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## **PSYCHOLOGICAL MEANING OF SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES OF NAQSHBANDIYAH KHALIDIYAH IN KEBUMEN, INDONESIA**

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### **Abstract**

*This study aims at identifying the psychology of the spiritual experiences of participants in Naqshabandiyah Khalidiyah tarekat. Data was obtained after the participants had taken part in the baiat tarekat and had carried out the spiritual teachings of the tarekat, using a phenomenological research method. The results of this study found themes of spiritual experience in the activities of baiat, tawajuhan, suluk, as well as in the period after after baiat and in interactions with tarekat friends. However, not everyone finds spiritual experience in the tarekat or in every activity of it, because spiritual experience is not one of the main goals of a person following the Naqsabandiyah Khalidiyah tarekat. Moreover, not everyone finds spiritual experience*

*in tarekat generally, again because spiritual experience is not one of the main goals of tarekat.*

**Key Words:** *Psychological meaning, spiritual experience, Naqshabandiyah Khalidiyah tarekat.*

## **A. Introduction**

The prophet Muhammad was sent to earth as the bearer of the message of Allah Almighty. His missions are based on very clear and powerful mystical experiences. The word of Allah is present in the Qur'an (Rahman, 1997). In the Holy Quran, Allah says the message of Isra (17:1) is:

The most holy of Allah who transports His servant Mohammed at night from the Haram Mosque to the very remote Mosque Baitul Maqdis which we have blessed all around, so that We show him signs of Our power. Verily Allah is Hearing, Seeing (al-Isra, 17:1).

The verse above describes the experience of the prophet Muhammad on the journey known as Isra and Mi'raj. Many members of the Quraish people did not believe the incident, because it made no sense. In contrast, others like the friends of Abu Bakar (*radhiallah'anhu* – may Allah be pleased with him), immediately believed what he said and carried out his instructions. Spiritual experience is not the ultimate goal of the prophetic mission. The purpose of the prophet's mission is to form a society built with the religious system of Islam as its moral basis. The meaning of morality is based on religion and the spiritual mystery of metaphysics (Rahman, 1997).

Many people discuss the issue of Sufi topics, but that person does not know what Sufi behavior really is. A person who only speaks about mystical topics in scientific discussions at colloquiums and in other writings but without carrying out their requirements will not receive spiritual experience of God. They will only know about Sufi themes or behaviors in theory but will not feel that the practice of Sufi teachings can be therapeutic for people who follow them.

Psychologically, someone who implements Sufi behavior will receive four benefits. The first is that mystic behavior benefits by purifying a neurotic personality. The second is that they will easily adapt as individuals in the community. The third characteristic of Sufi behavior is to reform negative personalities by the wise opening of the heart. The fourth advantage of Sufi behavior for someone for whom such behavior is heartfelt is that they will always be with the Lord (Frager, 1999).

Sufi behavior is included in organizations called *tarekat*. One of these Sufi organizations in Indonesia is the Naqshabandiyah Khalidiyah *tarekat*, whose founder was the famous Sufi leader, Muhammad Baha al-Din al-Uwaisi Bukhari Naqshbandi. This leader was born in the village of Qisri al-Arifi to a good family and earned the title of Shah, a title indicating his important place in the spiritual matters of the Naqshabandiyah Khalidiyah *tarekat*. At the age of 18, he began studying Sufism in Baba al-Samasi. He then learned *tarekat* at Qutb in Nasaf with the Amir Sayid Kulal al-Bukhari. He also studied in al-Dikkirani for a year (Sajarah, Mulyati, & Bakhtiar, 2006).

Naqshabandiyah Khalidiyah *tarekat* is supported by Sufi figures, particularly Maulana Khalid (also known as Khaled al-Kurdi). It has great popularity, and the leadership of Naqshabandiyah Khalidiyah *tarekat* is very widespread. Maulana Khalid Khaled Maulana was born in southern Kurdistan, a region in which several famous clerics were born, including Ibrahim al-Kurani and Muhammad ibn Abd al-Rasul Barzanji.

Worship in the Naqshabandiyah Khalidiyah *tarekat* can be said to be a typical ritual technique of the *tarekat*. Among the teachings of Naqshabandiyah Khalidiyah *tarekat* is *dzikir wirid* ('read repeatedly') (Bruinessen, 1995).

The experiences achieved through a person's spiritual behavior may be the calmness and enjoyment of the natural feelings of a person engaged in spirituality. The meaning of spiritual experience can be seen in the individual influences

on each individual of the attitudes and behavior experienced. Attitudes and behavior are related to a person's emotions while a person's feelings can be influenced by the body's beliefs and reactions. A person's faith in something can affect their emotional responses to stimuli (Cahyono, 2011).

The practice of spiritual and religious rituals can help to unite the body, mind, and spirit and can be beneficial for a person working at either psychological or physiological development. These spiritual practices include meditation, fasting, prayer, visiting holy places, and obtaining secrets. Spiritual practices can have an emotionally positive effect on the body, mind, and psyche of the person. The form of the influence of the implementation of spiritual teachings in delivering a spiritual experience can provide benefits to psychological. The effect of another person implementing spiritual behavior is the healthy physical benefit of that person.

Research by Wallace and Forman of the University of Michigan published in 1998, which surveyed 135 high schools in 48 countries, showed that religious obedience will have positive impacts on a child's lifestyle which continue into adulthood. Students who actively practice their religion rarely smoke, drink alcohol, or use other intoxicating substances. Instead, students who actively practice religion or other spiritual behaviors prefer to eat fruit, vegetables and to take breakfast Idler, 2008).

Spiritual experience is a psychological phenomenon. According to Tart, spiritual experience is comparable to transpersonal experience, and transpersonal experience is defined as experience in which there is a distance between sensory input and sensory silence, such that the existence of the body and time is forgotten. According to Valle, in such circumstances, the person experiences a tolerant spiritual view of existence. This means that people who have a spiritual experience are experiencing a change of consciousness, also known as an 'altered state' of consciousness. A person who has such an experience feels free

from material reality and unites with transcendent things, that is, with God (Sulistiyaningsih, 2004).

## **B. Discussion**

### **1. The concept of spirituality**

The spiritual concept is related to that which is mysterious, magical, and mystical. It can also be connected with the paranormal, religion, the supernatural, and superstition. These concepts reveal the interplay between religion, spirituality, and the supernatural. In fact, these conditions are not interchangeable; spirituality has an informal, personal, and constructive nature (Kari, 2007).

According to Armstrong, the spiritual relationship is with the person who is the highest being, that is, with God. This relationship has an impact on the person in the world. According to Doyle, the spiritual relationship is evidence of the servant of the Lord seeking meaning. According to Elkins, Henderson, Hughes, Lev, and Sanders that spirituality is an experience that came in consciousness. Spiritual possesses dimensions of a personality and is determined by values in a person (Pargament & Zinbauer, 2005).

Interest in transcendental relationships has flourished in the twentieth century. According to sociologist Emile Durkheim, a transcendental relationship is a sacred relationship. Spiritual experience provides time to for the participant to forget the immediate problems in their life. Such spiritual experiences can be achieved through practices such as meditation, prayer, adoration, reading books, etc., as appropriate to the teachings of religion (Idler, 2008).

Spiritual practice is often performed through meditation. There is much support from research suggesting that meditation as a spiritual practice that can be used by people as an intervention to treat mental disorders. In treatment groups, spiritual practices can increase brain waves and integrate behavior and cognitive function. The reason for improvement derived from meditation

is that integration of cognition and behavior can increase concentration. The focus applied during meditation, for example, focusing on reading texts, can lead to strategic experiences including peace of mind, acceptance, and the finding of value in behavior. Empirically, intervention therapy can use meditation as a cognitive therapy (Lykins, Emily, & Baer, 2009).

## **2. Spiritual experience**

Spiritual experience can be seen as a person's highest level of experience and is an affirmation in that person of their spiritual behavior. Spiritual experience is the highest human need. According to Maslow, someone who has undergone a spiritual experience has passed through the hierarchy of human needs (Cahyono, 2011). Spiritual experience is also known as trans-spiritual experience and is related to the sharing of a person's religious experience. These experiences relate to beliefs, the supernatural, superstitious power, life after death, and natural strength. The trans-spiritual approach combines the spiritual and the religious. The trans-spiritual is more explicitly called trans-humanism, and trans-humanism has a psychological welfare goal.

Spiritual experiences are connected to a person's brain. The brain is the basis of one's spiritual experience, and spiritual activities such as meditation, prayer, and memory will increase activity in the sympathetic nervous system. There are three levels for the spiritual person. The first level is the abstract level and includes theology, theory, and philosophy. Religious, spiritual, and religious systems tend to have a sacred doctrine that is settled in relation to the implementation of religious teachings within religious groups. The second level is related to everyday life, social, and spiritual practices. The third level is the concrete and relates to physiology, neurology, and neurotheology, which is related to the human brain (LaTorra, 2005).

According to Meister Eckhart and Paul Tillich, spiritual experience relates to the concept of a personal God found in

Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hindu-Buddhist and other religious traditions. Spiritual experience grows and develops according to human abilities. People organize their spiritual understanding according to a variety of individual experiences. In the light of experience, spiritual experience is always labeled with some quality. These labels are, for example, amazing occurrences, pity, clarity, silence, or profane expressions. Spiritual experience can be measured by feelings, consciousness, reason, or quality of relationship with God (Atchley, 2008).

A spiritual experience in Islam is the seeing of God. There are two kinds of seeing God in this context. The first is looking at the beauty of God in the Hereafter immediately without any reflection of the heart. The second is seeing God by meditating, through reflection of the heart and conscience and by reflecting the light of His beauty. The believer (*mukmin*) reflects his heart to others. The first believer is the believer himself, while the second is Allah Almighty (Al-Jilani, 1993). Allah so said in al-Qur'an an-Najm (53:11) and al-Hasyar (59:23):

*Meaning: His heart did not deny what he had seen (an-Najm, 53:11).*

*Meaning: The Almighty bestows security and is the Most Preserving (al-Hasyar, 59:23).*

People who see God's attributes in the world will see their existence in the hereafter later without knowing how. There are many examples of saints who have seen God in the world. Umar bin Khatab says: "My heart sees my Lord (meaning with the light of my Lord)". Ali bin Abi Talib said "I do not want to worship God that I see". All of this is their witness to the attributes of God. Similarly, this is indicated by someone who has seen the rays of the sun as the power of God (Al-Jilani, 1993).

### **3. The spirituality of Naqshbandiyah Khalidiyah tarekat**

Sufism is not just synonymous with its traditional rural areas; it also has a significant place among Indonesia's urban

society. When Indonesians converted to Islam, they converted thanks to the services of those who followed the path of Sufism (Bruinessen, 1995).

*Tarekat* is an organization of Sufism. Most *tarekat* teachers have taught more or less the same approach, that is of *dzikir* being a way of approaching Allah. *Tarekat* have not only a religious function; they also create an important 'family' among members. For an individual, fellow members of the *tarekat* are a large family who help and advise each other. One of the *tarekat* that developed in Indonesia is the Naqshbandiyah *tarekat*, which has large numbers of followers. Naqshbandiyah *tarekat* does not only appeal to certain social strata: rather, its followers come from both urban and rural communities. There are several schools within the Naqshbandiyah *tarekat*, including Naqshbandiyah Qadiriyyah, Naqshbandiyah Khalidiyyah, and others (Sila, 2007).

The *tarekat* also has a significant influence on Muslim communities in various regions. The *tarekat* referred to in this study is the Naqshbandiyah Khalidiyyah *tarekat*, so called because it was attributed to Bahaudin Muhamad Naqshbandiyah and to his successor, Maulana Khalidi al-Kurdi (Nasr, 2003).

The Naqshbandiyah *tarekat* first appeared in Indonesia in the second half of the seventeenth century. The first person known to head it was Syaikh Yusuf Makassar. It seems that the Naqshbandiyah *tarekat* was practiced in South Sulawesi, even though only by a part of the population. In Banten, the *tarekat* was introduced more or less at the same time and acquired an honorable position in the community. A teacher from Banten then taught the *tarekat* in Bogor and Cianjur. Later, in the late eighteenth century or the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Naqshbandiyah *tarekat* was established in Central Java in Kebumen, Kudus, and Sokaraja (Purwokerto) (Bruinessen, 1995).

In Central Java, the Naqshbandiyah *tarekat* is almost all derived from the Khalifah Sulaiman Zuhdi. Among other teachers are Muhamad Ilyas from Sukaraja Purwokerto Banyumas and



Muhamad Hadi from Giri Kusumo. Muhamad Hadi was known not only as a person who was an expert in the field of jurisprudence but also as a powerful man in Java (Sajaroh, 2006). Similarly, in Kebumen at the Al-Huda Islamic Boarding School, *Mbah* Abdurahman also studied the Naqshbandiyah *tarekat* with Sulaiman Zuhdi (Bruinessen, 1995).

### C. Research Methods

Phenomenology is one of the methods of research developed to investigate deterioration in global civilization. In the time of Kant and Hegel, Vandenberg states that phenomenology was known to science. However, the founder of phenomenological methods in science in the 20th century was Edmund Husserl (Groenewald, 2004). Phenomenology examines the meaning of one's everyday experience. According to Polkinghorne, it seeks to identify and understand the meaning of a comprehensive experience of a person's life and to understand human life as the emergence of experience (Laverty, 2003).

According to Husserl, transcendental phenomenology is closely related to the concept of intensity. According to Aristotle's idea of philosophical intensity, the term indicates the orientation of one's mind to an object. Objects always exist in one's mind in intensity. A person's existence in relation to the object is created in judging, feeling, and desiring. Each intensity consists of interconnected *noema* and *noesis*. *Noema* relates to how objects appear in the perception of people experiencing them. This depends on the background of the expectation orientation of the person's will or assessment. Through awareness of the particular object through the intermediary of openness to the world, *noema* occurs when there is *noesis*. The other side of *noesis* refers to the meaning of something. It is likely to have some meaning. Through *noema*, something will be uncovered and become available, explaining what really is in consciousness. *Noesis* explains the process itself (Moustakas, 1994).

## **1. Application of phenomenological methods**

Phenomenology is a method of research which can be used for transcendental themes (Moustakas, 1994) .There are several research principles within the phenomenological approach, as follows:

- a. Phenomenology concentrates on the appearance of what is in terms of something as told to someone.
- b. Phenomenology gives attention to the essence of different angles to obtain the core phenomena of perspectives or experiences.
- c. Phenomenology explores the meaning of essence through intuition and reflection on the awareness of the experience of actions, associated with the concepts of assessment and understanding.
- d. Phenomenology is used to produce a description of an experience, not only an explanation or analysis. The description is as close as possible to something that happens without ignoring its phenomenal quality and material properties. Description will reveal the phenomenon as it is in life, clarifying its existence as closely as possible to nature.
- e. Phenomenology is rooted in a focus on seeking meaning and themes, building interest and care in the researcher. Phenomenology develops research focus in the research theme.
- f. The subject and the object are integrated to create something subjective, and something objective becomes subjective in order to be objective.
- g. The choice of research questions is taken into account words. Guidance note for guiding research in phenomenology.

When someone conducts phenomenological research, that person's life experience needs to be considered. In simple terms, phenomenological research seeks to describe a person's life experiences in terms of a concept, and this experience is obtained

from first-person reports. Another description is that phenomena are researched through how they are seen by the actors in a situation. The phenomenological approach emphasizes the importance of individual perspectives and interpretations. The process of understanding phenomena must be understood: vision, limitation, imaginative change, and the synthesis of meanings and essences (Moustakas, 1994).

## **2. The role of researchers in phenomenological research**

Naturally that the role of the researcher in qualitative research is only open and end of the study. In qualitative research, researchers try to capture any verbal or non-verbal behavior based on an *emic* perspective. The data should not affect or be affected by the researcher. There are three things that need to be considered in qualitative research in terms of the role of researchers. The first is that the researcher is the main source of the instruments in the collection of data. The second is that the interpersonal-relationship expertise of researchers in real-life situations is important in collecting and giving meaning through discussion with informants. The third is that in conducting research, researchers and informants actively participate in the process of data interpretation (Nastasi & Schensul, 2005).

The data-collection techniques used in this study were interviews and surveys. Interviewing obtained research data through in-depth interviews with the study subjects and the researchers who conducted the interviews are reliable data sources. It is assumed that the interviews can produce a picture of the lives of the respondents (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

## **D. Research Findings**

The principles of phenomenology are *epoché*, reduction, imaginative variation, and synthesis of meanings and essences. *Epoché* is a term that refers to researchers conducting their studies without applying their own prejudices, distortions, and opinions about the data being gathered. Reduction is the process

of working to describe in textural language what the researcher sees, not only external objects but also internal actions and experience itself, as the relationship between the phenomenon under study and oneself as researcher. Experience quality is the focus of involvement (filling in). In this study, the principle task of the researchers is to use language about the experience of brotherly *tarekat* that is easily understood by researchers and others. Imaginative variation is looking for the meaning of using imagination, differentiating various reference frames. Grouping and reversal. Synthesis of meaning and essence.

The steps above are followed by the researcher in participatory observation activities, interviews and focus-group discussions. Researchers also conducted participant observation of Naqshbandiyah Khalidiyah *tarekat* activities. The participatory observation in this study took place in recitation, once every 35 days, at three months and on *haul* (the anniversary of the birth of the founder teacher of *tarekat*).

### 1. Spiritual experience of *tarekat*

**Table 1. In-depth interview activities for spiritual experiences of *tarekat***

Number	Type of activity
1	<i>Tarekat baiat</i>
2	<i>Tarekat tawajuhan</i>
3	<i>Tarekat suluk</i>
4	After <i>baiat</i>
5	Interaction with <i>tarekat</i> friends

#### a. *Tarekat baiat*

The first activity when joining the *tarekat* was *baiat*. Before the *baiat*, the congregation performed ablutions (*wudhu*) and prayed. After praying for forgiveness (*istighfar*) three times while pervading meaning, they read the invocation five times, Al-Fatihah once and *qulhuwallâh* three times. All were accompanied by submissions to God with the intention of reward being given to his spirit, Shaikh Bahaudin. When prayer had finished, participants faced the *Qiblah* to sleep, with their heads cushioned on their right hand and the left hand placed on their chest while

praying *rabbihg firli watub 'alayya innaka anta at-tawabu ar-rahim* as they went to sleep. Furthermore, if the congregation dreamed they were required to tell the teacher when asked. Researchers asked participant FGD about sleeping all night:

"... [there were] many mosquitoes as I slept last night. I had trouble falling asleep, stiff from sleeping on my side. I cannot sleep on this side. Then I changed to a sleeping position which I like" (FGD).

Researchers found themes of pleasant sleep when *baiat*, sleeping like a dead person and dreaming of meeting old people dressed in white:

"... Thank God, I can sleep pleasantly and calmly. I can sleep like the sleep of death that is sleeping in a tilted position to the right facing the Qiblah. The right hand is made into a sleeping pillow. The left hand is placed on the chest. When I slept, I dreamed of meeting someone who was old and I shook hands with them. The people were wearing white clothes and not saying anything. Then I woke up because there was someone going to pray at night (*tahajud*). After I woke up, I did the midnight prayer while waiting for the morning prayer (*subuh*)" (FGD).

Three participants of the *tarekat* and the *badal* (assistant *tarekat* teacher) all thought it was very hard to sleep on their sides:

"... do not dream anything ... sleep was difficult because of difficulty sleeping with my right hand in tilted position to become a pillow and my left hand placed on my chest. So I do not dream of anything" (FGD).

Another opportunity was given to meet researchers *badal*. He answered no dream. Researchers ask about their students. He never asked and answered or not it was a secret dream.

"... I never asked this question to the person I was giving to the father (*tarekat* teacher). Because it is a private secret. If you dream, if you don't get called, you don't tell stories. If I do not dream of anything" (FGD).

**Table 2. Summary of findings on the themes of spiritual experience of the tarekat during baiat**

Theme	Informant statement
Sleep well during <i>baiat</i>	"... <i>Alhamdulillah</i> , because I can sleep comfortably and calmly."
Sleep like a dead person	"... My sleep can also be like a person who died sleeping in a right-tilted position facing the Qiblah. The right hand is used as a pillow. The left hand is placed on the chest."
Dreaming of meeting parents dressed in white	"... When I slept I dreamed of meeting someone who was old and I could shake hands. The person wears white clothes and doesn't say anything."
Politeness toward teachers	"... I have never asked this question to the person I have given to you to the father ( <i>tarekat</i> teacher)."
Dream not revealed because it is secret	"... Because it is a personal secret."

### **b. The activity of *tawajuhan***

*Tawajuhan* is *dzikir* performed with members of the *tarekat*. This activity takes place at the cottage (Pondok-Pesantren) at *suluk* and on Tuesdays. In the village, there are those who take part on Tuesday, some on both Tuesday and Friday, and these activities are led by the *badal*. The researcher asked informants about their responses and found themes referring to spiritual experiences with additional energy and to this activity not being mandatory:

"... *Tawajuhan* is not mandatory, sir. *Tawajuhan* activities are like putting disposable batteries in a phone. It gives more energy and passion for doing *dzikir*" (Example AR-TW, the participant of researcher).

The researcher asked again about the activities of *tawajuhan* in Boarding *santri* (*Pondok-Pesantren Al-Huda*) Kebumen Indonesia:

"... The *tawajuhan* activities at the lodge were held on Tuesday after the *dzuhur* prayer, and at the time of *suluk*" (AR-TW).

The intention of *tawajuhan* is "*nawaytu atawajuha lirtifa'i alhijâbi wathalbi nuri masyâyikhinâ alkirami, liitbâ'i annabiyyi salallâhu'alaihiwasalam*", which translates as "I intend to face God to get the glory of the noble teacher because he followed the

prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H.” Researchers asked an informant about their experience with other participants:

“... In accordance with his intentions, the *tawajuhan* is intended to remove barriers, because one is looking for the teacher or the light of the teacher—such things as the teacher following the prophet’s commands. I once did *dzikir* together with others and when I laughed I felt my mind was bright. This *dzikir* is delicious. I feel as if God is with me in my spirit and my body” (example, MGL the participant of researcher).

Researchers asked another informant what could be achieved when praying while crying. He said his parents felt his body was dirty and covered in sin and immorality:

“... When I was praying with God with the *badal*, I wished my prayer would come true. On the other side I feel my body is dirty, covered in sin and immorality. So I criticize myself, lamenting my sin” (Example, TRM-TW, the participant of researcher).

The researcher questioned more deeply and found the theme of feeling guided by the teacher and crying when praying in the *tawajuhan dzikir*.

“... I cried during the *tawajuhan dzikir*, I felt guided by my teacher. In front of me praying with me was the *badal*, but I felt and imagined him like my *murshid* (spiritual guide). So I cried” (Example, SDR-TW, the participant of researcher).

**Table 3. Summary of theme findings on the experience of *tarekat tawajuhan***

Theme	Informant statement
Adding energy	“... <i>Tawajuhan</i> activity is like a battery being put in a cellphone. It gives more energy and enthusiasm for doing <i>dzikir</i> .”
Bright mind	“... when doing <i>tawajuhan</i> my mind was bright.”
His <i>dzikir</i> is delicious	“... I feel as if God is with me in my spirit and my body.”
Feel the body is dirty	“... I feel my body is dirty, covered in sin and immorality.”
Feeling with God	“... feel as if God is with me in my spirit and my body.”
Crying	“... I was crying, lamenting my sins.”
Feeling guided by the teacher	“... I feel guided by my teacher. In front of me who prayed with me was the <i>badal</i> , but I felt and imagined him as my <i>murshid</i> .”

**c. Suluk activities**

To enrich the phenomenological results regarding *tarekat* spirituality, researchers conducted an interview with someone who was *suluk* (i.e. experiencing mysticism), with results suggesting experiences being like someone being buried and ready for death.

“... In my opinion *suluk* was an interesting experience, it was like a person buried. The reason is that the place used for sleeping and rest is very tight. The length and width is just enough for sleeping and the items put in the bag contain clothes, gloves and toiletries, white, and this reminded me of dying, because I did not have anything, property, children, home.” (Example, RT-S, the participant of researcher).

Researchers found themes of patient training, being close to the Lord, training appetites, favors being short-lived and provision for death:

“... The *suluk* experience trained me patiently. The reason being, leaving my wife, children, and work. As usually every day I am busy with the problems of the world. Other experiences are closer to God. The reason is when in *suluk* my task is only *dzikir* and multiplying the *sunah* prayers. The other side of the *suluk* experience was training in managing lust. Because *suluk* food is only *tempe* and *tahu* and one should not eat food that has had life. Examples are eggs, meat, and fish. Vegetable cooking should not be seasoned. When I was undergoing *suluk*, I enjoyed the feeling of living only for the moment. It’s like people feel when drinking water. The feeling of deep experience in the heart when the *suluk* is remember to death. Sometimes when I take part in *suluk*, I come up with the idea of thinking about the problem of my death, my heart is crying. When I was absorbed, I was not ready to die. A person’s problem when implementing *suluk* is that the person must leave his wife, child. This is an illustration when someone dies. That person only brings good deeds done in the world” (Example, MGL-S, the participant of researcher).

**Table 4. Summary of findings on the themes within spiritual experiences of *suluk*.**

Theme	Informant statement
Someone being buried	“... because the place used for sleep and rest is narrow. The length and width are only enough to sleep and belongings are put in the bag. The bag containing the clothes, sarongs and tools for showers. The room is surrounded by white cloth.”



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Remember the dead	"... do not have anything. Property and children left at home."
Trained patiently	"... to leave my wife, my children and my job."
Near to God	"... undergoing <i>suluk</i> , my task is only <i>dzikir</i> , worship and multiplying the <i>sunnah</i> prayers."
The simple Life	".. <i>suluk</i> food only has <i>tempe</i> and <i>tahu</i> ... it should not be from animate sources ... vegetable cuisine should also not be seasoned."
Enjoy life for a while	"The joy of living the world is temporary like .. like someone feels a drink."
The preparation to die	"... undergoing <i>suluk</i> , my wife, my children are not brought ... just as a deceased person is brought as a good deed."

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#### **d. Experiences following *baiat***

To develop the findings, researchers conducted interviews with informants about their experiences following *baiat*. In connection with phenomenological research, researchers examine the *noema* and *noesis* of informants. *Noema* relates to how objects appear in the perception of people having the experience and is closely related to the background of the experience in terms of expectation or will. The other side of this is *noesis*, a term which refers to the meaning of something, and for which there may be several meanings. Through *noema*, something will be opened up (uncovered) and be there, explaining what really is in the consciousness. *Noesis* explains the process itself.

The first investigators in this research met with a civil servant PNS (government employee) in his office during the time after *dhuhur* prayer. Researchers found a theme of heart-calming experience:

"... Order for my needs. The need to get closer to God by means of *dzikir* guided by the *tarekat* teacher and *murshid*. The feeling after being blessed was my heart was calm. Relaxed because it is close to God" Example, SD-PS, the participant of researcher).

The interview above did not satisfy the researchers, so they looked for other informants who have taken part in *baiat*. The researcher asked participant RT what experiences he had after *baiat* and discovered themes of finding many *dzikir*, happy themes, and dreams of meeting prophets.

“The informants have had spiritual experiences when they are happy doing *dzikir* and happy to carry out many *dzikirs*. The informants themselves sleep, then dream of meeting one of the participant of *tarekat* and telling you that there are greetings from the prophet. One, the informer dreams of another, i.e. sperm, and then For example, exit the sperm. Furthermore, the person takes the meaning of the dream that he is too attachment about the world” (Example, RT-PS, the participant of researcher).

Researchers were still curious to find out about another experience in terms of relaxing time. The researcher asked whether the informant had ever tried not to do the obligation of *dzikir* because they were bored with it and thus stopped for a few days. Researchers found further themes of spiritual experience after the *baiat*, including dreaming of meeting Mr. Kiai ((the teacher of Islamic).

“... Actually *tarekat dzikir* is not heavy. Because the *dzikir* is of the heart. But sometimes people forget or are lazy. For a long time I did not carry out *dzikir*, but then I dreamed of meeting Mr. *Kiai*. This was a reminder not to forget my obligations” (Example, RT-PS, the participant of researcher).

Researchers sought out another informant and found a former boxer called YD (the participant of researcher). He told them that in the 1990s he was among the top ten athletes in Central Java boxing. He said when he lost boxing, he also won. He had never been knocked down by a KO. Researchers tried to deepen understanding of why he chose to box:

“... The informant participated in boxing because he wanted to die. Why did he want to die? Because he's tired of life. Rather than dying naturally, suicide is useless or dishonorable. If you die in a boxing ring, it's more honorable. YD told me that in the past, when he was young, he became a street kid. After he thought there was no end and he was given time, he studied in the cottage (Pondok Pesantren Al-Huda Kebumen” (Example, YD-BT, the participant of researcher).

Researchers dug deeper into the data from YD about why he participates in *baiat* at the *tarekat*:

“... YD answered while telling a story. How come, sir? My religious knowledge is not much. I want to gain repentance by a *dzikir* and so participated in the *tarekat*” (YD-PS).

The researcher explored spiritual experience after the *baiat* and found themes of the *tarekat* teacher's prayer and wanting to be hit by a bus:

“YD replied with a story ... After *baiat*, I [felt] friendship to Mr. Kiai (The teacher of *tarekat*). I told him, Mr. Kiai, I want to walk around the island of Java. Kiai does not allow this. He permits the pilgrimage of *Wali Sanga*. When I made a pilgrimage, I had walked to Pati and wanted to go to Tuban, but my legs were swollen. If the journey continues, my legs are not strong. Then I went to the village asking for help borrowing the phone, calling Mr. Kiai. I told him about my situation and asked whether I could take a bus/truck to Tuban. Mr. Kiai allows this. In Tuban, I was told to wait for Mr. Kiai. When traveling slowly while waiting for a bus, suddenly there was a truck behind me offering me a ride up to Tuban. I think quickly and draw the conclusion this is God's help through the prayer of the *tarekat* teacher. In Tuban, I stayed for two days waiting for the arrival of Mr. Kiai. When I met Mr. Kiai, I shook hands and he asked, 'still not strong?' I answered 'Yes, still sir'. The next day I continued the journey. On the way there is an incident. I hit the bus a little more, because behind me there was a bus colliding. Immediately I say 'Allah Akbar' because the Lord is still protecting me because of the prayer of the *tarekat* teacher (YD-PS, the participant of researcher).

The first meeting with this participant was very limited in time so the researcher went back to interview him again. He spoke about being solemn when worshiping. Researchers found the theme of experiencing the feeling that his spirit was flying:

“...According to the informant, if more fun (or *khusu*) is in prayer, *dzikir* provides a very good feeling. When performing prayers with *khusu*, his heart is firmly convinced of the pleasure of being with Allah. Once, when I performed a solemn prayer, *dzikir*, it felt like my spirit was flying, sir. This felt good while enjoying saying 'Allah, Allah'. But over time when I feel the pleasure of feeling the words of Allah in *dzikir* I fear that my spirit cannot go home. I feel the spirit of fear that later I cannot go home. Who will take care of my child and wife? I don't know what will happen if it continues. My next time at *dzikir* I tried to ask about the incident with Mr. Kiai, but not the *murshid*. I asked another Kiai. He replied that if it could continue then the veil would be opened. Later you will get extraordinary abilities unlike ordinary humans. Until

now, sir, I have never felt the pleasure of *dzikir* like this. Maybe I haven't had the time to be blessed with extraordinary advantages unlike ordinary humans. I may not be strong in heart and faith" (YD- PS).

Researchers sought another informant and met FD. He now works as a PNS:

"... FD has inner peace after entering the *tarekat*. Furthermore, he found inner peace can be realized because there were two issues. First, the person has goods and chattels. The second, in his life the person always remembers death. Remembering that death lives in the world will return the person to Allah. At that time we will be held accountable for all our actions in the world" (FD-PS).

Researchers explored the results of the interview above and found the theme of spiritual experiences related to being afraid of sinning:

"... The experience of participants is that, if there is the will to sin, immoral hearts feel fear of Allah. Their heart is always worried, because Allah does not sleep. Allah knows his servants who do evil and good. All will be held accountable in the hereafter. So the anxiety of the heart makes it not do evil" (FD-PS).

After the fourth informant, the researcher felt they had enough information to finish the interviews. The researchers met a *badal* with the initials TR who explained the following spiritual experience:

"... According to TR, it was mediocre. No, nothing. *Dzikir* according to TR is only a break in a busy life. Instead of daydreaming where nothing is done it is better to have a *dzikir* to God. The researcher deepened their questioning again, asking TR if maybe there was a student who had experienced a spiritual experience that was told to the father (the teacher of *tarekat*)" (TR-PS).

"... According to TR, there has never been a story. TR also never asked about it. But TR has a new friend. He regretted not having worked at *dzikir*. His wife has died, trading has stopped. In the past, he was busy trading. He could not take part in the *tarekat*, he answered, as there was no time. Now he is sorry. He will now be *baiat*" (Example, TR-PS, the participant of researcher).

**Table 5. Summary of findings on themes of spiritual experience after *baiat***

Theme	Informant statement
Calm heart	"... I think that I have felt after the <i>baiat</i> that my heart calmed down."
Glad to implement much <i>dzikir</i>	"... happy to carry out that much <i>dzikir</i> ."
Dreaming of meeting the prophet	"... when dreams feel very good."
Dream of meeting Mr. Kiai	"... reminded not to forget their obligations."
Prayer of the <i>tarekat</i> teacher	"... I thought quickly and concluded that this was God's help through the prayer of the <i>tarekat</i> teacher."
Want to hit the bus	"... because behind me there is a bus colliding ... God is still protecting me because of the prayer of the <i>tarekat</i> teacher."
It feels like flying	"... It was delicious once enjoying the sentence of 'Allah, Allah'"
Fear of sinning	"... will sin, the heart feels afraid of Allah."

### **e. The experience of interaction with members of the *tarekat***

Among the themes of spiritual experience was interesting behavior related to interaction between members of the *tarekat*. First, when meeting fellow members of the *tarekat* who are not known to them, congregants shake hands and their hands are returned to their breasts. If they already know each other, they shake hands while hugging the other person's shoulder.

After *baiat*, researchers interviewed members of the *tarekat*:

"... Sir, I'm sorry, I want to ask: how do you shake hands and place your body while kissing your hand or returning it to your chest? The informant answered 'I don't know, I just follow friends'" (Example, PI-AT, the participant of researcher).

Researchers were not yet satisfied with the answers received and so they collected data from other informants. Researchers found the theme of feeling despised at not having anything:

"... Oh, it is recommended that the *tarekat santri*s should respect each other. Even students are advised not to be arrogant. *Santri* should feel that they have nothing. In fact, you should feel insulted if you have nothing. His hat is like a dog or a pig" (PI-AT).

The researcher referred to the book *Miskatulkulub*, looking for references as to why the *tarekat santri* felt/behaved like

this. Researchers found the basis for the ethics or *adab* of *santri tarekat* students. The ethics say that between fellows there must be mutual respect. Even a *tarekat santri* should feel insulted for not having anything and this would be even more despicable than dogs or pigs. God will raise his rank in front of many people, even though the person feels lowly before them.

The experience of the second finding was that when the tarekat members met with Mr. Kiai they shake hands with him. When facing *silaturahmi* (meeting of fellow tarekat participants) they want them to use the word *sowan* (meet Kiai). Even when dealing with Mr. Kiai, they did not want to look at his face, but looked down. The researcher did this first as a *santri* in the cottage (Pondok Pesantren Al-Huda Kebumen) but did not know its meaning. Researchers only follow senior (old student) traditions. Researchers read the Athariqaṭ Annaqsabandiyah Khalidiyah document, as follows:

“... Some of the students’ manners toward the teacher are of respecting the teacher like respecting a queen or king. They even respect the teacher as if he was replacing the prophet Muhammad P.B.U.H.” (Risalat Athariqaṭ Annaqsabandiyah Khalidiyah).

**Table 6. Summary of findings on themes of spiritual experiences of interaction with members of the tarekat**

Theme	Informant statement
<i>Salaman</i> kissed hands	“... mutual respect between one another.”
Feel despised for not having anything	“... should feel humiliated, do not have anything. Despicable, it was like a dog or a pig.”
<i>Sowan</i> (friendship of Kiai)	“... the student’s etiquette with the teacher is to respect the teacher like respecting a queen or king.”

## E. Discussion

Phenomenological research comprises empirical studies based on the structure of meaning. Research phenomenology tries to construct meaning from the perspective of the actors in an event, in terms of cultural or religious behavior. The first that researchers start by analyzing each research finding from the actor’s perspective. Secondly, events or social conditions are

organized or planned events. The three phenomenologies have an empirical nature, because phenomenological research has an important role in the development of science (Aspers, 2004).

According to Moustakas, phenomenology is the qualitative study of human habits. Such research focuses on the overall experience of human beings, looks for the essence of their experience, and identifies the meaning of the experience that has been integrated by the subject and the researcher. A researcher in phenomenological research releases his or her own prejudice on the object of the research (Urdahl & Creswell, 2004).

- a) The themes regarding the *baiat* of *tarekat* are: to sleep deliciously when *baiat*, sleep like a dead person, dream of meeting old people dressed in white, politeness with the teacher, and dream/no secret.

According to William James, emotions or feelings are not associated with the intellectual. Emotions in religion or one's spiritual experience are variations in one's feelings in understanding religious or spiritual experiences. Many scientists have studied spiritual metaphysical experiences related to emotional experience, including John Henry Newman, Jonathan Edward, Rudolf Otto, Pierre Hadot, and William James. For example, according to Newman, emotional studies are related to spiritual experience. He posits that thinking is an affective feeling which strengthens awareness of God. Awareness in social reality is understood as the imagination of the reality of God, not the idea of God. The content of the imagination cannot be in the specific form of terms. Emotional experiences are abstract things that can be enjoyed by themselves and others who agree with them. This experience can be described through writing (Wynn, 2005).

- b) The theme of the findings about the *tawajuhan* of *tarekat*: adding energy, bright minds, *dzikir* is delicious, feeling the body is dirty, feeling with Allah, crying, feeling guided by the teacher.

The study of emotional regulation in psychology is an interesting subject, and even more interesting is the study of emotions in positive psychology. The theme of this topic is how emotions affect and reflect, and the experiences behind someone who is facing or expressing emotions. Among the emotional studies in psychology carried out by scientists such as Freud was the idea of psychological defense. Other scientists studied have studied Lazarus's theory of stress and acclimatization. This facility was reviewed by Bowlby, while self-regulation was reviewed by Mischel and Shoda.

Psychology has examined emotion in great detail and suggests it is born from the discourse of everyday human life. The birth of emotions comes from human feelings about simple and complex problems, broad and narrow issues, and privacy and general problems. Emotional expression can be in the form of anger, happiness (laughing), crying, giving appreciation, being amazed at something, or grieving. Emotion is generally conceptualized as multi-faceted and arising from subjective experiences. Experience is an aspect of one's emotions and becomes manifest when someone speaks. Emotions and feelings are words that are often used interchangeably. An emotion is a state relating to a situation that is of concern to and judged by someone and then responded to. Regulatory emotions can be intrinsic or extrinsic (Gross, 2008).

- c) The theme of the discovery when taking part in suluk of tarekat: being like people buried, remembering death, trained patiently, close to Allah, dealing with lust, enjoying life for a while, and prepare of death.

Muhammad's prophetic consciousness appeared in his mission and is based on mystical experiences that were very strong and certain. Such things are found in the Qur'an of the an-Najm (53:1, 12):

*Meaning: For the sake of a star when it sinks. So whether the people (musik of Mecca) want to argue about what He has seen (an-Najm, 53:1, 12).*



The above verse is a vague thing, but its form is real. The verse about what happened in Isra Mi'raj's prophet was a coincidence, not a goal of worship. This represents the prophet as an apostle. Spiritual experience gives meaning in worshipping Allah. Events like the above are used as support for Sufi followers. Sufis reasoned that their behavior followed the sunnah of the prophet, although this opinion was debated. Spiritual experience is the goal of training by God in religiously based moral behavior (Rahman, 1997).

The above findings in simple language in psychology are known as awareness. The function of consciousness is very important in the study of psychology in depth, the function of which is to explore, relate, and integrate the meaning in the soul within every human behavior. According to Jung, consciousness and unconsciousness are two opposites. But both naturally complement each other in human beings in the human psyche. In psychological theory, awareness and unconsciousness are opposites but can be brought to produce fantasy in psychic activity (Miller, 2004):

- d) The theme of the findings after the baiat of tarekat: the heart being calm, being happy to carry out a lot of dzikir, dreaming of meeting the prophet, dreaming of meeting the Kiai, prayers of the tarekat teacher, wanting to hit the bus, feeling like flying, and fear of sin.

The Naqsabandiyah Khalidiyah *tarekat* teaches its students to become closer to Allah (*muraqabah*). Among the *dzikir* taught to students is *lathaif dzikir*. This *dzikir* teaches *tarekat* followers to practice meditation by concentration. This *dzikir* is usually taught directly by the teacher. The teachings of the Naqsabandiyah Khalidiyah *tarekat* also teach the term "*wasilah*" or mediation through a spiritual guide or *murshid*. In this teaching, students who *dzikir* can meet the Absolute Essence, namely God. A person who succeeds in *dzikir* can live on with predecessors such as the prophet Muhammad (Bruinessen, 1995).

*Dzikir* is a form of meditation. In meditation, there are a series of verbal utterances and breathing forms. These exercises can help develop mental attitudes in which the mind is filled with a single idea and free from irrelevant thoughts. Meditation like this is known as the “unity destination” (Thouless, 1995).

If examined in depth, the findings above are characteristic of a person experiencing psychic awakening, known in psychology as arousal. Arousal is a manifestation of one’s psychic experience. These experiences can take positive or negative forms. Positive experiences are exemplified as heartbreak or happiness while negative experiences are described as stress or anxiety (Whitehead & Schliebner, 2001).

- e) The themes related to interactions among members of the *tarekat: Salaman* kissed hands, feeling despised at not having anything, and *sowan* (meet Kiai) respect being like respecting a queen.

The above findings figure in the Naqsabandiyah Khalidiyah *tarekat* of Ubaidullah Ahrar, who is highly respected by all levels of society. He was a simple character, friendly in accepting guests, and humble. He does not like arrogant behavior and considers pride and arrogance to be degrading to human morals and spirituality (Sajarah, 2006).

The above findings suggest that a person’s emotions are related to morality. The study of the role of emotions in morals in psychology has long been debated. Recently, neurological studies have concluded that emotions are related to morals. Conceptually and empirically, there is a difference between one’s emotional and psychological morality. In the first, unpleasant violation of morality is referenced. In the second, emotions are also related to morals. Someone who is having a negative emotion they cannot control may do something immoral. The three neuroscience studies conclude that emotional structures are owned by moral decisions. The four moralities are related to one’s emotional motivation (Huebner et al., 2008).

## **F. Conclusion**

Spiritual experiences can be encountered by everyone. In general, people who have spiritual experiences do so because they perform the spiritual behavior they believe is good and useful for them. Whatever the spiritual form a person believes in, if their spiritual behavior is well implemented they will derive spiritual experiences from it.

Spiritual experience can occur in a state of consciousness or unconsciousness. Spiritual experience has meaning for the person who experiences it. One way of studying spiritual experience is from the psychological perspective. The spiritual experiences that a person has will influence the person's behavior. As examples, spiritual experience can be seen in emotions, attitudes, self confidence, anxiety, calmness, intelligence, and creativity. Thus the spiritual experience of a person will affect their behavior.

The other side of spiritual experience is that it cannot be felt by others who do not have spiritual feelings themselves. The person who is spiritual will achieve this state through sincere and heartfelt practice, and that person will get pleasure from it that cannot be found in other behaviors. When the spiritual believe in what they do and that belief is sincere, the trust and sureness of that person in spiritual behavior will be increased.

The thing that should not be forgotten is that the sense or meaning obtained by a person in performing spiritual acts is subjective, thus the meaning derived can differ between people. Even people who practice the same spirituality may not acquire the same experience or meaning.

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