

Content Analysis of AI's Responses to Family-Related Religious Questions: A Comparative Study with the Fatwas of the Supreme Council of Religious Affairs

Yapay Zekânın Aile Temalı Dinî Sorulara Verdiği Yanıtların İçerik Analizi: Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulu Fetvolarıyla Karşılaştırmalı Bir Değerlendirme

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to put forward a content analysis of the responses provided by artificial intelligence (AI) to family-themed religious questions and examine the extent to which these responses align with the fatwas issued by the Supreme Council of Religious Affairs of the Presidency of Religious Affairs. The family plays a central role in the transmission of religious values, and Islam offers comprehensive principles concerning both the pre- and post-marital periods. In this context, individuals may encounter various religious issues related to family life. In addition to the Supreme Council of Religious Affairs—recognized as the highest religious authority—AI tools such as ChatGPT have emerged as easily accessible sources of information. However, current literature lacks systematic studies that examine the content alignment between AI-generated religious responses and institutional fatwas. This study seeks to fill this gap by revealing the capabilities and limitations of AI in delivering religious information. The research evaluates 84 AI-generated responses on family-related religious issues through a comparative content analysis in qualitative research design with the Council's fatwas. This method identifies both textual overlaps and the positioning of AI responses in terms of jurisprudential and sectarian sensitivity. The results indicate that 63% of the responses fully align with the fatwas, 20.2% show partial alignment, and 16.7% do not align. While the AI-generated responses are fast and accessible, it has revealed shortcomings, particularly on issues involving sectarian differences. The study assesses the potential and risks of ChatGPT through criteria such as jurisprudential grounding, sectarian sensitivity, clarity of expression, topical relevance, and moral emphasis. It also offers recommendations concerning the ethical barriers, reliability, and limitations of using AI in religious contexts.

ÖZET

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Bu çalışma, yapay zekânın (YZ) aile temalı dinî sorulara verdiği yanıtların içerik analizini yaparak bu yanıtların, Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulunun fetvalarıyla ne ölçüde örtüştüğünü incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Aile, dinî değerlerin aktarımında merkezi bir rol oynamakta olup İslam, evlilik öncesi ve sonrası dönemlere dair kapsamlı ilkeler sunmaktadır. Bu bağlamda bireyler, aile yapısıyla ilgili çeşitli dinî sorunlarla karşılaşabilmektedir. Dinî meselelerde en yetkili otorite olan Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulunun yanı sıra ChatGPT gibi YZ araçları da bireylere kolay erişilebilir bilgiler sağlamaktadır. Ancak mevcut literatürde, YZ'nin verdiği dinî yanıtların kurumsal fetvalarla içeriksel örtüşmesini sistematik biçimde inceleyen çalışmalar sınırlıdır. Bu çalışma, söz konusu boşluğu doldurarak YZ'nin dinî bilgi sunumundaki yeterliliğini ve

Anahtar

Kelimeler:

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sınırlılıklarını ortaya koymayı hedeflemektedir. Araştırmada, ChatGPT tarafından verilen 84 aile temalı dinî yanıt, Kurul fetvaları ile nitel araştırma deseninde karşılaştırmalı içerik analizi yöntemiyle değerlendirilmiştir. Bu yöntem hem metinsel örtüşme düzeylerini belirlemekte hem de YZ yanıtlarının fikhî ve mezhepsel duyarlılık bağlamında nasıl konumlandığını analiz etmektedir. Sonuçlar, yanıtların %63'ünün tam, %20,2'sinin kısmi örtüşme sağladığını, %16,7'sinin ise örtüşmediğini göstermektedir. YZ'nın sağladığı yanıtlar hızlı ve erişilebilir olsa da özellikle mezhepsel farklılıkların bulunduğu konularda eksiklikler barındırmaktadır. Çalışma, fikhî temellendirme, mezhep duyarlılığı, ifade açıklığı, güncellik ve ahlâkî vurgu gibi kriterler açısından ChatGPT'nin potansiyelini ve risklerini değerlendirerek etik, güvenilirlik ve kullanım sınırlarına dair öneriler sunmaktadır.

INTRODUCTION

Literature commonly defines family as the smallest unit in which individuals of different genders, ages, roles, and responsibilities live together and share a significant portion of their lives. This shared living space, whether in nuclear or extended forms, constitutes a dynamic system where members influence one another through experiences, thoughts, and emotions.¹ Society considers a healthy family environment the most suitable setting for fulfilling individuals' biological, emotional, and social needs and nurturing their spiritual growth.² The role of family in the intergenerational transmission of values is indisputable. Values such as love, respect, responsibility, loyalty and commitment create a sense of belonging in individuals and contribute to the preservation of harmony within the family. These values dynamically interact with family life, influencing individuals' approaches to marriage, criteria for choosing a spouse, and ways of coping with familial challenges.³

Religious values, in particular, have a guiding function in the construction of the family institution and the organization of family relations, as they offer moral and spiritual principles based on beliefs. From an Islamic perspective, The Qur'an portrays the family as a source of peace,⁴ and outlines numerous principles regarding family life.⁵ Additionally, the Qur'an and Sunnah depict the family as a setting of moral and spiritual testing.⁶ These principles enable individuals to interpret and navigate family lives through the lens of their beliefs. Indeed, one study found that the spiritual orientation and belief systems of family members were among the most significant

¹ Hayati Hökelekli, "Aile Psikolojisi ve Aile İçi İletişim", *Diyanet İlmî Dergi* 40/2 (2004), 42.

² Volkan Tekdemir-İbrahim Gürses, "Aile Krizleri Karşısında Aile Yılmazlığı Üzerinde Dinin Etkisi: Dindar Aileler Örneği", *Kocaeli İlahiyat Dergisi* 4/2 (2020), 256.

³ Deniz Kublay-Vesile Oktan, "Evlilik Uyumu: Değer Tercihleri ve Öznel Mutluluk Açısından İncelenmesi", *Türk Psikolojik Danışma ve Rehberlik Dergisi* 5/44 (September 2015), 26.

⁴ Kur'an Yolu (Accessed 16 April 2025), ar-Rûm 30/21.

⁵ al-Ahqâf, 46/15; al-Baqara, 2/233.

⁶ al-Taghâbun, 64/15; al-Shu'arâ' 42/49-50; Abu İsa Muhammad ibn İsa ibn Sevre ibn Musa ibn Dahhak Tirmidhi, *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, Critical Ed. Bashar Awwad Marouf (Beirut: Dar al-Gharbi al-Islami, 1998) "Zühhd", 56.

factors contributing to the resilience of families in times of crisis.⁷ Despite these limitations, another study with thirty individuals who had been married for more than ten years, found that religion provides both a theoretical framework and psychological support to individuals in family crises.⁸ A study conducted with fifty-eight couples outside of Türkiye, demonstrates that relational spirituality significantly influenced spousal behaviour; notably, husbands who attributed sacred value to their marriage exhibited fewer negative conflict resolution behaviours.⁹

Given this strong connection between religion and family life, it is natural that individuals seek religious guidance on matters such as marital rights and responsibilities, divorce, inheritance, and reproductive ethics. In Türkiye, one of the most authoritative sources in this regard is the Supreme Council of Religious Affairs (SCofRA), the highest religious decision-making body under the Presidency of Religious Affairs (DİB). Originating from the historical office of SheikhuIslam, the SCofRA evolved from the Fatwa Committee and the Tedkîkât ve Te'lîfât-ı İslâmiyye Committee in the early Republican era. These responsibilities were transferred to the Advisory Committee of the Presidency of Religious Affairs in 1924, renamed and restructured as the SCofRA in 1965. Today, the SCofRA issues fatwas, advises the public on religious matters, and serves as a key source of authentic Islamic knowledge in Türkiye. The Council also oversees the *Alo 190 Fatwa Hotline*, providing religious guidance on numerous family-related issues such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, and in vitro fertilization.¹⁰

Rapid advancement of science and technology, on the other hand, has diversified sources of religious knowledge. In this landscape, artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a significant alternative. AI, a sub-branch of computer science, refers to all systems that imitate human intelligence, can reason, learn and improve themselves.¹¹ Widely applied in sectors such as economy, health, education, and the arts, AI leverages advanced algorithms and deep learning to perform complex analyses in real time.¹² With the widespread availability of internet access and smartphones, AI technologies have become more accessible and are expected to play an increasingly significant role in both social sciences and theology.

⁷ Yaşar Özbay-Didem Aydoğan, "Aile Yılmazlığı: Bir Engele Rağmen Birlikte Güçlenen Aile", *Sosyal Politika Çalışmaları*, 31 (2013), 129-137.

⁸ Tekdemir-Gürses, "Aile Krizleri Karşısında Aile Yılmazlığı Üzerinde Dinin Etkisi", 254.

⁹ Amy Rauer-Brenda Volling, "The Role of Relational Spirituality in Happily-Married Couples' Observed Problem-Solving", *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality* 7/3 (August 2015), 239, 245, 247.

¹⁰ Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı (DİB / PRA (Presidency of Religious Affairs)), "Din İşleri Yüksek Konseyi" (Accessed 21 April 2025).

¹¹ Martin Obschonka-David B. Audretsch, "Aland Big Data in Entrepreneurship: A New Era Has Begun", *Small Business Economics* 55 (2020), 530.

¹² Ali Cañçelik et al., "ChatGPT 4.0'ın Türk İslam Edebiyatı Metin Şerhinde Doğruluk Değerlendirmesi", *Dinbilimleri Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* 24/3 (December 2024), 72.

Among these AI tools, ChatGPT has gained popularity by providing users with personalized responses and instant feedback.¹³ However, the question of how reliable and contextually accurate the information produced by this system is, especially on sensitive issues such as religion and family, still awaits an answer. It is therefore essential to evaluate the accuracy of AI-generated religious content by scientific inquiry. A review of the literature reveals only one study titled “*The Ability of AI-Based Applications to Answer Religious Questions: A Comparison in the Context of ChatGPT and Fatwas of the SCofRA*”, which addressed the topic in a general sense.¹⁴ However, the literature lacks an in-depth study addressing religious perspectives on the family.

This study aims to fill this gap by conducting a comparative content analysis of ChatGPT's responses to family-related religious questions with reference to the Council's responses. Through this comparison, the study aims to assess the coherence, limitations and ethical considerations of religious content produced by AI in a field that requires nuanced interpretation and contextual awareness.

1. Facilities and risks of AI in answering family-themed religious questions

Islam has attached great importance to the protection of the family institution and has laid down detailed provisions on issues directly related to the family, such as marriage, divorce, and paternity.¹⁵ It shows family issues have not only a social but also a religious dimension. In the modern period, with technological developments, individual transformations and changes in the social structure, the perception of family, family structure and the needs of individuals regarding the family have also been transformed. This transformation has affected individuals' search for religious knowledge in a wide range, starting from premarital processes to the continuation of marriage and after marriage. In this framework, individuals do not only apply traditional sources when seeking answers to their questions on religious issues related to family; they may seek religious content available in the digital space, such as online fatwa platforms and various AI applications.¹⁶ Especially regarding privacy-related questions, individuals tend to prefer AI-based

¹³ Yakup Kaya-Elif Eliyatkin, “Din Eğitiminde İçerik Oluşturma ve Kişiselleştirilmiş Öğrenme Aracı Olarak ChatGPT”, *Dinbilimleri Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* 24/3 (December 2024), 616.

¹⁴ Çınar-Ekinci, “Yapay Zekâ Tabanlı Uygulamaların Dini Soruları Cevaplama Yetenekleri: ChatGPT ve Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulu Fetvaları Bağlamında Bir Karşılaştırma”, 62-97.

¹⁵ Fatih Yücel, “Türkiye’de Aile Hayatına Dair Güncel Fıkî Meseleler -Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulu Karar ve Fetvaları Örneği”, *İslam ve Yorum VII*, ed. Mehmet Kubat et al. (İstanbul: Ensar Neşriyat, 2023), 2/189-210.

¹⁶ Mehmet Hicabi Seçkiner, “Yapay Zekâ Tabanlı İctihad Faaliyeti Üzerine Yeni Bir Keşif: Dijital İctihad”, *Yapay Zekâ, Transhümanizm, Posthümanizm ve Din Uluslararası Sempozyum Bildiri Özet ve Tam Metin Kitabı*, ed. Muhammed Kızılgeçit et al. (Erzurum: Atatürk Üniv. Yayınları, 2021), 441.

systems, as they may hesitate to seek counseling from a person. This preference is also influenced by the fact that individuals see AI as an accessible, fast and non-judgmental tool.¹⁷

Currently emerging applications such as robo-advisor or smart mufti, AI can scan religious texts based on natural language processing, big data analysis, and provide systematic and holistic answers to questions posed by users derived from these texts.¹⁸ Therefore, these tools, producing answers by drawing various sources of religious content, can offer very inclusive and multidimensional suggestions if taking into account sectarian differences in answering questions related to the family theme. In addition, the capacity of these systems to produce user-specific answers may provide family counselling based on personalised religious values.

Despite all the advantages of AI applications, there are also some disadvantages. Some of the ethical concerns include issues related to valid, reliable, and manipulative answers, breaches of confidentiality, incomplete responses, misinterpretations due to language proficiency in Turkish, neglecting fundamental sources,¹⁹ and superficial, one-dimensional evaluations.²⁰ These situations, especially in a sensitive issue such as family, may put users at risk. As a matter of fact, a wrong answer regarding a multidimensional and intimate structure such as a family may be difficult to compensate. In this respect, when AI produces an erroneous or inappropriate response, the question of whether responsibility lies with the human or the machine becomes an ethical issue. The accuracy and reliability of the answers given by AI on religious issues is also a distinct challenge area.²¹ Another risk of the use of AI is that querying questions about the family in public systems may lead to a breach of privacy or security vulnerability or cause concerns about breach of privacy.²² Additionally, the capacity of AI to interpret religious texts necessitates the consideration of denominations and different religious traditions. This brings with it the risk of producing a uniform sectarian response and the potential to ignore different belief systems and cultural contexts. Also, since AI applications cannot detect users' emotional states and personal contexts

¹⁷ Atıncı Yılmaz, *Yapay Zekâ* (İstanbul: Kodlab, 2024), 6-7, 14.

¹⁸ Muhammet Yurtseven, "İslâmî Finans Alanında Yapay Zekâ ile Tasarlanmış Fetva Uygulamaları: Robo Shariah Advisor ve Smart Mufti Örneği", *İslam Hukuku Araştırmalarına Zemin Oluşturması Açısından Yapay Zekâ*, ed. Yıldray Sipahi et al. (Burdur: Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2022), 171-189.

¹⁹ Çınar-Ekinci, "Yapay Zekâ Tabanlı Uygulamaların Dini Soruları Cevaplama Yetenekleri: ChatGPT ve Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulu Fetvaları Bağlamında Bir Karşılaştırma", 62-97.

²⁰ Hüseyin Okur-Ahmet Ekşi, "Yapay Zekâ (AI) Teknolojilerinin İslam Eşya Hukuku Bilgisi Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme: Chatgpt ve Google Gemini Karşılaştırması", *Dinbilimleri Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* 24/3 (December 2024), 29-54.

²¹ Abdulmuid Aykul-Mohammed Nurul Alam, "ChatGPT'nin İslâm Ceza Hukuku Özelinde Değerlendirilmesi", *Dinbilimleri Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* 24/3 (December 2024), 193-212.

²² Bernd Carsten Stahl, "Ethical Issues of AI", *AI for a Better Future*, ed. Doris Schroeder and Konstantinos Iatridis (Switzerland: Springer Nature, 2021), 35-53; Abdullah Demir, "İslam Hukukuna Göre Yapay Zekanın Hukuki Kişiliği, Sorumluluğu ve Etik Yönü", *Journal of Quranic Studies and Modern Science* 5/9 (2024), 31-41.

due to their machine-based nature, the capacity of their responses to be empathetic to the individual may be limited. Since religious questions often reflect the inner conflicts of individuals, this may reduce the depth and impact of the answers provided by AI.

In summary, AI applications can serve as valuable tools and resources for addressing family-themed religious questions, provided they are used appropriately, and with due regard for their limitations. Although this technology facilitates access to religious knowledge, users should consider ethical issues, questionable issues and methodological limitations. In questions related to a structure with high emotional, social and psychological dimensions such as the institution of the family, relying solely on AI is neither sufficient nor accurate approach. For this reason, it is important that the answers given are confirmed in different ways, AI is constantly updated, and users use the system effectively by asking correct and obvious questions.²³ Nevertheless, responding to family-themed religious questions with AI is not only a technological innovation, but also a process with a potential to create a new paradigm in religious education (RE) and guidance.

2. Method

2.1. Research Model

The study adopts the comparative case study model, one of the qualitative research designs. Case studies are qualitative research approaches aiming to understand a specific phenomenon in depth within its context. Researchers employ data collection techniques such as observation, interviews, and document analysis to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the examined situation. Comparative case studies examine multiple cases to systematically identify their similarities and differences.²⁴ In this study, we analyzed both the family-themed religious questions answered by SCofRA and ChatGPT's responses to the same questions using document and content analysis techniques, revealing similarities and differences between the two datasets.

2.2. Data collection, analysis and reliability

In the data collection process, 84 questions and answers about family life of the SCofRA were analysed. The questions were asked to ChatGPT unchanged and the answers were recorded. However, in 19 questions, ChatGPT gave the answers according to the Civil Law accepted by the Turkish legal system, and therefore, it was directed to answer to the Islamic law frame. The

²³ Ahmet Çakmak et al. "Din Eğitimi Biliminin Temel Konularında ChatGPT Yapay Zekâ Uygulama Verilerinin Güvenirliliği", *Dinbilimleri Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* 24/3 (December 2024), 325-357.

²⁴ Berrak Aytacı, "Durum Çalışmasına Ayrıntılı Bir Bakış", *Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi* 3/1 (June 2012), 1-4; John W. Creswell, *Araştırma Deseni: Nitel, Nicel ve Karma Yöntem Yaklaşımları*, trans. ed. Selçuk Beşir Demir (Ankara: Eğiten Kitap Yayınları, 3. Edition, 2017), 14, 183-193.

researchers started a new chat for each question and collected the answers from the same device on the same day. In the analysis phase, the rate of overlap between the answers of ChatGPT and the answers of the Board was determined, and then comparisons were made based on various criteria (jurisprudential justification and use of sources, comprehensibility of expressions and use of educational language, sectarian sensitivity, topicality and social cohesion, guidance and moral emphasis). To ensure the study's reliability, two experts in Islamic Law (Fiqh) and two experts in Religious Education (RE) re-checked the findings.

2.3. Limitations of the Study

The study is limited to the answers given by the ChatGPT version, which is available free of charge, and the answers available on the website of the SCofRA till 23 April 2025. In the process of the study, it was sufficient to examine the answers given to all questions (84 questions) on the theme of family life under the frequently asked questions title of the SCofRA the website on that date, but due to their scope and volume, not all of them were included in the report and archived in a separate file. In addition, it can be stated as a limitation that there may be a degree of subjectivity in the evaluations of the researchers and the experts whose opinions were taken, although attention was paid to the objectivity of the analyses during the study process.

3. Findings and Comments

The head presents the findings and interpretations from the analysis of ChatGPT's answers—evaluated in light of the main research problem and compared with the Board's responses.

3.1. The rate of overlap of ChatGPT's answers with the SCofRA

The table below shows the rate of overlap between the answers of ChatGPT and the SCofRA.

Table 1. The Rate of Overlap of ChatGPT's Answers with the SCofRA

Theme	Questions	Overlapping	Rate (%)	Partially Overlapping	Rate (%)	Not Overlapping	Rate(%)
Pre-Marriage	3	2	66.6	1	33.4	0	0
Alimony and Compensation	5	3	60	1	20	1	20
Milk Kinship	13	7	53.8	2	15.3	4	30.7
Adoption and Foster Family	2	2	100	0	0	0	0
Iddat	1	1	100	0	0	0	0
Marriage (Nikâh/ Marriage contract)	21	13	61.9	4	19	4	19
Divorce	33	23	69.6	5	15.2	5	15.2
Mehir (Mahir/Bridewealth)	5	2	40	3	60	0	0
Jewellery and Gifts	1	0	0	1	100	0	0
Total	84	53	63	17	20.2	14	16.7

As seen in the table, %63 of ChatGPT's answers fully corresponded with the answers of the SCofRA, %20.2 partially corresponded, and %16.7 did not overlap. The questions were taken verbatim from the Board and asked to ChatGPT without any guidance. However, it was determined that the answers to a total of 19 questions under the titles of pre-marriage, alimony and compensation, marriage (nikâh), divorce and jewellery and gifts were not evaluated from an Islamic perspective. For a more precise comparative analysis, the following examples illustrate questions that were specifically framed for Islamic jurisprudential evaluation:

Q4. What are the financial rights of a divorced woman?

Q7. Who is responsible for the maintenance of children after divorce?

Q66. Is the inability to have children a ground for divorce?

An analysis of ChatGPT's replies reveals a common characteristic among unanswered questions involving Islamic evaluations: none of the prompts contained expressions directly referencing religious concepts, despite not requiring external guidance. Therefore, it can be interpreted that ChatGPT evaluated and answered according to the Civil Law, and when a religious explanation is expected, this should be stated.

The following examples can be given for the 53 questions where the answers given by ChatGPT completely overlap with the board:

Q7. Who pays maintenance for children after divorce?

Q22. What is the ruling on becoming a foster parent?

Q48. Does divorce occur by saying "I divorce"?

When the above examples and other similarly exact answers are analysed, it is noteworthy that the common characteristic of these answers is that they are largely objective. ChatGPT responded similarly to the Board, especially to the questions, explicitly stated in the Qur'an and are clear from an Islamic point of view. For example, the Board's answer to Question 22 is as follows: *'The institution of adoption, which was preserved for a while in the early years of Islam as a continuation of the old tradition, was abolished with the verse that was revealed in the Medina period (al-Aḥzāb, 33/4), and in the following verse, it was ordered that adoptees should be attributed to their natural fathers, not to their adopters.'* ChatGPT, conversely, answered as follows: *"...According to Islamic law, it does not impose a direct responsibility. The foster family assumes a role that does not replace the child's biological family but temporarily protects the child..."*

The following examples can be given for the 17 questions where the answers given by ChatGPT partially overlap with the board:

Q4. What are the financial rights of a divorced woman?

Q18. Is it permissible to hire a wet nurse for a fee?

Q79. What is *mahr*? What are its types?

When analyzing the above examples and other partially overlapping questions, some responses contain cautious or contradictory explanations. While these answers are factually correct, they remain incomplete compared to the Board's responses, likely due to differing interpretations of digital platform guidelines or conceptual confusion between religious and civil marriage/divorce. In fact, the contradictions in the answer by ChatGPT within the scope of question 3, '*The wedding performed during engagement is not considered as a valid marriage in terms of Islamic law... A religious marriage must be performed for marriage...*' give the impression that the distinction between religious and civil marriage is not fully distinguished. Within the scope of question 4, both answers include the issues of mahir and alimony; however, while the SCofRA elaborates on the issue of mahir in the context of whether *halvet-i sahiha* or *zifaf* is realised, ChatGPT does not include this detail.

The following examples can be given for the 14 questions and answers given by ChatGPT did not overlap with the board's answers:

Q15. Is it permissible for a person to marry his father's child from his other wife?

Q33. Is a marriage contract made under threat valid?

Q49. What is the ruling on divorce with two or three talaqs at once?

When the non-overlapping answers are analysed, it is revealed that some of the answers by ChatGPT are completely different from the views of the SCofRA. For example, in question 12, ChatGPT stated that the identity of the woman who gives milk is decisive in terms of milk kinship and therefore direct kinship may not occur with milk from a milk bank. On the other hand, the Board stated that in both cases, milk kinship would occur, and this could lead to religiously objectionable marriages. Similarly, to question 33, ChatGPT answered '*Even if it is valid in form, it is not considered legitimate and acceptable.*' by referring to the SCofRA; however, the Council stated that the marriage performed by threats is invalid because it does not meet the condition of consent.

3.2. Comparison of the differences of the answers with the SCofRA to various criteria

The answers given by ChatGPT and the Board were compared in terms of the five different criteria mentioned before under this title.

(I) Fiqhical basis and usage of sources

Compared answers given to the questions on family are in terms of jurisprudential bases and use of sources, it is recognised that the answers of the SCofRA are more systematic and evidence-based and also the Board meticulously refers to classical fiqh sources and sectarian views in addition to verses and hadiths, ChatGPT's answers are generally limited to online sources, and the usage of

verses and hadiths is very limited. For example, to question 82, 'What is the ruling on the mahr of a woman who dies before her mahr is paid?', the Board answered: '*Mahr is a right that a woman gains through marriage (al-Nisā', 4/4, 24). If her husband did not give it to her while she was alive, he has to give it to her heirs after her death (Mawsili, al-Ihtiyār, 3/102).*' While ChatGPT, without citing any source, merely stated, "*The non-payment of mahr is considered a debt after the death of the woman and must be paid...*".

Although thought that ChatGPT's deficiencies in jurisprudential justification and use of sources can be overcome with a correct prompt, when the answers given are analysed, the impression is that it is not reliable enough in this regard. Even in the limited number of verses and hadiths it uses, ChatGPT sometimes provides incorrect citations or relies on poorly sourced material. For example, a paraphrase attributed the phrase '*Men being (most) superior to women...*' to verse 32 of Sūrat al-Nisā', but these expressions are not found in verse 32, but in verse 34 of the same surah.²⁵ Similarly, a hadith stating that '*Breastfeeding creates marriage barrier (forbiddenness) just like genealogy.*' was based on the fifth chapter of al-Bukhārī's Nikāh section; however, the aforementioned hadith in the relevant chapter was '*Actions are according to intentions...*'²⁶

(II) Comprehensibility of statements and educational language usage

As the answers compared in terms of comprehensibility and educational language, it is seen that ChatGPT generally uses a simpler and clearer language that everyone can understand, whereas the SCofRA uses more religious concepts. Besides, the Board prefer explaining these concepts when necessary. It can also be said that this approach contributes to the learning of religious terms. On the other hand, though the clearer language of ChatGPT is an advantage, the lack of technical terms may sometimes lead to superficial expressions and conceptual deficiencies. In rare cases, ambiguities of meaning were also observed in some answers of ChatGPT. Despite these limitations, provided the answers are correct, the instant feedback and personalised teaching opportunities offered by ChatGPT in situations where instant response from the Board is not available carry significant educational value. As a matter of fact, ChatGPT can analyse the issues in the context of a specific matter when directed correctly, and it can make comparisons and present them to the users in a summary table in an understandable way. For example, after answering the first question, ChatGPT can give feedback to users with statements such as '*If you want, I can*

²⁵ al-Nisā' 4/34.

²⁶ Abu-Abdillāh Muhammad b. Ismā'il al-Bukhārī, *al-Cāmi' u's-sahīh*, critical ed. Muhammad Zūheyr b. Nāsır (b.y.: Dārū Tavki'n-Necāt, 1422), "Nikah", 5.

analyse this issue in more detail in the context of sects such as Hanafi, Shafi'i, etc.' and *'How else can I help you?'*.

(III) Sectarian sensitivity

When the answers on family-themed questions were examined comparatively in terms of sectarian sensitivity, it was observed that ChatGPT answered the questions without specifying the name of the sect with an approach that can be called supra-sectarian but could make detailed sectarian comparisons in case of prompting. The Council, on one hand, generally gives answers according to the Hanafi sect, but also includes different opinions when necessary and explains the reason for the opinion it adopts. In this respect, the Council discusses different interpretations, especially on the issues where there is a dispute, and then expresses which view it adopts with its reasoning by referring to the authoritative sources. For example, in the board's answer to the question 9, 'What are the conditions for the formation of milk kinship?', stated that 'Shafi'i and Hanbalis say that for milk kinship to be formed, it is necessary for the baby to suck five times separately within the first two years of age and by the baby being full and spontaneously stopping.' ChatGPT states that *'The child must suck at least five times from the milk mother. This is the rule of 'breastfeeding five times' in Islamic law.'* It gave a general answer without referring to the source or sect. Therefore, it can be said that the fatwas of the Board have a higher sensitivity to sectarian differences, unless ChatGPT is directed to sensitize it to sectarian differences. Yet, ChatGPT can be effective in comparing the differences between sects and summarizing them in tabular form when directed to do so. It is observed, however, even in these cases that the jurisprudential background information is sometimes insufficient.

(IV) Timeliness and social cohesion

One may have the impression that a more traditional approach is adopted in the Board's answers, especially due to the intensive use of religious terminology as the answers to the questions analysed comparatively in terms of timeliness and social cohesion. However, seen that in the answers by the Board, the Board answers the questions by paying attention to the sensitivity of evaluating the questions asked in the context of today's conditions. In almost all questions, ChatGPT makes up-to-date evaluations with a similar approach, and also differs from the Board by addressing the issues from the perspective of modern law. For example, to the question 2 'Is it appropriate for fiancés to have a religious wedding so that they can see each other comfortably?' the Board answered as follows: *'Since these rights cannot be protected today without the official registration of marriage, it is not appropriate for people who are going to get married to perform the traditional ceremony known as "religious marriage" without having an "official marriage".'* In response to

the same question, ChatGPT made a similar statement: *'It is not considered appropriate within the framework of Islamic morality and legal understanding for fiancés to have a religious marriage only for the purpose of seeing each other comfortably or spending time together...'*

(V) Counselling and moral emphasis

It can be stated the answers given by the SCofRA and ChatGPT are significantly similar, as in topicality and social cohesion when the answers analysed comparatively in terms of counselling and moral emphasis. It can be said, yet the Board's guidance is clearer and more emphatic with its statements referring to authoritative sources, and somewhat superior to ChatGPT in terms of appealing to the heart. Question 8 for example, 'Is a man obliged to look after his unmarried sister?', the Board answered: *'Allah Almighty commands helping and doing good to relatives. In the Qur'an, it is stated: 'Give to the kinsman, the poor and the wayfarer his due...'*²⁷ *'Do good to parents and relatives...'*²⁸ *Accordingly, a man should take care of his sister who is in need.'* It responded with verses and hadiths that appeal to the heart. ChatGPT responded with those statements: *'According to Islamic law, it is considered a good behaviour for a brother to help and support his sister, but there is no legal obligation.'* Although ChatGPT provided guidance based on moral emphasis, it responded with a slightly more robotic and cold style.

Discussion & Conclusions & Recommendations

This study evaluated the responses of AI-based applications to family-related religious questions by comparing them with the fatwas issued by the Supreme Council of Religious Affairs (SCofRA), the highest official religious authority in Türkiye. Although the findings show that AI tools such as ChatGPT have the capacity to provide information on religious issues to a certain extent, this competence has serious limitations, especially in family issues that require sensitivity and involve sectarian differences.

Among the 84 questions evaluated within the scope of the research, it was determined that 63% of the answers given by ChatGPT were fully overlapping with the SCofRA, 20.2% were partially overlapping and 16.7% were not at all. Although these rates may suggest a functional level of performance at first glance, a deeper analysis revealed that most of ChatGPT's answers lacked solid jurisprudential foundations and sectarian diversity. In theologically delicate topics such as mahr (dower), milk kinship, and divorce, the responses were found to be insufficient, sometimes

²⁷ al-Isrā', 17/26.

²⁸ al-Nisā', 4/36.

inaccurate, and often contextually irrelevant. This shows that the capacity of AI tools to generate content on religious issues is effective at a certain level, but it is far from authentic contextualisation.

One notable finding of the study is the simplicity and accessibility of ChatGPT's language. On that sense, it may be argued that ChatGPT holds potential as a supplementary tool in widespread RE by enabling individuals to access religious content more easily. However, these advantages do not eliminate the risk of misinformation and may even contribute to the erosion of trust in religious knowledge. Indeed, in some cases, ChatGPT provided answers based on the modern legal system, while users expected responses grounded in Islamic jurisprudence. This highlights the drawbacks of relying on AI systems that cannot fully comprehend users' intentions, particularly in matters involving religious sensitivity.

Another critical contribution of the study is that it reveals that AI carries ethical fragility in religious contexts. Generic answers without taking into account sectarian differences may lead to problems of justice in representation. In addition, the occasional inclusion of incorrect verse or source citations raises the risk that AI systems may produce errors described as 'hallucinations'. Despite these limitations, ChatGPT's clarity and ease of language suggest that it possesses limited yet notable educational potential. Especially when supported by a Turkish language model and enriched with authentic jurisprudential content, such AI tools may contribute to raising individuals' awareness of religious matters. It has been observed that AI can be functional in answering religious questions about the family if the correct prompt is given and AI can be used as an auxiliary tool. Apart from theology,²⁹ its use in fields such as medicine,³⁰ foreign language,³¹ psychology,³² occupational health and safety³³ and obtaining similar results is an indicator of these. Based on these findings, the following recommendations may be considered:

²⁹ Yurtseven, "İslâmî Finans Alanında Yapay Zekâ ile Tasarlanmış Fetva Uygulamaları: Robo Shariah Advisor ve Smart Mufti Örneği", 171-189; Çınar-Ekinci, "Yapay Zekâ Tabanlı Uygulamaların Dinî Soruları Cevaplama Yetenekleri: ChatGPT ve Din İşleri Yüksek Kurulu Fetvaları Bağlamında Bir Karşılaştırma", 62-97; Cañçelik et al., "ChatGPT 4.0'ın Türk İslam Edebiyatı Metin Şerhinde Doğruluk Değerlendirmesi", 72; Mehmet Ayhan – Zülal Kılıç, "Yapay Zekâ Modellerinin Hadis Tarihi Sorularına Verdiği Yanıtların Karşılaştırmalı Analizi: Chatgpt ve Gemini Örneği", *Dinbilimleri Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* 24/3 (December 2024), 137-159; Ahmet Faruk Çelik, "Yapay Zekâ Teknolojilerinin Fetva Hizmetlerine Potansiyel Katkıları: DİB Fetva Hizmetleri Özelinde Bir İnceleme", *Dergiabant* 13/1 (May 2025), 85-96.

³⁰ Yaxin Xiong, et al., "Accuracy of Artificial Intelligence Algorithms in Predicting Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis", *BMC Med Inform Decis Mak* 25/44 (2025); Muhammed Aydınalp Özcan, *Yapay Zekâ ile KOAH Hastalarının Durum Analizi ve IoT ile Solunum Verilerinin Takibi* (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi, Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü, 2024), 28.

³¹ Şule Çınar Yağcı-Tuğba Aydın Yıldız, "ChatGPT, Yabancı Dil Öğrencisinin Güvenilir Yapay Zekâ Sohbet Arkadaşı mıdır?", *Rumelide Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi* 37 (2023), 1315-1333.

³² Murat Canpolat. "Psikolojik Danışmanlık ve Rehberlikte Yapay Zekâ Kullanılabilirliği Üzerine Bir Araştırma". *Millî Eğitim Özel Eğitim ve Rehberlik Dergisi*, 1/1 (2021), 1-25; Hatice Kübra Özdoğan-Nurten Karacan Özdemir., "21.

- To ensure more reliable and comprehensive information delivery, AI systems should be trained on big datasets and legal knowledge, by taking into account issues such as family privacy and ethical dilemmas.
- To provide accurate prompts that enable AI to represent the views of various denominations when addressing family questions can help to effectively meet user expectations.
- To carry out continuous AI's data updates, ethical audits and improvements based on user feedback considering sectarian difference is key to provide reliable, inclusive and accurate information by AI in religious and moral education. For this purpose, interdisciplinary research in RE and related fields should be expanded.

Article Type / Makale Türü	Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi
Peer-Review / Değerlendirme	Double anonymized – At Least Two External / Çift Taraflı Körleme - En Az İki Dış Hakem Bu çalışma, etik kurul izni gerektirmeyen nitelikte olup, kullanılan veriler literatür taraması ve yayımlanmış kaynaklar üzerinden elde edilmiştir. Çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere riayet edildiği ve yararlanılan tüm kaynakların eksiksiz biçimde kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur. / This study does not require ethical committee approval, as the data were obtained through literature review and published sources. It is hereby declared that scientific and ethical principles were adhered to throughout the preparation of the study, and all referenced works have been duly cited in the bibliography.
Ethical Statement / Etik Beyan	
Plagiarism Checks / Benzerlik Taraması	Yes / Evet – Turnitin.
Conflicts of Interest / Çıkar Çatışması	The author(s) has no conflict of interest to declare. / Çıkar çatışması beyan edilmemiştir.
Complaints / Etik Beyan Adresi	suifdergi@gmail.com
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Author Declaration on the Use of Artificial Intelligence

(Yapay Zekâ Kullanımına Dair Yazar Taahhütnamesi)

The author has declared adherence to the principles of transparency, ethical compliance, originality, and responsibility in the use of artificial intelligence tools. They have affirmed that such usage complies with ethical standards and have undertaken full academic responsibility for it. Final revisions and checks for academic compliance were carried out by the author, who assumes full responsibility for the resulting text. The signed original copy of the document is available in the journal's editorial process files. / Yazar, yapay zekâ araçlarının kullanımına ilişkin şeffaflık, etik uygunluk, orijinallik ve sorumluluk ilkelerine riayet ettiğini beyan etmiş, bu kullanımın etik ilkelere uygun olmasını ve tüm akademik sorumluluğu üstlendiğini taahhüt etmiştir. Nihai düzenlemeler ve akademik uygunluk kontrolleri yazar tarafından gerçekleştirilmiş olup, ortaya çıkan metnin tüm sorumluluğu yazara aittir. Belgenin imzalı asıl nüshası dergi süreç dosyalarında mevcuttur.

Yüzyılda Kariyer Psikolojik Danışmanlığı ve Yapay Zekâ Uygulamaları”, *Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Buca Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi* 57 (2023), 2127-2152.

³³ Bilal Murat, “İş Sağlığı ve Güvenliği Faaliyetlerinde Yapay Zekâ ve Uzman Sistem Uygulamalarının Değerlendirilmesi,” *5. Uluslararası Mühendislik ve Teknoloji Yönetimi Kongresi*, ed. Gökşen Aras et al. (İstanbul: Güven Plus Grup Danışmanlık, 2021), 240-248.

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