

CHAPTER 4

THE ROLE OF *SULŪK* IN SPIRITUAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMAN PRACTITIONERS

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher explained about the roles of *sulūk* in empowering the spiritual of woman practitioners particularly in Tarekat Naqsyabandiyyah Khalidiyyah. The term “role” in this study can be defined as the position or purpose that something has in situation, organization, society or relationship. The researcher discussed the effects resulting from a person’s involvement with religious activities which included acceptance; emotional well-being; general positive outcome; happiness; hope; life satisfaction; optimism; personal adjustment; personal growth; positive affect; purpose in life; recent mental health; resilience; satisfaction; self-esteem; spiritual growth; stress-related growth; and quality of life (Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005) whether they can empower the spiritual of the informants.

4.1 Easier to Achieve Peacefulness of the Heart

Referring to the researcher’s interview with Zainun, she stated that *sulūk* gave her peace of mind.

Researcher: *Apa yang awak rasa lepas pergi suluk?*

Zainun: *tapi first time rasa tenang la..*

Considering her personal background working in educational field, she is constantly tested with the whims of diverse students. However, *sulūk* can prevent her from feeling angry and always calm in any situation. According to her again, her son's friend who was also her student once said:

Zainun: *sebab tu yang kalau kawan Kimi tu kata..mak kau tak pernah marah ke? Tak tahu marah ke? Kita dah berzikir jadi kita marah tu kurang kan..tapi kalau dah berzikir tapi masih lagi marah-marah, ada gangguan juga tu..”*
buat relax je..Tuan cakap buat apa marah..kita marah nanti..kita tahu dah kan jin syaitan makin kuat kalau kita marah..tak payah marah..

This coincides with a study conducted by Fitrawati (2019) who said that *sulūk* can make a person more able to control his emotions, especially when faced with undesirable situations. Allah also mentioned in the Al-Quran:

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِ قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُضِلُّ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَن أُنَابَ ﴿٢٧﴾

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ ﴿٢٨﴾

Meaning: “And those who disbelieve say: Why is not a sign sent down upon him by his Lord? Say: Surely Allah makes him who will go astray, and guides to Himself those who turn (to Him). Those who believe and whose hearts are set at rest by the remembrance of Allah; now surely by Allah’s remembrance are the hearts set at rest.”

(Surah Al-Ra’d 13: 27-28)

Based on the analysis of the practices performed by Zainun, she is a committed *tarīqah* practitioner. This is due to her commitment in practicing *dhikr* after Asar prayer every day and never left her daily remembrance since she *bai'ah* to Tuan Guru. She would attend *tawajjuh* ceremony around Negeri Sembilan and diligently listens to religious talk delivered by Sheikh Dr Haji Jahid bin Haji Sidek by the platform of live streaming.

Zainun: *kita dah set pagi memang tak sempat..sekolah kan..kecuali hari sabtu ahad boleh lepas subuh..saya buat lepas asar la..tuan dah ingatkan sambil-sambil kerja pun boleh berzikir..takde masalah sebenarnya..”*

inn shaa Allah..belum pernah tertinggal sebab kita dah istiqamah selepas asar..memang..dengan suami dan anak-anak pun selepas asar..yang ada kat umah la..bila yang kuliah, dia orang akan buat kat sana malam biasanya..”

sekarang ni fokus kat Putrajaya kita ikut kan..sekarang ni ambil dekat Negeri Sembilan je..senang kan..yang paling susah nak pergi dekat Kuala Lumpur..

According to her, she rarely watched television broadcasts and only watched videos of Tuan Guru's talks in her spare time. In addition, her husband is now an editor for Tuan Guru's videos on You Tube.

Zainun: *sejak ikut Tuan Guru, kami dah tak tengok tv..memang tak tengok tv..pastu akhirnya tv tu bagi pada bangla..(ketawa kecil)..bagi pada jaga perumahan tu..kalau suami kan..kalau kat tempat tidur*

tu tengah-tengah tu akan ada kuliah Tuan..sebelum dia terlibat dengan edit video Tuan tu, memang hari-hari dengar kuliah Tuan..

Ross (1990) investigated the association between religion and psychological distress among 401 community respondents and discovered that those with strong religious convictions and those who did not practice a religion experienced less distress than those who held a weak belief or practised their religion merely out of indifference rather than out of commitment. The same thing was also experienced by Natasha where *sulūk* was able to make herself emotionally and mentally stable. According to her, who was still single and tends to experience emotional changes during menstruation, she can control those changes and emotions better than before she joined *sulūk*.

Researcher: *Apa yang awak rasa lepas pergi suluk?*

Natasha: *kalau uzur biasakan orang perempuan ni macam badmood,kita hormon tak stabil datang bulan tu kan, tapi bila dengan zikir kita tak rasa pun datang bulan ke, ataupun uzur ke kita rasa sama je dia punya kondisi tu.”*

This assertion also supported by the Insyirah who joined *sulūk* because of her parents. She said that she had experienced unfavorable situation during her studies. She stated that her father was the first individual in the family to practice the teachings of the *tariqah* when they were still in Miri, Sarawak. Her father was introduced to the Tarekat Rifa‘iyyah by his acquaintances before he met with Tuan Guru Dr Haji Jahid bin Haji Sidek. According to her father, the practice of *tasawwuf* had saved him from negligence while in Philippines.

Researcher: *Apa yang awak rasa lepas pergi suluk?*

Insyirah: *zaman sebelum saya masuk suluk pun final year degree kan..memang stress..and then..perjalanan masa degree tu pun memang berliku la..up and down..memang tak boleh carry on..lepas suluk tu tenang..sebab kita ada Allah kan..ma 'iyah..kurang dah sikit..*

Pargament, Koenig, and Perez (2000) believes that, “it is not enough to know that an individual prays, attends church, or watches religious television. Measures of religious coping should specify how the individual is making use of religion to understand and deal with stressors”. Hence, Insyirah managed to apply what she acquired during *sulūk* to be applied in her life especially when she was under stress by saying:

Researcher: *Apa yang awak rasa lepas pergi suluk?*

Insyirah: *memang selepas suluk tu saya banyak diam la...banyak diam..banyak fikir..setiap apa yang berlaku kena redha..semua Allah dah susun..*

According to Sheikh Ibn Rajab Al-Hambali (d. 795H) in his book *Jami 'al-Ullum wal-Hikam* that when a believer reaches the level of compassion, God will fill up his heart with *ma'rifah*. He further stressed that the level of compassion based on the hadith is divided into two levels. The beginning stage is when a person is in a state of *أن تعبد* *أن تعبد* الله كأنك تراه. When he was in this first stage, Allah bestowed enlightenment in his heart.

However, because the person is in a state of *fana'fillah* then the nature of his servitude

is not perfect, then the person is known as *'arif naqis*. When the person reaches the second stage *فإن لم تكن تراه فإنه يراك*, then the person has been removed by Allah from mortal to *baqa'billah*, then the nature of slavery of the person begins to be perfect. Therefore according to Sheikh Ibn Rajab al-Hambali that the person can be referred to as *al-'Arif al-Kamil* (Jahid Sidek, June 1, 2022).

With *ma'rifah* will enable a believer to achieve the nature of *siddiq*, which is true faith in Allah. And with the nature of *siddiq*, the fact of *tauhid* will be achieved, which is to emphasize Allah in terms of His *uluhiyyah* and *rububiyyah*. With the achievement of the *tauhid*, then the nature of a sincere heart is achieved. With a sincere heart, then the nature of his servitude to Allah is perfect, which encourages him to always be pious and trust in Allah (Jahid Sidek, June 1, 2022).

Meanwhile, according to **Hidayah**, *sulūk* makes her more resilient emotionally and mentally when faced with unexpected situations. She said that this time she got an extraordinary test which was slandered for something she did not do but it was not told further to the researcher. But the interesting part was, she felt not bouncy and angry, in fact it felt very sweet. She said that it was a blessing from Allah due to *sulūk* which able to make a person more resilient spiritually and mentally. She managed to restrain herself from the nature of anger and did not retaliate against the actions of those who accused her.

She believes that if it is happened not during *sulūk*, she might act according to emotions and will finally result to negative effect. According to her background, she is a woman in her 50s and a housewife. As a housewife, a lot of her time is utilised by attending programs and activities which held by the Tarekat Naqsyabandiyyah

Khalidiyyah. Due to her perseverance, she is assigned to be one of the instructors who teach the newly *sulūk* participants. Therefore, she always participated in *sulūk* and always be able to increase her spiritual level to be a person who is always calm in any situation.

Meanwhile, **Jasmin** who is a graduate student of Master of Biology at one of a public universities in Selangor also believes that *sulūk* has reduced the depression problem that she faced. Before she joined *sulūk*, her emotional and mental state is not very stable due to the problems she has encounter. As a result, she often sees a doctor and takes medication recommended by the doctor to reduce her depression. However, her condition improved after participating in *sulūk* for 10 days at ILIT Manarah.

Based on her background, the researcher believes that she is committed to the *tarīqah* because she never missed her daily *dhikr* and always attend *tawajjuh* ceremony three times a week. This is because of the venue is not far from her house. Although her family is not from religious education background, but they always support her activities regarding Sufism. Koenig (1995) stated in his previous study that lower levels of depression have been linked to increased church attendance. This statement also supported by Flannelly and Inouye (2001) which had investigated the relationship between religious affiliation and quality of life in 40 HIV-positive individuals and discovered that religious affiliation was positively associated with quality of life. Although her main reason for joining *sulūk* is because of the invitation of her friend, but due to her perseverance in practicing *dhikr* continuously and always attends *tawajjuh* ceremony, she to some extent has gained a spiritual improvement that has finally cured her depression issues.

The main elements of *sulūk* is *dhikr* and *tafakkur*. Ibn Manzur stated that *dhikr* literally means to remember, recalling, or learn by heart any given piece of knowledge,

but it also has metaphorical implications such as reputation, honour, and glory, salaah, prayer, and the divine scriptures. The purpose of *dhikr* is to make an effort to recollect what has been long lost and to maintain it in mind and heart for good. As a result, the heavenly connection and experience experienced by the individual matures. If one is inwardly nourished by *dhikr*, he or she will recall the creator of the cosmos and everything in it (Tenik & GÖKTAŞ, 2008).

Human in the past have made a vow to God while in the spirit realm, then it is a spiritual experience that has long been forgotten due to their birth into the world. Therefore, by learning and practicing *dhikr* and *tafakkur* with a *sheikh* who has a clear *sanad* that is connected to Rasulullah SAW, then people have been reminded back to their previous *iqrār* which is the purpose of the implementation of *dhikr*. This was also acknowledged by Maria who said that *sulūk* made her remembered and missed that spiritual moments.

Researcher: *Apa yang awak rasa lepas pergi suluk?*

Maria: *kita akan jatuh tapi tak mati..menyala dan tak menyala je..sebab main tu dah ada kat sanubari tu..ada orang tu yang tak de akan mati terus..hati kita tahu apa yang dia nak kan..yang nak tu bukan kita, tapi rohani kita..jasad kita tak nak..rohani kita yang rindu..*

She also believes that *sulūk* also can make her more conscious especially in decision making. *Sulūk* is the place that enable their practitioners to experience the highest degree of *maqāmat* which is the *kalimat al-tawhid*. The *kalimat al-tawhid* has no adverse effects on the spiritual structure of man. Getting deeper in this *dhikr*, the structure of consciousness gets more peaceful, and one's soul journeys toward perfection

(Tenik & GÖKTAŞ, 2008). She is committed in attending the *tawajjuh* ceremony every Friday even though she is tired. Furthermore, her two sisters are the individuals that always support her in attending the *tawajjuh* ceremony and motivate her in her spiritual journey.

Researcher: *Apa yang awak rasa lepas pergi suluk?*

Maria: *inn shaa Allah..otak kita lebih waras..kalau pergi suluk ni memang Allah bukakan hijab hati kita.. dia akan buat korang jadi cerdik..wanita yang baik je tak cukup..baik dan cerdik..*

4.2 Preventing From Evil Deeds

Zainun, who is never skips her daily *dhikr* believes that *sulūk* prevents her from doing negligent things. As *sulūk* trains her to isolate herself from worldly things for a certain period of time in a specific place, she finally refrains from doing negligent things which people normally do such as watching unnecessary content from television which can prevent her from remembrance of Allah.

Researcher: *Apa yang awak rasa lepas pergi suluk?*

Zainun: *pastu ty pun tak tengok..dengar kuliah Tuan je..*

In addition, her husband also played an important roles in her spiritual journey as he devoted most of his time in managing Tuan Guru's You Tube channel and ensuring the content moderation of the channel internally and externally. Thus, her life was full of religious activities that allowed her to prevent from any wrongful doings and sinful manners. This result can only be achieved when a believer understand the fact of

bai 'ah that he/she has done to the *sheikh murshid*. The believer makes a promise (*bai'ah*) outwardly and inwardly to be pious and trust in Allah by doing whatever is commanded and avoiding whatever is forbidden by Him. On the surface, it appears that the believer made an oath or promise to the *sheikh*, in fact the believer made an oath of allegiance to Allah. Allah SWT mentioned in the Al-Quran:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ فَمَنْ نَكَثَ فَإِنَّمَا يَنْكُثُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ
بِمَا عَاهَدَ عَلَيْهِ اللَّهُ فَسَيُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿١٠﴾

Meaning: “Surely those who swear allegiance to you do but swear allegiance to Allah; the hand of Allah is above their hands. Therefore whoever breaks (his faith), he breaks it only to the injury of his own soul, and whoever fulfills what he has covenanted with Allah, He will grant him a mighty reward”

(Surah al-Fath 48:10)

This statement has been supported by the Natasha who is now pursuing her study in one of the public university in Kuala Lumpur. She believed that youngsters nowadays has been exposed to various kind of unnecessary entertainment such as Korea drama including her. However, after frequently joined *sulūk* she was no longer addicted to that kind of entertainment. Somehow, she still watched it during her free time but not as much as before. In addition, her daily *dhikr* also plays a significant role in avoiding her from spending her time on worthless activities (Tenik & GÖKTAŞ, 2008).

Natasha: *jadi tengok drama ke atau dengar television tengok tv ke..kita still lakukan rutin yang biasa Cuma*

kuranglah..kurang tu ada nampaklah..dulu-dulu rasa macam 24 jam nak tengok..tapi sekarang dah dikurangkan..

Meanwhile, **Hidayah** believes that *sulūk* helped her to protect her tongue from uttering bad and harsh words towards other people. Hidayah also explained that she strictly followed the prohibition of speaking during *sulūk*, so that she would be able to practice it as well as in her daily life. In addition, Hidayah was also one of the instructors who will teach the new participants of *sulūk* during the event. Hence, she needed to represent herself as a role model to educate other practitioners as well.

Ibn Qayyim in (Tenik & GÖKTAŞ, 2008) said that Sufis see the tongue as the interpreter of the heart. As a result, one cannot truly conduct *dhikr* until the tongue and the heart are in harmony. Sincere *dhikr* shields the individual from deviations and errors against Allah. This practice of protection is one of the Sufi's most vital tasks. The Sufi must recall and keep Allah in mind at all times. Therefore, the *suluk* practices enables their practitioners to always look after their tongue so that it will enhance the concentration of heart in remembrance of Allah. This statement also supported by Maria:

Maria: *lepas tu kan..jadi pendiam..tak tahu kenapa..keluar suluk tu kan..dia rasa macam..diam..tak tahu kenapa..bila orang bercakap kan..tengok..diam..tak boleh nak bercakap..*

bila balik tu kan..rasa nak buat dosa ke, nak mengumpat ke..mesti ingat munajat tu..dia terjadi sendiri.. wa hua ma'akum ainamaa kuntum..

She also added that *sulūk* gave her more positive impacts towards abandoning her former habits in judging people. Based on her profession as a telemarketer, she always engaged in many people with different backgrounds yet she managed to refrain herself from negative thoughts about others after she joined *sulūk*.

Maria: *sebelum suluk saya menjaga..tapi lepas suluk lebih terbuka..cakap macam biasa..lebih open..kita takde nak expect apa kat orang..tapi perasaan tu sangat baik untuk emosi kita..kau laki ke perempuan, kau ta ksuka aku suka hati kau..apa yang aku buat , yang penting niat aku Allah tahu, dahh..kholas..takde nak jaga-jaga dah.. satu lagi, lepas suluk kita jadi susah nak judge orang sangat dah..ada satu perasaan rahmah kat diri kita..*

Hurting, insulting, and degrading others is the biggest sin one may commit against Allah. Being compassionate and merciful to others is the product of a heart-based intellect. If the disciple feeds his heart with remembrance of Allah, loving and respecting mankind is no different from loving and respecting Allah. Insyirah also experienced it by saying:

Insyirah: *tapi ada..hati ni selalu fikir..apa..yang buruk tentang orang..lepas suluk tu..pandang semua orang baik..okay..semua orang baik..*

Insyirah, who work as an illustrator at one of the private company believes that *sulūk* has changed her life. Since childhood she loved to spend her free time visiting vacation spots with family and friends, but after she joined *sulūk* she was no longer interested in doing so.

Insyirah: *dulu sebelum suluk kan saya suka pergi berjimba..kat Genting Highlands..suka berliburan..dengan kawan atau dengan family..tapi sekarang bila orang ajak pergi Genting kan, langsung tak nak pergi..tak tau kenapa..memang hati tu tak nak pergi..apa hal ni..dulu masa kecik suka pergi Genting..suka pergi jenjalan..sekarang Ya Allah malasnya...macam rasa takde faedah..*

It is also supported by Tenik & GÖKTAŞ (2008) that in the early phases, the individual experiences a process of social and psychological development through *dhikr*, which is the journey of *sayr al-suluq* station, and other Sufi training methods. As an illustrator, she needed to practice her skills by referring to the anime shows from inside and outside the country. Due to some limitations, she often browsed to the illegal website to get accessed to the shows so that she does not need to subscribe and pay for the fees. However, she finally realized that it was sinful manners to do so. After practicing remembrance of Allah during *sulūk*, she decided to stop her poor habit as soon as possible.

Insyirah *dulu selalu tengok anime kat website yang haram..sekarang dah tak tengok la..sekarang apa-apa yang haram saya tinggalkan..main game ke apa..hati tu akan jadi tak tenang..*

In addition, *sulūk* also managed to protect herself in her social life. According to her again:

Insyirah: *lepas suluk ni..one thing I notice la kan..kat tempat kerja..saya memang betul-betul jaga batas..laki dan perempuan..dulu macam..woww..i mean tak bersentuh la..very..yela..kawan-kawan kan..tapi now macam okay okay..apatah lagi orang tu dah kahwin kan..kita takde nak cakap beria-ria sangat la kan..okay, okay je..one thing..automatically tahu mana batas kita..*

Even though, *dhikr* or *tawajjuh* during *suluk* is a ritualistic activity that helps people socialize and get closer, the implementation was under the control. The *sulūk* participants was prohibited from meeting each other especially between men and women except for those who had permission from *sheikh* only. Thus, the *sulūk* practices actually teach people how to socialize with other human beings with perfect manners and prevent us from any slanders and social inconveniences.

4.3 Easier to Practice Remembrance of Allah (*dhikr*)

In *sulūk*, the *sheikh* and the disciple are together in the same place, which facilitates the purpose of *suhbah* to be easily achieved, because there is always a very close contact between the two, both the spiritual aspect and the physical aspect which facilitates the abundance the *al-barokah* of *sheikh* to the disciple. If repentance (*taubah*) is done continuously with a precise and sincere *himmah* throughout the period of *sulūk*, then the repentance is easily accepted by Allah and reaches the peak of its destiny. Such guided repentance is easily accepted by Allah and can easily overflow with various blessings, as the repentance practiced by some of the companions under the guidance of Rasulullah SAW. Allah SWT mentioned in the Al-Quran:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَّسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلَوْ أَنْتُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ

هُمْ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٦٤﴾

Meaning: “And We did not send any messenger but that he should be obeyed by Allah’s permission; and had they, when they were unjust to themselves, come to you and asked forgiveness of Allah and the Messenger had (also) asked forgiveness for them, they would have found Allah Oft-returning (to mercy), Merciful”

(Surah an-Nisa’ 4:64).

It can be summarized that the repentance of the Companions led by the Prophet SAW was easily accepted and able to overflow with abundant grace. One of the greatest blessings from Allah SWT when He accepted *taubah* of a believer, the journey of remembrance of Allah (*dhikr*) also will be smooth as *dhikr* is a door between Allah and His subjects (Tenik & GÖKTAŞ, 2008). Thus, for those who had finished their *sulūk* journey for ten days, they felt motivated in remembrance of Allah and easy to *dhikr* in any situations as Allah mentioned in the Al-Quran:

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هٰذَا

بٰطِلًا سُبْحٰنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾

Meaning: “Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord! Thou hast not created this in vain! Glory be to Thee; save us then from the chastisement of the fire”

(Surah al-Imran 3:191).

Natasha: *lepas tu bila dah mula dah kita dah suluk, kita baru dapat hikmah yang besar kan..pastu pergi kuliah Tuan Guru, masa tu bila tawajuh je kita macam..haa nak pergi..macam dia jadi makanan rohani la..*

lepas suluk tu keadaan rohani kita, kita hampir pada Allah..bila kita hampir dengan Allah tu kita nak sebut Allah je lah kan..nak berzikir selalu lah..

contoh kita tengok cerita kan,dalam masa yang sama kita terdetik Allah dalam hati tu..haa..

Meanwhile, **Insyirah** also added:

Insyirah: *suluk ni lah the only time you akan jumpa Allah..hadap Allah..betul-betul kembali pada kita punya fitrah ni..jadi hamba Allah yang sebenar..sebab..at the end..itu jela lah..*

Sulūk enables all the spiritual and physical aspects to always focus on God. All the intuition and mind are solely for God, to the point of seemingly severing all contact with the world and beings. It's like a dead man. Death which is termed as death of *ikhtiyari*. Allah mentioned in the Al-Quran:

وَأذْكُرِ أَسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا ﴿٨﴾

Meaning: “And remember the name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him with (exclusive) devotion”

(Surah al-Muzammil 73:8).

4.4 Easier to Practice Self-Reflection

Allah SWT commands the believers who repent to Allah that the repentance should be done in a state of collective (*jama'*) heart. Allah SWT mentioned in the Al-Quran:

وَتُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٣١﴾

Meaning: “and turn to Allah all of you, O believers! so that you may be successful.”

(Surah Al-Nur 24:31)

Tafsir Al-Quran by *isyāri* is one of the three types of tafsir that accepted by tafsir scholars or *mufassirin*. In the above verse, the *isyāri* interpretation is that the person who repents must have his heart in a state of *jama'* 'not *faraq*⁷. *Jama'*'s heart means a heart that is devout in remembering Allah. His opponent is the heart of *faraq* which is the heart that remembers other than Allah. A person who has undergone *sulūk* is always *dhikr* towards Allah because their hearts can easily become *jama'*. When the heart becomes *jama'*, Allah SWT will expose the sinful manners that has been committed in their heart so as to lead to repentance. Sometimes God shows his other sins one by one so that all the sins committed can be realized and then he immediately repents to God. It is clear that repentance in the state of the heart *jama'* will cleanse all the sins committed intentionally or not (Jahid Sidek, 2022). This statement also supported by the Insyirah:

⁷ *Faraq* heart means the heart that is unattached in remembering Allah.

Insyirah: *sebab mak ayah tu dah duduk dengan jemaah Arqam dah lama..so tempat tinggal yang sekarang ni pun ada lagi kawan-kawan kan..Cuma kalau saya sendiri memang tak de lah..memang tak pergi kedai dia dah..dulu pernah la pergi kedai beli barang-barang..sebab melayu kan..tapi bila dah tahu kesan zikir kita bila kita berjumpa dengan mereka, kita tak boleh berzikir contohnya..memang ada lah..situasi-situasi macam tu..*

Based on her background, her family was a staunch follower of Al-Arqam before joined this *tarīqah*. As she joined *sulūk* for several times and get the treatment from Pusat Rawatan Spiritual Islam Manarah, she managed to discover the negative impact of that deviant group even towards her mental and physical aspect. She believed that her body and minds becomes weak after she had a meeting with the members of the group intentionally or unintentionally. Thus, she prevent herself from meeting them even though they were from her family members.

Insyirah: *dari sudut kesihatan lah..saya cakap ni dari sudut kesihatan..memang kalau balik je daripada tempat tu kita akan jadi emosi..marah-marah..bergaduh..memang nampak benda tu..*

Generally, *sulūk* can be considered as a hospital for those who sick. *Sheikh murshid* not only treats spiritual illnesses, but also physical illnesses experienced by human beings. This can be explained by the Prophet Muhammad SAW who not only brings guidelines of Islamic life that includes *sharī'ah*, *ibādah*, *akhlāq* and social

relations between human beings, but also covers many aspects of other basic human needs as outlined in the *maqāsid al-sharīah*.

The ultimate goal of Sharia, also known as *Maqasid al-Syari'ah*, is to protect the five fundamental and inherent rights granted by Islam as outlined by the Quran (Al-Ghazzali, 2008). They include religious protection (*hifz al-din*), life protection (*hifz al-nafs*), descent protection (*hifz al-nasl*), the right to a dynamic role and the value of intellect (*hifz al-aqli*), and property protection (*hifz al-mal*) (Sarif, 2012).

Maria also believes that *sulūk* would help her to realize the *ahwal qalbiyyah* of her heart: She said that:

Maria: *berapa tahun hidup baru kita realize..kat mana kedudukan hati kita..selama ni kita rasa kita orang beragama..tapi rupanya..*

The practice of *sulūk* facilitates individuals to cure various heart diseases or *al-‘uwyub al-qalbiyyah* and improves the condition of the heart (*ahwāl qalbiyyah*) and the attributes of the heart (*maqāmat qalbiyyah*). *Dhikr Ism al-Dhat* of Allah helps one to achieve the virtue of reciting Allah with His unlimited number of names and attributes. Those who recite the name Allah frequently will experience a state of extreme spiritual enthusiasm (Tenik & GÖKTAŞ, 2008). Meanwhile, *dhikr naḥī isthbāt* and also various level of *murāqabah*, when done according to the actual method then all the *dhikr* especially *Ism al-Dhat* Allah when it really enters the heart space will leave a great impression. Among the effects of a bad state of the heart (*ahwal qalbiyyah*) will be immediately changed by Allah to a good one, for example a cold-hearted heart, Allah will change it to be the opposite, which is soft (Jahid Sidek, 2022).

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, all of the informants believed that *sulūk* practices is one of the method that capable in soothing their heart. Meanwhile, Zainun, Natasha, Hidayah, Maria and Insyirah also added that *sulūk* also preventing them from committing evil deeds. In addition, two of them also believe that they feel easier to practice the *dhikr Ism al-Dhat* after they participated in *sulūk*. As *sulūk* is comprises of the element of *dhikr* and *tafakkur*, two of the informants argue that self-reflection is easier to achieve after they participated in *sulūk*. As a result, it can be concluded that *sulūk* is capable in empowering their life especially in their spiritual journey.

