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Moral Maturity Levels of Imam Hatip High School Students: The Case of Ortakoy District

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to determine the moral maturity levels of the Imam Hatip High School students. It is also to analyze whether the level of moral maturity differs according to gender, class level and place they stayed. The study was carried out on 220 students of the İmam Hatip High School in the district of Ortakoy in Aksaray in the academic year 2016-2017. The study is a descriptive screening model. The " Moral Maturity Scale " developed by Şengün and Kaya (2007) and the " personal information form " created by the researcher were used as data collection tools in the study. Scale is a likert type measure of 66 items. The reliability of the scale is 0.89. As a result of the study, it was determined that 55 % of the Imam Hatip High School students had a moral maturity level above the average. In addition, gender, class level, and place they stayed did not make a significant difference on the level of moral maturity.

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Keywords:
Morality, Moral maturity, İmam hatip high school

1. Introduction

From the moment human beings are born, it is not only affected by the physical environment but also by the social environment. The society in which he lives does not only introduce some events to him, but also acquires a form of thought and new values through language. He teaches some rules that must be followed. These collective norms that are logical or pre-logical constitute morality (Şemin, 1979). Although moral precedence is a topic of philosophy and religion, it has recently become a subject of study of many branches of science such as politics, law, sociology, anthropology, psychology, neurology, along with the development of other sciences. This is a moral interdisciplinary concept, and each discipline has tried to define its moral concept from its own frame (Ünal, 2016). Most development theorists regard the morality as the fundamental dimension that determines adaptation to the individual's environment. Although the definitions of moral behavior and moral development of various theorists are quite different, the common thought in these definitions is that morality is regarded as a function that helps the individual to achieve collective harmony. Morality not only helps the individual to adapt, but also helps the community to maintain its existence (Çelen, 2000).

Moral development is closely related to the individual's spiritual development, mental development and personality formation (Kaya, 1993). A young's understanding of morality is not the same as a child's understanding, nor is it the same as a mature adult's moral understanding. There is an evolution from early childhood to adulthood in terms of what is right and wrong, and what it means to be a good person. Moral development is about ethical behavior, emotions, and changes in thinking over time (Gündüz, 2000).

Moral maturity refers to the sum of ethical qualities that give the richest, most necessary, and fullest meaning to the state of being competent and top in terms of moral feelings, thoughts, judgments, attitudes and behaviors. Moral maturity is the level of excellence that enables the individual to feel any immorality and deviation in his feelings, thoughts, judgments, attitudes and behaviors immediately in his conscience. It is expected that an individual with a moral dimension is a good person who is reliable, responsible, respectful, equitable, self-controlling, empathic, and a good citizen who fits all laws and rules (Şengün and Kaya, 2007). According to Topçu (2016), the most important task in moral education is to be a model. He underlines that teachers and administrators should be good models to students. Indeed, the school has more influence than the family in moral education. He emphasizes that this education should be given to young people with love, not fear.

Imam Hatip High Schools, which is one of the educational institutions in Turkey, which implements both vocational and higher education preparatory programs, is an important educational institution with increasing number of students serving in the field of religious education and training (Özüdoğru, 2013; Aslan 2013). The history of Imam Hatip High Schools are based on the Tevhid-i Tedrisat Law, which was adopted on March 3, 1924, shortly after 5 months after the declaration of the Republic on October 29, 1923. Despite years of being closed until today, it always maintains its place in the Turkish national education system. 40% of the curriculum consists of vocational lessons and 60% consists of culture and science lessons. This rate has been almost preserved from the first day until today. In addition to the lessons taught in general high schools, professional religious lessons are taught in Imam Hatip High Schools (Karateke, 2010). The inclusion of religious and secular lessons in the curriculum of Imam Hatip schools serves to integrate general education and religious education in these schools. In this way, there is presented an alternative to society that does not want children to be deprived of general education while they are in religious education, does not find religious instruction in general education adequate, or cares about the environment and religious atmosphere of Imam Hatip schools. In addition, this curriculum structure allows the students who come to these schools not only to focus on the field of religious services but also to educate them on different areas of the universities and to create alternatives to them. At the same time, it allows the students and graduates of these schools to easily adapt to the society (Aşlamacı, 2014).

The concept of moral maturity is becoming even more important in Imam Hatip High Schools which adopt a model of education and training not only for Turkey but also for all Islamic societies in terms of value given to religious lectures as well as culture and science courses. These schools are particularly important in gaining the desired behavior to the students in relation to education.

The aim of this research is to determine the level of moral maturity of the students of Imam Hatip High School and to show whether this level shows differences in terms of different variables.

In response to this general aim, the following questions were sought:

1. What is the moral maturity level of the students of Ortakoy Imam Hatip High School?

2. Do the moral maturity levels of the students of Imam Hatip High School show a meaningful difference according to gender?

3. Do the moral maturity levels of the students of Imam Hatip High School show a meaningful difference according to the grade level?

4. Do the moral maturity levels of the students of the Imam Hatip High School show a meaningful difference according to where they stayed?

2. Method

2.1. Research Model

The study is a descriptive screening model because it aims to present the present situation as it exists. Descriptive research defines a given situation as fully and carefully as possible (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz and Demirel, 2011).

2.2. Study Group

The study group of this research is composed of 220 students who are studying in Imam Hatip High School in Ortakoy district of Aksaray in the academic year of 2016-2017.

2.3. Data Collection Instrument

The " Moral Maturity Scale " developed by Şengün and Kaya (2007) and the " Personal Information Form " created by the researcher were used as data collection tools in the study. The Moral Maturity Scale consisting of 66 items is of the five-point Likert type and has a reliability value of .89. The highest score that can be taken from the scale is 330, the lowest score is 66. Scale items are graded as "yes, always", "most of the time", "occasional", "very rare", "no, never". Positive points are scored by giving 5 points to the "yes, always" option, 4 points to the "most of the time" option, 3 points to the "occasional" option, 2 points to the "very rare" option and 1 point to the "no, never" option. Scoring for negative items is done in the opposite direction. In the personal information form created by the researcher there are 3 questions about the gender, class level and the place of stayed the students.

2.4. Data Analysis

Data were analyzed with SPSS 16 packet program, frequency distributions were calculated, t-test and one-way analysis of variance techniques were used. The significance value of the data was accepted as $p < .05$.

3. Results

At the end of the research, the following conclusions were reached:

1. The level of moral maturity of Ortakoy İmam Hatip High School students is above avarage.

2. The level of moral maturity of students do not make a meaningful difference according to gender, grade level and place stayed.

Table 1. Results of moral maturity levels of students

	n	Min.	Max.	X	Sd
Moral maturity	220	219	328	289,64	21,36

As seen in Table 1, the average level of moral maturity of students is 289,64 and standard deviation is 21,36. The lowest score obtained in the Moral Maturity Scale is 219 and the highest score is 328. Based on this result, it can be said that Imam Hatip High School students have high moral maturity level above the average.

Table 2. Results of gender variability of students

Gender	n	%	X	Sd	p
Female	136	62	290,42	21,35	.481
Male	84	38	288,35	21,44	

According to Table 2, 62 % (136 students) of the students are female and 38 % (84 students) are male. The average level of moral maturity of females is 290.42, the level of standard deviation of females is 21.35. The average level of moral maturity of male students is 288.35, the level of standard deviation of male is

21.44. In line with these results, it is seen that female students have a higher level of moral maturity than male students but not a significant difference on moral maturity level of sex students. (p> .05).

Table 3. Results related to the level of class variables of students

Class Level	n	%	X	Sd	p
9th Grade	94	42,7	289,35	22,97	
10th Grade	43	19,5	286,40	19,50	
11th Grade	43	19,5	291,47	21,47	.629
12th Grade	40	18,2	291,85	19,41	

According to Table 3, 42.7 % (94 students) of the students are in the 9th grade, 19.5 % (43 students) are in the 10th grade, 19.5 % (43 students) are in the 11th grade, 18 students (40 students) are 12th grade students. The average level of moral maturity of 9th grade students is 289,35 and standard deviation is 22,97. The average level of moral maturity of 10th grade students is 286.40 and standard deviation is 19.50. The average level of moral maturity of 11th grade students is 291,47 and standard deviation is 21,47. The average level of moral maturity of 12th grade students is 291.85 and standard deviation is 19,41. The class levels of the students did not make a significant difference on the levels of moral maturity. (p> .05)

Table 4. Results related to the place the students stayed

Place	n	%	X	Sd	p
Home	192	87	290,18	21,26	.331
Hostel	28	13	285,96	22,07	.350

According to Table 4, 87 % (192 students) of the students stay in their homes and 13 % (28 students) stay in various hostels. The average level of moral maturity of the students staying at home is 290,18 and standard deviation is 21,26. The average maturity level of the students staying in the hostels is 285,96 and standard deviation is 22,07. Although the level of moral maturity of the students staying in their homes is higher than the students staying in the hostels, the difference between them is not significant. (p> .05)

4. Discussion, Conclusion and Implications

The individual is accepted to the extent that he or she adheres to the rules and values that the society accepts. It is important for the human being who can not live alone that individuals are accepted in society, they can adapt to society, and they comply with some rules adopted by society (Özkara, 2010). Being a social being, communicating with other people and developing various forms of relationship requires the existence of a great deal of moral values (Hatunoğlu, 2003). Adoption of cultural and moral values accepted by the society by individuals will enable healthy societies to exist within these values by fulfilling the duties and responsibilities expected from the society in which the individual lives. (Güngör, 2004).

Students who prefer the Imam Hatip High Schools prefer these schools with the expectation of learning religious information with their support and their families (Ateş, 2010; Karateke, 2010; Dündar, 2008). Parents who prefer Imam Hatip High Schools for their children want their children to be ethical individuals (Dündar, 2008).

When investigating the studies related to the Imam Hatip High Schools, it is seen that the subjects such as professional perception (Özen and Gülaçtı, 2006), perception of professional competence (Vural, 2016), professional interest (Aslan, 2013), university determination (Dikbayır and Bölükbaşı, 2016), music education (Sevinç, 2017), listening skills (Gürses, 2009), peer relations, human values and subjective well-being (Yılmaz, 2016), Allah almighty (Taluk, 2014), Arabic self-efficacy (Yaman, 2016), Parental attitudes and self-checks (Buyuk, 2016), violence trends (Kanal, 2008), religious beliefs and attitudes (Özüdoğru, 2003), Audit focus (Ağır, 1994) and responsibility (Kaya, 2000) as well as the studies about the historical process of the schools are also studied.

When we look at domestic studies on moral maturity, there are many studies that investigate the relation with other concepts and test the effect of some education and programs on moral maturity. Moral maturity is associated with concepts such as quality of life and hopefulness (Ünal, 2016), tolerance tendencies (Yeşilkayalı, 2014), Social attitude (Yıldırım, 2014), Sensitivity state (Seyrek, 2014), Democratic attitude (Kardaş, 2013), Intercultural tolerance (Bakioğlu, 2013), Competence beliefs (Yüksel, 2012), General self-efficacy levels (Adıgüzel, 2017), Humor styles and violent tendencies (Bayraktaroğlu, 2016), Narcissistic personality traits (Özyer, 2015), Dunning-Kruger effect (Turğut, 2015), Religional Belief (Kaya and Aydın, 2011), Parent attitudes (Şengün, 2013), Human values (Sarıçam et al., 2014), Subjective well-being (Çelebi and Sezgin, 2015), prayer (Kımter, 2016), Parental occupation and economic level (Şengün, 2015), Religiosity tendencies (Aktaş ve Kartopu, 2016), Feeling bullying trends (Kakcı, 2009), effect of Kelam lesson (Bulut, 2014). The moral maturity levels of high school students (Şengün, 2008) and prospective teachers (Çekin, 2013) were examined according to some variables. The effects on moral maturity of the character education programs with justice and respect (Demir, 2008), responsibility and helpfulness (Aydın, 2008) were investigated.

In studies carried out abroad, the concept of moral maturity was generally studied on the leaders in business life (Abu Bakar, Mujtaba and Medjedel, 2015), nurses (Sumner, 2010), adolescents (Hardy et al., 2012) and marketers (Falkendberg, 2010). In addition, the relationship between the environment as a predictor of undesired behaviors (Dokter, 2011) has been examined. The study of the effects of political disputes (Ferguson and Cairs, 2002) and the media ethics course (Auger and Gee, 2016) on moral maturity were examined.

As a result, in our study to determine the moral maturity level of the students of Imam Hatip High School, the students had high moral maturity level. It was found that the moral maturity level did not show any significant difference according to gender, class level and place they stayed.

Looking at the studies supporting the research result; In a study conducted by Şengün (2008), it was found that the moral maturity level of the imam hatip high school students was higher than the other high school students. In a study conducted by Kaya and Aydın (2011), it was found that the moral maturity level of the theology faculty students was higher than the students attending the other faculties. In the study conducted by Çekin (2013), it was determined that the moral maturity level of the teacher candidates in the department of religious culture and ethics reached the first place. In this context, it can be said that the results obtained from our studies have similarities with the results of other studies. As a result of the research, it is seen that the moral maturity levels of the students do not have any relation with gender. In this context, similar results were achieved in the study of Çekin (2013). In the study, it was determined that the gender variable did not constitute a significant difference on the moral maturity level of the prospective teachers.

Because the research sample is made up of students of a religious education institution, discussion of moral maturity and religion, religious education and religiosity will be in place. Süslü (2006) states that religion has a strong acceptance of the fact that religion has a decisive influence on morality in the theoretical sense of its study of relationship with morality. More than half of the participants emphasized that there must be a relationship between religiosity and ethics. Furthermore, a positive relationship between religious belief and moral maturity was found in Kaya and Aydın (2011) study. In this context, religious and moral education is thought to increase the level of moral maturity of individuals. According to Topçu, who is concerned with the relationship between morality and religion, the aim of morality, like religion, is to clear the human soul and raise it to infinity. For example, the work of religion in society is to be a source of

strength for souls. However, it does not provide people with some information. In addition, religious knowledge teaches ways of gaining mental strength. These are not house descriptions, but are order and value server information for a man's inner life. Thus, according to Topçu, religion is not a source of information for people but a source of strength (Cihan, 2016).

In this context Kohlberg, a moral development theorist, states that as a different view, the development of religion and morality is quite distinct and should not be confused with one another. We can see that Kohlberg's does not particularly associate a person's moral judgment with religion, and does not believe that a religion is superior to another in the course of moral development. On the other hand, contrary to religious-based moral systems, in which what is good or bad is determined by the religious authority, Kohlberg argues that man can discover the universal "good" only by his own cynicism. As can be clearly seen from these views, Kohlberg has built a sense of ethical education based on non-religious grounds. Therefore, it should be noted that Kohlberg's understanding of moral education does not coincide with religious-based moral understandings (Çinemre, 2013).

If suggestions are made in the direction of the research findings, moral education should be given practically not only in the İmam Hatip Schools but also in all schools. The family and school should work together on the moral development of children. Importantly, adults should be a good role model for children.

According to Topçu (2016), the school should uncover and sustain the strongest parts of people. Only schools with this understanding can produce qualified individuals in the fields of science, art and philosophy. In this context, Topçu has made some suggestions for the prevention of moral education problems and for the development of the moral principles required in national life, school and family. These suggestions are as follows:

1. Broadcasting on a neutral and full history culture based on science principles and taking place widely in schools.

2. Giving children, press, radio, stage and schools a deep inner education that depends on the subjects of the nation, religion, art and morality from the first years of school.

3. National education should be all cultural institutions that are not contrary to the language and traditions of a nation.

4. The necessity of a nation scene and a nation's university.

5. Creating an idealistic aesthetic case in the society.

6. The inner eucation combined with art is the real ethics of young people and women.

7. The presence of great people who are devoted to the sense of community, responsibility and sacrifice, who live far from reputation and wealth, and to be introduced to younger generations.

8. More idealistic training schools than technical schools.

9. Take out the benefit from the life.

10. Ethical education should be based on sound foundations, be at the desired level, and be connected to an authority.

Except those; Ethics lessons should be given to the students in elementary school, secondary school and high school. Education of girls and boys should be separated (Topçu, 2016).

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