THE IMPACTS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION ON INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

Cemil ORUÇ[*]

Din Eğitiminin Bireysel ve Sosyal Hayata Etkileri

Özet

İnsanın inanma içgüdüsünü çeşitli şekillerde açığa çıkaran dinin eğitimini sağlayan din eğitimi, kişiyle doğumdan ölümüne kadar belirli bir sistem içerisinde ilgilenir. Çocuktaki din duygusu, aşama aşama belirli süreçler içerisinde gelişir. Bu süreç boyunca, din eğitimi, bütün boyutlarda bireye rehberlik sağlar. Doğal olarak çocukların hayatındaki bu aşamada, bireyde bazı gelişim ve dönüşümler gözlemlenir. Eğitimin hedefleriyle uyumlu olarak din eğitimi, insanlara uygun değerleri taşımayı ve onları şekillendirmeyi, kişisel gelişime katkıda bulunmayı ve sosyalleşmelerini sağlamayı hedefler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Din, eğitim, gelişme, sosyal hayat

❀ ❀ ❀

Abstract

Religious education (RE), deals with religion showing up belief instinct of human being, surveys the person from birth to death in the particular system. The religious emotions of children evolve gradually, within specified periods. Within this process, RE provides the lead for individuals in all dimensions. Naturally, at this stage of children's lives, some improvements and transformations are observed in the individuals. In accordance with the goals of education, RE aims to form and transmit appropriate values to people, contributes to personal development, and ensures their socialization.

Key Words: Religion, education, development, social life.

[*] Yrd. Doç. Dr., Muş Alparslan Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi, cemiloruc@hotmail.com

General Framework

The religion[1] has an indispensable place as a universal phenomenon in the lives of individuals and communities throughout all periods of history; it surrounds the person and the community with both internal and symbolic aspects. What makes a person, an ideology, a movement or a religion successful is to provide integration of their own values, life philosophies, points of view and cultures with religion, and to use these value structures that everyone already knows in changing the lives of other people. From this perspective, it can be said that every religion can permeate all structures of society via an education process, transform these structures and create a new lifestyle that is not independent from the old roots of society

This process of change and transformation as part of religious belief becomes a permanent culture, due to an education authority. This is because the most effective way to convert a community is to develop an educational philosophy which puts the values of the religion into practice. In this way, there is a reciprocal relationship between the concepts of religion-education-culture and a complex structure affects each area in the specified aspects.

Because religions cannot describe themselves without a hierarchical order, theology and information about religious behaviors, they can coordinate the reciprocal relationship of the individual with God.[2] In these aspects, the religion is not only limited to one belief field, but also indicates defined behavior patterns. The religion therefore creates images and specific sensitivity, both in individuals and society, through its personal and social structures.

The concept of religion has always been present throughout human history, and may therefore be regarded as an ancient and essential structure. Due to the importance such concepts to the themes of this study, we are primarily going to present a study on concepts of religion and education, then examine their impacts on individuals and society.

---

[1]   What I mean by "the religion" is Islam and by "religion" is all religions.
[2]   Necdet Subaşı, *Gündelik Hayat ve Dinsellik*, İz Yay., İstanbul 2004, s.42.

Religion

Human being's belief in metaphysical powers and the rituals, associated with the practice of this belief, are evident of religion's existence in all aspects of society. Because of this importance of religion, many definitions of religion[3] have been made by many people. It therefore becomes difficult to understand the real meaning of the term, and each definition has been reduced to explain one aspect of religion.

Religion, as an umbrella term describing sets of highly differentiated and multi-faceted phenomena, straddling psychology and culture across huge divides of time and space, cannot simply be embraced by a single interpretive approach, no matter how complex.[4] From a theoretical perspective, religion is a unified system of ideas and practices with particular instances known as actual religions, such as Islam, Buddhism, Christianity and so on.[5]

When a child was born he is faced with a society which has an existing culture, but the child's mind is empty of any inclination and information. At the same time, a child has many inherent characteristics. This is a complex situation in many ways. For example, a wide variety of experimental work has indicated that children do not enter the world with minds that are blank slates. Rather, they are predisposed or equipped to acquire various forms of knowledge. Many of the mechanisms for the acquisition of domain-specific types of knowledge are in place at birth, as part of our evolutionary heritage. Language, for example, is acquired far too rapidly to have been imposed on the minds of children by cultural instruction. While there are some deep arguments about why it is that children acquire language so rapidly (an argument that has divided the classical from the connectionist approaches), the competing theories about language acquisition both agree that the answer lies not in culture but in psychological structure. Culture provides the occa-

---

[3] Most persons will say at once, the answer is very easy; and yet a comprehensive, universal, practical, unexceptionable answer, and therefore a true answer, may not be so easy as we suppose, Henry Colman, *What is Religion? The Question Answered*, Printed by C. Green, London 1846, 5.

[4] James J. Decenso, "Religion and the Psycho-Cultural Formation of Ideals"*, What is Religion? Origins, Definitions, and Explanations*, edited by Thomas A. Idinopulos and Brian C. Wilson, Brill 2006, p.15.

[5] E. Thomas Lawson, "Defining Religion… Going the Theoretical Way", *What is Religion? Origins, Definitions, and Explanations,* edited by Thomas A. Idinopulos and Brian C. Wilson, Brill 2006, p.45.

sion for the acquisition of the various forms of knowledge, but our biological and psychological heritage plays a fundamental role in interaction with the environment.[6]

To differing extents, various religions suggest that humans have certain abilities at birth and, at the same time, carry an inherent inclination towards belief. After birth, the environment where individuals become socialized -family, school, friends and media- play an active role in reinforcing the belief that humans have, as a "hereditary" trait, or in undermining it, year after year.

One hadith[7] of Islamic Prophet indicates that people's belief is innate: "Each person was born on Fıtrat[8] (pure creation); afterwards, their parents make them a Christian, a Jew or a Mazdean."[9]

Al-Ghazali, a Muslim scholar, describes people as a beeswax when they are children, and according to him, God creates everyone with the potential for belief and they then put into practice this belief in a certain direction, in the form of worship and rituals.[10] This indicates that every person was born with a faith.[11] Spirituality and religion are important, perhaps central, dimensions of human development. Data from American adolescents show that 95% believe in God and three-quarters try to follow the teachings of their religion. Almost half of U.S. youth say they frequently pray alone and 36% are involved in church youth groups. In a 1999–2000 Search Institute national survey of 6th- to 12th-grade youth, 54% said that "being religious or spiritual" was quite or extremely

---

[6] Lawson, "Defining Religion… Going the Theoretical Way", p.45-46.

[7] Hadith is a general name of Islam prophet's words.

[8] The concept of *fıtrat* means a capability of creating that human being can choose any way among many options. Fıtrat as a sacred power expresses the structure and the pure situation of creature types during the first creation. This interpretation proves that each person find a divine dimension with him., Hayati Hökelekli, *"Fıtrat"* DİA, XIII, İstanbul 1996, p.47; M. Ali Sabuni, *Safvetu't-Tefasir*, Dersaadet Yay., İstanbul trs., II, s.478.

[9] Buhari, Cenaiz, 680

[10] Ebu Hamid al-Ghazali, *İhya-u Ulûmi'd-Din* (thk. Abdul Muti' Emin Kalaci), Daru's-Sadr, Beyrut 2004, III, s.17.

[11] A survey has shown that eighty percent of Americans believe in God; 71 percent believe in angels; 75 percent believe in miracles. According to the World Values Survey of 2000, the percentage of people who never or practically never attend church was 60 percent in France, 55 percent in the UK, 48 percent in the Netherlands, but only 16 percent in the US., P. Richard Sloan, *Religion Medical Science and the Rise of Subjectivity*, European Journal of Integrative Medicine, Vol. 1, 2009, p.1.

important Religion is also important to most U.S. families. About 40% attend worship weekly, 95% of U.S. parents have a religious affiliation, and more than 90% want their children to receive some form of religious education.[12]

Religion requires this innate faith to be practiced as behaviors in all areas of life. The desire of this faith for practice has canalized groups to different ways and methods. Throughout history, people have thought as a necessity to connect with an extraordinary power.[13] Because religion has been a universal phenomenon during all periods of history, it has been an important position in the lives of people.

In the Islamic sources, religion has been defined in terms of various perspectives. The main framework of all definitions consists of the person's communication to himself, his environment and his Creator.[14] The person that performs efficient communication in these areas reinforces the faith situated as hereditary and, at the same time, starts to put into practice many implementations in his life concerning religion.

Religion has a structure which determines the lines of a person's thoughts and behaviors, gives him a certain philosophy of life and as a result, rules certain principles in every area of life.[15] In these aspects, the religion provides important answers to the questions of 'Where did we come from?', 'Where are we going to?' and 'What should we do to achieve happiness, both in this world and the Hereafter?'[16] In addition, the answer to the question of 'Why

---

[12] Chris J. Boyatzis, *"Religious and Spiritual Development in Children"* Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality (ed. Raymond F. Paloutzian and Crystal L. Park), The Guilford Press, New York 2005, p.123.

[13] Günay Tümer, *"Din"* Mad., DİA, İstanbul 1994, IX, s.317.

[14] Ahmet Hamdi Akseki, *İslam Dini*, Ankara 1963, s.223; Halis Ayhan, "Din Eğitimi ve Öğretimi; 21. yy.'dan Beklentiler", *21. yy.'da Eğitim ve Türk Eğitim Sistemi,* Dem Yay., İstanbul 2004, s.228; Cemal Tosun, *Din Eğitimi Bilimine Giriş*, Pegama Yay., Ankara 2005, s.10.

[15] Al-Ghazali, for example, in his work titled Bidayetu'l-Hidaye, explains the principles related to a person's all daily behavior and evaluates these principles as the beginning of Guidance, Al-Ghazali, *"Bidayetu'l-Hidaye",* Mecmuatu Resaili İmam Gazali, (thk. Muhammed Emin Muhammed), Mektebetu't-Tevfikiyye, Kahire, s.391-430.

[16] Ali Fuad Başgil, *Din ve Laiklik*, Yağmur Yay., İstanbul 1991, s.71-72; Bkz., Muhammed Nur Doğan, "Din Eğitimi ve Öğretiminin Vazgeçilmezliği", *Türk Milli Eğitim Sisteminde Din Eğitimi ve Öğretimi Sempozyumu*, *Yarınlar İçin Düşünce Platformu*, Ankara 2-3 Mart 2005, s.16-17.

religion?' is: 'for peace, happiness, tolerance, mercy and submission'[17] Apart from these questions, there is, of course no bigger 'big' question than what happens to us after death- and no surer guarantee that the subject of religion will be introduced into the family, ready or not. So it is instructive to contrast the general lack of interest in religion displayed by the outhers of child-rearing guides with the considerable attention that virtually all of them devote to children's concerns about death.[18] There is not an absolute answer of 'death' except for datas of religion.

The religion, in order to achieve such an effect in the life of individuals, should naturally establish an educational system to be applied. For this, it is necessary to define briefly the concept of education and to indicate the aims of education; the concept of RE will then be discussed.

Education

Of all the creations of God, human life is the most sacred. It has three aspects-the biological, the psychological and the sociological. While the biological aspect of human life is maintained and transmitted by nutrition and reproduction, the social aspect of human life is maintained and transmitted by education.[19] Education is generally defined as a process of changing behavior.[20] With this explanation, it can be said that education changes people's behaviors in a particular direction, matures them in many areas and provides for using their capabilities.

Education is a social process of change in the behavior of living organisms. This contains several important terms, each of which requires definition. First, education is social, for it involves the participation of different individuals. Secondly, it is a process of change –which suggests something more than a mere change in time or place- for the word process signifies progression in a series of events which are bound together, and which passes from a be-

---

[17] Bayraktar Bayraklı, *Kur'an Tefsiri*, Bayraklı Yay., İstanbul 2003, I, 140.
[18] Martha Fay, *Do Children Need Religion?-How Parents Today Are Thinking About the Big Question*, Pantheon Books of Random House Inc., New York 1993, p.23.
[19] V. R. Taneja, *Educational Thought And Practice*, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, p.3.
[20] Selahattin Ertürk, *Eğitimde Program Geliştirme*, Ankara 1997, s.12.

ginning to an end, or perhaps in a circuit which fulfills its destiny by turning full circle upon itself.[21]

Historically, education can be seen as the vehicle by which ideals of critical reason, individual freedom, progress and benevolent change are substantiated and realized.[22] The question 'is it possible to shape people in a desired direction' has been addressed in various ways. In particular, Locke and Rousseau's ideas in the Western world, and Ghazali's ideas in the Islamic world, include comprehensive views related to the power of education.

While Locke viewed the child's mind as a *tabula rasa* waiting to be inscribed with the received wisdom of society, Rousseau believed that children were born with the innate capacity to develop freely and naturally into fully rounded adults. Hence the role of education is not to fill the mind with alienating knowledge, but to preserve the child's primal innocence. The task of the teacher is to act, not as a postman delivering pre-packaged bundles of information, but as a gardener, responsible for creating the organic conditions necessary for the child's innate potential to flourish and flower. We were all born with an in-built natural goodness, but this quickly becomes contaminated whenever society, driven by hubris and pride, departs from the natural order. However, when properly cultivated and guided by conscience, natural reason will maintain a pristine relationship with the natural order.[23]

An alternative view of human nature is put forward by the 'romantics'. In the eighteenth century, Rousseau took the view that, far from maintaining society, power in the hands of the few will lead them to reinforce their position, which itself results in tyranny. In his view, what was needed was to educate all citizens fully. This involved encouraging the development of questioning minds and giving everyone the widest of educational experiences. As our intellects develop, we can all contribute to the evolution of society by continuous discussion and reason.[24]

---

[21] Robert Morris Ogden, *Psychology and Education*, Routledge Taylor&Francis Group, New York 1999, p.5.

[22] Andrew Wright, *Religion Education and Post-Modernity*, Routledgefalmer, London 2004, p.141.

[23] Wright, *Religion Education and Post-Modernity*, p.138.

[24] Stave Bartlett; Diana Burton; Nick Peim, *Introduction to Education Studies*, Paul Chapman Publishhing, London 2001, p.11.

The concept of *tabula rasa* was explained in a similar way by Ghazali, approximately thousands years prior to Locke. As mentioned above, Ghazali likens humans to beeswax, and suggests that everyone is affected by the educational activities seen in family, school, notification of the prophets, sermon of the preachers.[25] In this context, education transfers ideas, feelings, values and culture from generation to generation.[26]

Having defined the concept of education, the answer to 'why education' will be important to understand our aims on education more fully.

Modern education has determined some objectives, which serve as a guide for educational activities. These must be implemented in a specific order. If any part of society does not function properly, then this will affect the whole society and may even lead to social breakdown. These aims can be explained as follows:

Development of Basic Academic Skills: In order to participate in a modern society, certain skills are seen as very important. Most notably, we need to be able to read, write and perform basic mathematical tasks. These are needed in all areas of modern life.

Socialization: This is a process that begins at birth, when we start, effectively, as blank slates. We develop our 'selves' as we learn what we need to know to live and operate with others in social groups. This include language, right and wrong, expectations of ourselves and others, how to behave in different situations and so on. Socialization is a process of induction into society's culture, norms and values. This ensures a level of social cohesion necessary for society to continue. It is a process which continues throughout life but which is certainly of central importance in our early years.[27] In the social environment the child shares the experiences of others. He participates in several common activities. By doing things agreeable to others, he gets the same ideas and emotional disposition as are present in others. For example, a child living in a martial community will surely imbibe in him the martial spirit. For the education of a child in social environment, two things are essential: (1) Stimulus to action, (2) Making the child a co-partner in the activity.

---

[25]　Al-Ghazali, *İhya*, III, s.17.
[26]　Ziya Gökalp, *Terbiyenin Sosyal ve Kültürel Temelleri*, Meb. Yay., İst., 1974, s.321
[27]　Bartlett and the Others, *Introduction to Education Studies*, p.5.

Such conditions should be created that the child is stimulated to act, and then the feeling of co-partnership will be aroused in him in such a way that he owns the successes and failures of the activity.[28]

Preparing for Work: In small-scale and self-sufficient societies, children would learn about survival from adults. In these communities, adults are multi-skilled and can satisfy most of their wants by using their own abilities.[29]

Happiness of Human Beings: Human life can be described as a process in which individuals achieve the values and requirements so as to lead a happy life. Harrison states that, rather than an accumulation of pleasures and properties, the richness of a happy and quality life stems from the relationship with those who share the happiness. Education has a vital role in generating a happy life. According to Noddings, a good society is the one which has access to the resources providing objective happiness, and which has an education system encouraging its members to appreciate and search for all possible means to advance the level of happiness. An individual achieves the requirements of a happy life through various means throughout his or her life. These requirements, which can also be called basic life skills, are tried to be taught in formal teaching and learning environments, as well as in natural learning environments.[30]

General and Comprehensive Aims: This combines three general aims: Development according to nature, social efficiency and cultural or personal mental enrichment.[31]

These aims affect both people and the community in many aspects because, with these aims, education can help the society in making progress. Therefore, experiences of the old and dynamics of the young can help to shape a qualified generation.

---

[28] Taneja, *Educational Thought And Practice*, p.21.
[29] Bartlett and the Others, *Introduction to Education Studies*, p.5-6.
[30] Ayhan Ural, "Good Elementary Education", *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, World Conference on Educational Sciences, Nicosia, North Cyprus, 4-7 February 2009 -New Trends and Issues in Educational Sciences, 2009, Pages 1249-1254, p.1249.
[31] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*, The Macmillan company, Hyslop-Margison, New York 1968, 184; Chaube, S.P., Foundations of Education, Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd., 2002, 5.

Having explained the concepts of religion and education, we will now explore the concept of religious education and its impacts on the lives of individuals and community.

Religious Education (RE) and Its Impacts

RE is generally defined as the process of behavioral changing in the religious behavior of an individual.[32] RE therefore directs human instincts in the appropriate direction. Everyone has these innate instincts and, if they were not directed to the appropriate conditions, this may present a dangerous situation in both personal and social fields.

The subject of RE is the person: The person performes all acts which are deemed intellectual; the person feels all the moods which we connote as emotional; the person appreciates the states which we term aesthetic; the person makes all choices which belong to freedom; the person is the object of remorse or of exultation-the person who seeks, as he is able, to know God and all spiritual phenomena. The person is he who follows after God, if happily he may find him. The person is he who chooses or rejects whatever he regards as right. The person is he who rejoices in, or who is indifferent to, or antagonistic to, the true, the good and the beautiful. The subject, therefore, who is educated are, alike, the person.[33]

The person who has these all abilities is not only the subject and the object of RE, but also constructs himself and his environment. RE determines the direction of this shaping and helps the person to maintain the right direction. RE, briefly, is the process which forms behavioral change in the religious behavior of the person.

RE, with its fundamental position in human life, leads to some changes. The impacts of RE are summarized as follows:

1.RE establishes a value system: These values guide many behaviors of people and determine the direction of life. From birth to death, the person faces a value system that is created by the effect of several factors, such as religion, culture, traditions and so on. RE has an active role to play in forming religious and moral values,

---

[32] Beyza Bilgin, *Eğitim Bilimi ve Din Eğitimi*, Gün Yay., Ankara 1998, 7; Cemal Tosun, *Din Eğitimi Bilimine Giriş*, Pegama Yay., Ankara 2005, s.10-15.

[33] Charles Franklin Thwing, *Education and Religion: the Bedell Lectures for 1926-27*, Ayer Company Publisher, 1929, p.4.

because every religion constitutes a value system which leads to changes in the person's life in general.

2. RE contributes to childhood development: The first years of childhood development are very important because, "During the first two or three years, the child learns more than he does during the rest of his life."[34] If children were neglected in these periods, it would be a fundamental mistake. Children naturally complete their developmental stages in a particular order and harmony. When these stages are disrupted by external factors, the child's future life may be negatively affected.

Education and RE are not only an instruction. In fact, instruction is only a means for furthering the ends of education. They stand for developing all the physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual powers, and take into consideration all those factors that influence person, from birth to death.[35]

The first five years of childhood plays a key role with regard to cognitive, moral and religious development.[36] The basic emotions develop during this period and it is referred to certain fundamental needs of children. Some of the more important of these needs may be briefly enumerated as follows: (1) All children need security, (2) All of them need opportunities for various kinds of games, (3) They want to develop contacts with other children for their social, emotional and intellectual development, (4) All children want their questions to be listened to and answered within the limits of their understanding, and (5) They want to develop the powers of self-confidence, initiative, and independence in themselves, and for this they crave for suitable opportunities.[37]

RE is not only for the experiences of ritual and worship; it also provides answers to many questions, the feeling of security, and an instrument of communication between the person, society and the Creator. In this period, children perform an effective communication with these fields. At first, a child is influenced by his parents and family, and then researches an area in which he can find the answers to many questions and feel confidence. RE, from the early

---

[34]   Chaube, *Foundations of Education*, p.7.
[35]   Chaube, *Foundations of Education*, p.18.
[36]   Enver Özkalp, *Davranış Bilimlerine Giriş,* Anadolu Üniversitesi Yay., Eskişehir 2004, s.187-189.
[37]   Chaube, *Foundations of Education*, p.13.

period, educates the children in issues, such as affection, confidence, tolerance, and so on.

RE must be based on love, kindness, compassion, integrity and optimism. Thus, RE handles the people from early ages in all fields. Therefore, everyone acquires the moral principles such as honesty, stability and harmony between thought and behavior.[38]

3. RE establishes a moral system: All known societies have moral rules that identify certain classes of action as right or wrong. In general, these moral rules condemn selfish, impulsive, shortsighted actions and instead promote acts that provide benefits in larger perspectives—for example, by being good for society as a whole or by bringing long-term gains. Religion has strong ties to morality, in that religions prescribe morality. Religious writings are replete with instructions on how people ought to live, such as the Ten Commandments in the Judeo-Christian tradition or the Eightfold Plan in the Buddhist tradition. Further, many religious persons believe that religion is the source of morality; they view morality as originating in the will of God. [39] Religion has much to say about morality. Christians, Jews, Buddhists, Muslims, and Hindus may not agree on the nature of God, or on religious rituals and teachings, but they do tend to agree about moral issues. In fact, when it comes to ethics, major world religions are amazingly consistent in their teachings about right and wrong, especially concerning murder, stealing, and adultery. In Christianity and Judaism, this distilled essence of morality is captured by the Ten Commandments. And all major world religions seem to teach some version of "Do unto others what you would have them do unto you."[40] Generally, moral drives from relationships of individuals that take place with the other existences. Although many definitions exist of moral behavior, in brief, it represents what is good. In this case, morality is the general name of networks which regulate, both theoretically and

206| db

---

[38] Ömer Çam, "Din, Dil, Kültür ve Eğitim", Din Eğitimi Araştırmalar Dergisi, İstanbul 1994, s.31; İrfan Başkurt, *Din Eğitiminde Adalet Ölçü Denge*, İşaret Yay., İstanbul 2000, s.302.

[39] Anne L. Geyer & Roy F. Baumeister, *"Religion, Morality, and Self-Control (Values, Virtues, and Vices)",* Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality (ed. Raymond F. Paloutzian and Crystal L. Park), The Guilford Press, New York 2005, p.412-413.

[40] Ralph W. Hood & Peter C. Hill & Bernard Spilka, *The Psychology of Religion-An Empirical Approach*, The Guilford Press, New York 2009, p.381.

practically, the activities of people regarding all being sphers and connects the certain principles.

There is a parallelism between the principle of religion set forth and universal principles of morality. While the Religion puts forth principles such as peace, love, tolerance, justice and honesty, morality, likewise, embraces these principles universally.

The religion is the most fundamental of the social establishments that is necessary to internalize the concepts of 'morality' and 'conscience'.[41] It is also a discipline guiding people as a moral institution and surrounding the person more strongly than laws made by any human. Weaknesses in religious feelings leads to increases in crime, anarchism and illegality. Thus, we cannot mention any moral activities without religion.[42]

RE takes care of children at the beginning of their development and aims to clean their spiritual world against any hazardous situations. Therefore, a person believing in the existence of metaphysical powers such as Allah and angels through his early development and feeling their keeping a good lookout for him, has to obey the principles of religion and universal moral rules.

A verse in the Qur'an indicates this fact, as follows: "And thou (standest) on an exalted Standard of character."[43] Similarly, the Prophet of Islam says that: "I was sent to complete the good moral."[44]

Having determined the basic movement area like this, the religion aims to establish a moral system that is also in accordance with the universal values. This moral system is transferred to the next generation thorough education.

4. RE promotes human happiness: It is a paradox in educational theory that, although everybody admits, the happiness of in world is an important ultimate aim.[45] This aim in education becomes happiness both in this life and the life after death. A verse

---

[41] Özcan Köknel, *Ailede ve Toplumda Ruh Sağlığı*, İstanbul 1981, s.60; Ayhan, Eğitime Giriş, Damla Yay., İstanbul 1986, s.60.

[42] Günay Tümer, *"Din"* Mad., DİA, İstanbul 1994, IX, s.317; Imanuel Kant, *Pedagoji Üzerine* (çev. M. Rahmi), İstanbul 2005, s.22.

[43] Kalem, 68/4.

[44] Muvatta, Hüsnü'l-Hulk, 1.

[45] Edward L. Thorndike, *Education-A First Book*, Read Country Books, 2007, p.19.

explains this aim: "Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter and defend us from the torment on the fire."[46]

The happiness in this life mentioned in this verse is the major sources of happiness, such as health, appetite, a peaceful home and a propitious wife. The happiness in the Hereafter is to be protected from fear and to go Heaven.[47] To achieve all these forms of happiness is the ultimate goal of the religion. Religion and faith relate us to our existential limits such as death, aloneless, the need for meaning, and the threat of freedom. They are two polar extremes that help identify the quality of the relationship we have with God, self, others, and nature by which we cope or do not cope with our existential limits.[48]

Research indicates that global markers of greater parental and familial religiousness are linked to better child psychological adjustment. This includes youth exhibiting fewer externalizing and internalizing behavior problems, greater prosocial traits, lower alcohol usage, less marijuana usage, and less serious antisocial behavior. A few studies suggest that parents' religiousness promotes children's functioning by facilitating effective parenting. Given that more religious families tend to have better behaved children, it may be especially challenging for such families to deal with child psychopathology when it does occur. Consistent with this idea, Strawbridge et al., (1998) found that more involvement in religious activities exacerbated the negative impact of family dysfunction (e.g., marital or child problems) on depressive symptoms of elderly adults, whereas religiousness buffered the negative effects of more "uncontrollable" types of problems (e.g., chronic health problems, poverty). While similar research has yet to be conducted with families of clinicreferred youth, certain religious beliefs and practices could exacerbate as well as buffer the maladjustment of clinically distressed youth.[49]

---

[46] Bakara, 2/201.
[47] Sabuni, *Safvetu't-Tefasir*, I, s.130. Bkz., Erol Güngör, *Ahlak Psikolojisi ve Sosyal Ahlak*, Ötüken Yay., İstanbul 2000, s.115-116.
[48] Jerome W. Berryman*, "Faith Development and the Language of Faith",* Handbook of Children's Religious Education (ed. Donald Ratcliff), Religious Education Press, Birmingham, Alabama 1992, p.21.
[49] Annette Mahoney & Nalini Tarakeshwar, *"Religion's Role in Marriage and Parenting in Daily Life and During Family Crises",* Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality (ed. Raymond F. Paloutzian and Crystal L. Park), The Guilford Press, New York 2005, P186.

Different from mentioned above, RE should (1) Enable pupils to achieve knowledge and understanding of religions in the country and oft he influence religions on people's lives and in society; (2) Contribute to the spiritual and moral development of pupils; (3) Develop awareness of the fundamental questions about life raised by human experience; (4) Encourage pupils to investigate, reflect on, evaluate and respond to such questions in the light of the teachings of the world's great religious and ethical traditions; and (5) Promote respect for the rights of other people to hold beliefs different from one's own.[50]

Conclusion

All historical experiences show that there is no period of history in which people has lived without religious life and thought. We can say that religion has been with human being as sign of instinct of belief. This is because the human need and desire to express belief via specified rituals does not depend upon the option of individual; on the contrary, it is a form of inherited instinct.

When we define education as a process of behavioral change, we can also define RE as the changing of process of religious behavior of an individual. However, this situation needs a particular process, method and endeavour. To regulate the religious behavior of children and to direct their instinct of belief requires sustained endeavor and zeal.

The ultimate target of RE, in the long term, is to educate people to be happy, both in this world and in the Hereafter. That is why religion admits certain principles- to realize these targets, and constructs a moral and merit system to frame the behaviors of mankind regarding personal and social life. By this dimension, religion and its education makes all the necessary regulations for people to conduct their lives in accordance with these aims.

db | 209

---

[50] Peter Schreiner, *Different Approaches-Common Aims?, Current Developments in Religious Education in Europe,* Extracts of a Paper Delivered in Oslo, November 2001, p.4.

References

Akseki, Ahmet Hamdi, *İslam Dini*, Ankara 1963.

Al-Ghazali, Ebu Hamid, "Bidayetu'l-Hidaye", *Mecmuatu Resaili İmam Gazali*, (thk. Muhammed Emin Muhammed), Mektebetu't-Tevfikiyye, Kahire.

_____ *İhya-u Ulûmi'd-Din* (thk. Abdul Muti' Emin Kalaci), Daru's-Sadr, Beyrut 2004, III.

Ayhan, Halis, "Din Eğitimi ve Öğretimi; 21. yy.'dan Beklentiler", *21. yy.'da Eğitim ve Türk Eğitim Sistemi*, Dem Yay., İstanbul 2004.

_____ *Eğitime Giriş,* Damla Yay., İstanbul 1986.

Bartlett, Stave; Burton, Diana; Peim Nick, *Introduction to Education Studies*, Paul Chapman Publishhing, London 2001.

Başgil, Ali Fuad, *Din ve Laiklik*, Yağmur Yay., İstanbul 1991.

Başkurt, İrfan, *Din Eğitiminde Adalet Ölçü Denge*, İşaret Yay., İst., 2000.

Bayraklı, Bayraktar, *Kur'an Tefsiri*, Bayraklı Yay., İstanbul 2003, I.

Berryman, Jerome W*., "Faith Development and the Language of Faith",* Handbook of Children's Religious Education (ed. Donald Ratcliff), Religious Education Press, Birmingham, Alabama 1992.

Bilgin, Beyza, *Eğitim Bilimi ve Din Eğitimi,* Gün Yay., Ankara 1998.

Boyatzis, Chris J*., "Religious and Spiritual Development in Children"* Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality (ed. Raymond F. Paloutzian and Crystal L. Park), The Guilford Press, New York 2005.

Chaube, S.P., *Foundations of Education*, Vikas Publishing House Pvt Ltd., 2002.

Colman, Henry, *What is Religion? The Question Answered*, Printed by C. Green, London 1846.

Çam, Ömer, "Din, Dil, Kültür ve Eğitim**",** *Din Eğitimi Araştırmalar Dergisi*, İst., 1994.

Decenso, James J., "Religion and the Psycho-Cultural Formation of Ideals", *What is Religion? Origins,*

Definitions, and Explanations, edited by Thomas A. Idinopulos and Brian C. Wilson, Brill 2006.

Dewey, John, *Democracy and Education*: *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*, The Macmillan Company, Hyslop-Margison, New York 1968.

Ertürk, Selahattin, *Eğitimde Program Geliştirme*, Ankara 1997.

Fay, Martha, *Do Children Need Religion?-How Parents Today Are Thinking About the Big Question*, Pantheon Books of Random House Inc., New York 1993

Geyer, Anne L. & Baumeister, Roy F., *"Religion, Morality, and Self-Control (Values, Virtues, and Vices)",* Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality (ed. Raymond F. Paloutzian and Crystal L. Park), The Guilford Press, New York 2005, P186

Gökalp, Ziya, *Terbiyenin Sosyal ve Kültürel Temelleri*, Meb. Yay., İst., 1974.

Güngör, Erol, *Ahlak Psikolojisi ve Sosyal Ahlak*, Ötüken Yay., İstanbul 2000.

Hood, Ralph W. & Hill, Peter C. & Spilka, Bernard, *The Psychology of Religion-An Empirical Approach*, The Guilford Press, New York 2009.

Hökelekli, "*Fıtrat*" DİA, İstanbul 1996, XIII.

Kant, Imanuel, *Pedagoji Üzerine* (çev. M. Rahmi), İstanbul 2005.

Lawson E. Thomas, "Defining Religion… Going the Theoretical Way", *What is Religion? Origins, Definitions, and Explanations*, edited by Thomas A. Idinopulos and Brian C. Wilson, Brill 2006.

Mahoney, Annette & Tarakeshwar, Nalini, *"Religion's Role in Marriage and Parenting in Daily Life and During Family Crises",* Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality (ed. Raymond F. Paloutzian and Crystal L. Park), The Guilford Press, New York 2005, P186.

Nur Doğan, Muhammed, "Din Eğitimi ve Öğretiminin Vazgeçilmezliği", *Türk Milli Eğitim Sisteminde Din Eğitimi ve Öğretimi Sempozyumu,* Yarınlar İçin Düşünce Platformu, Ankara 2-3 Mart 2005.

Ogden, Robert Morris, *Psychology and Education,* Routledge Taylor&Francis Group, New York 1999.

Özcan Köknel, *Ailede ve Toplumda Ruh Sağlığı*, İstanbul 1981.

Özkalp, Enver, *Davranış Bilimlerine Giriş*, Anadolu Üniversitesi Yay., Eskişehir 2004.

Sabuni M. Ali, *Safvetu't-Tefasir*, Dersaadet Yay., İstanbul trs., I-II.

Sloan, P. Richard, Religion Medical Science and the Rise of Subjectivity, *European Journal of Integrative Medicine*, Vol. 1, 2009.

Subaşı, Necdet, *Gündelik Hayat ve Dinsellik*, İz Yay., İstanbul 2004.

Taneja, V. R., *Educational Thought And Practice*, Sterling Publishers, New Delhi.

Thorndike, Edward L., *Education-A First Book*, Read Country Books, 2007.

Thwing, Charles Franklin, *Education and Religion: the Bedell Lectures for 1926-27,* Ayer Company Publisher, 1929.

Tosun, Cemal, *Din Eğitimi Bilimine Giriş*, Pegama Yay., Ankara 2005.

Tümer, Günay, *"Din"* Mad., DİA, İstanbul 1994, IX.

Ural, Ayhan, "Good Elementary Education", *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences,* Vol. 1, Issue 1, World Conference on Educational Sciences, Nicosia, North Cyprus, 4-7 February 2009 -New Trends and Issues in Educational Sciences, 2009, Pages 1249-1254.

Wright, Andrew, *Religion Education and Post-Modernity*, Routledgefalmer, London 2004.

Schreiner, Peter, *Different Approaches-Common Aims?, Current Developments in Religious Education in Europe*, Extracts of a Paper Delivered in Oslo, November 2001.

db | 211

❉ ❉ ❉