

# Hedonic Consumption and Meta Needs: a Investigation on Al-Ghazali

Hasan Tutar<sup>1</sup>,

## ABSTRACT

Like any productive activity, the phenomenon of consumption itself is an individual and social action like other productive activities in consumer societies. People express this action with different conceptual definitions for different reasons. In hedonic consumption, people attribute meanings to the act of purchasing and the product they buy, and they see consumption as an important purpose of life. The person may feel unhappy if the meaning and importance attributed to a particular brand in these societies is not completed by owning it. The pleasure of meeting him is, unfortunately, momentary; with hedonic adaptation, the person has to chase other pleasures. The effort to convey a message to the social environment through the symbolic meanings of the goods and services consumed by the person is seen as worthless by Ghazali, who prioritizes meeting the commodity needs. Ghazali's view of human psychology is transpersonal, and Ghazali does not consider the physical aspect of man apart from his psychological and biological aspects, spiritual or spiritual aspects. Ghazali sees man as a being with the potential for continued development, especially regarding his spiritual aspect. It sees humanization not as a biological growth but as a psychological and spiritual deepening. Ghazali's goal of maturing man is to lead him to his spiritual depth and religious orientation. Ghazali argues that not meeting the spiritual needs of man will create a deep feeling of "emptiness," "nothingness," and "spiritual hunger" in him. Ghazali, who argues that those who see the products they consume as status symbols do not have individual values, even that they are idiots of fame, aims to turn people towards their spiritual or meta-needs. Ghazali, who prioritizes commodity needs, sees hedonic consumption as a consumption frenzy stemming from ordinary life or the folly of fame. For Ghazali, who prioritizes

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<sup>1</sup>Prof. Dr.,Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi, İletişim Fakültesi, Halkla İlişkiler Bölümü, Bolu/Türkiye  
E-Posta: hasantutar@ibu.edu.tr // Affiliated Universty Istanbul Commerce University, htutar@ticaret.edu.tr. ORCID: 0000-0001-8383-1464, DOI: 10.32704/erdem.2022.83.135  
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meta-needs, hedonic consumption is not a simple shopping or an act of meeting needs but a pathological condition that should be questioned. Based on the assumption that a happy life is possible to the extent of consumption, hedonic consumption is a simple pleasure appealing only to the biological side of a person for someone who prioritizes meta-needs. This research focuses on two themes. The first is hedonic consumption; an act people do for desire, pleasure and imitation, not because of their needs. The other is the meta needs, which, like Ghazali, do not see the needs as endless and unlimited and consider it necessary to meet the physical needs of the person at a minimum level and turn to psychological needs. In this research, both the hedonic consumption act was questioned at the conceptual level and aimed to examine the concept of “meta-need,” which does not give more meaning to human needs than it deserves. In this way, what should be the main purpose and priority of the historical march of man through Ghazali will be questioned.

**Keywords:** Consumption, hedonic consumption, needs, commodity needs, Spiritual needs, Ghazali

## Hedonik Tüketim ve Meta İhtiyaçlar: Gazali Üzerinden Bir Sorgulama

### ÖZ

Herhangi bir üretken faaliyet gibi, tüketim olgusunun kendisi de tüketim toplumlarında diğer üretici faaliyetler gibi bireysel ve toplumsal bir eylemdir. İnsanlar farklı nedenlerle bu eylemi farklı kavramsal tanımlarla ifade etmektedirler. Hedonik tüketimde insanlar satın alma eylemine ve satın aldıkları ürüne anlamlar yüklerler ve tüketimi yaşamın önemli bir amacı olarak görürler. Bu toplumlarda belirli bir markaya atfedilen anlam ve önem, ona sahip olmakla tamamlanmaz ise kişi kendini mutsuz hissedebilir. Ona kavuşmanın verdiği haz ise ne yazık ki anlaktır ve hemen hedonik adaptasyon ile kişi başka hazların peşinden koşmak durumunda kalır. Kişinin tükettiği mal ve hizmetlerin sembolik anlamları üzerinden sosyal çevreye bir mesaj iletme çabası, meta ihtiyaçların karşılanmasına öncelik veren Gazali tarafından değersiz görülür. Gazali'nin insan psikolojisine bakışı transpersoneldir ve Gazali, insanın fiziki yönünü psikolojik ve biyolojik yönlerinden, manevi veya manevi yönlerinden ayrı düşünmez. Gazali insanı, özellikle manevi yönü bakımından sonsuz gelişme potansiyeline sahip bir varlık olarak görür. İnsanlaşmayı biyolojik bir büyüme olarak değil, psikolojik ve ruhsal bir derinleşme olarak görür. Gazali'nin insanın olgunlaştırılması hedefinde onun manevi derinliğine ve ilahi yönelişine sevk etmek vardır. Gazali, insanın manevi ihtiyaçlarını karşılamamanın onda derin bir "boşluk", "hiçlik" ve "manevi açlık" duygusu yaratacağını ileri sürmektedir. Tükettikleri ürünleri statü sembolü olarak görenlerin bireysel değerlerinin olmadığı, hatta onların şöhret budalası olduğunu ileri süren Gazali, insanın manevi veya meta-ihtiyaçlarına yönelmesini amaçlar. Meta ihtiyaçlarını ön planda tutan Gazali, hedonik tüketimi sıradan yaşamdan kaynaklanan bir tüketim çılgınlığı veya şöhret budalalığı olarak görür. Meta-ihtiyaçları ön planda tutan Gazali için hedonik tüketim basit bir alışveriş ya da ihtiyaçları karşılama eylemi olarak değil, sorgulanması gereken patolojik bir durumdur. Tüketim ölçüsünde mutlu bir hayatın mümkün olduğu varsayımına dayanan hedonik tüketim, meta-ihtiyaçları ön planda tutan biri için insanın sadece biyolojik tarafına hitap eden basit bir zevktir. Bu araştırma iki tema üzerine odaklanmaktadır. Birincisi, insanların ihtiyaçlarından dolayı değil, arzu, zevk ve taklit için yaptıkları bir eylem olarak hedonik tüketimdir. Diğeri, Gazali gibi ihtiyaçları sonsuz ve sınırsız görmeyen, kişinin fiziksel ihtiyaçlarını minimum düzeyde karşılamayı

ve psikolojik ihtiyaçlara yönelmeyi gerekli gören meta ihtiyaçlardır. Bu arařtırmada hem hedonik tüketim eylemi kavramsal düzeyde sorgulanmış hem de insan ihtiyaçlarına hak ettiğinden fazla anlam yüklemeyen “meta-ihitiyaç” kavramının incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Bu sayede Gazali üzerinden insanın tarihsel yürüyüşünün temel amacının ve önceliğinin ne olması gerektiği sorgulanacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Tüketim, hedonik tüketim, ihtiyaçlar, meta ihtiyaçları, Manevi ihtiyaçlar, Gazali

## Introduction

The concept of need has been handled differently in various disciplines because it relates to human beings. Philosophy sees man as a being who needs many things, unlike God, who does not need anything, and therefore argues that living in society is not a choice but a necessity. On the other hand, psychology evaluates the consumer action of a person in terms of the meaning he attributes to it. On the other hand, religion wants to explain the act of consumption through the concept of “opinion.” On the other hand, ethics evaluates consumption within the framework of consumption ethics and hedonistic consumption as unethical. In particular, economists who adopt the neo-classical approach accept the needs as unlimited. However, the needs of an average person are limited, and their desires are endless, the needs are physiological, and the desires are psychological (Yaran 1992: 160).

According to their severity, needs are divided into essential (basic) and non-essential (secondary) needs. Mandatory needs are physiological needs such as air, food, and water for human survival. On the other hand, secondary needs such as entertainment, travel, and listening to music are not vital to meet but give pleasure to people as they are satisfied. What is necessary to make life easier and more beautiful is not needs but desires. People have many needs they want to satisfy, some of which are repetitive, i.e., periodic. Another characteristic of needs is that their intensity decreases as they are satisfied. Needs can also be classified psychologically as hedonic needs and meta-needs. For hedonic consumption, life is a set of actions consisting of consuming more products and owning more products. According to the hedonic consumption approach, the way to make life happier is the act of purchasing itself. The power that drives the buying action is the will to power from owning more. Hedonic consumption “corresponds to purchases made for the sensation derived from the experience of using the products (Roy and Ng 2012: 85, Botti and McGill: 2011). Hedonic consumption experiences; emerge as fun, emotional and spontaneous, thanks to their pleasurable and instantly satisfying nature (Kivetz and Strahilovitz, 2000; Sela, Berger and Liu, 2009).

The earliest thing people learn from birth is that when needs are satisfied, they are the source of pleasure and satisfaction; when they are not satisfied, they are the source of pain, sadness, and feelings of absence. Behind people’s

attitudes and behaviors, there is an orientation towards satisfying various needs. People must meet their basic and secondary needs to survive and lead happy lives. The approach in which people tend only to pleasure and avoid pain in their behavior is a “behavioral” approach. According to the meta-needs approach, which has recently been on the agenda in new behaviorism and behavioral sciences, there are needs and human cognition, beliefs, and values behind behaviors. For those who see the act of consumption in the context of commodity needs, people who have reached a position such as truth, beauty, and self-control do not think of the act of consumption independently of “commodity needs” (Maslow 2001: 299).

## **Conceptual Framework**

### **The Hedonic Nature of Consumption and Meta-Needs**

Economists divide needs into “basic” needs and “luxury needs.” Need is seen as “all of the natural and social requirements for living. Others consider the need the feeling of absence that the material and spiritual self feels and tries to eliminate (Yeniçeri 1980: 177). With a general definition, pleasure is the feeling that gives a feeling of absence and pain when the need is satisfied. Need is the feeling of lack that leads to the deterioration of the psychological and physiological balance of the person (Luthans 1997: 141). Needs are divided into two groups: primary needs, which include basic physiological needs, and secondary or meta-needs, which include social and psychological needs. Primary needs are those that are essential for human survival. When it is not met, various diseases and even death can occur. Such needs include food, drink, shelter, and sexuality, which are required by the physiological structure of the human being. Secondary needs are required by people’s social relations, social status, responsibilities, duties and roles. In this respect, it is possible to characterize them as social needs. Secondary needs are the need to love, belong, be liked, compete, and achieve. Needs can also be classified in terms of their continuity. Needs that continue as long as people live are constant.

Needs are divided into normal and essential needs in terms of necessity. Necessary needs are called “necessity,” which is more severe than relative need. In fact, “necessity” covers all needs and expresses complete neediness. The need concept is used for “normal” needs that have not reached necessity. While it is almost impossible for a person to get rid of this situation, someone in need can get rid of it. As the need intensifies and man is under the pressure

of the need, the need moves towards necessity. While the necessity of a person who has not eaten a few meals a meal is a necessity, the situation of someone on the verge of death from hunger is a necessity; that is, the need has turned into a necessity. While the feeling of a hungry person for food is needed, the lack of breathing of a person who is about to drown in the sea is necessary. Need is a feeling of lack that enables humans to continue their existence. All human behaviors and activities meet the need; In other words, the basic motive behind the behavior is the need. More important here, which constitutes the essence of this study, is the meanings people attribute to the act of consumption revealed by the concept of need rather than the meaning, characteristics, and types of need. The main purpose of this research is to question the consumption act in question in the context of hedonic consumption and meta-needs.

Hedonism, which has its roots in ancient Greece, asserts that “the supreme good is a pleasure as the main purpose of life.” “pleasure” is “the feeling of contentment arising from not getting something desired.” According to hedonism, the feeling of “pleasure” gives meaning to life. Epicurus proposes taking advantage of pleasures for people’s happiness and avoiding natural and non-essential pleasures. Hedonic consumption considers enjoying the pleasure dimension of consumption as a basic goal (Tynan and McKechnie 2009). For those who prioritize hedonic consumption, consumption provides the transition from the pleasure obtained through the senses to the pleasure obtained through emotions and dreams. Advocates of hedonism argue that pleasure can be obtained through fantasies, not specific actions. One of these fantasies is the act of hedonic consumption (Odabaşı 2009: 43). According to the hedonic consumption approach, the emotions and dreams of the consumer are at the forefront, not the quality, price, or functionality of the product or service. Hedonic consumers buy products not just for what they do but also for what they mean and feel. Hedonic consumers are more passionate about the excitement of buying a product rather than owning it.

Some studies show that people turn to hedonic consumption mainly because of unrealistic evaluations such as experiencing adventure, relaxation, establishing social relationships, and looking different from others. Research results show that consumers buy not for rational but emotional reasons (Arnold and Reynolds, 2003; Deli-Gray et al., 2010). It is not the need, price and cost that drives the purchasing behavior of hedonic consumers but the meaning and importance they attribute to the visual and message dimension

of consumption. For this reason, hedonic consumers prioritize the sense of image in the objects they buy. Apart from these, even the atmospheric elements of shopping malls can guide those who want a hedonic experience (Jack and Parsons 2010). Hedonic consumers can feel a different excitement from touching the product and interacting directly with the salesperson. For this reason, hedonic consumers visit the store directly rather than shopping on the website (Sarkar 2011). Shopping centers are a kind of consumption temple for them.

Besides hedonic behaviors limiting the purpose of human existence to a simple act such as consumption, Frankl (1992:99) states that it is impossible to understand the real purpose of human existence within the limits of his existence. The purpose of human existence is actually “transcendence” rather than self-actualization. Man is the only being able to transcend, and self-actualization is only the first stage of self-transcendence. Only when a person can transcend himself will the self’s search for meaning find an answer. In addition, the purpose of God, who gives the person the ability to transcend himself, will be realized in this way. Maslow’s truth, beauty, transcendence, etc. Meeting the “commodity needs,” he uses to describe his feelings can only be possible by exceeding himself. Maslow sees meta-needs as basic, instinctive, and transcendent, like lower-level biological-physiological needs. According to Maslow, transcendent aesthetic, spiritual and philosophical need in human life is human nature’s real and essential need, like any biological need (Maslow 2001:299). Maslow sees people with such transcendent needs as people who have moved beyond the realm of the transpersonal self. With the self reaching a full maturity level, all attitudes and behaviors of a person are beautiful, and there is wisdom and virtue in them.

He states that if meta-needs cannot be satisfied, it will lead to loss of value, cause anxiety and alienation, and as a result, psychological-spiritual diseases, which Maslow calls “meta pathology,” will emerge due to not being able to meet meta-needs (Walsh and Vaughan 2001: 163). Finally, Maslow concludes that a transcendent aesthetic, religious and philosophical aspect in human life is a real and essential need of human nature, like any biological need (Maslow 2001: 54). Maslow considers the transcendent, transpersonal, in other words, the transcendent transcendence of the person beyond the known limited self-area to the highest of all goals, even above self-actualization. Maslow’s thoughts on this subject are as follows: The examination of the



most spiritual dimensions of human nature and the latest possibilities of its potential caused the weakening of the theories that have been emphasized for years and the demolition of psychology theories that were deeply believed and accepted for a long time and accepted as uncritical (Maslow 2001: 75). With these thoughts, Maslow laid the foundations of humanistic psychology, which he founded. Humanistic psychology represents a universe-centered understanding of humanity beyond the physiological needs of humans and “transpersonal” psychology that does not exclude God in the process of self-realization.

Maslow divides self-actualized people into people who have not had a transcendent experience but are in good physical and psychological health and those who have had a transcendent/metaphysical experience. People whom Mevlana calls perfect human beings and who have reached the last stage of al-Ghazali’s religious orientation hierarchy are people who see their needs at the level of meta-needs and who have reached the level of Maslow’s transcendent and metaphysical experience. Although psychologists offer much new descriptive information about human behavior, they do not discuss how one can transcend oneself (Willox 2001: 12). Contemporary psychology, which developed under the influence of positivism and Newtonian physics, was not interested in what the ideal type of person or what was ideal for a person was and could not develop a perspective on this since it was based on “average” human behaviors that could be measured for itself (Capra 1992: 53). The purpose of psychology is to describe, predict and control human behavior. The tradition of basing his theories on a quantitative and physical basis has moved him away from dealing with man’s metaphysical/transcendent aspect (Walters 1995: 179).

### **The Structure of Human Needs in The Thought of Al-Ghazali**

Al-Ghazali’s (1058–1111) view of human psychology is a transpersonal or “transpersonal” view, and he does not consider the physical side of man as separate from the psychological side and the biological side from the spiritual or spiritual side. The transpersonal or “supra-ego psychology” believes every human being has a higher side than the one reflected in life from the known. It regards man as a being with infinite development potential, especially in his spiritual aspect. He sees humanization not as biological growth but as psychological, spiritual, and deepening. In al-Ghazali, the transpersonal approach transcends the sense of identity and self-concept. It expresses man’s

spiritual depth and eternal spiritual exaltation (Ali 2010:97). Al-Ghazali drew attention to the spiritual orientation of the human being and the needs of the human spirit to prevent the emergence of a new type of patient that psychotherapists encountered in the 1950s about a thousand years ago. Al-Ghazali's "holistic needs approach," which does not ignore human beings' spiritual and psychological needs, has been confirmed by the scientific level we have reached today and the basic assumptions of our knowledge.

Al-Ghazali argued that not satisfying a person's spiritual/spiritual needs will create a deep feeling of "emptiness," "nothingness," and "spiritual hunger" in him. Western psychologists, after the 1950s, especially among the people living in America, al-Ghazali placed the spiritual needs, which they defined as the "California Syndrome," which shows passion, selfishness and consumption passion, at the basis of the holistic need approach. He drew attention to the fact that satisfying only the physiological and biological needs will cause aimlessness, meaninglessness, loneliness, excessive selfishness, consumerism and passion, which are the symptoms of California Syndrome, and will result in a morbid psychological state.

People with California Syndrome are successful individuals considered normal by contemporary societal standards. At first glance, they have a respectable profession, a reasonable income, a good family life, status symbols, prestige in society, and all the opportunities that are believed to bring happiness to the relative. These people know they get "pleasure" by ordinary standards but still, seek therapy because they think life is "empty" and unhappy. What they are questioning is, are there no other pleasures apart from the biological pleasures of human beings, is not more than money, career, property and reputation necessary for a virtuous and profound life? In short, what is the meaning of life? (Palmer 2006:9). Essentially, while explaining the needs, al-Ghazali distinguishes between "pleasure" and "happiness" and states that by meeting the physiological needs of a person, he will experience a feeling of "pleasure" that is born prematurely and extinguishes prematurely. Al-Ghazali showed how to overcome the abovementioned syndrome through long-term happiness and satisfaction by meeting people's spiritual and spiritual needs instead of temporary pleasures.

In traditional psychotherapy, problems in the personality structure can be identified and corrected, but the real problem, the "true meaning" of life, is hardly addressed. These types, called "successful-unsatisfied," developed humanistic-humanistic and transpersonal-superpersonal psychology. These

psychology schools saw an inherently existential and spiritual dimension to humanity. In addition to achieving reasonable success in developing the skills necessary for an ordinary life, one should not neglect the existential and spiritual dimensions to be happy and psychologically healthy and in feelings of well-being (Palmer 2006:10). The belief that just as the stomach must be fed to get rid of the pain of hunger, the soul must be fed to get rid of the feeling of spiritual deficiency has led to the development of transpersonal psychology. Al-Ghazali's holistic needs approach gains importance at this point, drawing attention to human beings' spiritual and spiritual aspects without neglecting their biological and physiological aspects and emphasizing that the satisfaction of the human spirit is at least as important as meeting physiological needs.

About a thousand years later, al-Ghazali, Jung, Rogers, Maslow and Fromm also drew attention to human beings' spiritual, transcendent and transpersonal dimensions, which worked in this direction. In this context, Gurdjieff, who pioneered Eastern teachings by Westerners, developed the "Enneagram Theory." Enneagram Theory is a theory about self-knowledge, especially the transcendent personality dimension (Palmer 2006:6). The Enneagram theory emphasizes the importance of getting rid of the narrow patterns of biology, embarking on the endless journey of human development, being a transcendent and spiritual being, meeting transpersonal needs, and getting rid of being a pile of cells.

Al-Ghazali divides human needs into two categories and explains to them as follows: "Know that man has two kinds of needs; The first of these is to protect the heart and provide its spiritual food in order not to cause depression, the other is to protect its body from things that will lead to destruction and provide its physical food. According to him, the body's main function is to meet the heart's desires (al-Ghazali 2020:64). According to al-Ghazali, if the worldly assets or possibilities are not used to follow their purpose, they make people forget their purpose of existence and lead to destruction. Al-Ghazali sees the main source of psychological problems in improper organs or personal abilities. For example, the disease of the eye is the difficulty in seeing. The disease of the heart is that it is difficult for him to do the deed he was created to do. This deed is knowledge, wisdom, ingenuity, love of God, worshiping God, enjoying the remembrance of God, and preferring the satisfaction of these inclinations to other animal lusts (al-Ghazali 2002:43). A person must live with his soul and body and transform his powers into

action.

According to Mevlana, man's physical and spiritual development should be parallel. Human physiological needs and spiritual needs should be considered together. The needs of human physiological existence show a tendency from the concrete/physical to the abstract. Like al- Ghazali's spiritual ascension valleys, Rumi calls for changing physical and spiritual "spiritual self-transformation" (Mevlana 1990: 1189). Spinoza revealed that personal maturity is spiritual maturity by saying, "Taste is to move from a low level to a higher maturity point, and the pain is to fall from a more advanced maturity point to a lower position" (Bertrand 2018:50).

Al-Ghazali, who deals with the needs in two categories physiological and spiritual (psychological) needs, details the physiological and spiritual needs as follows (al-Ghazali: 2002).

*Necessities for life.* These are essential (necessary) needs for life or inevitable and non-deferrable (essential) needs. Necessary needs for human life such as eating, drinking and sleeping are included in this group. Needs have priorities, but they prioritize "met" instead of "birth" needs. Although people cannot meet their essential living needs, they continue to see the needs that make life easier and more beautiful as a need. A person's spirituality who cannot meet his essential life needs is negatively affected. As Plato stated, "the body is the house of the soul." Every person is affected by the house they live in.

*Necessities that make life easier.* Everyday needs that make people's lives easier and provide them with well-being and comfort are included in this group. The desire for regular life, the desire to achieve a sufficient income level, and the needs related to health and safety can be evaluated. Such needs are not related to the comfort of one's life, nor are they necessary for life.

*Necessities that make life beautiful.* Apart from the necessities necessary for life and making life easier, they are complementary and life-enhancing needs such as luxury. This includes not owning any house but the need to own a luxurious house. Apart from these, every need considered a luxury in life is evaluated within this scope. All kinds of consumer goods considered luxury are necessities that make life beautiful. All kinds of fine arts such as art, literature, music, travel, painting and all activities that will enable people to enjoy life (taste) and be happy are evaluated in this category.

*Spiritual needs.* In al-Ghazali's thought, while meeting the needs arising

from man's physiological or biological characteristics gives him "pleasure" or "taste," his heart also has spiritual needs, which can be met by obeying the creator's call to serve God. When a person meets these, he feels a sense of happiness and satisfaction in his heart. To meet the needs of man's heart, he needs to experience peak experiences by turning to God in the form of a "hierarchy of divine orientation." A person's satisfaction during peak experiences and ecstasy shows that he has spiritual needs (Tutar 2012: 139).

At the last step of his hierarchy, al-Ghazali named the transcendental or transpersonal needs of the human being, which Maslow described as meta needs towards the end of his life, and named them "spiritual needs" (Walsh and Vaughan 2001: 162). al-Ghazali draws attention to the negative mental illnesses that arise from the self-turned-to-the-world, like the Islamic thinkers who see the world and the afterlife together, in short, the universe conceptions and perceptions as "two-worldly." He sees the feeling of "appreciation," which Maslow sees as a stage in self-realization, as a "fame foolishness" and argues that this is due to the lust of the soul (al-Ghazali 2002: 154). Like Mevlana, al-Ghazali sees all the gains of the soul as temporary and vile things (Mevlana 2600-3)

While Freud determined the basic faculties in man as id, ego and superego, al-Ghazali determined the basic faculties in man; he categorizes them as the animal, aggressive, demonic, and angelic aspects. While Freud shows man as a being under the control of "libido" and "aggression" feelings, al-Ghazali argues that man has the appropriate potential to be equipped with angelic morality. According to him, human; It is equipped with a more noble and divine purpose than an animal and aggressive beast (al-Ghazali 2017:22). According to al-Ghazali, animal states also exist in humans, but the ability to mature in humans does not exist in animals. Whatever characteristics are given to animals and predators, they are also given to humans. People have also been given more maturity, which is the reason. According to al-Ghazali, everything was created for his maturity at the end of his ascension. With this maturity, the man knows God and experiences peak experiences, and thanks to his positioning himself according to the will of his creator, he gets rid of inner troubles and lust (al-Ghazali 2017:22). The man needs two things: to protect his heart from the causes of destruction and to provide his food (worship); the other is to protect his body from the causes of destruction and provide his food. The nourishment of the heart is to know God, love him, and turn to him because the food of all things is what nature desires. Before that, knowing and loving God was a human need. The restlessness of the heart

is due to turning away from Allah and turning to other things (al-Ghazali 2017:56).

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

Jung brought the first expansion to the spiritual and transpersonal dimensions of man. Later, Rogers, Maslow, and Fromm studied the transcendent dimension of human beings. Gurdjieff, who pioneered the adaptation of Eastern teachings for use by Westerners, developed the “Enneagram Theory (Palmer 2006:6). Inside every living thing, there is the urge to be himself, a life form, as Aristotle put it. A daughter is the form of a mother, a butterfly’s caterpillar, or a conifer of an oak tree. Every form grows and develops and becomes what it becomes in maturity. Every form knows what it will turn into. This information exists in the form, that is, in the beginning, only potentially. For the potential to emerge, favorable conditions must exist. What will man become? To be “adult” biologically or “adult” spiritually and spiritually?

Finding one’s truth on the path one walks on, expressing oneself as a whole person and communicating with other people healthily depends primarily on getting to know oneself (Palmer 2006: 12). Al-Ghazali, one of the important names of the eastern world of wisdom, focuses on transpersonal needs and transpersonal psychology (al-Ghazali 1984: 17). The transpersonal or transpersonal approach explains al-Ghazali’s experience as a “holotropic state of consciousness.” A person identifies with only a small part of his everyday consciousness. In holotropic situations, the body can transcend the narrow limits of its ego and become able to use its identity fully. Consciousness in holotropic situations is qualitatively altered quite profoundly and fundamentally, but not to such a great extent as in conditions where causes are organic. Contents from other dimensions of existence may enter our conscious field, which may occur intensely, even irresistibly. We experience two very different realities simultaneously, with our two feet in a different world (Gorf 2000: 22). Human is in the material world, in the world of objects and animals; on the other hand, he lives in a spiritual and transcendent world.

According to the transpersonal-suprapersonal approach, it is important to realize that many of the disorders diagnosed as psychotic today and treated indiscriminately with suppressive medication are the troublesome stages of a radical personality transformation and spiritual opening. If these are properly understood and supported, these psychospiritual crises can result in

emotional and psychosomatic healing, remarkable psychological changes, and evolution of consciousness (Grof 2000: 181). Al-Ghazali expresses this evolution of consciousness as follows: “Man was created from the body and the heart. My purpose from the heart is the spirit, which is the place to know Allah. Otherwise, it is not a heart of flesh and blood found in the dead and animals. There is a healthy body on which the happiness and well-being of a person depend. There is also a diseased one that causes destruction. So is the heart. He also has a state of health and well-being. Salvation for people: “Only those who come before Allah with a sound heart” (Quran, 26/89). There is also a state of heart illness that causes man’s eternal and otherworldly destruction. Not knowing Allah is a destructive disease. Relying upon Allah by following the soul’s desires is caused by that poison (al-Ghazali 1984:75).

Comparing the qualities and characteristics of al-Ghazali’s “healthy person,” which deals with the material and spiritual dimensions of the person together, with the following features that Maslow sees in a self-actualized person, will be useful in understanding the subject. Maslow claims that the self-actualized person has the following features: Perceives the known aspects of reality correctly, accepts reality as it is, tends to enjoy life’s events fully, acts spontaneously, acts creatively, and can laugh at himself and life, values humanity is close. He has friends, sees and lives life through the eyes of a child, works hard when necessary, is aware of his responsibility, is honest, aware of his surroundings, and constantly researches and tries new things. There are fundamentally important differences between the human being, whom Maslow sees as having completely turned his face to the world and consists of biological and physiological aspects, and al-Ghazali’s human model, which evolves from animal to human and then to the perfect human being. While Maslow does not see a transcendent aspect in human beings, al-Ghazali considers humans whole with animal and angel aspects. While Maslow’s man has biological and mental characteristics, al-Ghazali’s man also has spiritual and transcendent characteristics.

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