Al-Ghazali's Psychological Construct of *Nafsu*

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Abstract: A preliminary study was conducted to trace the attribution of causes of immoral behavior. This study found that most participants revealed *Nafsu* as the cause of such immoral behaviors. This study aimed to find out about the discourse of *Nafsu* in *Ihya 'Ulumuddin* text written by Al-Ghazali as one of the sources of explanation of the term *Nafsu*. This study used Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) method to construct *Nafsu* model. The result explained *Nafsu* as a psychological state which is infuenced by three major components of *Nafsu*, namely the intellect (*'aql*), desire (*syahwat*), and anger. This study also developed the psychological construct of Nafsu to explain immoral behaviors.

Keywords: immoral, nafsu, the psychological construct of nafsu

Introduction

A major development of science and technology has emerged in many countries, including Indonesia. The Indonesian Statistics Body, known in Indonesia as Badan Pusat Statistik (2017) found some raises in the indexes of the development of sciences and technologies in Indonesia, including the Information Technology and Communication Index (IP-TIK), which increased from 3.88 points in 2015 to 4.34 points in 2016. Indonesian Institute of Sciences or Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia (2016) also found out a lot of sciences and technology's contribution in some national sectors, e.g. technologies, infrastructures, economics, environments, social, education, etc.

However, such development does not emerge flawlessly. There are some manifested problems due to several imperfections of policies, especially in the forms of environmental damage and humanity problems (Hindersah, 2005). These problems could occur when the rapid developments are not transformed with wisdom (Mitroff, 1995). One of the major problem which adheres to the development of sciences and technology is moral problem (Iskarim, 2016). The statistics in Indonesia (2017) has found some increasing numbers of crimes in Indonesia during the year 2014 to 2016, including murders, persecution, domestic violence, sexual abuses, abductions, child labors, thievery, weapons misuses, drugs and substance abuses, fraud, corruption, and another crime of committed to conducts that go against public law. Still, there are other noncriminal moral problems, such as sexual permissiveness. Indonesian Ministry of Health (2015) delineated the increasing numbers of premarital sexual behaviors among Indonesian adolescents in 2015 and compared them with the data in 2007. Furthermore, Indonesian Ministry of Communication and Information denoted that there were 13,900 reports of access of pornographic contents, during September in 2018. Overall, these data only cover the observed forms of moral problems, yet a lot of moral problems are developed from smaller-unobserved moral problems, e.g. corruption (an observed big moral problem) which is linked with cheating behavior (Orosz et al., 2018).

A preliminary study has been conducted in 2017. The study aimed to gain some subjective reasons of immoral behaviors. There were 57 participants in the study. Each participant completed an open-ended questionnaire about their subjective point of view regarding the causes of immoral behaviors. The preliminary study found some causes of immoral behaviors, e.g. the presence of '*Nafsu*' (commonly known as the desire to do an evil behavior), uncontrollable situation, false belief, along with other internal and external factors. This study resulted in an appealing outcome, especially with the presence of '*Nafsu*' as the most mentioned causes among all participants. *Nafsu* has been described as a huge desire to gain pleasures that should be opposed, or that men should control over in order to keep themselves in the right conduct. People did immoral behavior when they failed in the fight against their own *Nafsu*. Moreover, *Nafsu* was also associated with some mystical factors, i.e. the presence of devils. The

emergence of *Nafsu* as the cause of immoral behaviors in the interpretation of the participants, could originally show the existence of *Nafsu* in the dynamics of human behavior, especially in immoral behaviors. This study is not limited in a certain religion due to the result of a cross-religion study of *Nafsu* in Islam and Buddhism by Adnan (2014).

There were some different meanings of the *Nafsu* terms as understood by the society (Fauzi, 2011). The term *Nafsu* was derived from an Arabic word *an-nafs* which means the soul or the spirit or *ruh* (Munawwir, 1997). The word *Nafsu* are also frequently used in the Quran. There are 298 verses in the Quran that reveal the word *Nafsu*. Al-Quran also used *Nafsu* terms in different spectrum, from the human-related context (i.e. human soul) to the divine-related statements (God) (Rahmatiah, 2017). Some Muslim scholars, e.g. Ibn Sina, al-Kindi, al-Farabi, etc, also described *Nafsu* as the soul that could drive the whole human body (Reza, 2014). These meanings have broader perspectives of the *Nafsu*, and they do not only define the *Nafsu* as the bad drive in human (Hikmah, 2009). Meanwhile, another meaning has been found in sufism terminology of *Nafsu*. They took *Nafsu* as the source of all the ignominious attributes of human and evil behaviors (Burckhardt, 1984). Hence, people should resist the effect of their *Nafsu*. Overall, the meaning of *Nafsu* in the preliminary study were presented in the way in which the *sufis* presented it.

One of the Muslim *sufis* whose works widely influenced the Islamic classical and modern thoughts is Al-Ghazali. Al-Ghazali was not only known as a *sufis*, but also a great muslim philosopher and a muslim scholar with wide areas of expertise, e.g. philosophy, *tafsir* (the interpretation of the holy scripture or Quran*)*, *ushul fiqh* (the evolution of Islamic jurisprudence*),* *tasawwuf* (the knowledge and practice for building moral excellence*), mantiq* (the science of logic), etc. Al-Ghazali was also recognized as the '*hujjatul Islam*' or 'proof of Islam' for his substantial contribution for the knowledge of Islam (Atabik, 2014). This study used Al-Ghazali's thoughts on *Nafsu* as the representative of sufi's terminology. The identification of the meanings of the *Nafsu* term*,* in turn, could be used to find out about the relevance of *Nafsu* in immoral behaviors. In its practical relevance, this study could provide fundamental consideration in the prevention

and treatment policies aimed at controlling problems resulting from immoral behavior, through the inclusion of this understanding in the area of education, psychology, law, social study etc.

Methods

This study used a qualitative approach in understanding social reality, by exploring the concept, behavior and perception (Moleong, 2012) of the people related to the word of *Nafsu*. The researcher used Foucauldian Discourse Analysis by Michel Foucault (Willig, 2006) as the tool to understand the term of *Nafsu* as a discourse. This study took the most honored work of Al-Ghazali, namely *Ihya 'Ulumuddin*, specifically in the chapter of 'the Miracle of Heart' or *'Ajaibul Qulub',* which has been translated in Indonesian by Tengku Haji Ismail Yakub, M.A., S.H. (1965).

Findings

This study resulted some important things, which can be grouped into four categories Those four categories are: the definition of *Nafsu*, the components of *Nafsu*, the classification of *Nafsu*, and the dynamics of *Nafsu*.

The definition of Nafsu

Al-Ghazali defined *Nafsu* as a subtle, nonmaterial, and spiritual substance (*lathifah*) which was diffused with human body then works as the core of human, supplies the essence of human, forms the identity of self, and becomes the center of all human behaviors. His view on *Nafsu* is referred to as human soul. He noticed some diverse meanings of the *Nafsu* which have been used by people, including the way *sufis* use it. They viewed *Nafsu* as the main desires that lead to evil behaviors, while Al-Ghazali did not go along with them.

Furthermore, Al-Ghazali also defined *Nafsu* as the same substance with spirit *(ruh),* intellect *('aql)*, and heart (*qalb*). It could be concluded that basically those four terms are defined as *lathifah* as well. The difference of those four terms lies on the different functions that each of them performs. In other words, Al-Ghazali did not mentioned those four terms as different substances. He brought those four terms on the beginning part of his writing only to straighten the misconception about those terms in society. So, he identified the presence of those four terms which are commonly used

to explain about human soul, but did not intend to classify those terms or even construct them as a different structure of the soul.

Al-Ghazali limited his explanation about *Nafsu*. He did not explain the substance of *Nafsu,* which is categorized as a *mukasyafah* knowledge, a term that refers to knowledge beyond material (metaphysical) reality, that only certain people with high faith could conceive it. He defined *Nafsu* through the explanation of its dynamics as a psychological state of human. However, the way he defined *Nafsu* is not definitive. He defined *Nafsu* using a lot of metaphors and symbols constructively. His concept was aimed at giving explanations in *muamalah* knowledge (the managing of affairs in the world), so that people could understand it easily.

Al-Ghazali emphasized that *Nafsu* is an unstable and unsettled psychological state. There are various kinds of turmoil that take place at once within the *Nafsu,* which are caused by various opposing forces. The unstable state of *Nafsu* is basically caused by some factors, i.e. internal and external factors. Al-Ghazali elucidated that those internal factors consist of certain main components of the *Nafsu* which interact with each other dynamically. While the external factors are comprised with certain influences from the outside and by 'the outsiders'.

The main cause of the unstable state of the *Nafsu* is the dysfunction of each component of *Nafsu*. They originally have certain main duties, but at one point it is possible that they work improperly, or do not function as they should. Those components of *Nafsu* are even battling towards each other's roles, so it finally causes several chaos in the mechanism of the *Nafsu*.

The components of Nafsu

The main principle to understand the role of each component of *Nafsu* is the existence of the Hereafter. Al-Ghazali viewed worldly life as a temporary period before the Day. Each component of *Nafsu* has been created to take responsibility in preparing for the hereafter. There are three most influencing components in the mechanism of the *Nafsu*, i.e. the desire (*syahwat*), the intellect (*'aql*), and the anger. They impose the state of the *Nafsu* according to their kind of interaction. Al-Ghazali identified those components as the master motives of human being that are able to evoke all

behaviors. Those master motives have basic natures, which are the needs and abilities to recognize, interact, and to serve God. The researcher calls those basic natures as the 'serving God motive'. However, Al-Ghazali described the tendency where the serving God motive has been dysfunctioned as *hawaa,* or in further explanation, it can be described as the 'downfall' tendency on human by not fulfilling serving God motive. The inappropriate performance of the components of *Nafsu* is the sign of that downfall.

1. The desire (*syahwat*)

Al-Ghazali defined the desire (*syahwat*) as a psychological drive which is needed by every human being to maintain body functions, thus could prevent from abnormal conditions or body damage, or even the death. The body maintenance aims to preserve the stability of human psychological state from any deficiencies. The desire (*syahwat*) will fulfill all human physiological needs within sufficiency, especially in the forms of hunger, thirst, sexual needs. The desire (*syahwat*) in essence is related to human survival.

The desire (*syahwat*) fulfillment has such an unnecessary potency. It could get into an excessive condition, which occurs when the fulfillment exceeds the maximum limits. The effect of the desire (*syahwat*) will be increased along with the escalating desire (*syahwat*) fulfillments. It also finally could reach the infinity due to all excessive compliances towards the desire (*syahwat*). The desire (*syahwat*) does not act as the body maintainer anymore, but adheres the pleasure principle, that is to maximize pleasure only.

The illustration of the desire (*syahwat*) potencies are displayed in the Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. The Potencies of the Desire (*Syahwat*)

There are some basic characteristics of the desire (*syahwat*), i.e. (1) the main role is to maintain the human body sufficiently by fulfilling its physiological needs, thus prevent humans from abnormalities, or even from death, (2) tends to attract people on

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Excessive

Maximum limits

Sufficient

Minimum limits Death
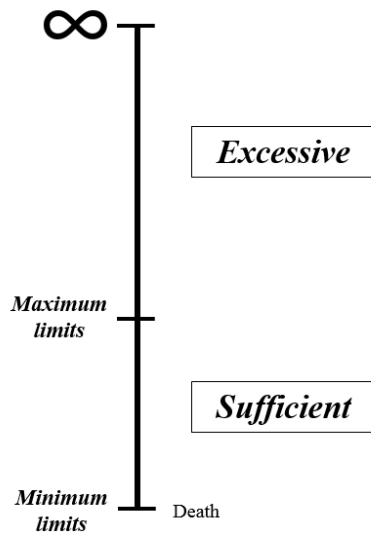
various worldly things (unnecessary things in the hereafter), (3) follows the 'pleasure' and 'satisfaction' principles, (4) has the tendency to break the maximum limits excessively, (5) could harm the body when it got excessive, (6) evokes unsatisfaction as its consequence, (7) could reach infinity in various ways, thus needs to be controlled, and (8) could be affected by 'the outsiders' to do such bad things.

Al-Ghazali then explained that the mechanism of the desire (*syahwat*) is like a 'chain'. A fulfillment of the desire (*syahwat*) in excessive ways will lead other forms of the desire (*syahwat*) to be fulfilled. He elucidated about how the desire (*syahwat*) could reach infinity. Therefore, a person should ensure the sufficiency of the desire (*syahwat*) fulfillments, such as not to eat excessively in having meals. Consequently, a person should do various ways of self-control continuously in order that the desires (*syahwat*) learn its limit. Self-control will cease the endless desires in human.

2. The anger

Al-Ghazali defined the anger as a psychological drive in human that would protect it from any threats. The threats are everything that could damage the serving God motives, in terms of physical, psychological, and spiritual threats. While the desire (*syahwat*) plays as the maintainer, the anger plays as the

protector. They have the same mission, that is keeping the human nature in the balance state.

The anger is so indirectly gruff. It has refusing and opposing basic tendency. It is like the innate guardian of every person, but at the same time it can endanger the self as the result of its uncontrollable tendencies. Hence, anger –in its appropriate measure- originally is so much useful for human beings when they can order it properly.

The main way to order the anger is by using it to control the desires (*syahwat*). As the desires (*syahwat*) are easily attracted to anything, the anger will restrain it in the order of the intellect (*'aql*). Therefore, the wild nature of the anger could be controlled by the intellect (*'aql*). The effect of the anger towards the desire (*syahwat*) are also multidimensional. The anger could control the desire (*syahwat*) in various ways, thus it does not only act emotionally. As the main target of the anger is inside the human body, so the direction of the anger is not only outside of human. A person which is using the anger to oppose the desire (*syahwat*) will not always be obviously visible by others. In the contrary, the uncontrolled anger would lead into various hostilities, violence, and conflicts.

Therefore, the anger has some characteristics, i.e. (1) it has the main function to protect the self from any physical, psychological, and spiritual threats, (2) it has the ability to refuse and oppose gruffly to anything, but indirectly, (3) it could be used by the intellect (*'aql*) to restrain the desire (*syahwat*), and (4) it could be used by the outsiders to do bad conducts.

3. The intellect (*'aql*)

Al-Ghazali defined the intellect (*'aql*) as the same substance as *Nafsu*. However, he addressed the intellect (*'aql*) term into some specific abilities. Firstly, the intellect (*'aql*) is the main advisor in every decision making done by human. It leads every behavior in the aim to implement the motive to serve

God. It also gives rational, even beyond rational, considerations in human behaviors. Secondly, the intellect (*'aql*) is the main self-controller of human beings. Every component of *Nafsu* should be controlled by it, directly or even indirectly, e.g. controlling the anger and the desire (*syahwat*). It is like the king which leads the whole kingdom. Overall, the explanations of the intellect (*'aql*) are limited into its specific functions and abilities.

Al-Ghazali introduced two ways to maximize the intellect's (*'aql*) functions. The first way is by self-controlling the desire (*syahwat*) and the anger or other things which could harm the serving God motives. Al-Ghazali specifically described it as the *mujahadah* or preserving the serving God motives earnestly and continuously. The term comes from the same root of the word *jihad* which means 'to struggle'. The *mujahadah* has various ways to do with different level of hardship. Basically, the *mujahadah* aims to recognize, watch over, and control any threats which could obstruct the serving God motives, so that the intelligent (*'aql*) could remain as the primary controller of each component of human *Nafsu*.

The second way is through the enhancement of knowledge (*'ilm*) and wisdom (*hikmah*). As those two things are the main supplier of the intellect (*'aql*), the performance of the intellect would be more optimum given the sufficient intake of knowledge and wisdom. There are many kinds of knowledge (*'ilm*) and wisdom (*hikmah*). They aim to facilitate human to recognize God, so that people could intensify their devotion and servitude towards God. The stronger performance of the intellect (*'aql*) would lead to its more legitimate role as the main advisor and controller of human.

The classification of Nafsu

There are five fundamental principles in understanding the classification of *Nafsu*. They describe the origins of *Nafsu*, namely as the *fitrah*. Those fundamental principles of *fitrah* are (1) the nature of the *Nafsu* is to develop a transcendent relationship with a divine being,

namely God, which is accommodated in the serving God motive, (2) the state of *Nafsu* is unstable and changeable easily, (3) the state of *Nafsu* could be affected by the nonmaterial outsiders, the negative outsiders are called *satan* and the positive outsiders are called *malaikat*, (4) every human is actively responsible to be the decision maker of everything through the innate freedom to choose and freedom of will, and (5) there is a strong force of *hawaa* through the desire (*syahwat*) and the anger, so the human could not execute the motive of serving God.

Subsequently, the classifications of the *Nafsu* are based on the different kinds of relationship of the intellect (*'aql*), the desire (*syahwat*), and the anger, which could then determine the state of the *Nafsu*. So, the various kinds of *Nafsu* below only define the various kinds of *Nafsu* as the changeable states. There are three different kinds of the state of the *Nafsu,* these are:

1. The *ammarah bis suu'i*

    The *ammarah bis suu'i* is the state of *Nafsu* which is not capable of execcuting the serving God motives. As the serving God motives are only implemented by the intellect (*'aql*), this kind of state of *Nafsu* has failures in the intellect (*'aql*) performance. The intellect (*'aql*) could not do its role as the main controller. It is even being controlled by another component of *Nafsu*. The desire (*syahwat*) takes over it, so the intelelect (*'aql*) could not control the desire (*syahwat*) and the anger. The dominating role of the desire (*syahwat*) could be used by the negative outsiders as a consequence.

    There are some characteristics of *ammarah bis suu'i*, namely (1) there are no serving God motives in this state, (2) this state of *Nafsu* has been changed from the basic nature of *Nafsu*, (3) there are several dysfunctions of the components of *Nafsu*, (4) the desire (*syahwat*) takes role as the main influencer and controller of *Nafsu*, (5) there is no *mujahadah*, and (6) easy to fall into committing bad behaviors.

2. The *lawwamah*

    The *lawwamah* is the state of *Nafsu* where there are some conflicts by the intellect (*'aql*) and the desire (*syahwat*). The desires (*syahwat*) tends to

take over the intellect (*'aql*) role, so the intellect (*'aql*) fights against those influences to defends its role. Those battles occur rapidly and continuously, hence cause chaotic, unsteady, and unstable state of *Nafsu*. Al-Ghazali described this kind of state as the majority state of every living human being. Consequently, the intellect (*'aql*) could not implement the serving God motives optimally.

There are some characteristics of the *lawwamah*, these are (1) the state of the *Nafsu* tends to adhere to the *hawaa*, (2) there is no peace as the consequent of its chaotic state, (3) there are some doubts caused by too many inappropriate advisors, (4) the serving God motives are implemented partially and discontinuously (5) each components of *Nafsu* could not perform their functions optimally (6) there are regrets and guilty feelings as the consequence of not being able to preserve the role of the intellect (*'aql*) as the primary advisor, (7) the desires (*syahwat*) exceed its maximum limits, thus could not be controlled by the intellect (*'aql*) frequently, and (8) the *mujahadah* is inconsistent.

The mechanisms of the *lawwamah* are started with the tendency to adhere to the *hawaa* through the desire (*syahwat*). It will activate an alarm system by the intellect (*'aql*) to defend its role. The alarm system blames the self for not taking care of the serving God motives. Hence, the person will have some doubt and uncertain feelings that could interfere its serenity. Therefore, the alarm system could be noticed or ignored due to the existence of freedom to choose in human. The conflict of the intellect (*'aql*) and the desire (*syahwat*) would occur continuously. If the intellect (*'aql*) could vanquish the desire (*syahwat*) by the persistent *mujahadah*, the state will be changed into the *muthmainnah*. The contrary conditions will change the state into the worse state of the *Nafsu*, that is *ammarah bis suu'i*.

3. The *muthmainnah*

The *muthmainnah* is the state of *Nafsu* which represents its true nature of *Nafsu* that is to fulfill the serving God motives. It does not adhere to the *hawaa*

through the influence of the desire (*syahwat*). Each component of *Nafsu* are working properly. The intellect (*'aql*) could preserve its role as the main advisor on every decision and the main controller of every components of *Nafsu*.

There are some characteristics of the *muthmainnah*, i.e. (1) the state represents the true nature state *Nafsu*, (2) there is peace inside the human for not being interrupted in keeping the basic nature of *Nafsu*, (3) the serving God motives are being implemented, (4) each component of the *Nafsu* is working rightly (5) there is continuous, consistent, and hard *mujahadah* towards *taqwa*, and (6) the intellect (*'aql*) effectively controls the *syahwat* and the anger.

There is a deep peace in the *muthaminnah* state. This peace is different from the momentary enjoyment, pleasure, or happiness. The different between the deep peace of the *muthaminnah* and another peace-like feelings are (1) this feeling is the result from the fulfillments of the serving God motive, (2) each component of the *Nafsu* is responsible for its own tasks, thus are controlled by the intellect (*'aql*), (3) there is no rebellion from the desire (*syahwat*), (4) there is faith toward God, (5) the positive outsider's influences are stronger than the negative outsider's influence which help the intellect (*'aql*) performs its tasks, and (6) tt is not triggered by the worldly things which are unnecessary for the hereafter.

The dynamics of Nafsu

Al-Ghazali emphasized the role of three main compononents of *Nafsu* for explaining the dynamics of *Nafsu*, i.e. the desire (*syahwat*), the intellect (*'aql*), and the anger. He constructed the explanation of *Nafsu* through its mechanisms which include the relationship of those three main components of *Nafsu*. The mechanisms are started with the explanation of the origin of *Nafsu* (*fitrah* or the true and basic state of *Nafsu*), which is to fulfill the *serving God motive*.

Al-Ghazali pointed out that the desire (*syahwat*) is the main determinant of the state of *Nafsu*. The desire (*syahwat*) could demand, not only sufficient fulfillment, but also an excessive kind. An excessive fulfillment of the

desire (*syahwat*) indicates the tendencies of *hawaa* that will produce dissatisfaction. However, the sufficient fulfillment of the desire (*syahwat*) indicates the preservation of the basic nature of *Nafsu* that will result in an adequacy.

The state of *Nafsu* where the serving God motives are preserved and implemented optimally is the state of *muthmainnah*. There is a deep peace in that kind of state. This state of *Nafsu* does not adhere to the *hawaa* and the negative outsiders. There is a strong, various, and continuous *mujahadah* to oppose the outsiders' influences. These struggles reflect the status of *taqwa*, which is a proactive struggle to recognize God and preserve the serving God motives continuously.

Therefore, the excessive fulfillments of the desire (*syahwat*) could lead into two different states. When the intellect (*'aql*) is still able to recognize, warn, and oppose the desire (*syahwat*) through the *mujahadah*, so the state is in the *lawwamah.* This kind of state is full of conflicts between the intellect (*'aql*) and the desire (*syahwat*). The intellect (*'aql*) also could not control the anger persistently. Those conflicts cause a disharmony in the relationship between each component. This state is also changeable easily, thus evokes doubts, unsteady, anxious, regrets, and guilty feelings.

If the intellect (*'aql*) is fully controlled by the desire (*syahwat*), it is called as the *ammarah bis suu'i*. The intellect (*'aql*) also could not fully control the anger. It loses its authority as the main controller. The desire (*syahwat*) influences it in the form of 'false rationalization', which causes some unnecessary motives and fallacious reasoning. The dominance of the desire (*syahwat*) and the undirected anger make the person ignore every warning sent by the intellect (*'aql*). It causes the alarm system to be deactivated. Although there are no doubts, regrets, and guilty feelings, the person also has no peace. This state could not implement the serving God motives and *mujahadah* properly and continuously, thus there is no *mujahadah*. This state also could be influenced by the negative outsiders to commit bad conducts easily.

Al-Ghazali emphasized that the state of *Nafsu* is unsteady and changeable when a person is still alive. Those kinds of *Nafsu* are not the final state of a living human being, thus could be changed. The *ammarah bis suu'i* also has the opportunity to be changed to a better state. It begins with the willingness to improve itself which then would drive into various struggles of *mujahadah*. These struggles are supported and verified by God's will, which is called as *taufiq*. It is an assistance from God to reactivate the alarm systems of the intellect (*'aql*) to notice the influence of the desire (*syahwat*). An activated alarm system indicates the performance of the intellect (*'aql*) which would ease the way for taking the influences of the positive outsiders.

Al-Ghazali described the influence of the positive outsiders as the *ilham*. It will help a person to build a closer relationship with God by implementing the serving God motives. Therefore, the person will be peaceful, secure, and restful. On the contrary, there is also an influence of the negative outsiders which is called the *waswas*. It will prevent a human to implement the serving God motives. The *waswas* could emerge in various forms to influence the intellect (*'aql*), including several peace-like feelings or false beliefs.

The dynamics of *Nafsu* is described in Figure 2.

Discussion

This study aims to understand the construct of *Nafsu* by Al-Ghazali in explaining various moral problems of human behaviors. The results show that Al-Ghazali did not define *Nafsu* as a drive which could cause immoral behaviors. However, various immoral behaviors could be emerged when *Nafsu* is not in its fundamental and true state (*fitrah*). The basic nature of *Nafsu* is the state where it could actualize the serving God motives.
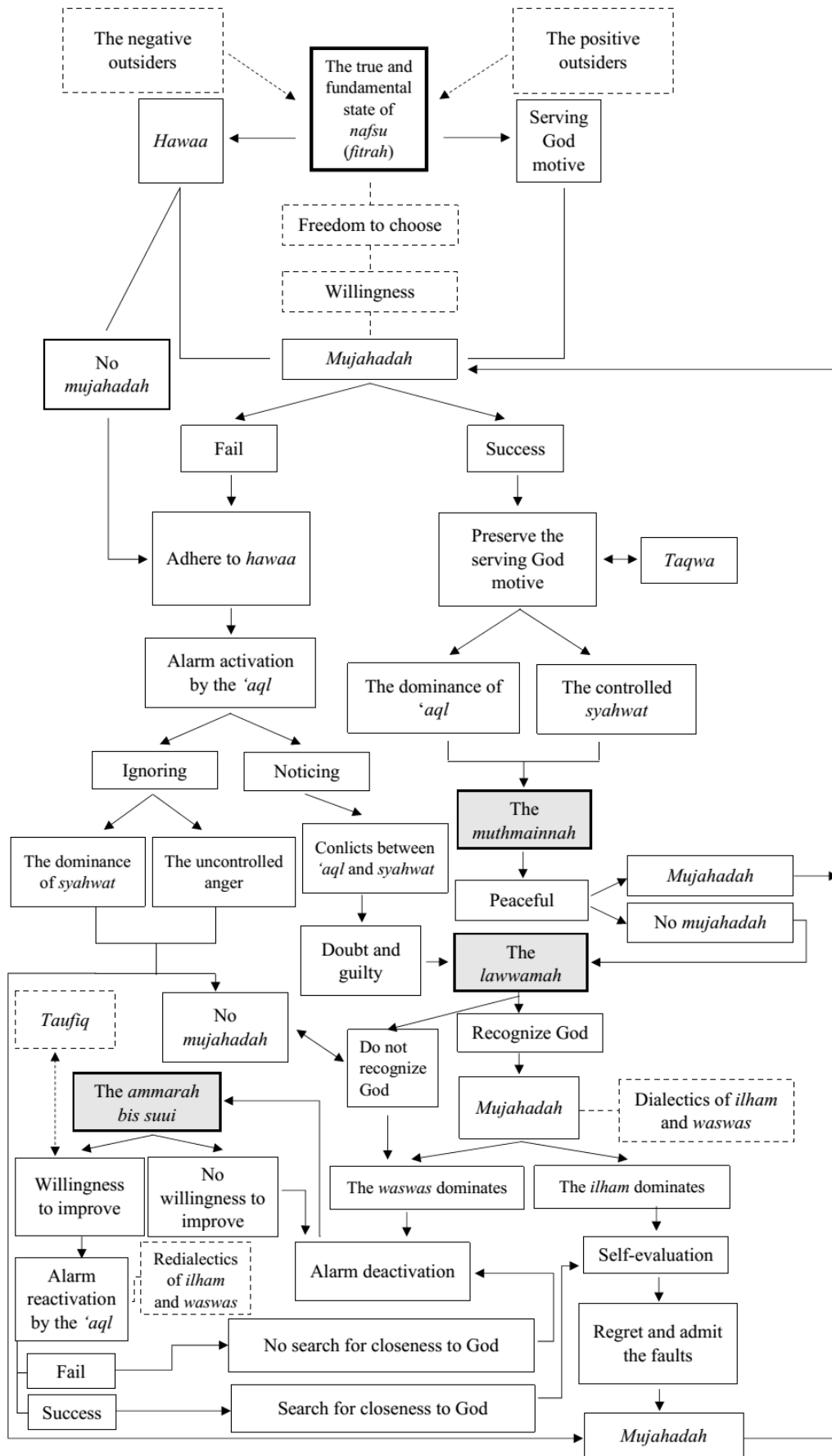
Figure 2. The Dynamics Model of *Nafsu*

Al-Ghazali explained the concept of the origin of *Nafsu*. *Nafsu* is basically able to act based on the serving God motives, but this fundamental nature of *Nafsu* could be changed into another states. It means that not everyone could preserve and fulfill the serving God motives. Furthermore, Al-Ghazali emphasized that *Nafsu* is transcedental, which is similar to Maslow's (1970). However, Al-Ghazali described more specifically on the devotion and servitude towards God as the basic and true nature of men. It is called as the serving God motive.

The fulfillments of the serving God motives are controlled by the intellect (*'aql*). Al-Ghazali explained many different activities of the intellect (*'aql*), involving some basic cognition activities which are mentioned by Matlin (1994), e.g. the acquisition, storage, transformation, and use of knowledges, but specializes the internal controlling process towards another *Nafsu* component. Al-Ghazali also viewed human as an intentional being, which is in line with the basic paradigm of general human cognition according to Eysenck and Keane (2000), then he underlined the serving God motive as the predominant intention of human behaviors.

Therefore, the intellect (*'aql*) directs another component of *Nafsu* to support the perseverance of the serving God motives. These components are the master motives of a human, i.e. the desire (*syahwat*) as the maintainer and the anger as the protector of human body. However, there is a major different explanation about anger by Al-Ghazali. Lewis and Haviland-Jones (2000) stated a common principle of the study of the anger, where the anger regulates interpersonal behaviors in an interpersonal context, while Al-Ghazali emphasized the intrapersonal functions of it. Interestingly, it also implies that the anger could not always be linked to hostility, aggression, violence, and another negative experiences in social context (Strongman, 2003).

The presence of the desire (*syahwat*) as a psychological drive which is responsible to maintain the body shows that there are some deprivations or deficiencies in the body that causes some abnormalities, even the death. The body has some basic needs to stay alive. Al-Ghazali described two basic needs on human. The first are food and drink needs, while the second is sexual needs. He did not explain their relationships. The desire (*syahwat*) is basically responsible to fulfill these needs.

The explanation of the basic needs of human is consistent with Maslow's (1970). However, Carver and Scheier (2008) stated that Murray described food and drink needs as the primary needs, while sexual needs as the secondary needs. Maslow uses the 'homeostatic' principles to expound the mechanisms of these basic needs. The basic needs are resulted from a response from the deficiency of the body, in order to maintain the physiology to be stable. However, the homeostatic principles are not sufficient in explaining the sexual needs. Overall, the responses towards the deficiencies will generate satisfactions.

On the other hand, there is another explanation about the mechanisms of needs by Al-Ghazali. He viewed that satisfaction is not caused by the homeostatic state. It could occur when the fulfillment of those needs is in sufficiency. The homeostatic state does not determine the satisfactions. Al-Ghazali stated that only the serving God motive which could lead to satisfaction, so that a person would feel satisfied when the fulfillments of the needs are based on the serving God motives. The explanation is different from Maslow's (1970), who stated that unfulfilled needs would dominate the drive for those need fulfillments. It indicates that the homeostatic principles are not relevant to explain the mechanism.

The domination of physiological needs could occur when the fulfillments exceed the maximum limits. Those needs will be increased continuously, thus they reach infinity. They also trigger other forms of the desire (*syahwat*) to be fulfilled. Al-Ghazali uses 'chain' principle to explain the connection of those needs.

An excessive desire could distract the performance of the intellect (*'aql*). The intellect (*'aql*) should prevent the desire (*syahwat*) from the excessive fulfillments. Al-Ghazali emphasized a basic responsibility to do 'self-controlling' towards the desire (*syahwat*) and the anger. The function of the intellect (*'aql*) has some differences with self-regulation. Self-regulation takes situation requirements as the standard of self-adaptation (Berger, 2011). It is different from Al-Ghazali's, which expounded thar the serving God motive is the standard. The intellect (*'aql*) which is unable to control the desire (*syahwat*) indicates the presence of some distractions towards it.

Al-Ghazali deduced the ideal concept of human based on the origin of *Nafsu*. A person has some fundamental needs to build a transcendent relationship with the divine being, namely God. These needs are accommodated through the serving God motives. A person who could preserve the serving God motives is an ideal person in Al-Ghazali's view. Therefore, this person could be in the *muthmainnah* state when the death comes. This is not an easy affair as the state of living human is changeable easily.

The ideal concept of human by Al-Ghazali could shed a new perspective in the study of personality. There are some interesting discoveries in this concept. Firstly, Al-Ghazali viewed a human as a spiritual entity which has been diffused with the body. It also has innate willpower and abilities to actualize the serving God motive. Secondly, Al-Ghazali expounded the intellect (*'aql*) as the main controller of a human, especially towards the desire (*syahwat*) and the anger. Hence, the desire (*syahwat*) and the anger is not always negative. They are needed to support the actualization of the serving God motive.

The control mechanisms of the intellect (*'aql*) are frequently linked with the fundamental structures of the personality by Freud (1961). Engler (2014) stated that Freud describes the well-adjusted personality has the *ego* as the 'controlling excecutor' towards the *id* and the *superego*. Al-Ghazali did not explain the mechanisms similarly. There are some differences between Al-Ghazali's and Freud's concept. Firstly, the desire (*syahwat*) is different from the *id*. The desire (*syahwat*) does not only follow pleasure principles, but also maintenance principles. That maintenance principles could be changed into pleasure principles if the desire (*syahwat*) exceeds the maximum limits.

Secondly, the intellect (*'aql*) does not control the desire (*syahwat*) based on reality, but the *ego* does. The intellect (*'aql*) uses preservation of serving God motive principles to control the desire (*syahwat*). The desire (*syahwat*) is only fulfilled in the aim of actualizing that motive. Thirdly, Freud viewed the spiritual activity as a norm which could lead into abnormalities when it dominates the structures of personality. Al-Ghazali gave a different explanation. He stated that the serving God motive is the basic innate motive of the human due to its fundamental spiritual entity.

One of the characteristics of an ideal concept of human by Al-Ghazali is the presence of peace from the actualization of the serving God motive. Riyono, Himam, and Subandi (2012) elucidated that the peace is the result for making God as the anchor. It will create a more stable state on the human. The peace could not result from other anchors, e.g. materials, self, and others. A peaceful state of *Nafsu* would not experience worry and anxiety. Consequently, this concept of the peace and stability could be used in practical settings, such as psychotherapy.

There are three major limitations of this study. Firstly, there is limited operational explanation on the influence of the nonmaterial outsiders, i.e. *ilham* and *waswas*. The further studies can explore more transcendent experiences to understand the influence of those outsiders. Secondly, this study keeps the original terms which have been used by Al-Ghazali. It aims to preserve the original and unreduced meanings of each term in describing *Nafsu*. Consequently, some terms are not explained operationally. The further studies could operationalize more on the psychological construct of *Nafsu*. Thirdly, this study is limited on its theoretical explanation, so this needs more empirical supporting evidences. further studies should validate this psychological construct of *Nafsu*. Therefore, this psychological construct of *Nafsu* can have more reliable empirical foundation in the future.

Conclusion

This study gives a new perspective to understand moral problems through Al-Ghazali's psychological construct of *Nafsu*. This construct shows that the immoral behaviors only occur when *Nafsu* could not preserve its basic true state, which is actualized motives of serving God. In immoral behavior, the fundamental state has been changed from its original state of the *Nafsu*. This construct also deeply explores the dynamics of immmoral behaviors, thus it can contribute a fundamental consideration to prevention and intervention policies to solve various moral problems. Furthermore, the next study can also refer to the *muthaminnah* state of *Nafsu* to develop the ideal characteristics of personality which could be implemented in various settings, such as psychotherapy, education, law, etc.

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