

Understanding the Essence of 'I Am According to the Prejudice of My Servant' in the Philosophy of Islamic Sufism from the Perspective of Imam Al-Ghazali

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Abstract

This article reviews Imam al-Ghazali's view of "I am According to the Prejudice of My Servant" from the perspective of Sufism and Islamic philosophy. In this context, *husnudzon* will result in the belief that all enjoyment and goodness obtained come from Allah SWT, while the difficulties and badness experienced by humans are caused by sins that have been committed in the past. This research uses descriptive-analytical method to analyze the *hadith qudsi* and Al-Ghazali's view of its meaning in daily life. Imam Al-Ghazali, a great philosopher and Sufi in Islamic history, paid special attention to the various dimensions of belief and spirituality. He explained that "I am according to the prejudice of my servants" shows the importance of having a good attitude towards God in understanding and living the teachings of Islam. Al-Ghazali's view is relevant in building faith and psychological well-being in facing the challenges of contemporary life.

Keyword: Essence; I Am According to My Servant's Prejudice; Philosophy of Sufism; Imam Al-Ghazali

Introduction

Basically, humans will always face various problems in their lives. This includes daily life with family, friends, and the surrounding community. A German philosopher who was influential in the fields of phenomenology, social philosophy, and the sociology of knowledge, he described humans as *Das Kranke Tier* (the sick animal), which is always overwhelmed by anxiety and problems (Wong, 2016). In living everyday life, everyone is not always in a happy condition. There are times when a person experiences events that make him sad and even feel unable to cope. It all comes one after another, as if there is an order set by Allah (Tarmizi, 2016).

The results of previous research on understanding the concept of 'I am according to my servant's prejudice' have been widely researched. Among them are Mamlutar Rahmah (2021). "Husnudzon in the Perspective of the Qur'an and its Implementation in Making Meaning of Life" *Academic Journal Of Islamic Principles And Philosophy*. This study aims to reveal the meaning of husnuzon in the Qur'an and its ideal practice in human life. This research shows how the attitude of husnidzon can help individuals in dealing with various life problems, as well as how the application of husnudzon can clear the mind of prejudice labor and bring peace of mind. through literature study and descriptive analysis approach, concluded that husnudzon can clear the mind, get rid of prejudice, calm the soul, and facilitate affairs and increase one's degree (Rahmah, 2022)

Current research and previous research have similarities, namely understanding the meaning of prejudice. However, there are differences between current and previous research. The current research takes an approach through the science of Sufism and psychotherapy. While previous research, focused on the meaning of good prejudice through the study of the Qur'an.

Humans always experience changes in their lives, both those that occur in themselves and in their environment, which are constructive or destructive. These changes are an integral part of human life. Whenever changes occur, humans must make the right decisions as a consequence of their interactions with the surrounding environment. However, sometimes the decisions taken are not as expected, which can lead to despair and lead to the wrong path. Everything depends on how a person interprets everything he experiences in life. Therefore, awareness and self-improvement are required.

Awareness of the meaning of life is the first step to achieving happiness. Fridayanti in her research entitled "Meaning in Life in Psychological Studies," explains that the meaning of life is important in optimizing humanity, especially when facing stressful situations. The "meaning of life" can affect individual well-being and happiness (Fridayanti, 2013). Making meaning of life is the quality of individual appreciation of how much a person can actualize and develop his potential and capacity, as well as the extent to which he has achieved his life goals with emotional and spiritual freedom. It aims to give meaning to his life in interaction with the ever-changing environment. Facing the ever-changing demands of life, an individual's appreciation and ability to respond to change determines the level of meaningfulness of life he has (Sumanto, 2006).

The awareness of life in interpreting every issue of life is obtained by each person solely because he has a goal that is believed to be valuable enough to fight for and sacrifice. In the Islamic tradition, there are various

expressions and teachings that are deep and full of meaning, one of which is the Qudsi Hadith which states, "I am according to the prejudice of My servant." This expression illustrates good luck (husnudzon), the right step in dealing with every life problem experienced, because of how much influence one's prejudices and beliefs have on his life, especially in his relationship with God.

As explained by Ibrahim Elfky, positive thinking, which in this context is the same as husnudzon, will result in the belief that all the pleasures and goodness obtained come from Allah SWT, while the difficulties and badness experienced by humans are caused by sins that have been committed in the past. Everything that happens in this world is by His will, so that no one can avoid the reality (destiny) (Ibrahim & Darsono, 2009).

Imam Al-Ghazali, a great philosopher, theologian and Sufi in Islamic history, paid special attention to various dimensions of belief and spirituality. In his works, Al-Ghazali elaborated on his spiritual and psychological state. Al-Ghazali's perspective provides deep insight into the relationship between belief, religious experience, and inner well-being.

Based on the above background, this paper aims to describe and further analyze Imam Al-Ghazali's thoughts on the essence of the qudsi hadith. As well as knowing how it is implemented in giving meaning to life. By understanding Al-Ghazali's views, we are expected to gain a more comprehensive insight into how prejudice or belief in God plays a role in shaping a person's spiritual experience. In addition, this study also seeks to highlight the relevance of Al-Ghazali's thinking in the contemporary context, especially in efforts to build better faith and psychological well-being in the midst of life's challenges.

Research Methodology

The writing of this article uses a descriptive-analytical approach method. The analytical approach is to describe the data obtained then analyzed and presented in the form of description. The main source of data in this study is the qudsi hadith which explains "I am according to the prejudice of my servant," in the perspective of Imam Al-Ghazali, a leading Islamic philosopher. For the second source in this study refers to articles, data, journals, and books that examine husnudzon and the meaning of life.

Result and Discussion

1. Biography of Imam al-Ghazali

Al-Ghazali, whose full name is 'Abu Hamid Muhammad bin Muhammad al-Ghazali,' was born in Thus, a city in Khurasan (Persia) in the middle of the fifth century Hijriyah (450 AH/1058 AD). He was one of the

great Islamic thinkers who earned the titles of Hujjatul Islam (proof of the truth of Islam) and Zaid ad-Din (jewelry of religion). Al-Ghazali died in his hometown, Tus, on 14 Jumadil Akhir 505 AH (December 19, 1111 AD) (Zaini, 2017). His father worked as a wool capitalizer and sold it in his shop in Tus. Before his death, Al-Ghazali's father entrusted his two sons, Al-Ghazali and his brother Ahmad, to his friend who was also a Sufi, and gave him some of the money he had saved.

Al-Ghazali studied fiqh in Tus with Ahmad al-Radzakani. After growing up, he went to the city of Jurjan to study with Abu Nashar al-'isma'il, and then to Naisabur to study with Abu al-Maali al-Juwaini, who was titled Imam al-Haramain (Syafri, 2017). Under the guidance of Imam al-Haramain, Al-Ghazali studied the kalam of al-'Ash'ari until he really mastered it. After some time, he went to the city of Askar (Mu'askar) to meet Nidzam al-Mulk, Prime Minister of the Saljuk Banu, who then appointed Al-Ghazali as a teacher at the Nidzamiyah University in Baghdad (Syafri, 2017).

At the age of 34, Al-Ghazali settled in Baghdad and taught at the Nidzamiyah University. In this city, Al-Ghazali became increasingly famous and he was warmly welcomed and treated with great respect. According to the testimony of 'Abdul al-Ghafir al-Farisi' who was a contemporary of Al-Ghazali, as narrated by al-Subki, Al-Ghazali's popularity was only slightly below that of the Imam of Khurasan, surpassing the popularity of the Saljuk Banu officials and ministers (Dalamislam, 2024).

2. I am according to my servant's prejudice

Positive thinking or good prejudice, known in Islam as husnudzon, is the ability to have good prejudice towards Allah Subhana Wa Ta'ala (SWT). The basic principle of husnuzhon is based on the prophet's hadith which reads:

يقولُ اللهُ تَعَالَى: أَنَا عِنْدَ ظَنِّ عَبْدِي بِي، وَأَنَا مَعَهُ إِذَا ذَكَرَنِي، فَإِنْ ذَكَرَنِي فِي نَفْسِهِ ذَكَرْتُهُ فِي نَفْسِي، وَإِنْ ذَكَرَنِي فِي مَالٍ ذَكَرْتُهُ فِي مَالٍ خَيْرٍ مِنْهُمْ، وَإِنْ تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ بِشَيْءٍ تَقَرَّبْتُ إِلَيْهِ ذِرَاعًا، وَإِنْ تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ ذِرَاعًا تَقَرَّبْتُ إِلَيْهِ بَاعًا، وَإِنْ أَتَانِي بِمَشِي أْتَيْتُهُ هَرَوَلَةً

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Allah says: I am as My servant thinks. I am with him when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me when he is alone, I will remember him within Myself. If he remembers Me in an assembly, I will remember him in a better assembly than that (assembly of angels)." (Muhammad Abduh Tuasikal, 2018).

The explanation of the hadith states that Allah SWT will treat His servants according to their prejudices. So, if a person often thinks positively, positive things will materialize in his life.

Husnudzon comes from Arabic, but has now been absorbed into Indonesian with the meaning of good prejudice (Tesauro, 2016). In Arabic, husnudzon consists of two words, namely zan and husn, which means good prejudice. Ibn Faris, in *Mu'jam Maqayis al-Lughah*, argues that the word zan is also found in QS. Al-Baqarah verses 46 and 249 indicate that zan has the meaning of belief (Faris & Ahmad, 1979). Ibn Manzur in *Lisanun 'Arab* also states that zan is sometimes interpreted as knowledge and belief. In terminology, zan is the name for something that comes from guidance, if the guidance is strong, then it is equated with knowledge (Al-Ghazali, 2017). According to Abu Muhammad al-Mahdawi, husnudzon or good prejudice is the elimination of prejudice.

The Qur'an also emphasizes about prejudice clearly, one of which is in QS. Al-Hujurat [49]: 12 which means, "O you who believe! Avoid much prejudice, indeed some prejudice is sin and do not find fault with others and let none of you backbite others. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Surely you feel disgusted. And fear Allah, verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful".

The meaning of the verse explains that Allah Swt always commands His creatures to stay away from prejudice, finding fault, and backbiting others. These things are included in sins and heinous acts that do not get forgiveness from Allah SWT except by repenting. This verse also emphasizes that backbiting and prejudice are the same as eating the flesh of one's own dead brother. Therefore, as His creatures, we must always be prejudiced and behave well towards everything that has been given by Allah SWT (Rahmah, 2022).

Husnudzon is included in good manners, which arises from a calm and peaceful heart, and accepts all the decrees of Allah SWT. Husnudzon encourages a person to be prejudiced towards Allah, other people, and the environment. Thus, the person does not need to worry or worry about the decree of Allah Swt and can avoid sin (Bakri, 2018).

bn Qayyim al-Juziyah defines husnudzon as an attitude that leads humans to obedience and obedience to Allah Swt, accompanied by effort, persistence, and obedience to His commands and prohibitions, so that husnudzon has true and strong expectations. This attitude becomes a means to achieve beneficial things and avoid things that become obstacles (Al-Jauzi, n.d.). Husnudzon can also be defined as a perspective that makes one see things positively. People who apply husnudzon will consider everything with a clear mind, and have a mind and heart that is clean from prejudices that are not necessarily the truth.

In husnudzon, there is a difference between ordinary people and people who are more profound in their understanding. Ordinary people tend to see husnudzon to Allah through the favors and gifts they receive. Meanwhile, those who are more profound in their understanding, view husnudzon to Allah through full understanding and awareness that Allah is the only glorious and perfect substance (As-Sakandari, 2017). This difference shows that ordinary people still have the opportunity to have a bad opinion (Suudzon) of Allah, especially when they face calamities. In contrast, those with a deeper understanding have no chance of prejudice against Allah because of their high confidence and knowledge (ma'rifatullah) of Allah Swt (As-Sakandari, 2017).

The attitude of husnudzon can result in the belief that all the goodness and enjoyment that humans receive comes from Allah, while the difficulties and disasters they experience are the result of human actions themselves (Pinandito, 2011).

3. "I am According to the Prejudice of My Servant" from the Perspective of Imam Al-Ghazali

Imam Al-Ghazali was a great philosopher, theologian and Sufi in Islamic history. He paid special attention to various dimensions of faith and spirituality, including the concept of husnudzon. In his various works, Al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of husnudzon as one of the key elements in achieving inner peace and a strong relationship with Allah.

Huznudzon, or prejudice, is an important concept in Islamic philosophy that Imam Al-Ghazali emphasized. For him, husnudzon is the foundation for man's relationship with Allah and his fellow human beings. Imam Al-Ghazali views husnudzon from several perspectives which include: husnudzon to Allah, husnudzon to fellow human beings, and husnudzon in daily life.

In the context of Sufism, husnudzon to Allah is the main principle that guides the behavior of a Sufi. With the belief that all tests and trials are a form of love and teaching from Him, a Sufi learns to accept His provisions gracefully and without complaint (Cholid, 2023).

In addition, Imam Al-Ghazali explained that positive thinking has enormous benefits for human mental health, especially in the context of religion. Positive thinking helps a person to improve themselves, stay away from disobedience, and get closer to Allah (Ilyas, 2023).

Thus, Imam Al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of husnudzon in achieving inner peace and tranquility in dealing with the trials of life. For him, husnudzon is not just a positive attitude, but also a fundamental spiritual wisdom in understanding and living the teachings of Islam.

4. Kinds of Husnudzon

First, Husnudzon to Allah. A firm belief can make dreams come true. Without strong belief and persistent effort, dreams will not be achieved. If we are prejudiced against Allah, then Allah will give us what we expect. God responds to what we think. If a person thinks that the problems he faces are bad, then Allah will give him bad. Conversely, if he thinks that the problem is good, then Allah will provide goodness and show a way out (Rahmah, 2022).

Being kind to Allah is an obligation for a believer, because everything that has been determined by Allah must be a form of His compassion for His creatures. If a servant is tested with calamity by Allah, he should realize and be grateful that the test is a trial that will bring wisdom and benefits to him (Rahmah, 2022). A person who sees pain from the point of view of suffering will feel that he is full of suffering, misfortune, and misfortune. Conversely, if sickness is seen as a remover of sins and a form of forgiveness from Allah, then he will be more sincere and patient in dealing with it, and become closer to Allah SWT (Al-Ghazali, 2023). By changing this perspective, good prejudice will arise.

Thus, there will be an attitude of acceptance (qanaah) and tawakkal to Allah for everything that is given (An-Naisaburi, n.d.). Submission to Allah (tawakkal) is the result of a reflection of faith. The level of a person's tawakkal depends on the quality of his faith in Allah. The higher one's faith, the higher one's surrender, and vice versa.

After tawakkal, the next step is ridho. With ridho, a person will accept everything determined by Allah and obey His commands, because everything that comes from Allah is the best for him (An-Naisaburi, n.d.). As a human being, it is not always easy to be prejudiced, sometimes he can also be prejudiced against something. Prejudice is a perception or impression of something from one point of view. Changing suudzon (prejudiced) to husnudzon (favorable) is simply changing the perception from one point of view to another.

Therefore, the main way to build husnudzon to Allah Swt is to believe that whatever His decision is not in vain. In a Sufistic perspective, husnudzon becomes a necessity that is not only addressed to fellow humans but also addressed to the Lord of the universe. The command for humans to glorify and praise God implies that humans should always be kind to God. Husnudzon is part of a mental attitude or action of the heart (a'mal al-qalb) that reflects one's belief and firmness in Allah SWT (Rahmah, 2022). Islam also explains that prejudices, beliefs, and individual mindsets affect the reality of the individual's life. One of the indicators of having good faith in Allah is tawakkal. People who have husnudzon to Allah will surrender themselves to Allah (tawakkal) and accept all conditions that occur.

Second, Husnudzon to oneself (Belief). Being kind to oneself is a belief in one's own abilities. This can be done by exploring one's abilities and

working to the best of one's ability. A person who is always husnudzon to himself has a positive view of himself and is more confident by realizing his weaknesses and recognizing and developing his strengths. He has an unyielding attitude, does not easily despair of whatever he gets, and is always grateful for the favors and gifts that have been given by Allah SWT (Rahmah, 2022).

Third, Husnudzon to Others (Fellow Humans). Establishing good relations with others is very important. To build ukhuwah Islamiah, one of the things that must be done is to be husnudzon. In the word of Allah QS. Al-Hujurat verse 10, humans are commanded to avoid prejudice (suudzon) because prejudice is generally destructive and has a negative impact. Sometimes, humans have difficulty distinguishing between good and bad prejudice, so Islam recommends avoiding prejudice in any form as much as possible.

According to the Sufi perspective, including Ibn Arabi, husnudzon towards humans is a logical consequence of the understanding that all creatures are manifestations of Allah. Therefore, one must have good relations with fellow creatures and not see oneself as superior (Bakri, 2018). A person who is prejudiced towards others is critical of negative issues and does not immediately believe them. The way to build good prejudice is to confirm (tabayun) the negative information obtained. The benefits of husnudzon with others include establishing better friendships and brotherhood, avoiding regrets in relationships, and always being happy for the progress of others even though we ourselves have not achieved it. Husnudzon also minimizes the behavior of tajassus (looking for other people's ugliness to talk about) and tahassus (looking for other people's ugliness for personal information), and avoids attitudes of hatred and hasad (envy) (Rahmah, 2022).

Fourth, Husnudzon to The Situation Or Circumstances. In the word of God QS. Al-Baqarah verse 216, it is explained that one form of husnudzon towards the situation is when faced with things that are liked or disliked, one always prejudices and asks for help from Allah Swt with the aim of getting blessings and the best guidance. A servant must believe that every situation that happens to him is the best for him, because behind every event there must be wisdom. This can be done by seeing all people as good before they are proven wrong or mistaken, so as not to cause chaos (Rahmah, 2022).

5. Implementation of "I Am According to My Servant's Prejudice" in Interpreting Life

Life in the world is like a garden, a place where to plant the seeds of love for Allah. This love must be built from the attitude of Husnudzon

(prejudice), acceptance, surrender, and willingness to everything that has been given by Allah to His servants. Husnudzon in daily life is a very important thing, because many conflicts, feuds, and even murders occur because of bad prejudice. In the Sufistic context, being husnudzon is not only towards fellow humans but also towards Allah SWT. Husnudzon is actually part of a mental attitude or expression of the heart that reflects one's belief and firmness in Allah Swt (Bakri, 2018).

According to psychologists, health is influenced as much as 70% by a person's mindset. individuals who have a positive mindset will feel their souls calm and their bodies relax. This situation also affects the stabilization of blood pressure and heart rhythm according to its nature. Sick people, when they have a strong belief that healing comes from Allah, will have a positive impact on their health (Adi Abdillah, 2010).

Husnudzon is one of the main foundations for humans to think positively about what they experience. Husnudzon also has an impact on a person's positive behavior (Yucel, 2015). By applying this attitude, a person can change their view of life. When facing calamities, they consider it as a good provision from Allah Swt. to increase their tawakkal to Him, not as the worst event in life.

Husnudzon will also produce good prejudice towards anyone, including Allah, other people, and the surrounding circumstances. As a Muslim, one should only hope in Allah and not fear anything except the sins one has committed (Pinandito, 2011). With good prejudice, a person's mindset will be affected, if they think of useful things, both in worldly and ukhrawi affairs, their lives will bring goodness and happiness. But if not, life will be miserable and full of sadness.

The prejudices that come from Allah should always be greeted with positive thoughts. Allah treats His servants according to their expectations of Him. By adopting an attitude of husnudzon, one can change their outlook on life. This includes cultivating enthusiasm and optimism towards the future, as well as learning from every event experienced to improve the spirit of life.

By being husnudzon, one realizes that life is a beauty and should be lived with positive emotions, based on love for Allah and all His creations. Husnudzon helps people realize that everything goes according to the rules and laws set by Allah. By maintaining an attitude of husnudzon towards Allah, life becomes calmer and more productive, avoiding doubts about others that can drain energy.

Husnudzon encourages people to strive and do good deeds earnestly, to achieve a good life in this world and the hereafter, in accordance with Allah's decree. This brings them closer to Allah, who has absolute power and will, as well as wisdom, justice and compassion towards His creatures.

Husnudzon also brings peace of mind and tranquility of life, because it believes that everything that happens is the will of Allah.

The meaning of life can be found in every situation, whether pleasant or not. Every human being has a different view of the meaning of life, which affects how they assess the usefulness and preciousness of life. Making meaning of life requires a strong desire and motivation to do useful things, with full awareness to achieve happiness (HD, 2007).

In dealing with the various realities of life, it is important to have an attitude of goodwill, which is sometimes overlooked. Humans often face good and bad situations, joys and sorrows, and successes and failures. Being trapped in untrue prejudices can cause suffering, as they tend to interpret happiness only in terms of how well others treat them, which is unrealistic.

The culmination of husnudzon is tawakkal to Allah. People who tawakkal fully rely on and surrender themselves to Him, without being influenced by various thoughts. They feel calm and unshakable, because they believe that all affairs have been handed over to Him, without depending on other than Him (Rahmah, 2022).

The essence of tawakkal is not only about passively surrendering, but also requires maximum effort (Rusydi, 2012). Tawakkal means trying hard while trusting in Allah's help. People who do not have faith in trying will feel tired and often experience failure, because they feel capable without God's help, or depend on wealth and other people (Al-Ghazali, 2023).

Finding an inner direction in life amidst countless possibilities can cause anxiety, which is one of the threats in interpreting the meaning of life. Conversely, the success or failure of finding direction and making personal decisions to overcome crises brings the experience of positive emotions that are crucial in giving meaning to life.

Conclusion

Awareness of the meaning of life helps individuals cope with stress and enhances well-being. In the Islamic tradition, the concept of goodwill or husnudzon, especially to Allah, is key in achieving inner and spiritual peace. This study explores Imam Al-Ghazali's views on the qudsi hadith "I am according to my servant." Al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of husnudzon in achieving inner peace and tranquility in the face of life's trials. Husnudzon includes being prejudiced against God, oneself, fellow human beings, and situations or circumstances. With husnudzon, one can develop a positive mindset that impacts positive behavior and mental health.

This positive attitude requires enthusiasm and optimism towards the future and helps individuals learn from every event they experience. Thus,

husnudzon is not only a spiritual concept, but also a practical wisdom that can improve the quality of life and psychological well-being in the face of various life challenges. This research is expected to be able to provide an understanding of the thought of the meaning of husnudzon according to Imam Ghazali and can increase knowledge about husnudzon. So the researcher recommends for further researchers with the observation method.

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