

## The Concept of Ikhtiar in Sufism Viewed Through Nietzsche's Philosophical Approach as Motivation for Living Life

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### **Abstract:**

*In Sufism, there is no specific theme related to ikhtiar; if any, it is very limited and serves as a supplement to the theme of tawakal. So, people can misuse tawakal as a shield for laziness, and even the general public views Sufism as hating worldly life. Meanwhile, there is a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad commanding ikhtiar first before tawakal. This study aims to discuss the concept of ikhtiar seen through the motivation of Nietzsche's philosophical life. The research method employed is qualitative, utilizing library research and syncretic-hermeneutic to analyze Nietzsche's philosophical concepts in relation to or unite them with the concept of ikhtiar in Sufism through the reinterpretation of texts related to everyday life. The results are, the concept of ikhtiar through Nietzsche's philosophical approach as a motivation to live life: a. Nietzsche's critique of absolute truth is linked to ikhtiar, namely, there must be a dismantling of understanding so that sustenance depends on someone's struggle, but the final step must still be balanced with tawakal; b. Nietzsche's will to power is linked to ikhtiar, namely that someone does not know the cause of what sustenance from existence can bring him. Therefore, according to Nietzsche, someone must optimize the power to gather sustenance that is around him, but the final result must still be left to Allah (tawakal).*

**Keywords:** critique of absolute truth, will to power, ikhtiar, tawakal

### **INTRODUCTION**

The concept of tawakal has been widely discussed. Anyone studying the science of Sufism will not overlook a discussion of *the spiritual stations*, particularly regarding tawakal. For example, Ibn Atha' explains tawakal by stating that a person who practices tawakal should not harbor intense desires for worldly matters, even if they are in great need of them, and that such a person should always maintain *qana'ah* (contentment) with Allah's decree, even while dependent on worldly necessities (Al-Qusyairi, 1994). A person who places their trust in Allah will surrender in all circumstances of their life solely to Allah; in their view, only Allah can do everything, while they themselves are powerless. Likewise, when Abu Abdallah Al-

Qarsyi was asked about tawakal, he replied, “Tawakal means being with Allah in every circumstance.” The questioner asked for further explanation, and he then said, “Abandon reliance on every cause that leads to another cause, until Allah Himself is the One who controls all those causes (Al-Qusyairi, 1994).” Al-Kalabadzi also put forward the meaning of tawakal, namely abandoning all efforts by saying “*la haula wa la quwwata illa billah*” (there is no power and effort except from Allah) (Widayani, 2019). Many more Sufi figures explain tawakal, which generally directs people to surrender to Allah SWT.

That is not incorrect, but there is a hadith narrated by Anas bin Malik, in which a man came to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon *him*) riding a camel and asked him, “*O Messenger of Allah, should I leave this camel untethered and then put my trust in Allah?*” He replied, “*Tie up your camel first, and then put your trust in Allah*” (H.R. Tirmidhi) (Azra, 2018). The wording of this hadith indicates that the Prophet commanded effort (by instructing him to tie the camel first) followed by tawakal. This demonstrates that in the reality of life in this world, the concepts of effort and tawakal are fundamentally complementary; they are two inseparable aspects, not a matter of choosing one over the other or even pitting them against each other. Both concepts (effort and tawakal) are equally important. As stated by Sahal bin Abdullah, tawakal is the spiritual *state* of the Prophet Muhammad, and effort is his Sunnah (Azra, 2018). In the sense that the Prophet’s spiritual state—his deep connection with Allah—reflects his unwavering faith in Allah; thus, tawakal here is interpreted as faith. Meanwhile, the Prophet’s sunnah—that is, all of the Prophet’s actions (since the Prophet also possessed a human side or human nature)—cannot be separated from the laws of nature or cause and effect; thus, the Prophet also felt hungry if he did not eat. Therefore, tawakal is faith, while ikhtiar is the law of nature.

Relying solely on human effort leads to frustration, for no matter how great a person’s knowledge may be, they cannot control the future; even controlling oneself according to one’s desires or future goals does not guarantee success. Meanwhile, relying solely on resignation is tantamount to suicide, for the laws of nature operate within the realms of space and time. Within the realm of fellow creatures (everything other than Allah is a creature), there is inevitably a chain of cause and effect, where everything interacts and depends on one another. Within time, there are limits to life; if this chain of cause and effect does not function properly, nature will accelerate time, leading to problems—even destruction. In other words, if humans refuse to follow the course of natural laws, they are effectively hastening their own destruction. For example, humans certainly need food and drink to sustain life; however, if there is no effort to work or seek food and drink—only passive reliance (tawakkal)—while the laws of nature continue to operate, humans will lack the nutrients their bodies need, leading to illness. They should be healthy and able to continue living, but because the laws of nature are not functioning as they should, they become ill (Nopitasari & Heri, 2021). In other words, structurally the concept of ikhtiar in classical Sufism literature does not receive special attention as the concept of tawakal in Sufism, there is no specific theme that discusses the concept of ikhtiar. Even if there is a discussion of ikhtiar, it is substantial, that is, it will be included in the gaps of the theme that discusses tawakal as discussed by Imam Al-Ghazali in the book *Ihya Ulumuddin*, volume IV, Chapter Tawakal (Sulaiman, 2023). Likewise, in the book *Encyclopedia of Sufism* that the explanation of ikhtiar is included in the theme of tawakal, that is, not simply abandoning efforts altogether, and submitting matters completely (completely

surrender) to Allah SWT, but must go through a serious effort or ikhtiar which is then submitted to Allah SWT (Azra, 2018).

In the discussion of ikhtiar, as the Prophet's command or hadith that should be balanced and complementary between ikhtiar and tawakal, the author feels it is important to contribute an explanation or reinterpretation of the concept of ikhtiar in Sufism with the perspective of Nietzsche's philosophy. First; So that ikhtiar in Sufism is not only understood as a formality effort (merely an activity without serious effort) and tawakal as a shield of laziness to not do more. Second; Sufism in the view of the general public is not seen as a teaching of resignation (tawakal) with a passive nature without motivation in life, or asceticism in the view of Imam Al-Ghazali, namely hating the world for the sake of loving the afterlife (Ahmad, 2005). The purpose of this research is to reinterpret the concept of ikhtiar in Sufism from the perspective of Nietzsche's philosophy, utilizing qualitative methods and library research. This involves collecting data and information through the technique of reading literature or written sources. While the research procedure in directing the data is using a syncretic and hermeneutic. Syncretic comes from the Greek word *syncretizein*, which means to combine (Mokhtar & Sa'ari, 2015). In this method, namely analyzing the concept of Nietzsche's philosophy in association with the concept of ikhtiar. Hermeneutics is explaining the text by proposing other scientific approaches by itself testing the process of understanding, mechanisms of interpretation and explanation (Arif & Rahmawati, 2022). In this method, hermeneutics analyzes and re-explains the meaning of the text related to ikhtiar through Nietzsche's philosophy. In this way, the concept of ikhtiar as part of the Islamic religion based on dogma and teachings can be understood and studied in depth, comprehensively, and reveals the wisdom behind its teachings (Pransiska, 2017).

In this paper, the author aims to describe the concept of ikhtiar in Sufism, specifically human efforts in carrying out life activities based on the belief that everything is fundamentally predetermined. Using Nietzsche's philosophical approach or Nietzsche's thoughts on motivation in life, namely encouraging each individual to be aware of life whose content is a process (in Nietzsche's language is war, namely mastering or overcoming challenges, trials, or problems given by reality to us), there is no fixed goal (a safe place without trials or problems forever) and there is no other choice but to undergo the process or war to fight for life. Nietzsche begins the concept of his life motivation by dismantling the foundation or foothold that makes a person comfortable in their comfort zone, or that makes someone unwilling to try or fight to face life's challenges. This foundation or foothold is the absolute truth (Nietzsche, 2010). Next, Nietzsche introduces the law of nature which is the will to power, which inevitably follows because we are part of nature, so we must fight or fight (entities or existences) of other parts of nature to continue living (Nietzsche, 2002).

The author considers Nietzsche's thinking to be an appropriate approach to analyzing the concept of ikhtiar, as Nietzsche does not directly direct, conceptualize, or dictate life's goals. Instead, Nietzsche's philosophy emphasizes the process and lacks an endpoint, thus becoming known as the philosophy of nihilism, as it lacks a fixed end goal (Hardiman, 2019), but rather constructs a means of thinking to form a life motivation.

As for research relevant to the title of this article, *the first* is a journal article titled “Keselarasan Antara Ikhtiar dan Tawakal dalam Membentuk Mental Positif”, written by Singgar Mantahari Dalimuthe and Mardiatul Husna Rambe. This article discusses the importance of harmony between human effort and trust in God in cultivating a positive mindset. Ikhtiar refers to hard and maximum effort to achieve a goal, while tawakal is surrendering to God after trying one’s best. By maintaining a balance between these two attitudes, a person can build a stronger and more positive mindset in facing life’s challenges. The purpose of this study is to determine what the harmony between ikhtiar and tawakal looks like in shaping a person’s positive mindset. This study is a multi-site descriptive qualitative study using primary and secondary data. Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews and a literature review. Data validity was tested through source triangulation, while data analysis utilized the Miles and Huberman model: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The results indicate that the appropriate balance between effort and trust in God can help an individual develop a positive mindset, manage anxiety and stress, reduce mental burdens, foster gratitude, build optimism, enhance mental resilience, increase the willingness to take risks, alleviate feelings of being overwhelmed, encourage a never-give-up attitude, strengthen one’s relationship with God, instill realistic hope, and promote inner peace (Dalimuthe & Rambe, 2025).

*Second*, the journal titled “Ikhtiar dan Tawakal dalam Menghadapi Wabah Pandemi Covid-19 (Perspektif Tasawuf)” was written by Juhri Jaelani. This study analyzes how the public, particularly Muslims, should behave when facing the COVID-19 pandemic. Regarding ritual worship, MUI has issued a fatwa prohibiting worship activities in mosques in certain areas classified as red zones or with high transmission rates, intending to break the chain of transmission. However, in reality, there are still some members of the public who insist on worshipping at the mosque’s prayer hall, even though in Islamic teachings themselves, human effort (ikhtiar) takes precedence over reliance on God (tawakal). This study employs a descriptive-analytical approach in its literature review (Jaelani, 2021).

As explained in classical Sufism literature, the concept of ikhtiar does not receive an equal share of structural discussion with the concept of tawakal. Ikhtiar is often only positioned as a subordinate or complementary explanation in the chapter on tawakal. This imbalance gives rise to sociological and psychological problems in society, where the teachings of Sufism (especially tawakal and zuhud) are reduced to a passive, fatalistic attitude, and are often used as a justification for laziness. The position of this paper is to review (reinterpret) the concept of ikhtiar through a critical and active approach, one of which is by borrowing Nietzsche's philosophical perspective, to create a balance between spiritual life and the laws of causality (nature) faced by humans. The formulation of the problem in this study is: How is the concept of ikhtiar in Sufism viewed through the motivation of Nietzsche's philosophy of life?

## **DISCUSSION**

### **The Concept of Life Motivation in Nietzsche’s Philosophy**

Nietzsche, whose full name is Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (Wafi & Firdausiyah, 2022), is one of the great philosophers of the modern world. On the one hand, his ideas radicalized modern thought (with a philosophy emphasizing the self or egoism in living life); while on the other hand, he criticized his own era (the modern age), thereby providing a foundation or crucial awareness for the subsequent era (postmodernism; characterized by the absence of a single truth and the acknowledgment of the plurality of truths). In other words, his ideas

are considered to have transcended his time (Munir, 2011). The aspects of Nietzsche's thought relevant to this article are:

### ***Critique of Absolute Truth***

Nietzsche lived in the modern era, following centuries in the Middle Ages when people were constrained by the church and lacked freedom to think or formulate truths; all truths—whether regarding religion or knowledge—had been predetermined by church authorities, and whatever emanated from the church was considered absolute truth. Philosophers and scientists of that era dared not oppose the church. Thus, when the transition to the modern era occurred, the philosophers and scientists of his time felt free to think and formulate truth (truth based on the self, not dogma, or the unproven words of others). Philosophy was so free that it resembled an animal newly released from its cage or from a zoo into the wilderness—that is, philosophy was extremely wild and ran rampant. This was marked by the emergence of many philosophical schools of thought aligned with their respective interests; not only that, but philosophers clashed with one another and belittled each other, each believing their own philosophy to be the most correct (Tjahjadi, 2004). Generally, by pitting one truth against another, the aim is to prove whose truth is the most correct; thus, the most correct truth will be recognized as the absolute truth, or regarded as the truth that always aligns with reality.

From this, Nietzsche disagrees with the concept of absolute truth; in his view, there is no absolute truth, because absolute truth would only diminish other truths—what is deemed wrong, heretical, and useless here might be highly respected, revered, and worshipped elsewhere (Nietzsche, 2010).

Nietzsche criticized absolute truth in religion and knowledge. In religion, God, positioned as humanity's support and guide, is seen as limiting and weakening human free will, preventing it from maximizing its full potential, thus rendering it passive. Life becomes completely dependent on God as the absolute truth (Adi, 2020). Thus, according to Nietzsche, if the reason religious people live passively is that they fear God, then Nietzsche offers an imagination aimed at stimulating each individual's thinking so they become aware—or at least confused and anxious—first: what if God is dead? What should be done? What is the purpose of life? And what is the state of this earth? (Sunardi, 2011) In this way, Nietzsche wanted every individual to think about their own existence or being as they live in the world, and to become aware of their own will. Because if the foundation of life up until now has been God (thereby providing mental comfort and peace, making one feel that everything is already provided for or guaranteed by God), then if this imagination is turned on its head—that is, if there is no foundation for life, no absolute foundation of truth—on whom else should one rely but oneself?

As for Nietzsche's critique of knowledge, he argued that every thought, piece of knowledge, or philosophy produced by philosophers contains a belief or a subjective element within that philosophy. Thus, when philosophers consider their intellectual output to be the most true, the most objective, and the most in line with the reality of the universe, such philosophers are extremely arrogant. Because, in his view, no one has ever discovered the truth; if a truth had been discovered, it would certainly no longer be debated or questioned as if the question were a new one (Nietzsche, 2002).

In Nietzsche's view, social and intellectual life depend on mutual agreement, and thus produce a concept of reality knowledge, as well as language as a means to reinforce or convince others of that knowledge of reality (Robinson, 2002). Language is the sole means that plays a crucial role in expressing an existing reality; however, due to its limitations, no

matter how powerful language may be, it cannot objectively express the truth of that reality, because there is no coherent relationship between language and the existing reality (Robinson, 2002).

When we think, we need language to engage in a dialogue with ourselves—that is, by choosing the right words. The reality that exists in the real world is then simplified, frozen, or reduced by these words. Thus, the world, reality, or the actual state of affairs—which previously existed in a state of chaos within our minds—becomes neatly organized and easier to understand. Therefore, according to Nietzsche, this process of simplifying reality constitutes a form of self-deception, because none of it is the true reality. Reality remains reality, and language remains language; the truth of reality can't become language, nor is it possible for language to represent the truth of reality.

Besides philosophers being trapped by language, according to Nietzsche, philosophers are also trapped by logic as a rationalizing tool created by Aristotle. So, both tools, namely language and logic, are used as the basis of belief or the foundation of philosophers to form or seek truth. Logic is nothing more than a rule for the flow of thought and conclusions in the brain related to the process of fighting various kinds of wills that exist within oneself (Robinson, 2002). So logic is a tool as a mediator or peacemaker of various doubts, battles, turmoil in the brain so that it will produce a conclusion, and that conclusion is then considered the truth, or in general it can be said that logic is simply our way of creating a reality that can provide comfort and can convince us in fulfilling needs as truth (Robinson, 2002). Therefore, according to Nietzsche, logic will not be able to provide true truth, but only as an interpretation or mere assumption (Nietzsche, 2002).

### ***The Will to Power***

In Nietzsche's view, the will to power is the essence of everything in reality, whether it concerns the "world," "life," or "being" (Sunardi, 2011). There is no true world, no world that is the most real, no world that is the highest, other than the world manifested through numerous phenomena. It is not the value behind the phenomena or the metaphysical, but the phenomena themselves that constitute the manifestation of the true world—one that cannot be systematized, one that is chaotic or in a state of flux, and always in the process of becoming (Sunardi, 2011).

In truth, humans living in the world must also be prepared to accept the phenomena or realities that exist in the world. According to Nietzsche, these phenomena are irregular, chaotic, and will forever remain in a state of constant flux, never neatly organized (Sunardi, 2011). Therefore, while these phenomena are sometimes linked to logic or science, what is obtained is merely an interpretation of reality, not the truth of reality, because reality or phenomena, according to Nietzsche, are indeed incomprehensible. Furthermore, phenomena are sometimes linked to the mystical world or metaphysical concepts. Yet, according to Nietzsche, reality remains reality—unfathomable and incapable of systematization. Thus, regardless of the form of phenomena or reality, Nietzsche refers to it as the will to power, because these phenomena change according to their own will; nothing can know or stop them except their own will.

Nietzsche interprets the will to power as the foundation of the laws of nature, specifically the law of the causality of the will. For every manifestation of a phenomenon, there is an energy of the will influencing the phenomenon's manifestation; or, in Nietzsche's own words, "*to the extent that there is active energy within it, it is actually the energy of the will that constitutes the influence of the will* (Nietzsche, 2002)."

The world is a vessel or a place where forces, energies, or powers gather; thus, the world is described as the will to power. Humans live within the world; thus, humans are one of the forces or powers contained within the world, alongside countless other existences or forces. Therefore, humans must contend with or confront the other forces present in the world, and to maximize their will to power, they must maximize their own energy.

If the will to power is a law of nature and all entities in reality exert influence over one another—with no way to predict when, from which direction, or which specific entity will emerge to challenge or dominate—and since there is no absolute truth that can serve as a basis, foundation, or support for anticipating this, then one has no choice but to rely on one's own potential, strength, or energy to face life's challenges.

### **The Concept of Ikhtiar in Sufism**

Ikhtiar comes from Arabic, meaning seeking better results. According to Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyah, etymologically, ikhtiar means "choosing the best option." More broadly, ikhtiar is a person's earnest effort to achieve their goals. In other words, ikhtiar is an active effort to achieve dreams, not a state of silence or avoidance of reality. Ikhtiar is an effort that humans must strive to fulfill all aspects of their lives, including material, emotional, spiritual, health, sexual, and future needs, so that the goal of success in both this world and the hereafter can be achieved (Hakim et al., 2023).

The concept of ikhtiar in Sufism can be seen from the explanations of several Sufi figures, such as the view of Imam Al-Ghazali who describes ikhtiar with an orientation of spiritual improvement. Based on his work *Ihya' Ulumuddin*, Imam Al-Ghazali explains ikhtiar through the concept of tawakkul. According to him, the concept of tawakkul is understood as a high spiritual station (level) that is not merely passive submission. Al-Ghazali actually emphasizes that tawakkul is the fruit of deep faith (yaqin) in God, which can only be achieved after someone makes maximum effort (Fathkhullathif, 2025). In other words, someone to be able to achieve a high spiritual level or achieve the level of tawakkul must strive with all his strength (ikhtiar). In Imam Al-Ghazali's view, ikhtiar is only to achieve high spiritual goals, even if it is to motivate in living life such as seeking sustenance or working to earn a living, it must be based on tawakkul to God (surrender to what is determined by God), not on one's own abilities or potential. As in the Al-Qur'an Surah Hud verse 6: *"And there is no living creature on earth but depends for its sustenance on God; and He knows its time-limit on earth and its resting-place after death: all this is laid down in His clear decree."* And there is also a fragment of a verse (Surat Al-Talaq: 3) in the Qur'an which means: *"And He provides for him from (sources) he never could imagine."*

According to Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya, ikhtiar is the experience of the causes that Allah has determined in the universe. These causes are taking concrete actions to achieve goals. Tawakal is closely related to plans and efforts (ikhtiar), when the plan is mature, the results are surrendered to Allah (Arikhah, 2016). In Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya's view, efforts in living life such as seeking sustenance must follow the causes determined by Allah (sunnatullah or natural law), namely planning and carrying out actions to seek sustenance, while the results are left to Allah.

As for the evidence regarding ikhtiar, there are several words of Allah in the Qur'an, such as Surah Ar-Ra'd verse 11 which states "Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change the situation that exists within themselves." (QS.

Ar-Ra'd: 11). And it is also found in the word of Allah in the Al-Quran surah Al-Jumuah verse 10 which reads "When the prayer has been performed, then spread out on the face of the earth; and seek Allah's grace and remember Allah often so that you will be successful." (QS. Al-Jumu'ah: 10). The verse indicates that humans are given clear instructions to immediately seek sustenance after performing Friday prayers, which shows that Allah likes it when humans put their trust in Him after trying (Hakim et al., 2023).

**The Concept of Ikhtiar in Sufism Viewed Through Nietzsche's Philosophy of Life**  
*Nietzsche's Critique of Absolute Truth in Relation to Ikhtiar in Sufism*

In the syncretic approach, the researcher analyzes Nietzsche's philosophical concepts, which are then linked or combined with the concept of ikhtiar in Sufism. Meanwhile, the hermeneutic approach attempts to re-understand texts related to everyday life through Nietzsche's philosophy.

There is a verse in the Qur'an (Hud: 6) that reads: "*And there is no living creature on earth but that Allah provides for it. He knows its place of residence and its place of storage. All is recorded in a clear book (Lauh Mahfuz).*" As Muslims, because it is a verse or the word of Allah, we rely on it, which then gives rise to the belief that "Allah will surely provide for all His creatures." If this is taken as an absolute foundation (an absolute truth as the final understanding without any exceptions, interpretations, or additional meanings), our mindset will become one of laziness, content to stay in our comfort zone, rather than a mindset of striving or fighting; our mindset will accept the suggestion that our share of sustenance is guaranteed even if we do not strive. The consequence is that the mindset of the Muslim community becomes one of mere expectation, devoid of the will or desire to strive for sustenance or to build a more advanced civilization. Muslims become a poor and weak community; indeed, the religion of Islam might even be perceived as a religion that rejects life because it fails to offer viable solutions for living and is unrealistic regarding life's necessities.

Thus, the meaning of the verse that "God will surely provide for all His creatures" must involve (a critique of absolute truth) the dismantling of absolute views or understandings; such understandings cannot be regarded as final or absolute. This dismantling involves understanding and experiencing in real life that the reality of the world operates with consequences: any action will have an impact (consequence), and so will inaction. In other words, the foundation of this understanding must be dismantled and replaced with the understanding that Allah will not provide sustenance to His creatures who do not strive. Consequently, sustenance depends on our own *efforts* or struggles. As stated in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Ra'd: 11: "*Indeed, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is within themselves.*"

However, relying solely on one's own *efforts* or struggles is not enough in navigating life, as this can still harm our mental well-being. It is also important to realize that humans have limited strength and energy; therefore, when faced with various life challenges, forcing oneself to exert excessive strength or energy can lead to psychological disturbances such as stress, anxiety, and mental exhaustion (Widyawati et al., 2025), and emotional instability—which can result in frustration and, in extreme cases, even suicide.

Thus, the solution must be balanced with *tawakal* (Tammar et al., 2023) that is, surrendering to Allah (after striving with one's utmost strength or effort) to release the burden of excessive thoughts and worries (Astuti & Bashori, 2025).

### ***Nietzsche's Will to Power is Linked to Ikhtiar in Sufism***

As discussed above, Nietzsche interprets the laws of nature not as cause and effect but as the will to power, because every time a phenomenon appears, there is certainly the energy of the will to influence that phenomenon (Nietzsche, 2002), so that, according to him, all existences in the reality of this world dominate one another, or in simple terms, chaos cannot be systematized (Hidayatullah, 2020).

In fact (the natural law of cause and effect and the will of power) only differ in perspective, because of this difference in perspective, the consequences are also different. The natural law of cause and effect or causality refers to the relationship between an event (cause) and a second event (effect), where the second event is the result of the first (Widiadharna et al., 2023). However, in this reality, what is referred to as the second event (effect) or phenomenon is extremely numerous (hereafter, this second event will simply be referred to as an event); within just one minute, millions upon millions (an expression that cannot be counted due to their sheer number) of events or phenomena occur in the environment around us. The question is, to what extent can the cause of an event be known before the event or phenomenon occurs? In other words, can Nietzsche's perspective that reality is chaos be considered true? Since we cannot know every cause (before the event or phenomenon occurs), can we not predict what events or phenomena might occur in our surroundings? Every entity or existence in our surroundings possesses a force of movement, and its movement is random (unpredictable); this force of movement might disturb us or even bring us harm. In Nietzsche's terms, such an entity possesses a will to power that seeks to dominate us.

Thus, since we do not know every cause and therefore cannot predict all the movements of the entities in our surroundings, we have no choice but to optimize our power or strength as a means of asserting control over or anticipating the random movements of the entities or beings around us.

Nietzsche's "will to power" can be linked to *spiritual practices* in Sufism, such as seeking sustenance. As we know, we cannot know the cause of an event before it occurs. Likewise, with the event or phenomenon of sustenance, we cannot know for certain what causes our sustenance. Since we do not know the cause of sustenance—from what entity or existence it comes that can move or bring it to us—then, according to Nietzsche, whether we like it or not, we must optimize our power or strength as the will to power to master the entities or existences around us. As there is a verse (Surah Al-Talaq: 3) in the Qur'an that means: "*And He (Allah) provides sustenance from directions one would not expect.*"

After harnessing the power of will to control or attract prosperity from the entities or forces around us, the final step must still be balanced with *tawakal* (as a preventive measure against the potential for the psyche to drift toward negativity) (Tammar et al., 2023) —that is, surrendering to Allah (after striving with maximum strength or power) to release the burden of excessive thoughts and worries (Astuti & Bashori, 2025). *Tawakal* is not passive surrender, but the metaphysical awareness that the results of all efforts (*ikhtiar*) are returned to Allah (Angraini et al., 2025).

### **CONCLUSION**

Nietzsche's critique of absolute truth in relation to *ikhtiar* in Sufism is that there must be a kind of dismantling of the understanding that sustenance depends on one's struggle. As for Nietzsche's will to power in relation to endeavor in Sufism, namely, we do not know the cause of sustenance from what existence, so according to Nietzsche, one must optimize

one's own power to seize the sustenance that is around them, but the final step must still be balanced with trust in God.

It is fully recognized that this study still has many shortcomings, and therefore, further research is expected to expand upon these findings, particularly in the field of religious psychology. It would be interesting to specifically examine how a balanced understanding of Sufism, which balances *ikhtiar* (as will and recognition of the law of causality) and *tawakal* (as the strength of faith), can serve as a therapeutic (healing) method for addressing modern psychological issues such as fatalism, existential anxiety, or depression.

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