

Religious and Cultural Change In Three Generations*

Translated
Article
Çeviri

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This study is a field research that aims to investigate the formation of the differences in attitudes assumed by generations towards religious and cultural values in today's changing socio-cultural environment. The population of the study consists of individuals aged over 18, who are originally from Giresun and who are still dwelling in the province. This research is based on data obtained between January and June 2008 by "easily accessible situation sampling". A total of 62 interviews and 538 questionnaires were conducted. In this respect, qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques were used in conjunction within this study. We believe that the historical process the Province of Giresun has undergone, the social structure within the province and the social transformation it has experienced are similar, in many ways, to the modernization process and dynamics of Turkey. Therefore, we believe that this study will not only show the regional trend for differentiation of values between generations, but it will also enable those concerned to make comments and evaluations regarding this matter for Turkey in general.

Keywords: Sociology of Religion, Religion, Values, Social Change, Giresun, Generation.

Abstract

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Üç Nesilde Dinî ve Kültürel Değişim

Bu çalışma, günümüzün değişen sosyokültürel ortamında, nesiller arasında dinî ve kültürel değerlerde nasıl bir tutum farklılığının ortaya çıktığını araştırmaya yönelik yapılan bir saha araştırmadır. Araştırmanın evrenini, Giresun il merkezinde ikamet edip, doğma-büyüme Giresunlu olan 18 yaş üstü bireyler oluşturmaktadır. Bu araştırma, 2008 yılı Ocak-Haziran ayları arasında evrenden, “kolay ulaşılabilir durum örnekleme” yöntemiyle elde edilen bilgi ve verilere dayanmaktadır. Toplamda 62 mülakat ve 538 anket uygulaması yapılmıştır. Bu yönüyle çalışmada nitel ve nicel veri toplama teknikleri birlikte kullanılmıştır. Giresun ilinin geçirdiği tarihsel sürecin, sahip olduğu toplumsal yapının ve yaşadığı sosyal değişimin, Türkiye’nin modernleşme süreci ve dinamikleriyle birçok açıdan benzerlik gösterdiğini düşünmekteyiz. Dolayısıyla bu araştırmanın, nesiller arasındaki değer farklılaşmasına yönelik bölgesel bir yönelimi göstereceği düşüncesinin ötesinde, Türkiye geneline yönelik de birtakım yorumlar ve değerlendirmeler yapmaya da imkân vereceğini düşünmekteyiz.

Özet

Anahtar Kelimeler: Din Sosyolojisi, Din, Değerler, Sosyal Değişme, Giresun, Nesil.

Introduction

In general, the discussions about “religious and cultural life”, “religious and cultural values”, the transformations of these and how these transformations are manifested in generations are of great interest to academicians, who continue to produce many works in this field.¹

As a science that claims to systematically examine the facts and events that occur within a society, social institutions, organizations, social structures, culture and transformation with scientific methods, sociology is interested in religious and cultural values and religious and cultural life emerging based on these factors. Although it is generally accepted that sociological literature on the cultural forms of religious and cultural values and their effects on social structure and transformation is not at a satisfactory level, it could be said that recent sociological studies have shown an increasing interest in religious, moral and general social values and life. This article is also an attempt to assess attitudes and behaviours regarding religious and cultural values of three generations in Giresun, which highly represents Turkey in general.

Today, people live in an environment in which the despondency rooted in the rapid transformation, which began with the industrial revolution and proliferated to every area of human life, has mutated into a radical and deep discomfort. This rapid transformation can be seen in each area of human life, and it has caused fundamental changes in social institutions; how communities are organized, and the cultural structure and these changes have

¹ Wade Clark Roof, “Generations and Religion”, *The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Religion (Oxford Handbooks in Religion and Theology)*, ed. Peter Clarke (Oxford University Press, 2009), 616-634.

transformations, in turn, have altered the value systems of the relevant societies.² This transformation emerging through the historical experiences of Europe and demonstrating itself as a unique form of social understanding, life and organization style, has deeply affected and influenced nearly all existing structures and institutions on earth.³

These rapid and deep-rooted transformations have generally occurred in the latest century, and affected many institutions in the social structure. To understand and resolve the problems emerged due to these changes, many new areas were established in addition to the endeavours undertaken by the existing fields of science. The field of sociology, which has emerged as a result of such process, has been accepted within the field of social sciences as “a child of the crises” and has made an intense effort to understand and explain the process that has caused its birth. For this reason, many sociologists, including the founders of the field, have tried to determine the underlying causes that have overtaken societies and made significant references to the “values” that guide and determine people’s attitudes and behaviours.⁴ For this reason, the subject of values has always been of great interest to sociologists. However, it has only recently become a field of studies that the Western societies pay a great deal of interest to.⁵

Value is a concept that is used to define abstract or concrete principles, beliefs or entities that guide people in shaping the meaning of life and daily life.⁶ In this respect, values are what we refer to while judging our behaviours and choosing our purposes in life. They are socially shared standards that tell us what is right and what is wrong in determining our goals and behaviours. In other words, values are ideals and beliefs considered important by a society or a social group.⁷ According to this definition, value is a phenomenon that emerges in the context of the connection of humans, which are beings that need, desire and aspire, with objects.⁸

The study of values is a common area of interest for a variety of disciplines. Therefore, many disciplines have put forward different definitions and ideas about them. In anthropology, particularly in the evaluations by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, values are described as the elements that answer the basic questions of existence and enable people to make sense of their lives.⁹ In philosophy, the matter of the quality and characteristics of values, the hierarchy between values and the criticism of values are at the forefront, while

² Barlas Tolan, *Sosyoloji* (Ankara: Gazi Kitabevi, 2005), 281.

³ Anthony Giddens, *Modernliğin Sonuçları*, translated by Ersin Kuşdil (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 1994); Charles Taylor, *Modernliğin Sıkıntıları*, translated by Uğur Canbilen (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 1995); Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, *Modernleşme: Başkaldırı ve Değişim*, translated by Ufuk Coşkun (Ankara: Doğu Batı Yayınları, 2007).

⁴ Tolan, *Sosyoloji*, 281, 282.

⁵ David R Karp, “Values Theory and Research”, *Encyclopedia of Sociology*, Second Edition, ed. Edgar F. Borgatta, Rhonda J. V. Montgomery (New York: Macmillan, 2000), 5/3224.

⁶ Mehmet Ali Kirman, *Din Sosyolojisi Terimleri Sözlüğü* (İstanbul: Rağbet Yayınları, 2004), 57.

⁷ Gönc Şavran, “Toplum, Bilim ve Yöntem”, *Sosyolojiye Giriş*, ed. Nadir Suğur (Eskişehir: Anadolu Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2009), 8.

⁸ İsmail Killoğlu, “Değer”, *Sosyal Bilimler Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Risale Yayınları, 1990), 1: 305.

⁹ Karp, “Values Theory and Research”, 5/3212.

in sociology, the definition of values, how these values emerge, their interaction with the social phenomena, institutions and processes, their types, their importance in social life, and their functions and effects are examined.¹⁰ For this reason, Smith and Schwartz have expressed the characteristics of value that contain faith and purpose, include the entirety of life within its scope, and are passed down from generation to generation.¹¹ Fichter, on the other hand, argues that values are used as ready-made tools for judging the social value of individuals and partnerships, that they guide people in choosing and realizing their social roles, and that they are tools of social control and oppression. He also points out that values are also used as tools of solidarity.¹²

Particularly after the 1960s, there has been a surge in studies examining the subject of social values, and scholars such as Rokeach, Schwartz, Bilsky, Inglehart, Flanagan, Allport, Vernon, Williams, Kluckhohn, Braithwaite, and Law have asked questions regarding values, which are defined as “the criteria they use to evaluate people and events, to choose and justify their actions”, and attempted to answer them. The questions asked by these scholars include: What kind of values move people? Which ones take priority? How do values differ from between societies and cultures? Do values motivate behaviour? How does people’s commitment to values become stronger and weaker? How do the values of societies change? How do values affect the conflicts between people, societies and cultures? How do individuals’ value priorities affect their social behaviour? How do individuals’ common position (education, age, gender, profession and so on) and shared experience affect their value priorities? Do individuals’ unique experiences (traumas, intra-family relations, immigration, and so on) change their value priorities? How do individuals’ value priorities affect their behaviour and preferences? How do individuals’ value priorities affect their political, religious, ideological attitudes and behaviours? What are the international and cross-cultural differences in value priorities and how can the related causes and problems be defined?¹³

According to Schwartz, who adopts the approach of Rokeach, Williams and Kluckhohn that is centred on the concept of value on understanding human behaviour, values are the criteria that people use to evaluate other people and events, including themselves, and to select and legitimize their actions. Schwartz evaluates the importance of values around the following questions: How do individuals’ value priorities affect their social behaviour? How do individuals’ common position (education, age, gender, profession, and so on) and shared experience affect their value priorities? Do individuals’ unique experiences (traumas, intra-family relations, immigration, and so on) change

¹⁰ İsmail Doğan, *Sosyoloji, Kavramlar ve Sorunlar*, 6th edition (Ankara: Pegem Akademi Yayıncılık, 2004), 236; Ertan Özensel, “Sosyolojik Bir Olgu Olarak Değer”, *Değerler Eğitimi Dergisi* 1/3 (2003), 229.

¹¹ Karp, “Values Theory and Research”, 5/3213.

¹² Joseph Fichter, *Sosyoloji Nedir?*, translated by Nilgün Çelebi (Ankara: Atilla Kitabevi, 1996), 150, 151.

¹³ Karp, “Values Theory and Research”, 5/3224; Ronald Inglehart, *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies* (Princeton University Press, 1997); Özensel, “Sosyolojik Bir Olgu Olarak Değer”, 222-223.

their value priorities? How do individuals' value priorities affect their behaviour and preferences? How do individuals' value priorities affect their political, religious, ideological attitudes and behaviours? What are the international and cross-cultural differences in value priorities and how can the related causes and problems be defined?¹⁴

Although the concept of value has been an area of interest for sociologists for many years, influence of the positivist mindset has caused the concept to be excluded from the scope of sociological studies, as it has expressed only the individual reality and possessed a subjective character. The understanding provided by the "scientific" positivist perspective argues that the values do not have an objective truth intrinsic to them and that they can only be addressed with a subjective approach has caused sociologists to avoid studies focused on values for a long time.¹⁵

Subject and Problem

We have observed that the researchers studying values and religious life generally shaped their understanding around the following questions: What kinds of values move people? Which ones take priority? How do values differ from between societies and cultures? Do values motivate behaviour? How does people's commitment to values become stronger and weaker? How do the values of societies change? How do values affect the conflicts between people, societies and cultures? What are the contact points of religion with society? What are the roles and functions of religion in social life? What are the effects of social changes on perspectives regarding religion?¹⁶

All nations and societies strive to transfer the values that constitute their own identity to the next generation. However, it is almost impossible to say that the values of societies can be transferred from generation to generation without any change. Over time, each society experiences change or differentiation in the value orientations inherent to them to varying degrees. Of course, this situation is also valid for Turkish society. Therefore, trying to understand what sorts of change occur between generations of the Turkish society in religious and cultural values in the light provided by empirical data is of critical importance in understanding the transformation dynamics within the structure of the Turkish society.

Turkish society experienced a process of rapid transformation with the Edict of 1856 and the following Tanzimat reforms, and this situation had significant effects on the religious and cultural values of the society. However, the impact of this rapid change, which occurred between Tanzimat and the present day, has not been a subject of academic studies, especially within the context of generations, to the extent that it deserves. Therefore, the subject of

¹⁴ Milton Rokeach, *The Nature of Human Values* (Free Press, 1973); Özensel, "Sosyolojik Bir Olgu Olarak Değer", 223.

¹⁵ Doğan Özlem, "Açış Konuşması", *Bilgi ve Değer*, ed. Şahabettin Yalçın (Ankara: Vadi Yayınları, 2002); Özensel, "Sosyolojik Bir Olgu Olarak Değer", 218, 219.

¹⁶ Niyazi Akyüz & İhsan Çapçioğlu (ed.), *Ana Başlıklarıyla Din Sosyolojisi*, 4th edition (Ankara: Gündüz Eğitim ve Yayıncılık, 2012), 41.

this research is the attitudes and behaviours of three generations (grandmother/grandfather-son/daughter-grandchild) living in the city centre of Giresun towards religious and cultural life and relevant values. The population of the research consists of individuals from Giresun over the age of 18, who live in the city centre. Based on information and data obtained from the universe between January and June 2008, this research has applied the “easily accessible situation sampling”. A total of 62 interviews and 538 questionnaires were conducted. In this respect, qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques were both used. In 2010, the research was accepted as a doctoral dissertation by the Institute of Social Sciences of Marmara University with the title “Three Generations as Carrier of Religious and Cultural Values (The Case of Giresun)”.¹⁷ A certain part of this thesis was published as a book with the title *Three Generations and Three Lives (Religious and Cultural Change)*.¹⁸ This article has been prepared based on the data presented by the thesis on the variable of generations. The tables regarding variables such as gender, education, economies, and marital status present in the thesis, were not included by this article. Additionally, the data related to the variable of generations were only included as a percentage and the relevant P (Probability) values were provided in parentheses.¹⁹

This study, which seeks to answer the basic question of “Is there a difference in the attitudes and behaviours of the three generations living in Giresun towards religious-cultural values and life?”, was attempted to address matters such as preferences regarding the selection of spouses; differences in marriage styles and perspectives on family; gender equality in the occupational life; education of girls; birth control; gender equality in inheritance; the differences in the attitudes and behaviours regarding the friendship between young boys and girls (flirtation) and pre-marital sex; differences in the perspectives regarding the effects of television and technological means on religious and cultural values, social values, national values and identity; faith in Allah, “subjective perception of religiosity” and the frequency of fulfilling religious obligations, and the frequency of engaging in religious prohibitions such as drinking of alcohol or usage of blasphemous words.

Method

In determining the conceptual framework of the research and evaluating the data, the general principles of the structural-functionalist approach, one of the dominant paradigms of sociology, were taken into consideration and it was

¹⁷ Mustafa Bakırcı, *Dini ve Kültürel Değerlerin Taşıyıcısı Olarak Üç Nesil (Giresun Örneği)* (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Doctoral Thesis, 2010).

¹⁸ Mustafa Bakırcı, *Üç Nesil Üç Hayat (Dini ve Kültürel Değişim)* (İstanbul: Bir Yayıncılık, 2019).

¹⁹ P (Probability) value is the value that is used to determine the presence of statistical significance and the level of evidence of the existing difference if any. Therefore, the P-values were also provided under the statistical analysis that was included in the thesis, which has served as the source of this article. This P-value, which helps us to understand whether there is a significant difference as a result of the relevant hypothesis test, was accepted as “0.05”.

predicted that religious-cultural values and life are in a mutual relationship with other social structural elements.

Variables other than generation are not included in this article. However, the information regarding the participants' gender, education, marital and economic status, business and professional life, and political-intellectual views were also included as a percentage to provide the readers broader knowledge about the people participated in the research. The six-point age classification of Turkish Statistical Institute was used in determining the age ranges of generations. Accordingly, the first generation in the study consists of individuals aged 55 and over, the second generation consists of those between the ages of 35-54, and the third generation consists of those between the ages of 18-34. Within the scope of the study, 538 questionnaires were applied and 62 people were interviewed. Of the 538 individuals who answered the questionnaires, 30.7% belong to first-generation, while 38.3% to the second, and 31% to the third. Meanwhile, 29% of the interviewed individuals belong to the first generation, 32.3% to the second, and 38.7% to the third. 49.4% of the questionnaire participants are men and 50.6% are women. 54.8% of the interviewees are men and 45.2% are women. 20.8% of the questionnaire respondents are single, 69.8% are married, 8.8% are widows, and 0.6% individuals who are living separately from their spouses but are not divorced. For the first generation, the percentage of married is 74.5%, while the percentage of widows is 23.6%. For the second generation, 92.9% are married and 3.9% are widows. The rate of single participants in the third generation is 63%, and the rate of those who are married is 36.4%. There are no widowed participants in the third generation. 32.3% of the interviewees are single, 53.2% are married, and 14.5% are widows. There are no single individuals in the first generation. The rate of married people in the first generation is 61.1% and the rate of widows is 38.9%. The rate of singles in the second generation is 15%, the rate of married people is 75%, and the rate of widows is 10%. In the third generation, the rate of single individuals is 70.8%; while the rate of those who are married is 29.2%. There are no widows in this group. 29.4% of the men who participated in the interviews are single, 58.8% are married and 11.8% are widows. The proportion of single women is 35.7%, while the rate of married women is 46.4%, and the rate of widowed women is 17.9%. 2.7% rate of widows are among men, and this rate is 14.8% among women. 29.2% of the questionnaire respondents are housewives, 9.3% are students, 8.7% are workers, 8% are teachers, 7.6% are tradesmen, 6.7% are civil servants, and 5.2% are farmers.

Meanwhile, the interviewees included the self-employed (17.7%), housewives (16.1%), students (12.9%), and tradesmen (14.5%). It was determined that 27.3% of the 479 people who answered the questionnaire have a monthly income of more than 1.000 TL and 34% have an income between 500-1.000 TL. 43.5% of the interviewees are people with a monthly income of more than 1.000 TL. The rate of those whose monthly income is between 500-1,000 TL is 33.9%.

500 participants answered the question of "How would you describe yourself in terms of political thought?", which can be addressed within a

political or ideological framework. Among these people, the rate of those who define themselves as “conservative” is 17.4%, the rate of those who define themselves as “nationalist” is 31.8%, the rate of those who define themselves as “Islamist” is 25.2%, the rate of those who define themselves as “social democrats” is 18.6%, and the rate of those who say they are “liberals” is 2%. The ratio of those who are not included above is 5%. We have observed that, in the first generation, the rate “conservatives” is 21%, the rate of “nationalists” is 28%, the rate of “Islamists” is 30%, the rate of “social democrats” is 14% and the rate of “liberals” is 0.6%. In the second generation, the rate of “conservatives” is 17.1%, the rate of “nationalists” is 32.6%, the rate of “Islamists” is 24.4%, the rate of “social democrats” is 19.7% and the rate of “liberals” is 2.1%. In the third generation, the rate of “conservatives” is 18%, the rate of “nationalists” is 34.7%, the rate of “Islamists” is 20.7%, the rate of “social democrats” is 18% and the rate of “liberals” is 3.3%.

Religious-Cultural Values and Life in Three Generations

In this section, the following matters will be addressed within the context of generations: the selection of spouses and the form of marriage, family structure, women’s rights and freedoms (business and professional life, inheritance sharing, flirtation, sexuality and birth control), intergenerational relationships, media and technology, social values, the protection of the Turkish language, religious beliefs, religiosity, and worship and religious prohibitions.

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1. Generational Attitudes Towards the Selection of Spouses

The choices of generations in choosing spouses are discussed under the subheadings of wealth, beauty (handsomeness), morality, piety, profession and lineage. Regarding the issue of the selection of a spouse, only one question was included in the interview form, while five questions were included in the questionnaire form. In addition to the questionnaire questions that examine respondent’s preferences regarding their spouses’ wealth, beauty (handsomeness), morality, piety, profession and lineage, the question of “What qualities do you believe that a person to be married should have?” was included to understand the matter fully.

It could be said that, in Turkish society, there is a general trend that women tend to prefer men with higher income while selecting spouses. This is a matter that both the bride-to-be and her family take into account. Just as the bride-to-be does not want to have any financial difficulties in her husband’s house, the family of the girl also does not want their daughter to suffer from financial problems. Half of the participants stated that it is important for the person to be married to be rich and wealthy. Although there is no distinct attitude difference between generations towards the desire regarding the person to be married being rich and wealthy, and the importance given to this matter by the first generation is higher than the second and third generations. The ratio of importance attributed to this is 47.3% in the third generation, which increases to 48.3% in the second generation, and 55.5% in the first

generation ($P = 0.260$). Based on the data obtained from the interviews, it was determined that the first generation had a greater belief that the economic situation in marriage is important. Since the individuals of the first generation settled in the centre of Giresun and spent a lot of effort to establish themselves there, their preference for the spouse-to-be having a good financial status is understandable. Half of the participants believe that beauty or handsomeness is significant in the selection of spouses. Although there is no remarkable attitude difference between generations in regards to spouse-to-be being beautiful or handsome, it was seen that the degree of importance increased from the first generation to the third generation. This rate was 45.7% in the first generation, and it increased to 52% in the second generation and 55.1% in the third generation ($P = 0.222$). Almost all participants stated that their spouse-to-be should have good morals and nature. There is no difference in attitudes between generations in regards to this issue ($P = 0.355$). In the interviews, good morality and character were mentioned as the most important features that should be sought in the spouse-to-be. These characteristics were emphasized by the members of all generations. However, the members of the first and second generations have stated that the youngsters generally place greater emphasis on physical beauty in the marriages and do not pay sufficient attention to good morality and character. According to their opinion, people can understand how important a good temperament is only after marriage, during the later stages of their lives. 91.6% of the participants have stated that it is important for the person to be married to be religious. 93.9% of the first generation found it "important" for the spouse-to-be to be religious. This rate is 95.6% in the second generation, and 84.3% in the third generation ($P = 0.000$). Therefore, the preference for "religiosity" shows a remarkable decrease in the third generation. This situation can be considered as paying less attention to the references that can be evaluated within the framework of "religiosity" in the third generation. 86.4% of the participants stated that the spouse-to-be should have a profession. There were no significant differences between the generations in terms of the importance given to the spouse-to-be having a profession. While the first and second generations had a rate of 87% regarding the importance placed on this matter, this rate showed a slight decrease in the third generation to 84.5% ($P=0,712$).

72.6% of the questionnaire participants have stated that the spouse-to-be should have a good lineage, while 27.4% stated that the lineage does not matter. There were no significant differences between attitudes of the generations in terms of the importance given to the spouse-to-be having a good lineage. However, it is noteworthy that the rate of importance placed on this matter by the first generation, which was 69.3%, increased to 76% in the second generation and decreased to 71.7% in the third generation ($P=0.346$). This indicates that individuals still put great importance on the family and lineage of the spouse-to-be, which they consider to be a matter that should be researched beforehand, and that this attitude is being transferred to the new generations. In the interviews, it was observed that the first and second generations put emphasis on the importance of family and lineage, and the members of those generations have expressed that having a bride from a "bad"

family would harm the family. However, the interviews with the third generation did not support the 71.7% rate that is in favour of having a good family and lineage. It was noted that the third generation did not put great importance on the matter of lineage and family in their selection of spouses.

2. The Marriage, Wedding Ceremony and Wedding Reception Forms of the Generations

In every society, marriage is performed by obeying the rules and patterns of the culture. Forms of marriage tend to change based on the cultural codes and socio-cultural conditions that change over time. This phenomenon of change can be observed clearly between the attitudes of generations. The matter that will be addressed in this section is whether there is a difference in the forms of marriage between generations in Giresun.

49.8% of the answers given by the married participants regarding the marriage methods are for the option “by meeting and mutual agreement and the approval of our family” and 42.1% for the option “by arrangement”. While the rate of participants stated that they got married by eloping/kidnapping is 6.1%, this rate is 1.4% among those stated that they got married despite the opposition of their family. There is a significant difference between generations in terms of marriage method ($P = 0.000$). The proportion of those who have marked the arranged marriage option is 58.4% in the first generation, while this is 36.9% in the second generation, and 18.8% in the third generation. There is a remarkable decrease in arranged marriages from the first generation to the third generation. The rate of marriages with the consent of the individuals and their families is 32.3% in the first generation, 57.1% in the second generation and 69.6% in the third generation. Accordingly, the rate of marriages based on personal preferences shows a significant increase from the first generation to the second generation. The difference between the first generation and the second generation is quite remarkable. Although the marriages performed by eloping/kidnaping do not have a high percentage rate, their number has decreased over the generations.

Additionally, although the rate of individuals who have gotten married despite the opposition of their families is quite low, the numbers of such marriages have increased over the generations.

The concept of “Arranged marriage” does not mean that two people who are arranged to be married do so without ever seeing one other. This method of marriage can be seen throughout many regions of Turkey and it describes a style of marriage that is initiated by older family members or other members of the family believing two young individuals suitable for each other for marriage. This is also the case for Giresun. The decision is left to the people that are arranged for marriage, even after a consensus is reached by the members of the family that young individuals in question are suitable for each other. Based on interviews, it was understood that there is no pressure from families on young people, and especially girls, for marriage.

Regarding the marriage methods in the Turkish society, in addition to the previously existing typologies of “arrangement method” and “meeting method”,

a new typology titled “softened arrangement method” has emerged, which acts as an intermediate between the aforementioned typologies.²⁰ Although the arrangement method has largely been abandoned by the Turkish society and the method of selection of spouses by meeting has become widespread, the influence of families regarding the selection of a spouse and marriages continue. Hence, the typology of “softened arrangement” marriage has emerged. This situation correlates with the findings of this study regarding the choice of spouse and marriage methods in Giresun.

In the survey data, it has been observed that the marriages defined as arranged marriages, in which the bride-to-be is recommended to the groom-to-be by the family members or the immediate environment, has decreased from the first generation to the third generation. Instead, marriages that are based on meeting and mutual agreement have become widespread. In the interviews, it was seen that the vast majority of the first generation got married by this method. None of the participants has stated that they were only allowed to see their spouses after the wedding or that their families decided their marriages without their approval. However, in the interviews, a small number of women from the first generation stated that they saw their husband only after the engagement. It is understood that, in such marriages, the man has seen and known the bride before the marriage. In the interviews, it was understood that arranged marriage was common among second generation. Even among those who are university graduates and teachers, there have been some expressions such as “a friend of mine or a fellow teacher recommended my spouse, they saw us fit for each other”. Many of those who have participated in the interviews have stated that perceptions of suitability by one’s environment or friends and family are worth considering, as these are usually people with a certain amount of experience. This line of thought can be summarized as “approval of one’s environment”. In the interviews, many people shared their experiences of the negative consequences of marriages taking place despite the opposition of their families.

The attitudes of those who have answered the questionnaire as to whether or not they interfere with the marriage preferences of their children were also measured. In examining whether or not the family elders should interfere in the marriage preferences of their children, it was observed that 57.6% of the first generation believed that they should not, while the same rate is 41.3% in the second generation and 60.2% in the third ($P=0,000$). The rates of the first and third generations are close. The rate in the third generation can be explained by the younger generation’s “libertarian” attitude in the preferences regarding marriage, as is the case in many other issues. The rate of child marriage in the first generation is 88.9%. This rate is 24.4% in the second generation. Therefore, the experience of the first generation in having married children is quite high.

Many interviewees have expressed regret over the fact that they have interfered with the marriage preferences of their children. This regret has been

²⁰ İhsan Sezal, “Toplum ve Aile”, *Sosyolojiye Giriş*, ed. İhsan Sezal (Ankara: Martı Yayınevi, 2003), 150, 151.

demonstrated through statements such as “I wouldn’t have interfered if I knew what I know now. I don’t care what anyone does. They are better off finding their spouses and making their own decisions. Because, if it turns out well, it is their achievement and if it turns out bad, it is our fault”. A certain number of those who have interfered their children’s marriages have made statements, in regards to their preferences and their reasons for interfering, such as “We believed that if the spouse is a person we knew, they would take care of us. It did not turn out as we had expected”.

115 of the respondents who answered the questionnaire did not answer the questions regarding their method of marriage. This can be explained mostly by the fact that 111 of the participants are single. It was observed that most of the married participants had both official and religious marriages. Many participants who only marked the “official marriage” option also had a religious ceremony. While checking the questionnaires in the presence of the participants, we asked those who had only marked the “official ceremony” whether they had a religious ceremony and they answered that they had a religious ceremony as well. Therefore, it is understood that most of those who mark this option simply did not notice the option of “we had both official and religious ceremonies” following the “official ceremony” option or they found it sufficient just to mark this option. In the interviews, it was seen that the people living in Giresun showed sensitivity towards both official and religious marriages. There is no significant difference between generations in terms of marriage method.

Regarding the type of wedding receptions, 53.8% of the people who participated in the questionnaire have stated their reception was only “musical”, 19.7% stated that it was “without music or alcohol”, 14% “with both music and alcohol”, and 5.2% with “religious ceremonies”. When the rate of having weddings with both music and alcohol is examined over generations, it is seen that the rate of those who marked the “both music and alcohol” option is 15.8% in the first generation, 10.2% in the second generation, and 20.9% in the third generation ($P = 0.024$). The high rate in the first and third generations is remarkable. Looking at the methods of holding wedding receptions by the generations of the study, 63.6% of the first generation preferred a musical wedding ceremony for their children’s wedding ceremonies, and this rate dropped to 14.7% in the second generation ($P = 0.000$). There is also a significant decrease from the first generation to the second generation in the wedding option “with both music and alcohol”. In the interviews, people showed a tendency towards having music in their wedding ceremonies and used expressions such as “you cry at funerals and dance at the weddings”. However, it was observed that the general attitude towards drinking alcohol at weddings was negative. It is understood that the reason for this negative attitude towards alcoholic drinks was related to fights or arguments that take place at weddings where there is alcohol rather than religious reasons. Additionally, the replacement of traditional village-type wedding receptions with wedding receptions that are performed in halls leads to the decrease of alcohol consumption in weddings.

3. Family Structure, Relationships between Men and Women, Women's Rights and Freedoms

The matters of family structure, the relationship between genders, the examination of attitudes towards women's rights and freedoms are discussed within six headings. It was first attempted to establish a general framework regarding the family structure in Giresun. Afterwards, attitudes towards women's participation in business and professional lives, which is considered one of the most important indicators of modern life, and them having the same rights and equal opportunities as men in this regard were examined. The third heading is the attitude towards gender equality in inheritance. The fourth heading is in relation to flirtation between young girls and boys, and the fifth heading is about the attitudes towards premarital or extramarital sexual intercourse. And finally, the sixth heading is related to birth control.

3.1. Family structure

The institution of the family is one of the primary research areas of sociology. This is because each individual belongs to a family and this affiliation creates a pattern of relationships based on blood ties. Family is a basic social unit consisting of individuals who have ties between each other by consanguinity, marriage and legal relationships and who usually dwell in the same house and it is within this unit the sexual, psychological, social, cultural and economic needs of the individuals are met and social harmony and participation are ensured and regulated.²¹ In the interviews, the participants emphasized that the family is very important and responsible for the upbringing of the children. It can be said that society, in general, has a very strong attitude towards the sanctity, protection and maintenance of the institution of marriage.

One of the issues discussed often within the topic of the family structure is the position of women in the family. Contrary to the prior predictions, it was noted that the position of the women in the family strengthened as their age increased. It was noted that, with the death of the family elders, the children reaching adulthood, and their spouses reaching their middle ages, the role and effectiveness of the woman in the family increases. The data obtained based on the interviews confirm that the preferences of women in many subjects, particularly the matter of purchasing houses and the marriage of the children, are effective in the relevant decisions, and that their influence within the family increases after they reach the status of being middle-aged. However, this phenomenon should not be construed as women having a desire towards the activities of being "visible" and "perceptible". According to the data obtained based on the interviews, it was determined that the women want their spouses to have "influence" within their environment and they tend to avoid any actions that might contradict this issue, and that they do not want to cause the emergence of a typology which cannot "command" their spouses and children.

²¹ Kirman, *Din Sosyolojisi Terimleri Sözlüğü*, 16.

In this case, it could be said that women actively participate in familial matters, but they tend to adopt an attitude that does not harm their spouse's quality of being "the head of the family".

Considering the family structure in Giresun, one of the issues that should be examined is the practices about the upbringing. It was expressed in the study that the third generation's age was determined to be between 18 and 34. However, the age period for male children between 15 and 20, which can also be characterized as the "adolescence period", was emphasized in the study, and it was attempted to determine the attitudes and behaviours regarding the upbringing of male children. The first thing that drew attention in our observations of this age group is that male children are allowed "extreme freedom" during their upbringing. Many people have evaluated the excesses of men during the adolescence period with expressions such as "such things happen in youth; youngsters do such things". It can be said that such an attitude by parents, especially fathers, negatively affects the growth of young people as responsible individuals. Some of the young people we have interviewed stated that their certain habits such as drinking and cursing, were not received with negative reactions by their parents, and some even stated that expressions involving cursing and swearing were employed towards them during their childhood. This issue was also discussed with the members of first and second generations, and many stated that young children were directed to use abusive expressions for entertainment purposes. Again, some of the third-generation individuals we have interviewed stated that their fathers and other family elders did not object to their usage of alcohol when they reached 17-18 years old, and that their fathers have consumed such drinks in their presence. Especially in families whose fathers and grandparents have a habit of drinking, there is a tolerance towards the drinking habits of the younger generation, and this situation is expressed with an approach such as "a man, may drink occasionally".

A "harsh/rude" attitude was observed in the behaviour of young people towards their elders, especially their mothers, and many participants expressed that young people sometimes experience arguments with their parents. Of course, the imitation of previous generations has a great effect on the development of such negative behaviours in young people. It was observed that behaviours such as "bullying, being ready to bully, talking loudly in public places with a group of friends without considering other people, using abusive and slang expressions" are common among the youth. It should be stated that, in the proliferation of these sorts of behaviours, which are usually learned by the young generations from their peers, the attitude of toleration adopted by the family plays a great role. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct further studies on upbringing practices in the Eastern Black Sea Region, especially on "aggressive, spoiled youth" who do not hesitate to create "disturbances" in many public spheres ranging from traffic to education. Of course, institutional structures that "are not bothered" by such matters, especially the family, and "social toleration" should be included in this subject. This is because of the observation that the young individuals, especially the males, adopt strikingly "aggressive" attitudes and behaviours that are a far cry from "social

responsibility". It could be said that the "tolerance" shown by the families towards their children lies at the root of this issue and many problems regarding socio-cultural and religious life such as the prevalence of the phenomenon of violence in the region, the use of abusive expressions, behavioural disorders, and alcohol consumption can be traced back to practices of upbringing. Men in the region perceive drinking alcohol during their "adolescence" period as a "merit", and behaviours that can sometimes be described as "bullying" are seen as the "mark of adolescence". It is observed that attitudes and behaviours that can be expressed within the framework of certain mentalities such as "a man can do such things", "a man drinks", "a man can cuss" are frequently encountered.

The attitudes towards children living with their parents after marriage is generally negative. While 60.5% of the participants stated that it would be more appropriate for a young couple not to live with their families, the rate of those who find it appropriate for two generations to live together is 39.5%. The rate of those who find it inappropriate for children to live with their families after marriage is 53.7% in the first generation. This rate is 68.4% in the second generation and 57.5% in the third generation ($P = 0.010$). Accordingly, it is seen that the most negative attitude towards children living with their parents after marriage is displayed by the second generation. This rate can be explained by their own negative experiences about living with their parents who are not in the need of care. During the interviews, some participants have stated that some conflicts could occur between children and parents while they are living together. The majority of women from the first and second generations have supported their opinions that it would be more beneficial for both the parents and the children to live separately by emphasizing the statements such as "I am still able-bodied. Most of the work is done by machines now anyway. We live our lives according to some arrangements, and we usually have guests or visitors. It is hard for them to find comfortable lives with us. They would be more comfortable in their own houses". Additionally, there were some participants who tried to live with their parents but had to leave due to the discomfort they had experienced. Those of the third generation who approach this matter positively generally consider this matter from the perspectives of the care of the children (grandchildren) and economic benefits. On the other hand, in today's society, many technological possibilities are available to facilitate the housework of elderly people. In addition to the technological opportunities that facilitate the daily life of the elderly and many other means and opportunities that are at their disposal today such as social security, readily available means of transportation, ease of shopping, and the comfort of modern houses have reduced the dependence of the older generation on the younger generation.

3.2. Business and Professional Life

Due to factors such as urbanization and increased level of education, women have started to participate more and more in paid employment and to receive equal rights with men in many areas. Approximately 90% of the

participants view women possessing equal rights to men in paid employment positively. In terms of generations, there is no difference in attitude towards women having the same rights as men in employment and professional lives ($P = 0.639$). The first and second generations often viewed the employment of women within the context of contributing to the family budget. Generally, they used statements such as “it is difficult to make a living with only one person working. If the woman works, making ends meet will be easier”. The third generation, on the other hand, supports the employment of women with statements such as “a modern woman should have an occupation and stand on her feet” in addition to economic reasons. The opinion that women should have a job/profession that allows them to make a living independently is a view that is expressed by the majority of women from the first and second generations.

Almost all participants believe that the education of girls should continue after primary school. There is no difference in attitudes about this matter among generations. The interviews have also supported the generally positive attitude towards women’s education and employment.

3.3. Inheritance

The equality between men and women in terms of inheritance rights is discussed very often. 89.6% of the participants who answered the questionnaire stated that women and men should be equal in the partitioning of inheritances. The rate of those who believe there should not be gender equality in this matter is 10.4%. In terms of attitudes towards gender equality in the partitioning of inheritances, there are no differences between the generations ($P = 0.829$). In the interviews, it was observed that, although most of the first-generation men and a certain portion of the second-generation men have indicated that partitioning of inheritances should be equal, their perspective of this equality does not imply a fifty-fifty partition. It instead refers only to the inclusion of women in inheritance partitioning. Although there is a consensus supporting the inclusion of women in the partitioning of inheritances and them not being aggrieved in such matters, it was noted that that male children are generally viewed as the ones who should handle and protect the property inherited from their fathers.

3.4. Flirtation and Dating

The term “flirtation” expresses being lovers of boys and girls, and it is usually defined as “dating” among young people. Considering the attitudes of the participants towards this relationship, 59.1% of the participants have stated that they do not see any harm in the friendship between boys and girls. The rate of those who are opposed to this is 40.9%, however. Considering this situation in terms of generations, while the rate of those who do not see any harm in the relationships between boys and girls is approximately 50% in the first and second generations, this rate exceeds 70% in the third generation ($P = 0,000$). Therefore, the relationship types that involve meeting, sustaining friendships, and being in relationships with the members of the opposite

gender is viewed as normal by the members of the youngest generation and it was noted that the form of friendship that can be described as “boyfriend/girlfriend” is generally accepted by their environments. In addition to expressing that they see no harm in the relationships between young individuals of opposite genders, the members of the first and second generation have stated that such relationships should be controlled strictly and young people, especially the girls, should be given advice about these relationships. Even those who view such relationships negatively have stated that such friendships are inevitable in the education and social life and opposing such relationships is practically meaningless. In this context, they have used expressions such as “everyone has a boyfriend/girlfriend in this day and age, what are you going to do about it” and added, in regards to the things that should be done concerning this matter that, the children “should not be left to their own devices” and “should be controlled strictly”. However, the interviews with the third generation have demonstrated differences in forms of friendship with the opposite gender.

3.5. Sexuality

Almost in all religious understandings there are orders and prohibitions to regulate the sexual life of individuals and that they present a framework for the sexual lives of their members. It is noted that matters such as the promotion of marriage, the existence of sexuality on a legitimate ground, prohibition of unmarried and homosexual relationships are included within this framework established by religions regarding sexuality.²² Although the rate of individuals who have stated there is no harm in friendships between boys and girls is 60% in the study, 93.2% of the participants have stated that they view premarital sexual relationships negatively. The rate of those who approve of such relationships is 6.7%. The rate of those who do not view premarital sexual intercourse negatively increases from the first generation to the third generation. While the rate of those who did not view this matter negatively in the first generation is 1.8%, this is 4.3% in the second generation and 15% in the third generation ($P = 0.000$). In the interviews with the first generation, the matters in which their fathers and grandfathers were mentioned included entertainment activities with women and alcohol and the harassment of widowed women. In the interviews with the first generation, it was observed that they display an attitude about premarital sexual intercourse that is more personal and private. When the female and single members of the third generation who have shown a negative attitude towards premarital sexuality were asked “Would you be uncomfortable if one of your girlfriends has a positive attitude or behaviour towards such a relationship or would you change your attitude towards her?” they have generally answered with statements such as “no, that is her preference”. There is a widespread opinion that

²² Asım Yapıcı, *Ruh Sağlığı ve Din (Psiko-Sosyal Uyum ve Dindarlık)* (Adana: Karahan Kitabevi, 2007), 69.

premarital and extramarital sexual intercourse has a higher rate than what is anticipated, especially among second and third-generation men. However, it was also noted that the individuals used expressions such as “we hear, we see, they say, they always say, a friend of mine told me, someone was talking about it” when talking about this subject.

3.6. Birth control

In the questionnaire, it was determined that the rate of those who think that birth control is necessary is 90.5%. Although there is a slight increase from the first generation to the third generation, approximately 90% of all three generations have stated birth control as a necessity (P = 0.339). The majority of the interviewees stated that having a child is very important for the family but have also added that birth control is a necessity in our age. Although there are no remarkable differences in attitudes between generations and genders, especially the first and second generations do not consider that it is sufficient to have a single child and prefer to have 2-3 children. The third-generation members, on the other hand, believe that one or two children are sufficient. It could be said that notions regarding birth control are generally based on financial reasons. Generally, the opinions were centred on the idea that people should only have several children that their financial status allows them to look after. Additionally, some of the participants who could be described as “religious” and “conservative” have added “moral” concerns to these reasons. These individuals have expressed that if the status of the couple does not allow them to provide their children with sufficient moral and financial opportunities, then it is not necessary to have children. As a matter of fact, several people from the first generation interviewed have stated “actually, our prophet has suggestions on how we should reproduce, but under today’s horrible conditions, it is very difficult, both materially and spiritually, to raise a child.”

4. Intergenerational Relationships

Social scientists are always very interested in information regarding intergenerational relationships and intergenerational conflicts.²³ 77.3% of the participants have stated that there is not enough communication between generations. The rate of those who do not share this opinion is 22.7%. All three generations generally (70%) believe that there is not efficient communication between the generations. This rate is highest in the second generation with 80.9%. In the third generation, this rate is 78.3%, while the same is 72% in the first generation (P = 0.118). The rate of those who think that the incompatibility and conflict between generations have increased is 67%, and the rate of those who have the opposite opinion is 33%. Approximately 70% of

²³ Mahmut Tezcan, *Kuşaklar Catışması Kuşaklararası İlişkiler Eğitimi ve Sosyolojisi* (Ankara: Anı Yayıncılık, 2017); M. Zeki Duman, *Kuşak Catışması X ve Z Kuşağı Üzerine Sosyolojik Bir Çalışma* (Ankara: Nobel Yayıncılık, 2019); Aydın Aktay, *Yeni Türkiye’de Yeni Kuşaklar* (Sakarya, 2019); *Sosyoloji Divanı 13. Sayı Dosya: Kuşaklar Sosyolojisi (13)* (Konya: Çizgi Yayınevi, 2019).

the members of all three generations believe that intergenerational disharmony and conflict has increased ($P = 0.490$). There was no significant correlation between generations regarding this subject.

5. The Effects of Media and Technology on Religious and Cultural Values

In the research, the attitude of generations towards the effects of media, television, the internet and other communication and technological tools on religious and cultural values was also evaluated. 74% of the participants think that television broadcasts have a negative effect on religious, moral and cultural values. 26% of the participants do not share this opinion. There is no significant difference between generations about the subject ($P = 0.388$). The rate of those who think that technological means and opportunities have a negative effect on religious and cultural life is 46%. The rate of those who think otherwise is 53.7%. There was no significant correlation between generation and attitudes towards technology ($P = 0.529$).

6. Social Values

Social values, which we can define as behavioural patterns internalized by the individuals of the society, can include variations according to time and place. It was attempted to measure the attitudes of generations towards social value in Giresun. The rate of those who think that the young people are becoming indifferent to the values of the society was 78.5%, while the rate of those who disagreed with this view was 21.5%. The views of the generations regarding this matter are similar to each other. The opinion that young people are indifferent to social values is 78.2% in the first generation and this rate is 76.4% in the second generation. What is remarkable is that this rate is 81.3% in the young generation, despite prior predictions that this would be lower ($P = 0.510$). In this case, the younger generation supports the notion that they are becoming increasingly indifferent to social values. The rate of those who have stated that the values of the society do not concern them is 23.5%. On the other hand, the majority takes the values adopted by society into account. The rate of those who have stated "social values do not concern me" is 19.5% in the first generation, 21.3% in the second generation, and 30.3% in the third generation ($P = 0.047$). Therefore, there is a decrease from the first generation to the third generation in terms of taking into account the values adopted by society. However, there is also no significant difference between generations in this regard. Although the adoption of religious and moral values by the third generation does not show any significant contrasts with other generations, it was determined that some members of the first-generation question certain cultural values and have difficulties understanding certain attitudes and behaviours. This situation can be constructed as the existence of lack of interest or acceptance by the third generation towards religious and cultural values, as well as them being distant from some customs and traditions. As a matter of

fact, it is often expected for the young generation to have critical and questioning attitudes towards traditions.

7. Protection of Turkish Language and The Use of Foreign Names

One of the important issues regarding national values is the preservation and development of a nation's language. Considering the necessity of preserving and improving Turkish language as a value, almost all participants agree that the preservation and development of the Turkish language is very important for the future of the Turkish nation.

Although there is a slight decrease from the first generation to the third generation about the inclusion of foreign names or words in the names of business places or objects, there is no significant difference in attitudes between the generations in relation to this subject ($P = 0.378$).

Although members of all generations expressed negative beliefs about the usage of foreign names, it was noted that the reactions of the first and second generations were more severe.

While nationalistic and religious opinions were at the forefront for the members of the first generation in terms of the use of foreign names in business place names and product names, political and cultural factors were more influential in the second generation's opinions about this matter.

In addition to measuring the attitude towards the preservation and development of the Turkish language, the subject of whether the generations associated dressing according to fashion and following fashion closely with being modern was also examined. The rate of those who associate dressing according to fashion and following fashion closely with being modern was 36.3%. The rate of those who have expressed the opposite opinion is 63.7%. The rate of those who have associated dressing according to fashion was 28.9% in the first generation, while this rate was 38.6% in the second generation, and 40.7% in the third generation ($P = 0.055$). The rate of those who associate fashion with modernity has shown a trend towards increasing from the first to the third generation. The interviewees stated that it is important to dress properly and cleanly, but they did not associate dressing according to fashion with modernity. It was noted that the people living in Giresun attach importance to their dressing style and follow the trends of fashion, but also that they do not associate this behaviour with modernity.

8. Attitudes and Behaviours Towards Religious Values

It was attempted to measure the attitudes and behaviours of Giresun's generations regarding faith, worship and religious prohibitions, beliefs, subjective sense of religiosity and religiosity, and worshipping habits and, based on the data, it was attempted to establish how the people in Giresun view the matter of religiosity and to what criteria they associate religiosity with. In the section "religious worship and applications", the primary worshipping tenets of Islam, which include salaah, fasting, pilgrimage, sacrifices, and zakat,

were evaluated. Likewise, in the section “religious prohibitions”, the matters of alcohol usage and using expressions of cursing (swearing or cursing) were evaluated.

8.1. Faith, Subjective Perception of Religiosity and Religiosity

In the questionnaire form, the participants’ belief in Allah was attempted to be ascertained with the question, “Do you believe in Allah?”. However, a question about believing in Allah was not included in the interview form. 99.6% of those who have answered the questionnaire stated that they believe in Allah. This indicates that there is no difference between generations in terms of believing Allah ($P = 0.108$). Therefore, it is seen that the believing Allah is very high in this province, both in general, as well as in particular for generations of our research.

It is not an easy task to determine the religious lives of individuals within general lines and to establish their religiosity typologies based on such information. Because, in such an attempt, issues such as the criteria by which religiosity types will be determined and how can religious people, who have a wide variety of religious lives, can be categorized are encountered. However, researchers have tried to develop a number of typologies to show the differences and similarities manifesting in a wide variety of ways in people’s religious lives.²⁴ In terms of subjective religiousness perception, 80.1% of the respondents defined themselves as “religious”. The rate of participants who see themselves as “very religious” is 10.9%. On the other hand, 9% of the participants consider themselves “less interested in religion”. There is a significant correlation between the three generations in terms of subjective perception of religiosity ($P = 0.000$). While 19.5% of the first generation described themselves as “very religious”, this rate was 7.8% in the second generation and 6% in the third generation. Despite this, the rate of those who define themselves as “religious” is 73.2% in the first generation, 86.8% in the second generation and 78.9% in the third generation. The rate of those who consider themselves “less interested in religion” is 7.3% in the first generation, 5.4% in the second generation, and 15.1% in the third generation. While the proportion of those who consider themselves less interested in religion is the same in the first and the second generations, it has increased significantly in the third generation. Therefore, while the ratio of those who selected the “very religious” option is remarkable in the first generation, the same is also right for those who have selected the option of “less interested in religion” in the third generation. 15% of the participants who answered the question about the

²⁴ Ahmet Onay, “Dindarlık Ölçme Çalışmaları: Dindarlık Ölçümünde Üç Farklı Yaklaşım ve Ölçmenin Esasları”, *İslami Araştırmalar Dergisi* 14/3-4 (2001): 439-449; Necdet Subaşı, “Türkiye Dindarlığı: Yeni Tipolojiler”, *İslamiyat Dergisi* 5/4 (2002): 17-40; Celalettin Çelik, “Dindarlık Tipolojilerine Metodolojik Bir Yaklaşım”, *İslâmiyat Dergisi* 8/2 (2005): 71-90; Ünver Günay, “Dindarlığın Sosyolojisi”, *Dindarlığın Sosyo-Psikolojisi*, ed. Ünver Günay & Celalettin Çelik (Adana: Karahan Yayınları, 2006), 1-59; Hasan Kayıklık, “Değişen Dünyada Birey, Din ve Dindarlık”, *Dindarlığının Sosyo-Psikolojisi*, ed. Ünver Günay & Celalettin Çelik (Adana: Karahan Kitabevi, 2006), 157-174.

religiosity of their parents stated that their parents were “very religious”. The rate of those who have stated that their parents are “religious” is 76.8%. The rate of those who have stated that their parents are “less interested in religion” is only 5.6%. While 27.4% of the first generation have stated that their parents were very religious, only 12.8% of the second generation and 5.4% of the third generation have stated that their parents were very religious. Therefore, there is a significant correlation between the religiosity of the participants’ parents ($P = 0.000$).

It can be said that the perception of religiosity in Giresun is based on the aspect of “faith” that is inherent to the concept of “religiosity”. However, considering the religiosity of their parents, the interviewees emphasized mostly the “worship” aspect of the religion. It was observed that the participants based their answers on religious rituals such as praying five times a day, fasting and visiting holy places. For this reason, whenever one of the participants stated that his/her parents were “religious” it was usually accompanied by expressions such as “he would perform prayers 5 times a day” or “he went on a pilgrimage”. It was observed that the majority of the population perceived individuals who prayed five times a day, who have gone on a pilgrimage, or the women who dress according to the veiled code of dress as individuals who are “very religious”. In a certain sense, it is accepted that these people reinforce their religiosity and “declare” this as a lifestyle and make it “visible”. It was observed that society has more expectations regarding such people’s attitudes and behaviours being “in accordance with the religion”. Therefore, many people react negatively and criticize some negative words and behaviours performed by people who are “very religious”.

8.2. Religious Education

Families, mosques and Quran courses appear to be at the forefront regarding who or from which institutions have the participants received their religious education from. The rate of those who have received religious education in the family have decreased from the first to the third generation. It could be said that the effect of the family on the child’s religious education has decreased. Based on the interviews, it was understood that the first generation usually sent their children to the mosque.

The individuals from the first generation, who expressed that they did not have the opportunity to go to the mosque or to a Quran course, have stated that they received information regarding prayers, verses of the Quran and worship from the older members of their families (such as their grandmothers or grandfathers). According to the survey results, the rate of receiving religious education in the family was higher in the first generation than the other generations (35.8%). The rate of first-generation receiving religious education within the scope of general education institutions is also very low (1.8%). Based on the interviews with the second generation, it was determined that the mosque had an important place in receiving religious education. This situation was also reflected in the questionnaire with the rate of 27.5%. Statements given by the members of this generation indicate that almost everyone went to the

courses held in the mosque after the closure of schools. It was determined that the mosque served an important function in providing religious education during the period when the second generation was raised. It was observed that families had an important incentivizing role in the reception of religious education in this generation with 20%. Moreover, the contribution of formal education institutions to religious education has increased in the second generation. The rate of those who have attended Quran courses in the first generation, which is 23%, have increased to 28.5% in the second generation. In the third generation, the influences of both the family (19.6%) and the mosque (19.6%) have decreased. However, the influence of formal education institutions has increased (11.7%) in this generation. It was also noted that the number of those who have received education in religious high schools increased in this generation, as well as the number of those who have received religious instruction in courses in mosques. Among those who have received religious education in a mosque, the highest rate belongs to the second generation (27.5%). This rate is 23% in the first generation, and 19.6% in the third generation. Based on the above-stated information, it was determined that there is a significant difference between generations regarding where they have received their religious education ($P = 0.002$).

8.3. Halal Income

“Halal income”, which can be defined as income earned without harming the rights of others and in return for proper hard work, is expected from individuals from both religious and social perspectives. Almost all of the participants stated that it is necessary to consider halal and haram while making a living. In this context, there are no differences between the generations ($P = 0.629$). In the interviews, it was ascertained that there are different perspectives regarding ill-gotten gains and thievery, both within the same generation, as well as between different generations. It was noted that thievery of personal property (such as house goods, store goods or products) is not very widespread and many interviewees have stated that events involving the thievery of personal property are not very common. However, many people have stated that the same sensitivity is not present when it comes to state property. Many interviewees have stated that they do not see any harm in those who are well-off benefitting from the funds established by the state to provide aid to the low-income individuals or from health care (such as the green card application) and fuel distribution services. Therefore, despite the fact that sensitivity exists towards keeping the personal property of others free of harm, this sensitivity is not present considering the property of the state (the in-kind and in-cash aids created for the poor by state such as tender commissions), and that benefitting illicitly from such things are not perceived as “thievery” or “ill-gotten gains”. It was noted that individuals would employ excuses such as “these sorts of behaviours are not done only by themselves, but also by many other individuals within the society” to justify themselves. In general, it is well-known that expressions such as “the property of the state is as much as the sea,

and those who do not exploit it are suckers” are frequently used by the members of the Turkish society.

8.4. Prayer and Basmalah

It is common in Muslim societies to say basmalah and pray while starting something. The rate of those who selected the option that they “always” say basmalah is 43.2%, the rate of those who do so “occasionally” is 55.7%, and the rate of those who chose “never” is 1.1%. Considering the starting something by saying basmalah was evaluated, it was determined that the rate of those who have answered “always” is 59.4% in the first generation, 47.1% in the second generation, and 22.3% in the second generation. Accordingly, there is a decrease in the habit of saying basmalah before starting something from the first generation to the third generation, which means there is a significant difference between the generations in this regard ($P = 0.000$). The rate of participants who have stated that they “always” pray is 55.5%, and the rate of those who have replied “occasionally” is 43.9%. Accordingly, it is understood that almost all of the participants have a habit of praying. Considering the prayer habits of generations in terms of their responses with the option “always”, it was determined that the first generation’s habit of praying is 65.5%, while this rate is 58.7% in the second generation, and 40.7% in the third generation. Accordingly, there is a decrease in prayer habits from the first generation to the third generation, which means there is a significant difference between the generations ($P = 0.000$).

8.5. Worship

Performing five daily prayers and attending the Friday prayers are one of the most important criterias that is included in studies involving religiosity. In the study, it was attempted to measure the five-time prayer frequency habits of participants according to their gender, educational status, and generation variables. The frequency of performing Friday prayers includes only the male participants. 43.6% of the participants have stated that they perform five daily prayers and 44.1% have expressed that they only perform these prayers “occasionally”. According to generations, the rate of those who have stated they always perform the five daily prayers is 67.3% in the first generation, 45.4% in the second generation, and 18% in the third generation. When considering the habits of the generations about five daily prayers in the context of the options of “always” and “most of the time”, it was determined that the rate of the first generation is 77%, while this is 57.6% in the second generation and 30.6% in the third. Accordingly, there is a remarkable decrease in the habit of performing five daily prayers from the first generation to the third generation. In this context, it was determined that there is a significant correlation between generation and the habit of performing five daily prayers ($P = 0.000$). In the interviews, however, it was observed that those who have stated they “always” perform their prayers try not to skip their prayers to the extent that is possible, while those who have stated they perform their prayers “most of the time” tend

to skip certain prayers of the day. Those who tend to skip their prayers stated that they tend to do so when their workload becomes heavy such as during the times of the day when their work is very busy or when they need to harvest their hazelnut crops. Those who have stated they “occasionally” perform their prayers consist of individuals that place extra effort in trying to perform their Friday and holiday prayers.

In the general examination about the habits of the participants regarding Friday prayers, it was determined that 57.8% of the male participants always perform their Friday prayers, while 37.6% do so only “occasionally”. There is a significant correlation between the generation and the habit of performing Friday prayers. While the rate of those who “always” performed Friday prayers is 75% in the first generation, this rate has decreased to 61.9% in the second generation, and to 34.6% in the third generation ($P = 0,000$). While the first and second-generation display similar rates of performing Friday prayers, this rate has decreased in the third generation. The interviews and our observations indicate that the rate of attending to Friday and religious holiday prayers by the male participants is high. When those who say they “never” pray and those who say they do “occasionally” are excluded from the evaluation, it can be said that the rate of participants who perform Friday prayers is approximately 80%. This ratio is similar to the rate of male participants who have stated that they perform the five daily prayers “always”, “often” and “occasionally”.

Fasting, which is obligatory for Muslims to observe during Ramadan, is one of the basic practices of the religion of Islam. More than 90% of the participants stated that they fast during the month of Ramadan. A significant correlation was determined between the habit of fasting and generation. When the answers of “always” and “most of the time” given to the questions regarding fasting habits by the participants were examined together, the first generation has a fasting habit rate of 93.9%, while this rate is 96.6% in the second generation, and 88.6% in the third generation ($P = 0,000$). The first generation’s rate of fasting habit is lower than the second generation due to their health problems.

In the religion of Islam, it is a form of worship to sacrifice animals with certain characteristics by following certain practices during the period that is called Festival of Sacrifice. The rate of participants who have stated that they always perform this type of worship is 42.7%. Meanwhile, the rate of those who have stated that they perform the worship of sacrifice “occasionally” is 41.9%, and the rate of those who state that they never perform this is 15.4%. There is a decrease in the performance of the sacrifice worship from the first generation to the third generation. This means that there is a significant correlation between generation and the performance of this worship ($P = 0,000$). It was understood from the interviews that worship of sacrifice has an important place in the establishment of religiosity. However, since this method of worship requires relatively high economic status, the rates regarding its performance are expected to decrease from the first to the third generation.

It is known that providing financial aid and assistance to those in need has an important place in religiosity. It was observed that nearly all of the

participants sought to provide financial aid to those in need, albeit not constantly.

Considering the generations in the context of the “always” answer given to the questions regarding the provision of financial aid, it was determined that 37.8% of the first generation chose this answer, while this rate was 25.1% and 18.1% for the second and third generations respectively ($P = 0.000$). The number of people who have selected the option of “always” has shown a remarkable decrease over the generations. Therefore, there is a significant correlation between the generations in this regard. Moreover, the members of the third generation had the notion that “the state should protect those in need” more often than the members of the other generations. While certain members of the first and second generations also agreed with this notion, they have generally expressed their opinions on this matter with statements such as “one should not expect everything from the state”, “the state cannot protect all of them”, and “the state can protect some of them, that is true, but as Muslims, we should do whatever we can”. In the first and second generations, it was observed that expressions such as “he must have given alms beforehand” were used for people who had managed to get over a difficult situation without suffering much. The usage of this expression indicates that providing aid and assistance to those in needs is perceived as an act that protects against misfortune.

8.6. Religious Prohibitions

In the context of religious prohibitions, only the rates of the use of abusive expressions (swearing) and alcohol were measured. Approximately 60% of the participants stated that they did not use abusive expressions. The rate of those who state that they constantly use abusive expressions is around 6%. The rate of those who have stated they “always” use abusive expressions is 9.7 in the first generation, 3.4% in the second generation, and 5.4% in the third generation. Therefore, a significant correlation has been identified between generation and the use of abusive expressions ($P = 0.005$). In the interviews, most of the participants who were asked the question “Do you think the use of abusive expressions is common in our society?” answered positively. Our observations also confirm this situation. However, many participants who have indicated that they use such expressions have stated that most individuals that use these expressions use them out of habit. This is why it is observed that many individuals who use expressions that include rude, slang or abusive words use such words without being aware of it. The majority of participants have stated that they believe abusive expressions are bad words that are used in anger with the intent of trying to insult another person under hostile circumstances. According to some participants, the use of abusive expressions is the act of insulting the honour of the other party.

Regarding the rates of alcohol consumption, 78.6% of the participants have stated that they never use alcohol, while the rate of those who stated that they “always” use alcohol was 4.7%, and the rate of those who stated they use alcohol “occasionally” was 16.7%. Considering the frequency of using alcohol of

the generations within the context of the option “most of the time”, it was determined that the rate in the first generation is 6.1%, the rate in the second generation is 2.9%, and the rate in the third generation is 5.5% ($P = 0.063$).

Conclusion

A meaningful correlation could not be determined between the generation and the desire for spouse-to-be being rich and wealthy, beautiful or handsome, moral and good-natured, having a good lineage and having a profession. However, there is a significant difference between generations regarding spouse-to-be being “religious” and the preference regarding the spouse-to-be being “religious” has shown a decrease in the third generation. While there is a remarkable decrease in arranged marriages from the first generation to the third generation in terms of the methods of marriage, there is a strong increase in the rate of marriages performed with the consent of the individuals and their families from the first generation to the third generation. The greatest increase is noted to be between the first and second generation. While there is a decrease in marriages between close relatives from the first generation to the third generation, there is also an increase in the number of marriages from outside Giresun from the first generation to the third generation. It was observed that the people living in Giresun give importance to both official and religious marriages. There are no differences in attitudes between generations in terms of marriage type. The rate of having wedding receptions with music and alcohol is high in the first and third generations. In the interviews, all three generations had a positive attitude regarding the holiness and preservation of the family institution. Many interviewees have stated that social problems mostly stem from the family and therefore the improvement of the society depends on the improvement of the institution of the family.

Almost all of the participants have stated that women have the same rights in business and professional lives as men and displayed a positive attitude towards girls’ education. Moreover, there was no difference in attitudes between the generations regarding business and professional lives as men and girls’ education. Likewise, the majority of the participants believed that birth control is necessary in today’s world and there are no intergenerational attitude differences on this issue. However, it was understood that some male members of first and second generations do not agree with the opinion that partitioning of inheritances should be equal between men and women, and that, for them, equality within this context does not mean the equal division of the inherited property, but rather the inclusion of women in inheritance. Although approximately half of the members of first and second generations do not see the harm in the friendship between boys and girls, this ratio was determined to have increased in the third generation. Most of the participants reported a negative attitude towards premarital sexual intercourse. While the rate of not seeing any harm in premarital sexual intercourse is similar in the first and second generations, this rate has increased in the third generation.

Most of the participants believe that television broadcasts have a negative effect on religious, moral and cultural values. While there is no significant

difference in attitudes in the questionnaire data in terms of generations regarding this matter, it was noted that there is a decrease from the first generation to the third generation in the attitude towards the negative impact of television broadcasts in the interviews. Approximately half of the participants believe that technological means and opportunities have a negative effect on religious and cultural lives. The opinion that technological means and opportunities have a negative effect on religious and cultural values are similar in all three generations. However, it was seen in the interviews that the negative view on the subject decreased from the first generation to the third generation.

Most of the participants take into account the values adopted by society. The rate of those who say that these values do not concern them increases from the first to the third generation. The rate of those who think that the younger generations are becoming increasingly indifferent to the values is quite high in all three generations, especially in the third generation. Therefore, it was observed that this negative attitude of the third generation also extends towards itself.

Although the notion that it is not correct to have foreign names or words in the names of workplaces decreased from the first to the third generation, there is no significant difference between the generations. Almost all of the participants have stated that they believe the preservation and development of Turkish is very important for the future of the Turkish nation. There are no differences in attitude between generations on this issue. The rate of those who associate wearing fashionable clothing with modernity has shown an increase from the first to the third generation.

Almost all of the participants have stated that they believed in Allah. There are no differences in attitude between generations on this issue. Most of the participants describe themselves as “religious”, and those who have selected the “very religious” and “less interested in religion” options have similarly low rates. There are no differences in attitude between generations in terms of believing in Allah. However, there are differences in attitude between generations regarding the subjective perception of religiosity and worship. There is a decrease from the first generation to the third generation in this regard.

All three generations expressed the opinion that it is necessary to pay attention to halal and haram in earning. There was a decrease in the habit of saying basmalah and praying while starting a job from the first generation to the third generation. Similarly, there is a remarkable decrease in the habit of performing five daily prayers from the first generation to the third generation. It was determined that most of the male participants attended the Friday prayers and that the first and second generations had similar rates of attending to the Friday prayers. However, a significant decrease was detected in this regard in the third generation. The majority of the participants stated that they fast during the month of Ramadan.

More than half of the participants have stated that they do not use abusive words while talking. However, in the interviews, many participants have stated that the use of abusive expressions is common in society. Our observations

have also confirmed this. However, many people who have the habit of using abusive expressions have stated that such expressions are not actually used to curse, but rather as a habit. Therefore, it could be said that many people use such rude and abusive expressions in their daily speech without realizing it. There is a decrease in the frequency of generations for using abusive expressions from the first generation to the second generation. However, this tendency is reversed between the second and third generations. The majority of the participants stated that they avoided drinking alcohol. Although there is a decrease from the first generation to the second generation in this regard, it is also noteworthy that there is an increase from the second generation to the third generation. Although the data obtained by the questionnaires indicate the low rates of alcohol usage and use of abusive expressions, the interviews have revealed all three generations believe that the usage of both is high.

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