RELIGIOUS REFERENT TRANSMISSION IN THE PROCESS OF CONSCIENCE DEVELOPMENT: A QUALITATIVE STUDY*

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Abstract

The concept of conscience is attributed to many different meanings, but its origins remain a subject of debate among several scholars. In the first century BCE, early Stoics defined the conscience as an internal voice that made ethical judgments. While classical Greek philosophy and the Old Testament did not use the term itself, they did understand and employ the idea of such a faculty using the corresponding concept of the heart. Conscience is not found as an explicit term within the Qur'an, but there are a number of verses that speak of the concept. Numerous studies show correlations with different variables from parental attitude to religious tendency. In this study, the focus is on the process of conscience development in Qur'an course students (N=9) and how religious text is used. This is a qualitative study which employed the interview method and a phenomenological approach. The results demonstrated religion as a tool to help guide the individual in distinguishing what is right and what is wrong. However, the participants obeyed religious rules based on their personal life goals, individual expectations. Because of this, they used the same religious text for different stages of conscience.

Keywords: Psychology of religion, Kohlberg, conscience development, religious development, religious life goals.

Vicdan Gelişim Sürecinde Dini Referansların Kullanım Biçimleri: Nitel Bir Araştırma

Öz

Vicdan kavramına atfedilen pek çok farklı anlam olmasının yanında kaynağının ne olduğu konusundaki bilim insanlarının tartışmaları da sonlanmış değildir. Vicdan kavramın MÖ I. yüzyılda Erken Dönem Stoacılığı'nda ahlaki yargılarda bulunan bir içses olarak tanımlanmaya başlamıştır. Klasik Yunan Felsefesinde ve Eski Ahitte bu kavrama rastlanmıyor olsa da, Eski Ahit'te bu yetinin

fenomen şeklinde bilinmekte ve kalp kavramını bunun karşılığı olarak kullanılmaktadır. Vicdan kavram olarak doğrudan Kur'an'da yer almaz, fakat bu kavrama işaret eden ifadeler vardır. Alanda yapılmış çalışmalarda anne baba tutumundan dini eğilime kadar vicdan gelişimini ile ilişki çok sayıda değişken belirlenmiştir. Bu çalışmada ise Kur'a Kursu öğrencilerinin (N=9) vicdan gelişim sürecine ve bu süreçte dini metinlerin nasıl kullanıldığına odaklanılmıştır. Nitel bir çalışma olması nedeniyle mülakat yapılmış ve fenomenolojik yaklaşım benimsenmiştir. Elde edilen sonuçlarda doğru ve yanlışın ne olduğunun belirlenmesinde dini kuralların önemli bir kaynak olduğunu anlaşılmıştır. Fakat katılımcıların dinin belirlediği kurallara neden riayet etmelerinin nedeni kişisel yaşam hedefleri ve bireysel beklentileridir. Bu nedenle aynı dini metin farklı vicdani gelişim basamaklarına dayanak teşkil edecek şekilde kullanılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Din psikolojisi, Kohlberg, vicdan gelişimi, dini gelişim, dini yaşam hedefleri.

Introduction

Erich Fromm said;[1] "there is no prouder statement man can make than to say: I shall act according to my conscience." Scholars of theology, sociology, psychology and anthropology attributed different meanings to this concept and these meanings evolved depending on scholars' perspectives and backgrounds. The conscience remains the subject of perennial debates, including those on whether everyone's conscience is the same, on its social roots, on the connection between one's conscience and the conduct of one's parents, and on whether there is a universal model capable of encompassing conscience in all contexts.[2]

In the first century BCE, early Stoics defined the conscience as an internal voice that made ethical judgments. While classical Greek philosophy and the Old Testament did not use the term itself, they did understand and employ the idea of such a faculty using the corresponding concept of the heart.[3] With the rise of Christianity, the concept of conscience would develop into a fundamental ethical category in theology, especially through the work of Paul. He viewed the conscience as an impartial judge that witnessed the agreement among the moral laws written in the human heart and discovered by individual reason through the course of human action. Several centuries

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1   Erich Fromm, *Man, for Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics* (Rinehart and Winston: Holt paperbacks, 1990), 141.

2   Grazyna Kochanska et al."A Developmental Model of Maternal and Child Contributions to Disruptive Conduct: The First Six Years", Journal *of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 49/11 (2008): 1220.

3   Psalms 16/7; Jeremiah 31/33.

later, Augustine (354-420) would describe the conscience as people's inner "voice of God".[4]

Conscience is not found as an explicit term within the Qur'an, but there are a number of verses that speak of the concept.[5] These describe a certain faculty within the ontic structure of the individual that inclines one toward the good. Examples of such verses include the Surah Al-Imran 3/190, which states that the world contains signs for people of understanding, and the Surah al-Tawbah 9/118, which details the inner pain experienced by those who fail to carry out the duties imposed upon them by the society. As a religion, Islam emphasizes that all people are born with an equal ability to understand what is right, all are capable of understanding good and evil, and all people are therefore responsible for their actions.[6] This faculty of distinguishing between right and wrong (the Surah al-Shams 91/8) is the conscience.[7]

1. Development of Co nscience

Every child has the need to develop a meaning of the world and affirmation from others. Through group activities and contact with others, a child feels like they are part of the society. It fosters power of understanding and development of emotional connection. Key factors are understanding the child`s existence situation, and reconstruction of events with feeling. Additionally, the experience of appreciative care, understanding of conversation, participation in a culture of justice, and becoming aware of the best self help support the development of a conscience mind.[8] The attachment between a mother and a child is known as the center of the child`s moral and emotional development.[9] The conscience is accepted as an ability that one is born with; development of this ability, however, is closely connected to the child's experiences, and it gains importance in learning to love in relationships and in identifying,

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4   Hans G. Gruber, "Vicdan", İslamiyet-Hıristiyanlık Kavramları Sözlüğü, ed. Martin Thurner, 2 cilt (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2013), 2: 823-824.

5   Şenol Korkut, "Vicdan", İslamiyet- Hıristiyanlık Kavramları Sözlüğü, ed. Martin Thurner, 2 cilt (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Yayınevi, 2013), 2: 822.

6   Musa Bilgiz, *Kur'an Açısından Vicdan ve Değeri* (İstanbul: Beyan Yayınları, 2007), 213.

7   Fikret Karaman - İsmail Karagöz, "Vicdan", *Dini Kavramlar Sözlüğü*, nşr. İsmail Karagöz-Mehmer Canbulat-Fikret Karaman-İbrahim Paçacı (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2006), 250.

8   Martha Snyder et al., *The Young Child as Person* (New York: Human Sciences Press, 1985), 15.

9   John Bowlby, "Forty-Four Juvenile Thieves: Their Characters and Home Lives", *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 25/1 (1944): 19.

first, with the child's mother and father, and later, with more abstract ideals and God.[10]

When a child identifies with someone, they will mimic that person's moral behavior. The child will appropriate these external moral prescriptions only to the extent that they are aware of the dictates of their own conscience.[11] If the child has responsible parental figures, then their interpersonal relations and sense of gratification will develop in tandem. This connection plays the role of a neurobiological "glue," establishing healthy relationships. The acceptance and affection the child receives from those whom they love and respect will be the strongest possible rewards. As the brain develops, at least in children who grow up in loving families, these will take the shape of a model that the child will use in their relationships with those raising them.[12]

Robert R. Sears evaluated the relationship between moral growth processes and how they affect general child rearing practices. Sears divided conscience development of children into three different stages. The first one is the "external monitoring and intervention by adult authority figures" stage. In this stage, the parents or adults keep the child from performing egocentric actions that affect others. Second, the child avoids punishment by using self-control. Third is the stage where the child uses regulatory internal control as they realize the implications of their actions.[13] Scientific outcomes show that the mother's acceptance of the child at an early age is very essential to conscience development in stopping destructive behaviors,[14] and if the mother warns the child about misbehavior, this makes it easier to internalize social behavior.[15] Even preschoolers imprint and imitate parental behavior to adapt

10   Hans Zulliger, *Cocuk Vicdanı ve Biz,* Trans. Kamuran Şipal (İstanbul: Cem Yayınevi, 2013), 8.

11   Zulliger, *Cocuk Vicdanı ve Biz,* 25-33.

12   Bruce D. Perry - Maia Szalavitz, *Köpek Gibi Büyütülmüş Çocuk* (İstanbul: Okuyan Us Yayınları, 2014), 109.Top of Form.

13   John M Rich - Joseph l. De Vitis, *Theories of Moral Development* (Illinois: Charles Thomas Publisher, 1985), 42-43.

14   Grazyna Kochanska et al., "A Developmental Model of Maternal and Child Contributions to Disruptive Conduct: The First Six Years", J*ournal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 49/11 (2008): 1220–1227.

15   Deborah J. Laible, "Mother-Child Discourse Surrounding A Child's Past Behavior at 30 Months: Links To Emotional Understanding and Early Conscience Development at 36 Months", *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly* 50/ 2 (2004): 159-180.

to social life.[16] This way, the conscience development process starts from one`s contact with others and through adoption of social rules, and it prevents antisocial behavior.

2. Nature of Conscience

Snyder et al.[17] stated that the conscience is dependent on one`s approach to self and others' personas; it is based on how we assign attributes to self and others. It determines how a person interprets events and acts. At this point, there are different attributes among scholars. Freud explained this relation in Civilization and Its Discontent, saying there are two primary sources of guilt in relation to the conscience. According to Freud, the first source originates from dread for authority and the second source comes from dread for the super-ego. The former pushes us to refuse gratification and the latter forces to us to resist forbidden wishes that cannot be concealed from the super-ego. The conscience carries on the severity of external authority which directly affects a person's sense of guilt.[18] Erich Neumann also believed that the conscience emerges from a collective superego. External effects may help encourage or discourage the growth and development of consciousness. "The external authority of the superego, which possesses the character of stability and unbending tradition, is opposed by the "voice" in its capacity as an ordaining factor, the expression of an inner revelation of and progressively unfolding development-of that which is to come in fact."[19]

However, Erich Fromm[20] criticized Freud and said he directed his theory of super-ego (conscience) to internalized authority. Erich Fromm[21] distinguished same concept as "authoritarian" and "humanistic" conscience by following differences between authoritarian ethics and humanistic ethics. "The authoritarian conscience is the voice of internalized external authority, the parents, the state, or whoever the authorities in culture happen to be". The relationship between the individual and authority remains external without

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16   David R. Forman et al., "Toddlers' Responsive Imitation Predicts Preschool-Age Conscience. *Psychological Science*", 15/10 (2004): 699.

17   Snyder, *The Young Child as Person*, 16.

18   Sigmund Freud, *Civilization, and Its Discontents,* Trans. J. Strachey (New York: Norton publisher, 1961), 111.

19   Walter E. Conn, *Conscience: Development and Self-Transcendence* (Birmingham, Alabama: Religious Education Press, 1981), 10.

20   Fromm, *Man, for Himself,* 34.

21   Fromm, *Man, for Himself*, 142, 143,159.

ethical acceptance. No one can hear the real voice of the conscience, if their "conscience" is navigated by fear of punishment and hope for reward. On the other side, the humanistic conscience displays the person`s true self and includes the basics of one`s moral experiences in his/her life. It also keeps one`s principles which they discovered or learned from their individual life story.[22] Humanistic conscience is the representation of one`s self interest and integrity, but the interest of the authoritarian conscience is one`s "obedience, sacrifice, duty or social adjustment."[23]

Moreover, Allport[24] stated that the same concept of the conscience depends on cognitive development. Accordingly, the conscience is an essential agent in the development of personality. In childhood, the conscience is based on an opportunistic attitude and avoiding punishment and obeying parents' commands, but in adulthood, the conscience is seldom tied on dread for punishment. It is predominantly "an experience of value-related obligation."

3. Motivation of Conscience

At the end of childhood, everybody has an internal control mechanism, but it is not the end of conscience development, because there is a very important point that is a source of one's motivation for conscience development. In a society, there are several different rules such as state laws, religious rules and traditions. Studies focusing on conscience development have tended to focus on how to describe the conscience during the different stages of its development and what the factors that influence this developmental process are.[25]

Piaget explained how a child internalizes social rules, but succeeding scholars focused on values and principles. For instance, Piaget[26] cleared up moral development stages of children and explained how children internalize the rule of a marble game based on cognitive development. After Piaget, Kohlberg explained moral reasoning stages and focused on the social perspective differences between stages. Even other theorists such as Loevinger, Kegan, and Selman focused on the reason of moral behavior.[27] The last

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22   Fromm, *Man, for Himself,* 159

23   Fromm, *Man, for Himself,* 160.

24   Gordon Allport, *Becoming: Basic Considerations for a Psychology of Personality* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), 68, 72-73.

25   Geoffrey M. Stephenson, *Development of Conscience* (New York Humanities Press, 1966), 117.

26   Jean Piaget, *the Moral Judgement of the Child* (New York: The Free Press, 1965), 20.

27   Lawrence Kohlberg, *Child Psychology and Childhood Education: A Cognitive- Developmental View,* 2nd Edition (New York, London: Longman, 1987), 223.

stages of their theories are similar to Kohlberg`s universal ethical principle. Selman`s 'symbolic interaction perspective', Kegan`s 'inter-individual" and Loevinger`s "integrated stage" all show pro-social behavior as the last stage of ethical behavior.[28]

Although Piaget and Kohlberg inspired and influenced who came after them, Gilligan reacted, in particular, to Kohlberg for studying with men. Gilligan emphasized that women in moral issues care more about the care and protection of others than men. She explained the difference with the "ethics of care" and "ethics of justice" models. But, no important finding has been achieved so far, claiming that gender influences moral development. In the Social Domain Theory that he pioneered, Turiel focused on the relationships between social life and ethical thought.[29]

An individual's capacity to resist traditional pressure and ability to present their own authenticity are important biases for researchers.[30] The relationship between the rules of the society and the capacity to resist traditional pressure is used to discover one`s stages of the conscience. Durkheim described authority and discipline as moral rules which "perform an important function in character and personality in general." He claimed that authority and discipline are indispensable because of their capacity for limitation, allowing the nature of human beings to "contain our passions, our desires, our habits, and subject them to law." Thus, if we have lost discipline, we would be slaves to our instincts and we would be neither happy nor free. According to Durkheim's paradigm, individuals follow three steps in the process of internalization of moral values: the "spirit of authority and discipline," the "attachment to social groups," and "autonomy" or "self-determination".[31] Riesman[32] stressed the concept of "social character." According to Riesman,[33] social character is a part of character which is shared among significant social groups and it is the product of the experience of these groups. He described human nature as "tradition-directed," "inner-directed," and "other-directed."

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28   Kohlberg, *Child Psychology and Childhood Education,* 373.

29   Zekeriya Çam, Duygu Çavdar, Sedef Seydooğulları and Figen Çok, "Classical and Contemporary Approaches for Moral Development", *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice* 12/2 (2012): 1222.

30   Rich - De Vitis, *Theories of Moral Development,* 10.

31   Rich - De Vitis, *Theories of Moral Development,* 11.

32   David G. Riesman et al. *The Lonely Crowd* (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1950), 10.

33   Riesman, *The Lonely Crowd,* 18.

Sociologists McCord and McCord[34] explored the roots of the conscience in relation to social structure. As a part of this effort, they tried to understand just what it is that one obeys when one makes a decision and acts on it. According to McCord and McCord,[35] two individuals may hold similar values but implement them very differently due to their different moral orientations. In other words, one's conscience may affect an individual's decision-making process. McCord and McCord presented their subjects with brief scenarios—such as that of a young, unmarried woman who had become pregnant and was unsure whether or not to have an abortion—and asked them to offer their advice. McCord and McCord then asked his subjects to explain how and on what basis they offered the advice they had.

McCord and McCord[36] identified four sources that supplied motivation to the conscience, which they described as "moral anxiety." They termed these hedonistic anxiety, authority-oriented anxiety, other-directed anxiety, and integral anxiety. "The hedonism-oriented" are those who have not internalized moral standards and are only restrained by their fear of potential negative repercussions of their actions. Those who are "authority-oriented" fear opposing authority and potentially losing their social status; they have internalized the unbreakable rules of their parents, obey the law, and actively seek the approval of their parents and political and religious authorities. Those who are "other-directed" follow the dominant group out of fear of losing their love, even in cases where the dictates of that group violate normal ethical standards. The last group is those who are "integrity-oriented"; members of this group fear losing themselves and the internal consistency of their identity, and may even go so far as to violate external laws in order to avoid losing their own internal moral standards.

4. Methodology

4.1. Research Design

This study focused on the place of religion in the process of conscience development among young female students at a Qur'an Course (boarding school to learn Islam's holy book). It is a qualitative study. Qualitative methods are more adaptable in investigating multiple realities and accessing the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the participant. In these, it is

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34 William McCord - Joan McCord, "A Tentative Theory of the Structure of Conscience Decision", *Values and Groups,* ed. D. Willner (New York: Pergamon Press, 1960), 108.

35 McCord - McCord, "A tentative theory of the structure of conscience decision", 108-165.

36 McCord - McCord, "A tentative theory of the structure of conscience decision", 155-160.

easier to describe the phenomenon with the terms the researchers use. Several two-way effects may be encountered because qualitative methods are more sensitive and adaptable to patterns.[37]

Based on student statements, the study investigated which religious references were dominant in the process of conscience development. It also sought to assess the role of the education students receive on their ability to distinguish right from wrong and its influence on their reactions in cases where they feel they have done something wrong. In line with these objectives, the study employed a qualitative research design, phenomenology in particular, to identify the religious referents that are the most important in the process of conscience development in these young female Qur'an Course students.

4.2. Sample

This study employed purposive sampling to establish an experimental group comprising nine female students between the ages of 14 and 18 at a Qur'an Course boarding school. Participation in the study was voluntary, and the study was carried out with the knowledge of the school administration. Permission for the study was obtained from the office of the Mufti of the Keçiören district of Ankara, Turkey and from the Ethics Board of Ankara University. Since the scores of the variables which are much related to conscience development such as religious feeling, guilt feeling, and level of self-sacrifice differ very seriously according to gender, only female students who took Qur'an course were recruited as the sample. The goal is to minimize the impact of variables such as social environment and gender differences. In this study, to ensure that the sample was homogeneous, participants were chosen from same the school and gender. [38]

4.3. Data Collection

This study utilized a phenomenological research design and semi-structured interviews to obtain its data. Face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were carried out on an individual basis with the students who volunteered to participate. The questions used in this study were selected from a list of questions that were originally developed by sociologists McCord and McCord,[39]

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37   Yvonna S Lincoln - Egon G. Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry (*London: Sage publication 1985), 40.

38   David A Erlandson et al. *Doing Naturalistic Inquiry- A Guide to Methods* (Newbury: Park Sage Publication, 1993), 82.

39   McCord - McCord, "A tentative theory of the structure of conscience decision", 110-130.

the survey was revised further by Stephenson.[40] The questions were selected on the basis of their appropriateness to the purpose of this study, and they were used to create an interview form. This interview form was submitted to an expert, and the form was revised and finalized on the basis this expert's recommendations.

The semi-structured qualitative interviews were carried out on the basis of the interview form with the nine students who volunteered to participate in the study by the permission of the office of the mufti of the Keçiören district of Ankara. Prior to the interviews, the students were asked to read and sign an informed consent form detailing the aims of the study and the nature of the research process. The interviews were recorded with a digital recording device, with the consent of the interviewees. Each interview lasted between 20 and 30 minutes.

4.4. Data Analysis

The recorded interviews were transcribed. These transcriptions were then analyzed using a phenomenological coding technique. The coding process began with selection of codes (open coding). Following this, themes were determined. The last stage of the process identified common points that were particularly revelatory in terms of where and how in the process of conscience development the young female Qur'an Course students used religious referents. The findings obtained through this study were then compared to those of other researchers in the field.

4.5. Ensuring Validity and Reliability

During the course of the research process, attention was paid to ensuring the internal and external validity of the study's findings. Every effort was made to offer clear and consistent findings capable of being tested and confirmed by other researchers. The details of the process were laid out in detail. In order to ensure the credibility of the study, the researchers spoke to the students and teachers at the Qur'an Course over a period of prolonged engagement to identify the characteristics of the course. In order to allow for triangulation of the study's findings, they also spoke to teachers at other Qur'an Courses and asked for their views on the subject. In order to ensure participant honesty, participation in the study was on a strictly voluntary basis. The participants

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40   Stephenson, *Development of Conscience,* 10-20.

were informed in detail, prior to any interviews, of the nature of the study and the research process, and were explicitly offered the option to quit the study.[41]

5. Findings

5.1. Should People Live Primarily for Themselves?

Principle-based	*People will not live for themselves and also think of the wants and needs of those around them, because we can't live on our own. The world doesn't revolve around us. The people around us have needs, just like we do. (H-4)*
Society-based	*People shouldn't live primarily for themselves because they should live for others. When you're a child, you live for yourself and your brothers and sisters. When you grow up, you'll have friends and you'll get married. You'll live for your children.* **(H-1)**
Rule- based	*"I don't agree with this view because we are a community* [ummah]. *The prophet* [Muhammad] *didn't live just for himself. He lived for all humanity. Because we are a community, we should never think of only ourselves."* **(H-3)**
Individual-based	*I agree that people should live primarily for themselves. This is what I think now. What changed my mind* [to this view] *is all the examples of people's lack of compassion and how they never listen to their consciences. I want to live for myself.* **(H-9)** *Yes, I agree. You should prioritize yourself first. You should do things for yourself. If you always do things for others, you will be lost* **(H-6)**

According to Akbaba,[42] "Altruistic behavior, according to both the general learning approach and the social learning theory, is an accumulation of past experiences." If the child is rewarded for helping someone in a difficult situation, altruistic behavior will develop naturally. Froming[43] has discovered that the acquisition of altruistic behavior has the steps of pre-socialization, awareness that others value altruistic behavior and internalization of the altruistic norm, and that altruism is behaviorally attained when these stages are completed. We can think that H4 and H1 internalize the tendency of society in this

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41   Lincoln - Guba, *Naturalistic Inquiry,* 40-45.

42   Sırrı Akbaba, *Grupla Psikolojik Danışmanın Sosyal Psikolojik Bir Kavram Olan Özgecilik Üzerine Etkisi* (Doktora tezi, Atatürk Üniversitesi,1994), 107-117.

43   William J. Froming, Leticia Allen-Richard Jensen, "Altruism, "Role-Taking, and Self-Awareness: The Acquisition of Norms Governing Altruistic Behavior", *Child Development* 56/5 (1985): 1223.

manner. On the other hand, individuals can learn altruism also from a model without a direct reinforcement. There must be a model for this, as well as verbal and imaginary reminders[44]. For H3, the responsibility of being a citizen of Islam / Ummah assigned by Prophet Mohammad and his self-sacrificing behaviors are important in referring to him as a role model, and his words are used as reminders. But problems encountered during socialization and negative life experiences hinder H9 and H6 from acting in an altruistic way.

5.2. What is the worst thing a person can do in his or her life? Why?

Principle-based	*The worst thing a person can do is to lie to herself. If a person can lie to herself, then that is something inside of them. Someone who can lie to herself can lie more easily to those around them. Someone who can't control herself can't teach anything to others. (H-2)*
Society-based	*The worst thing a person can do is to hurt herself. Using drugs or alcohol or keeping to herself too much are ways a person can hurt herself.* **(H-4)**
Rule- based	*Adultery, because it's a sin.* **(H-1)** *"Telling a lie. The prophet* [Muhammad] *has a saying. He says my people can do everything, but they will not tell a lie. Lying is the mark of hypocrisy. Telling a lie is bad, and so is having someone you trust tell you one. It's bad both because it's a sin and because it weakens trust."* **(H-3)** *"Killing someone. It is for Allah to take the life that He has given."* **(H-6)**
Individual-based	*The worst thing is killing someone. (Why?) Because you'll regret it for the rest of your life.* **(H-8)**

From the answers given to this question, the most basic moral concerns that people have in life stood out. Considering McCord's categorization, it can be said that H2 had the fear of harming the integrity of the self ("integral anxiety"), H4 had the fear of destroying social relations, "other-directed anxiety," H4 had "authority-oriented anxiety" to avoid opposing the rules, and H8 had "hedonistic anxiety" for avoiding individual harm. Of the given examples that cause the individual to feel anxiety, even though direct religious references are used only in the rule-based approach, all acts of anxiety are actions

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44   Akbaba, *Grupla Psikolojik Danışmanın Sosyal Psikolojik Bir Kavram Olan Özgecilik Üzerine Etkisi,* 21, 31, 32.

forbidden by religion. But the fact that lying has been emphasized more often than the others and the statement that "a Muslim does not lie" has been repeated by different people may be related to the emphasis of Prophet Mohammad in this matter. The fact that lying is wrong does not just stem from the prohibition of religion. It has become an answer given by those who have moral concerns at different levels, because it reduces the inner peace of the individual and confidence in society.

5.3. How do you feel /what do you do when you do something bad?

Principle-based	*I feel regret. And if I feel sad enough then I'll deliberately avoid doing it* [my mistake] *again. (H-7)*
Society-based	*When I do something bad, I feel guilty first. I'll find myself trying to cover up my mistake.* **(H-4)**
Rule- based	*When I do something bad, I feel bad. After feeling bad for a moment, I make a rule for myself so that I'll never do the same thing again. At first, after making a mistake, I may make it again, because people can't change themselves immediately. But with time, I can correct myself. If I can't, then this will make me sad. It will irritate me constantly. I might even ask for help from older people around me.* **(H-2)**
Individual-based	*I feel really bad when I do something bad. But sometimes, I might make the same mistake again. But then, I tell myself that I've learned from it and that I won't do it again.* **(H-5)**

After the violation of a rule, people often feel guilt and shame. Shame is the negative attributions one makes about one's self, whereas guilt is the negative attributions one makes about one's behaviors. When a feeling of guilt develops after a behavior that is thought to be faulty, people feel remorse for these actions. This feeling leads people to apologize and confess the crime.[45] Among the participants, H7's feeling of guilt, and H2, H4 and H5' feelings of shame were more prominent. None of the participants claimed that they would not regret their mistakes. Religious references were not used directly in this regard. However, it has been determined — in studies that relate the feelings of guilt and shame to gender and religious tendency — that being a woman, having religious education and having a religious tendency support

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45   Cirhinlioğlu - Güvenç, "Shame proneness, guilt proneness and psychopathology", 255.

both guilt and shame.[46] While guilt supports the development of conscience in terms of directing a person to repair his mistake, shame leads to the loss of psychological health by harming the self.[47] For this reason, while the religious tendency supports conscientious development of H7, the shame of H4 weakens this development.

5.4. Have you ever deliberately said something to hurt someone you love?

Principle-based	*Never. If I truly love someone, then I would never hurt them, even if they hurt me. (H-7)* *Hurting someone's feelings is the thing that I hate the most. (H-5)*
Society-based	*I've hurt the feelings of people I love, but afterwards, I felt very guilty, because I've hurt them, and also because now they'll start thinking badly of me. Because people hold a grudge when someone hurts them.* **(H-4)**
Rule- based	*Sometimes I do things to hurt someone I love. If they're constantly coming at me and trying to take advantage of me, then I'll respond.* **(H-6)**
Individual-based	*I wouldn't say anything like that to my mother, but I might say these to my friends, because sometimes I get my own feelings hurt. If I tell someone that they've hurt my feelings but they don't do anything about it, then I'll definitely try to hurt their feelings back, because if I get really upset, I don't know what else to do.* **(H-9)**

Religions can produce a function to prevent violence by ameliorating factors that cause violence.[48] It has been determined that the level of aggressiveness of those who care about the examples of Prophet Mohammad and "those who care about religious and ethical advice" in adolescents diminishes.[49] It has also

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46   Cirhinlioğlu - Güvenç, "Shame proneness, guilt proneness and psychopathology", 255; Asım Yapıcı, "Differentation of Religiousness According to Gender in Turkish Society: An Essay of Meta-Analysis" , *F.Ü. İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 17/2 (2012): 1-34; Ok - Cirhinlioğlu, "Who are More Religious: Women or Men?" *ZfWT* 3/1 (2011): 121-142; Stephenson, *Development of Conscience*, 117.

47   Hicran İnandılar Topaç, *Shame-Proneness vs Guilt-Proneness and Their Relationship to Attributional Styles, Coping Strategies and Depressive Symptom Levels of University Students* (PhD Thesis, Middle East Technical University, 2010), 50.

48   Faruk Karaca "Violence and Religion from the Psycho-Social Perspective", *EKEV Akademi Dergisi* 30/3 (2007): 32.

49   Macit Yılmaz, *Gençlerde Şiddeti Önlemede Din Eğitimin Rolü* (Doktora tezi , Atatürk Üniversitesi, 2010), 50.

been determined that 57.3% of the students do not participate in violence at school because "violence is prohibited by religion".[50] Based on these studies, it can be said that the religious tendency reduces the occurrence of aggressive behavior. Considering the expressions of H7, H5 and H4, they appear to avoid upsetting others. But, even if the religious tendency reduces the aggressive behavior, it may not be able to eliminate the anger. In the study of Ulu and İkis,[51] there was a negative relationship between aggressive behavior and more than one dimension of religious tendency, but there was no relation with anger and hostility. It makes one think that the emphasis on mothers placed by Prophet Mohammad and his hadith "paradise lies at the feet of the mother" were effective in preventing H9 from upsetting his mom by stating that *"I cannot tell my Mom, but I can tell my friends"* but not in displaying the same sensitivity to others in terms of preventing the aggressive attitude. It can be understood that religion has prevented the emergence of aggressive behavior against the mother because of the importance given to mothers, but it has not prevented anger towards the others. As H6 and H9 pointed out, the reason for aggressive behavior is actually not knowing how to deal with anger.

5.5. After you make a mistake, do you do something to make yourself feel better?

Principle-based	*I'll perform my ablutions and then my prayers. I'll pray for forgiveness for what I've done. Then, I have to pledge to myself that I'll never do it again. (H-1)*
Society-based	*I'll try to fix my mistake. I'll apologize. I'll give them a present. I'll go to them and try to get them to forgive me.* **(H-9)**
Rule- based	*If I apologize and my apology is accepted, then I'll feel better. Generally, I'm the one to make the apology, because it's in the Hadith. Whoever takes the first step will be higher in the eyes of Allah. Even if the person doesn't agree with me, I'll go and tell them what I think. I'll go to them and apologize.* **(H-3)**
Individual-based	*If I've hurt someone then I pray for them and then I feel better.* **(H-5)** *To make myself feel better, I pray.* **(H-2)**

50   Bozkurt Koç, *Okullarda Şiddet*, 2. Basım (İstanbul: E Yazı Yayınları 2011), 412.

51   Mustafa Ulu - Mehmet İkis, "The Relationship between Religion and Aggression among the High School Students", *Erciyes Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 16/2 (2016): 95-96.

Religious references were used by H1 for a behavioral change, by H9 to repair through apology the feelings of the person hurt, by H3 to relieve himself through apology and to reduce the anxiety that arises from acting contrary to the rules, and by H5 and H2 to rescue themselves from feeling remorse. The motivation for H1's behavioral change, repentance, is "a man's giving up his sin, which he has committed, and promising Allah not to commit the crime he has committed again".[52] In this four-stage transformation process, it is expected of one to realize his mistake, forgive himself, produce actions that are useful for the society and maintain this attitude.[53] A person's repentance and self-forgiveness has been found to have an important effect on the personal transformation and moral development.[54] For this reason, it can be said that repentance plays a supporting role in the development of conscience.

5.6. Does it make you sad when other people think negative things about you?

Principle-based	*I'd be sad if someone else were to have a negative opinion of me, and I'd try to change it. I'd be especially sad if it were a person who was important to me. I wouldn't be sad because our relationship might suffer. If someone has made a mistake and that mistake needs to be rectified, I'd be happy* [to do so]. *If that person won't tell me what I've done wrong, then they aren't a real friend anyway.* [Upon learning my mistake] *I'd be sad and ask myself how I made that mistake. Then I'd try to fix it. (H-2)*
Society-based	[I would,] *both because I'd done something wrong—I've done something wrong and other people can see that—and because the person before me is not someone who overlooks such things in other people. (H-4)*
Rule-based	*I'd take their negative opinion of me and try to improve myself. (H-5)*
Individual-based	*What other people think about me wouldn't make me sad unless that person were important to me. Otherwise, it wouldn't be a problem. People can think what they want. (H-9)*

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52 Asım Yapıcı, *İslamda Tövbe ve Dini Yaşamdaki Rolü* (İstanbul: Beyan Yayınları, 1997), 178-183.

53 Öznur Özdoğan, *İsimsiz Hayatlar,* 2. Basım (Ankara: Özden Öze Yayınları, 2007), 200-245.

54 Öznur Özdoğan, *"İnsanı Anlamaya Yönelik Bir Yaklaşım: Pastoral Psikoloji"*, *AÜİFD* 47/2 (2006): 127-141.

Most of the people in the sample of the present study were very serious about the negative thoughts of others. Being loved and accepted by friends in adolescence is a crucial need for a teenager.[55] The individual attached to parents in childhood is directed to his friends during adolescence,[56] and the support the adolescent receives from his friends is indispensable in developing a positive image of self toward himself.[57] The importance attached to friendship varies according to gender. Teenager girls attribute more emotions, privacy, companionship and satisfaction to their friendships than their male counterparts. They can establish closer and deeper relationships with their peers and are more connected to their peers.[58] For this reason, the idea of attributing more importance to friends may be related to the period of development and the fact that the sample was all female.

5.7. How do you feel and what do you do when someone wrongs you?

Principle-based	*If they say what they say and then ask for forgiveness, I can forgive them. (H-1)*
Society-based	*If someone wrongs me in some way, I won't go straight to them and ask them what they're doing. I'll wait until we come together on some other occasion and, omitting the name, I'll explain why the thing they did was bad. (H-2)* *If a friend were to do something bad to me, I'd be sadder for them for doing such a thing. Then, I would be sad for myself, at least so long as it wasn't something really bad. (H-4)*
Rule- based	*You can't stay mad for more than three days. I generally try to change my behavior so that it accords with the Hadith. (H-5)* *Our prophet tells us to be forgiving, so I would forgive. (H-7)*
Individual-based	*I get sad. If I really care for them then I try to make peace. (H-8)*

H5 and H7 show the suggestions and words of Prophet Mohammad as the fundamental motivation in overcoming, forgiving, and trying to reconcile the resentments that develop based on the mistakes that other people have made. There are many studies that have found an increase in the tendency to forgive

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55   John W. Sandrock, *Adolescence,* 11th Edition, (Boston: McGraw Hill pub., 2007), 311.

56   Cindy Hazan - Phillip Shaver "Romantic Love Conceptualized as an Attachment Process", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 52/1 (1987): 511-524.

57   See. Figen Çok, "Gençlikte Arkadaşlık İlişkileri", *Eğitim ve Bilim* 89/17 (1993).

58   Buket Günaydin - Zeynep Deniz Yöndem, *"Ergenlerin Akran Bağlılığının Bazı Değişkenler Açısından İncelenmesi", AİBÜ, Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi* 7/1 (2007): 141-153.

as the religious orientation grows.[59] However, it makes one ponder that those with a high religious tendency have high scores to forgive others, while their tendency to forgive themselves is weak,[60] and that they receive high scores from the tendency to forgive more in hypothetical situations[61]. For this reason, it is difficult to understand very clearly whether religious people really forgive others, whether they feel obliged to forgive others because of the religious mandates and restrictions, or whether they forgive to be forgiven by the Creator.[62] For this reason, the reason why someone forgives the other depends on the level of conscience development.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

When one takes into account the fact that a number of factors related to the conscience—those encouraging the development of the ability to distinguish right from wrong and motivating certain behaviors or emotional states rather than others—change according to the conditions of social life, it seems unlikely that these debates will reach a conclusion any time soon. According to Dewey, new developments in peoples' lives bring about new ethical problems, and these problems in turn lead to new debates about the conscience. It is a mistake to ignore these problems stemming from the processes of change. If we cannot help children in developing the ability to arrive at correct judgments, then we should not be surprised when confronted with those who prove incapable of doing so.[63]

The findings of this study revealed that religion is an important source of motivation for students' consciences, and avoiding religious prohibitions is important for those receiving instruction at Qur'an Courses. Religious referents play a significant role in determining one's life goals and deciding what is right and what is wrong. The participants also made explicit references to prophetic advice more often than the Qur'an. At the same time, religious referents were used in different stages.

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59   Ali Ayten, "Affedicilik ve Din: Affetme Eğilimi ve Dindarlıkla İlişkisi Üzerine Ampirik Bir Araştırma", *M.Ü. İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 37/ 2 (2009): 111-128.

60   Özlem Gündüz, Üniversite Öğrencilerinde Affetmeyi Yordayan Değişkenlerin Belirlenmesi (Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara Üniversitesi, 2014), 63.

61   Collin D. Barnes - Ryan P. Brown, "A Value-Congruent Bias in the Forgiveness Forecasts of Religious People", *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality* 11/2 (2010): 17–29.

62   Ayten, "Affedicilik ve Din: Affetme Eğilimi ve Dindarlıkla İlişkisi Üzerine Ampirik Bir Araştırma",   111-128.

63   Thomas F. Green, "The Formation of Conscience in an Age of Technology". *American Journal of Education* 94/1 (1985): 3.

Similarly, eastern and western scholars discovered that people have different religious life goals. Allport[64] stated that religion has influence on the conscience. It does not make sense to believe that religious people do certain acts and abstain from other actions because of God`s dread, because religious people act more with love than fear. Religious life requires "discipline, charity, and reverence." If someone prays to God with "fear of divine punishment", it means they have a childish conscience. Allport[65] even developed a model of religious life that depends on religious motivations. He compared mature and immature forms of religiosity. Allport[66] explained mature religion as intrinsic religion and described it as: "By surrounding himself with this purpose, religion becomes an 'intrinsic value' for the individual, and as such, comprehensive and integrative and motivational."[67] Allport attributed positive expression of religious values to intrinsic religiosity while negative expression of religious life was attributed to extrinsic religiosity.[68] He used "religious life intention" as a basic motivation.

Likewise, the idea of intention has been a very core concept for Muslim scholars; they shared this with scholars in other religious traditions. Imam Gazzâlî stated hypocrisy/"riya" as a social effect on motivation to pray. Gazzâlî argued that an authentic prayer has the singular goal of connecting to God. Prayer should be centered on God and independent from any reward or punishment.[69]

Prophet Mohammad migrated/Hijret from Mecca to Madinah to protect Islam against the pressure from paganist people. Muslim people followed him, but some Muslims migrated for different intentions. It is related to Prophet Mohammad about a practice /hadith about "intention". He said that "actions are based on intentions, and everyone will get what was intended. Whoever migrates with an intention for Allah and His Messenger, the migration will be for the sake of Allah and His Messenger. And whoever migrates for worldly gain or to marry a woman, then his migration will be for the sake of whatever he migrated for."[70]

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64   Allport, *Becoming,* 72-73.

65   Gordon Allport, *Individual and His Religion* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1963), 10.

66   Allport, *Individual and His Religion*, 301.

67   Allport, *Individual and His Religion*, 301.

68   Seth Daniel Kunin, *Religion: The Modern Theories* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), 107-108.

69   Gazzâlî, İhyau Ulumi›d-Din (İstanbul Bedir Yayınları, 2002), 3: 627-641.

70   Müslim, "İmare", 155 (Müslim'in Sahîh adlı eserinin İmare bölümünün 4927 nolu hadis).

People who believe in the same religion often have different intentions for praying. In this study, a small group of students demonstrated how different prayer intentions or motivations were present among different people of the same religion. Students used the same religious text for different stages of the conscience. This was because people have different life goals and individual expectations from religion and God. Religion is only a system to show humans what are wrong or right behaviors, but people obey religious rules depending on their individual traits.

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