this state is called the beta state. According to the psychological point of view, al-Ghazali argues this is a condition in where man able to actualize himself, the condition when a person has reached a different personality from the other person in general. The characteristics that be differed well-known as B-values (Maslow term) that has attached to himself and all his behavior. 

In this phase, an individual who performing *dhikr* often get mystical experiences or Altered States consciousness (ASC), which is a form of consciousness that is different from the normal consciousness in general. So in this situation is often equated with the *peak experience* in hierarchy of needs that was formulated by Abraham Maslow. 

Religious life of "ordinary people" or immature religious reflected from involvement an individual that focuses on the social level characterized by superficial tendencies, ritualistic and tend to be

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33 Abdul Muhaya, *Integration of Sufism and Transpersonal Psikology*, p. 43
34 Maslow’s theory of self-actualization based on a basic assumption, essentially to human has intrinsic value in the form of goodness that is driven by the high of needs well-known as meta-motivation or being values. Abraham Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*, p 43
35 Subandi, *Psikologi Dhikr*, p 58
conventional. So in this period for them to be Muslims "being a moslem" is different amongst the Muslims amid others "being with other moslem". It is different for ordinary people who more mature in religion that be shown by the renewal of religious life, that is participation experienced and relationship with God. The existence of a Muslim man is being with god "being with God".

4. Fourth Phase

In psychology, this phase is often referred to a condition or state beyond ego, where the state of the brain more than the rate of 40Hz per second and this situation is very difficult to be reached by someone. This phase is often said by al-Ghazali as a core or final result from dhikr, the Qur'an said "waladhikrullahi akbar ", the quality is higher than other worship in Islam, including higher than the one who fought on the battlefield.

Based on description above, at least we know that humans have many kind of awareness, and each consciousness has a different level of consciousness, so that the results also were varied as well. Dhikr, as one of the worship in Islam, is able to deliver an individual to ideal consciousness at the height of awareness, or consciousness that is not accessible to many humans. Where in this consciousness, person is at the unity maturity soul, so that man is able to actualize himself perfectly.

In psychology tradition, this phase usually called the selfless (lack of self), or also known as beyond self-actualization. The term refers to human development beyond the self in self-actualization. People in this state moves without exception, where the interest focuses on self-actualization, focuses on achieving personal identity
and overall acceptance of the self. In this phase, there are some interesting dimensions, ones of them is creativity go, behave authentically, and bringing the future into the present.