The Metaphors of Pre-Service Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Pre-Service Teachers Related to Cyber-Bullying

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Abstract
The concept of cyber-bullying has started to become a part of our daily life together with the social life that has been carried into online platforms. Cyber-bullying has different definitions in the literature, and moreover, it has been defined as threatening, humiliating other individuals or sending them sexually explicit photos and messages through the web sites, blogs, chat rooms, mobile phones, electronic mails and personal online profiles. Cyber-bullying as the disappointing result of modern life and information technologies is one of the leading moral problems among the young together with the increase at communication networks. When the studies carried out on cyber-bullying were reviewed, cyber-bullying could be noticed to be a common problem at schools. The purpose of this research was to determine the perceptions of Theology Faculty, Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge (RCMK) pre-service teachers related to the concept of cyber-bullying through the metaphors. In accordance with this purpose, the pre-service teachers were asked to fill in the gaps in the sentence of “In my opinion, cyber-bullying is like a/an ...; because ...” So that, metaphors of the participants related to the concept of cyber-bullying were tried to be determined. The aim for using “because” was to reveal the meaning and reason pre-service teachers attributed to the metaphors. Phenomenology as one of the qualitative research designs was used in the study. Participants of the research were 108 volunteer students studying at Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University, Faculty of Theology (Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Department students. The data obtained from the research were analyzed using content analysis method as one of the qualitative data analysis methods.

1. Introduction
Diverse bullying kinds have been present decades such as general bullying, peer victimization environmental and family bullying. Though cybey bullying, the latest danger for individuals remains to be the most popular of all. To illustrate, its virtual view spreading to more audience and its challenge to self-control.
Use of technology at schools and houses has recently become remarkable on training of teachers. Furthermore, use of internet and social networks has significantly changed the life styles of pre-service teachers. Because internet is a popular and fast system that penetrates into life of more and more people day by day. The internet is a remarkably important social and communicative tool that appears in parallel with the technological developments (Yellowless and Marks, 2007).

In daily life, individuals from any groups including the students, adults, children, and old retired people can spend considerably productive time both on the Internet and their computers (Shaw and Black, 2008). The areas Internet has been preferred to be used has changed in time; in the past the internet was only used in business areas such as banking, but nowadays internet is also used for many areas such as education, shopping... This development and change have caused new addictions (Kalkan and Kaygisiz, 2013: 2). These addictions sometimes move forward and turn into bullying. The effect of technology on mental health is inarguable. As a matter of fact, misuse of computers and the internet have caused psychological problems and disorders. According to Cross (2011), young people’s communication patterns have completely changed and now the internet is in the center of the popular culture. The developments experienced in information and communication technologies have caused some risks beside the aforementioned opportunities. The leading of these risks is the fact of cyber-bullying that appears through carrying traditional peer bullying from school environment to the cyber environment.

Cyber-bullying expresses disturbing actions of an individual or a group such as humiliating, slander, rumor, harassment, threatening, abashing, exclusion, etc. constantly and intentionally on an electronic environment (through e-mail, instant messaging, SMS, chat rooms, blogs, forums, and social networks) (Patchin and Hinduja, 2006: 152). De Padis and Willford (2014) determined in their study upon 660 elementary education students that 17.7% of the students were cyber victims. Recent researches and experiments have been carried out for preventing cyber-bullying. These studies have especially aimed to create an environment of self-esteem where the students could feel themselves safe and valuable (Heath, A. M et al., 2013).

Cyber-bullying at university level can be considered as a bridge for the maintenance of a behavior in transition from childhood and youth to adulthood. Recently, cyber-bullying is a term that has been used both in the business world and among the university students. Negative use of technology has probably canalized individuals from ordinary bullying to cyber-bullying. The researches have revealed that cyber-bullying has now been a very serious problem at an international level. The most serious output of cyber-bullying is suicide. According to a research carried out in America, 71% of the young had their own mobile phones, and 58% of these had social accounts (Li, Q. et al., 2012: p 2-3).

Teachers have also been affected from cyber-bullying that emerged as result of the negative use of technology. It is necessary to determine the perceptions of Theology Faculty RCMK pre-service teachers related to the concept of cyber-bullying through the metaphors as in other departments. RCMK pre service
teachers’ correct use of technology and social networks and their being a role model upon their students is remarkable. Pre-service teachers’ correct use of computers and the internet in their daily life and professional life is important in terms of their students they will train in the future. One of the strongest mental instruments possible to be benefited for revealing the perceptions of pre-service RCMK teachers related to the concept of cyber-bullying is the metaphors pre-service teachers develop.

Metaphores first emerged as the "mental metaphors theory" developed by Lakoff and Johnson in the 1980s. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2005:27), "the essence of metaphor is to understand and translate something according to something else.” The metaphors are highly efficient upon learning the abstract concepts that are possible to be learned indirectly (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Lakoff and Johnson (2005) defined metaphor as resembling something to another, and to understand and experience it according to another. In this sense, Saban et al., (2006) expressed metaphor as a strong mental instrument individuals could benefit for understanding and explaining an abstract, complicated or theoretical fact. Sometimes it is not possible for individuals to clearly explain the knowledge, concept or thought they have. According to Şahin and Baturay (2013), this can be arisen from individuals’ not having adequate knowledge or having imperfect knowledge related to any concept.

When the literature was reviewed, it was noticed that there were studies on determining the metaphorical perceptions of pre-service teachers towards the concept of “teacher” (Çelikten, 2006; Saban et al., 2006, Pektaş and Kildan, 2009; Aydın and Pehlivan,2010; Ocak and Gündüz, 2012; Tortop, 2013), “student” (Saban, 2009, Aydın and Pehlivan, 2010), “school” (Saban, 2004; Cerit, 2006; Saban, 2008, Saban, 2011), “internet” (Palmquist, 1996; Ak and Yenice, 2009; Johnston, 2009; Kaya and Durmuş, 2009; Firat and Yurdakul, 2012; Yu, 2013; Aksal et al., 2014), “mathematics” (Güveli et al., 2011; Güler et al., 2012), “computer” (Vural et al., 2008; Kaya and Durmuş, 2009; Saban, 2011; Güneyli and Özkul, 2013), “program development” (Semerci, 2007) (Fidan, M. 2014).

Moreover, it could also be noticed that the metaphorical analysis of pre-service teachers’ perceptions related to technology has become the subject of several studies (Kurt and Özser, 2013). For that reason, it is necessary to provide pre-service RCMK teachers to develop positive attitudes towards the concepts of technology and social network determining their perceptions on the concepts. This study was considered to provide contributions upon filling a significant gap in the literature, to point out the importance of integrating ethic and technology, and to reveal the depth, substantiality and comprehensiveness individuals had on a phenomenon, case or concept they were requested to create metaphors. Furthermore, it could be emphasized that pre-service RCMK teachers should use social networks correctly and be role models for their students.

**Aim of The Study**

The aim of this research is the determination of the perceptions of Theology Faculty Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge (RCMK) pre-service teachers related to the concept of cyber-bullying through the metaphors.
2. Method

This research aiming to determine the perceptions of Theology Faculty students related to the concept of cyber-bullying through the metaphors was carried out using quantitative research methods on screening model.

2.1. Participants

This research included 108 students studying at Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University, Faculty of Theology.

The reason of selecting RCMK teachers as study group remains on the fact that, these teachers have the main role of bringing moral and ethical values included in the Turkish National Education Curriculum. In other words, teaching moral and ethics are considered to interest much more the RCMK teachers than the other branch teachers. In Turkish National Education Curriculum outcomes for every branch are different.

The properties of the students who participated into the research were presented in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Properties</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Teaching</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theology</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As could be seen in Table 1, totally 108 pre-service teachers including 34 (31%) students from Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge Teaching department and 84 (69%) students from Theology department participated into the research. In the study, 61 (57%) of the pre-service teachers were female, and 47 (43%) were male participants.

2.2. Data Collection

For determining the perceptions of Faculty of Theology students related to the concept of cyber-bullying, the participants were asked to fill in the blanks in the sentence of “In my opinion, cyber-bullying is like ...; because ...” The relationship between the subject and source of the metaphor was tried to be determined using the word of “like.” The reason for using “because” was to reveal the meaning and reason for the metaphor.

2.3. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The metaphors Theology Faculty students created for the concept of cyber-bullying were analyzed using content analysis technique. The basic purpose in content analysis is to establish relationships that can explain collected data. For that purpose, collected data are primarily conceptualized, and subsequently organized in a logical way; and the situations explaining these data are thematized (Yildirim and Simsek, 2006).
During the stage of determining the metaphors, the forms collected from the pre-service teachers primarily, collected forms were analyzed in details; and the forms in which metaphors were not explained specifically, the forms which were not filled in and the forms of pre-service teachers who did not explain a logical reason were excluded from the scope of the study. At the end of this stage, 46 out of 154 forms were excluded, and 108 forms were included within the scope of the research. Totally 53 metaphors were created in the research. The created metaphors were listed alphabetically.

During the stage of category development, the metaphors created by the Theology Faculty students were categorized considering “subject of the metaphor,” “source of the metaphor” and “the relationship between the subject and source of the metaphor.” In these categories, the metaphors including the similar properties were included. In the research, totally 4 conceptual categories including 53 metaphors were created. Finally, during the stage of providing reliability, the steps fulfilled in qualitative data analysis were implemented. Furthermore, created categories, metaphors related to these categories, and metaphor symbols related to these were submitted to different experts except from the researchers. The experts compared the analyses and quotations, and the categories were finalized.

3. Findings and Interpretation

In this section, the metaphors Faculty of Theology students created for the concept of cyber-bullying were presented in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metaphors</th>
<th>Moral Corruption</th>
<th>Rumor</th>
<th>Nightmare</th>
<th>War</th>
<th>Cliff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Scorpion</td>
<td>Earthquake</td>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>Flood</td>
<td>Drug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>Dictator</td>
<td>Darkness</td>
<td>Mosquito</td>
<td>Black Death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Flame</td>
<td>Natural disaster</td>
<td>Tick</td>
<td>Subliminal message</td>
<td>Virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Atom bomb</td>
<td>Disaster</td>
<td>Going blind</td>
<td>Lightning</td>
<td>Cherry stain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Marsh</td>
<td>Reading of diary</td>
<td>Being unfair</td>
<td>Schizophrenia</td>
<td>Fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Knife</td>
<td>Prison</td>
<td>Bullet</td>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>Lightning strike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hell</td>
<td>Disease</td>
<td>Germ</td>
<td>Fox</td>
<td>Volcanic eruption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>Death</td>
<td>Traffic accident</td>
<td>Poison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Avalanche</td>
<td>Injection</td>
<td>Spider</td>
<td>Tsunami</td>
<td>Glue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Desertification</td>
<td>Infidelity</td>
<td>Flash in the pan</td>
<td>Glue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As could be seen in Table 2, totally 53 metaphors related to the concept of cyber-bullying were created. Some of these metaphors that were listed alphabetically (theft f=10, germ f=8, rape f=8, cancer f=5…) were expressed by more than one student. When created metaphors were analyzed in details, cyber-bullying was noticed to be associated more with disease and natural disaster. The categories created at the end of the research were presented in Figure 1.
As could be seen in Figure 1, the conceptual categories created depending upon the metaphors Theology Faculty students expressed for the concept of cyber-bullying were discussed under the titles of “physical-mental effect,” “attack on personal rights,” “subversive results,” “and spreading. The metaphors related to the category of “physical-mental effect” were presented in Figure 2.

As could be seen in Figure 2, “physical metal effect” category included the metaphors of disease, schizophrenia, drug, alcohol, cancer, Black Death and nightmare. Among these metaphors, cancer was used by 5 participants, and drug, schizophrenia and disease metaphors were used by 2 each participants; the other metaphors were repeated once. The participant who resembled the concept of cyber-bullying into schizophrenia explained his/her view as “In my opinion, cyber-bullying is like cancer, because cancer decays the body and cyber-bullying decays the spirit,” and so emphasized the physical and mental effect of cyber-bullying.
Another participant emphasized the negative effects of cyber-bullying mentioning that “In my opinion, cyber-bullying is like a drug; because it creates addiction.” The metaphors related to the category of “Attack on Personal Rights” were presented in Figure 3.

**Figure 3:** The metaphors related to the category of attack on personal rights

![Diagram of metaphors related to attack on personal rights]

As could be seen in Figure 3, the category of “attack on personal rights” included the metaphors of rape, murder, rumor, being unfair, being prisoned, reading of diary, and moral corruption. Among these metaphors, rape was used by 8 and moral corruption was used by 2 participants; the other metaphors were repeated once. The participants who resembled cyber-bullying into rape explained their views as “In my opinion, cyber-bullying is like a rape, because you have great embarrassment and destruction,” and “In my opinion, cyber-bullying is like a rape, because your personal rights are attacked.” Another participant explained his/her views on cyber-bullying as “In my opinion, cyber-bullying is like reading of my diary by someone else, because it is interference in private life,” and emphasized that private life of people who were subjected to cyber-bullying was interfered. The metaphors related to the category of “subversive results” were presented in Figure 4.
As could be seen in Figure 4, the category of “subversive results” included the metaphors of volcanic eruption, earthquake, lightning strike, flame, atom bomb, traffic accident and bullet. Among these metaphors, earthquake was used by 4 participants, flame by 3 and lightning strike was used by 2 participants; the other metaphors were repeated once. The participant who resembled the concept of cyber-bullying into “earthquake” emphasized the problem mentioning that “In my opinion, cyber-bullying is like an earthquake, because it deeply affects people.” The other participants who explained their views as “In my opinion, cyber-bullying is like a traffic accident, because it is hard to compensate,” and “In my opinion, cyber-bullying is like a flame, because it burns where it falls” emphasized the subversive results of cyber-bullying. The metaphors related to the category of “spreading” were presented in Figure 5.

**Figure 4:** The metaphors related to the category of subversive results

![Diagram of subversive results metaphors](image)

*Volcanic Eruption → Lightning Strike → Flame → Atom Bomb → Traffic Accident → Bullet → Earthquake*

**Figure 5:** The metaphors related to the category of spreading

![Diagram of spreading metaphors](image)

*Germ → Virus → Avalanche → Flood → Poison → Marsh → Cherry Strain → Glue → Spreading*
As could be seen in Figure 5, the category of “spreading” included the metaphors of germ, virus, avalanche, flood, poison, marsh, cherry strain and glue. Among these metaphors, germ was used by 8 participants, flood by 4 participants and avalanche was used by 2 participants, the other metaphors were repeated once. Related to cyber-bullying, the participants explained their views as “In my opinion, cyber-bullying is like an avalanche, because it keeps getting bigger, and its damages also becomes more efficient,” “In my opinion, cyber-bullying is like a virus, because it spreads fast,” and “In my opinion, cyber-bullying is like a germ, because you cannot understand how fast it spreads.” Another participant expressed his/her views mentioning that “In my opinion, cyber-bullying is like a cherry strain, because it is hard to clean when it strains,” and emphasized that the problems cyber-bullying victims encountered had long-term damages.

4. Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

Fast spread of technology has changed our patterns of behavior in the society. According to Li et al. (2012), although internet has opened new and different doors, it has caused ethical problems of use, either. Fast increase at the use of internet in Turkey has brought the discussions of correct and safe use of the internet to the light.

When ever-growing internet use and the problems young people have encountered in the internet have been considered, determining the metaphors related to the concept of cyber-bullying and grouping these metaphors under specific categories has become prominent. Because Theology Faculty pre-service teachers were on the internet environment during their student life, they were noticed to create totally 53 metaphors in this research which aimed to determine their perceptions on cyber-bullying. According to the research findings, cyber-bullying was determined to be associated more with disease and natural disaster when the created metaphors were analyzed in details. Related to the concept of cyber-bullying, the categories of “physical-mental effect,” “attack on personal rights,” “subversive results,” and “spreading” were created.

As expressed by Weade and Ernst (1990: 133), “the metaphors are eclectic and represent only one piece of a phenomenon, not the whole.” Under these circumstances, Religious Culture and Moral Knowledge teachers were not possible to explain the concept with only one metaphor. The metaphors that were repeated most in the research were “theft, germ, and rape.” Because the individuals who were subjected to cyber-bullying affected from this physically and mentally, the category of “physical-mental effect” was prominent. It was concluded that pre-service teachers emphasized different dimensions of cyber-bullying through the metaphors they created, and their views on cyber-bullying were negative, in general. Moreover, in some other researches (Ak and Yenice, 2012; Kaya and Durmuş, 2012), pre-service teachers were also noticed to have negative perceptions on the concepts of internet and computer. This finding supported the new findings we obtained.

When the literature was reviewed, it was noticed that, metaphor studies were carried out with different concepts, (related to teacher, curriculums, life science program, etc.), quantitative studies were preferred more on cyber-bullying, and
the rate for being exposed to cyber-bullying and making cyber-bullying were discussed more. This study would provide contributions upon both creating a perception on pre-service teachers related to the concept of cyber-bullying, and determining and understanding the views of pre-service teachers on cyber-bullying. Furthermore, no studies on cyber-bullying or moral education were found. The metaphors provide more easily understanding of the subject that could not be understood. Metaphors also play an important role for revealing the problems clearly, and provide summarizing of the thoughts, above all (Saban, 2006; Yob, 2003; cited by Şirin, et al., 2012: 214). The metaphors have precedence for the students studying religious culture and moral knowledge for their correct perceptions and their explaining cyber-bullying to their students correctly. However, rapid development of technology and its spreading use have caused unethical use, and it could be noticed that removing all cyber-bullying actions completely is not much possible. The more knowledge RCMK teachers have on cyber-bullying, the more they play active roles on prevention. As soon as RCMK teachers play an active role on computer and internet use, they can establish more easily communication with their students.

In accordance with the findings obtained from the research, the suggestions below were possible to be offered;

- Further studies could be carried out on different concepts and for different educational programs (instructors, curriculums, religion, etc.)
- The negative metaphors pre-service teachers create on the concept of cyber-bullying should be analyzed in psychological terms, and the reasons for the negative perceptions of pre-service teachers should be investigated. Their viewpoints towards the technology should be changed positively.
- The course of “Information Ethics” and courses on precautions to be taken for cyber-bullying should be included in Theology Faculty curriculums.
- Seminars for informing the pre-service teachers related to the concept of cyber-bullying should be given to the pre-service teachers.
- Awareness on cyber-bullying could be raised through conducting such seminars in different groups of pre-service teachers (classroom teachers, science teachers, English teachers, etc.).
- Occupational attitudes of RCMK teachers who have just started their duty and who have maintaining to carry on their duties could be determined through specifying their metaphorical perceptions.
- The establishment of RCMK curriculum development and its revision will contribute to get teacher trainees informed about the use of technology.
References


