Religiosity and Academic Motivation on High School and University Students in Turkey

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to find out the relationship between motivation and religiosity in terms of academic motivation and intrinsic religious motivation. The sample consists of 471 participants chosen randomly from different high schools and from different faculties at Ataturk University in Erzurumin, Turkey, namely: Department of Theology, Department of Geography Education, Religious High School and Religious Super High School and general high school. Correlation, One-way variance analysis ANOVA, with the Turkey HSD post-hoc analysis were used in multiple comparison statistical analysis as applied to the data. The results showed that there was no significant relation between academic motivation and sex, socio-economic level, and education department but rather, students' participation in private educational activities like extra classes on weekends with the aim to prepare for exams affects their success and academic motivation level. The study also revealed a significant relation between academic motivation and self efficacy, success of sibling, positive or negative attitudes of teacher, competition, reward and punishment. Finally, the study showed that there was significant relation between intrinsic religious motivation and class and education department. According to these results, intrinsic religious motivations of students increase as long as class level increases. The research reveals that religion provides meaning in one's life with direction and purpose. The study therefore draws attention that religion can be a point of reference in motivation of human in all fields and the increase of human's efficiency.

KEYWORDS: Motivation, religiosity, academic motivation

Introduction

An extensive amount of work on motivation has accumulated over the years. Much of the work focuses on varied implications and applications of motivation to various psychosocial phenomena. Religion as a social system is no different as psychological elements are inherent cross culturally providing a variety of potential research opportunities within academic literature. A theory of motivation can provide the operational framework in which to position empirical inquiry. Motivation describes the forces acting on or within an organism to initiate and direct behavior. Motivation also describes the differences in intensity of behavior (Hughes, 2011). Motivation is a psychological phenomenon that leads one to be moved. Also, it leads one to do something and to achieve specific goals and aims (Bilgin, 2003; Ryanand Deci, 2000). Thus, it can be said that motivation encourages desire, excitement and interests of the individual for her/his life, and it also creates positive results from his acts. Motivation supports people to carry out their imaginations and provides energy and desire for them (Shinn, 1996). People, who have

high motivation levels, access their point target and achieve their goals more easily and successfully. Briefly, motivation has an undeniable impact on the human life to satisfy needs and desires and be a successful and happy person. One possible aspect of motivation is self-actualization, which is living a good and beneficial life, utilization of ability and skills in the best form and providing the highest performance from the individual (Baykal, 1978).

The concept of motivation refers to internal factors that impel action and to external factors that can act as inducements to action. The three aspects of action that motivation can affect are direction (choice), intensity (effort), and duration (persistence). Motivation can affect the acquisition of people's skills and abilities also how they utilize their skills and abilities (Locke & Latham, 2004). Individual and environmental factors impact the many aspects of motivation like physiological, psychological, and sociological (Woolfolk, 1980). These factors are examined from many perspectives (psychosocial, Jung, 1971; need-based, Maslow, 1954; intrinsic, Deci, 1975; Katz & Kahn, 1978; social identity, Ashforth & Mael, 1989; value-based, Etzioni, 1961, Kelman, 1958; goal-setting, Locke & Latham, 1984; self-concept based, Brief & Aldag, 1981; Gecas, 1982; Snyder & Williams, 1982; Sullivan, 1989); and to some extent, developmental (Kegan, 1982; Kohlberg 1976; Loevinger 1976) yet arguments over the merits of each viewpoint have been long and exhaustive in the social sciences literature. There are several theories about motivation like self-determination theory (Deci &Ryan, 1985), goal-orientation theory (Kaplan & Maehr, 2007; 2002), Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (Maslow, 1943), McClelland's (1965; 1987) need for achievement theory, Weiner's (1992) attribution theory to name only a few. Motivation is the main component of education, and it takes an important role on achievement and benefit of the learning process for students. Psychological efforts and studies are keen on finding different techniques that increase motivation of students and their success.

Motivation is hardly a unitary phenomenon. Individuals have varied degrees, and different kinds of motivation. Orientation of motivation concerns the underlying attitudes and goals that give rise to action. It is about the reason of the actions. As an example, a student can be highly motivated to do homework out of curiosity and interest or, alternatively because he or she wants to procure the approval of his/her teacher or parent. A student could be motivated to learn a new set of skills because he or she understands her/his potential utility or value or because learning the skills will yield a good grade and the privileges good grade efforts. In these examples, the amount of motivation does not vary necessarily, but the nature and focus of the motivation should be evidenced certainly (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Student motivation is an important issue, but it is understood poorly in higher education classrooms, so researchers should devote themselves to situational and personality factors that influence student motivation in teaching (Hancock, 2004). A person, who has positive academic motivation level, has a will to learn, likes learning related activities and believes that school is important. Positive academic motivation not only helps a person to succeed in school, but also helps the person to see that learning is rewarding and important in all aspects of life (Brown, 2009). There are several factors that affect academic motivation and achievement: individual characteristics, tendencies, and abilities (Deci & Ryan, 1985); socio-economic status (Etten & Presley, 2008); self-efficacy(Schunk & Miller, 2002); self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985); anxiety and fearof success (Deci & Ryan, 1985); parents attitudes (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan, 1991; Struthers, Perry & Menec, 2000); positive or negative attitudes of teacher (Akbaba, 2006); success of sibling (Ülper, 2011; Balkış, 2004); competition (Hardré, Chen, Huang, Chiang, Jen & Warden, 2006; Tezcan, 1985); reward and punishment (Covington, 2002; Deci & Ryan, 1975;

Balkış, 1972), etc. Factors such as this influence how hard students will work in school, how easily they will be able to learn, how well they will perform, and how satisfied they will be with their educational experience (Moen & Doyle, 1978).

A look at literature shows that many factors like education, culture, religion, and human relationships, etc. affect human life in all aspects. Each factor has a value for people, but it can be said that the most important value is religion for people. The effect of religion on human life is undeniable. It is a formalized system of belief and practice manifested in behaviors of devotees. Experientially religion provides community and commonality of social norms and taboos ensuring directed purposeful structure in one's life. Religion is considerable socially and culturally. Religion as a social system has had strong impacts on all aspects on human life. Religion gives ethical structure to people in every domain and subject. Religion provides an interpretative structure for the individual encouraging some behaviors while discouraging others. These complex systems of behavior management, in many respects, are coupled with systems of motivation. Religion seeks to motivate how adherents behave within preset norms socially and personally. In a sense, belief provides another layer of complexity in shaping one's motivations within their world. There are several studies about motivational influence of religion in the literature. Religion has different dimensions related the human life. There is extensive research in exploration of the varied dimensions of religion. These dimensions affect religious individual's life from different perspectives. One of these studies is made by Allport and Ross (1967). Allport and Ross presented two distinctions about dimensions of religion. This distinction had been encapsulated in the terms "intrinsic religion", referring to a genuine, heartfelt devout faith, and "extrinsic religion", referring to a more utilitarian use of religion as a means to an end, such as church/mosque attendance to gain social status, etc. These dimensions of religion were measured on the Religious Orientation Scale of Allport and Ross (Allport & Ross, 1967). Daniel Batson added one more dimension to Allport and Ross' distinction or what he refers to as extrinsic, intrinsic and quest respectively as religion-as-means, religion-as-end, and religion-as-quest, and measures these constructs on the Religious Life Inventory (Batson, Schonrade & Ventis, 1993). Another distinction related dimensions of religion is made by Stark and Glock (1968). This distinction presents five forms of religious orientations. These dimensions are the doctrinal, the ritual, the experiential, the intellectual, the ethical-consequential (Stark & Glock, 1968). The doctrinal dimension bases on religious belief. This is a kind of attachment and the attachment takes its power from religious belief. Religious individual has certain beliefs that attached him to God and connect into the relationship with the God (Hokelekli, 1998). The ritual dimension consists of some certain behavior patterns which are expected to do by individuals who believe. This dimension contains some certain rituals like worship, prayer, attending to special ceremonies, fasting, etc. (Karaca, 2011). The experiential dimension is connected with belief and rituals, but it is a kind of life which is more sensitive and more special. A religious individual may access information about God and may experience different emotions related to God. These emotions and experiences are unique and special for every religious individual (Kayıklık, 2011). The intellectual dimension base on the expectation that the religious individual will be informed about his faith is common to all religions. There is important and considerable variation, because every religion evaluates kinds of knowledge according to its main system (Glock & Stark, 1969). The ethical-consequential dimension is different from the other four. This dimension identifies the effects of the four dimensions in all of individual life (Glock & Stark, 1968). Religion provides meaning in one's life with direction

and purpose. The innate tendency to believe makes religion an indispensable element for them, however, individuals who belief a religion try to reach the highest religious level in their life, so they attain a certain standard of living which is identified by the religion. When the individuals act like this, they maintain the impact of religion in every aspect of their life. Religiosity may influence the individual's goals and contribute to everyday functioning and well-being both through the search for the sacred and through the adherence to religious tradition.

In this study the following questions are addressed: "Is religion a motivator for religious person's educational life or not?", "If religion motivates the individual's everyday goals, how much does it affect individual's academic motivation?" In this direction, "What is the academic motivation levels of respondents?", "Is there a relationship between demographic variables and academic motivation levels?", "What are factors that affect academic motivations of respondents?", "What is the intrinsic religious motivation levels of respondents?", "Is there a relationship between demographic variables and intrinsic religious motivation levels?", "Is there a significant relation between academic motivation and intrinsic religious motivation?". According to these research questions, the following hypotheses were generated on the basis of available evidence: 1) Socio-economic status is an important factor for academic motivation. Respondents, who have low socio economic status, have higher academic motivation levels than respondents who have high socioeconomic status. 2) Academic motivation levels of respondents increases as long as the education level increases. 3) Intrinsic religious motivation level of respondents changes according to the education level and department. It is thought that respondents who are students in theology faculty, religious high school, and religious super high school have higher intrinsic religious motivation levels as compared to others in secular institutions or who did not receive the education. 4) There is a significant correlation between academic motivation and intrinsic religious motivation. Furthermore, factors that affect academic motivation are investigated. The research also focuses on respondents' thoughts related factors that affect academic motivation. Finally the overall aim of this study is to focus attention on religion as motivator in education area. Because, we thought that there is a lack of importance to motivational influence of religion in related education research. The current academic literature confirms this assertion.

Method

Participants: The sample consists of 471 participants. These participants were chosen randomly. The entire sample consisted of Muslim students. These students are from different high schools and from different faculties at Ataturk University in Erzurumin, Turkey. The high schools are (3) Erzurum Religious High School*, Religious SuperHigh School, (4) Erzurum Super High School, and Erzurum Nevzat Karabag Super High School. The different faculties were (1) Divinity Faculty and (2) Kâzım Karabekir Education Faculty. Of this sample, 219 (46.5%) were boys and 252 (53.5%) were girls. Ages of sample groups ranged from 14 to 34. Of this sample, 13 respondents (2.8%) had low socio- *) Religious High School: It was given education to students both natural sciences and religious sciences in this school. These schools are expressed for "Imam Hatip High School" or "Imam Hatip Super High School". There is a difference between these two schools. There is teaching of English lesson detailedly in Imam Hatip Super High School, there is no teaching of English lesson detailed in the other. Economic level and 14 respondents (3.0%) had high socio-economic level. The high estrange had carried out in center socio economic level; 306 respondents (65.0%). This sample consists of respondents who are in

different class levels at high school and university. While 163 respondents (34.6%) were in high school 1; 52 respondents (11%)were in high school 2; 25 respondents (5.3%) were in high school 3; 59 respondents (12.5%) were in university 1, 94 respondents (20.0%) were in university 2, 60 respondents (12.7%) were in university 3 and finally 18 respondents (3.8) were students in university4. The sample consists of students who are in different departments. 110 respondents (23.4) were students in Department of Theology, 121 respondents (25.7) were students in Department of Geography Education, 120 respondents (25.5) were students in Religious High School and Religious Super High School, and finally 120 respondents (25.5) were students in general high school.

Procedures: This research was conducted in 2010-2011 autumn semester. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study. We gave a questionnaire to participants and asked them to answer the questions honestly and from their own experience. The overall completion time was between ten or fifteen minutes. Correlation, One-way variance analysis, and ANOVA, with the Tukey HSD post-hoc analysis were used in multiple comparison statistical analysis as applied to the data.

Measures: Since this study deals with the relation between motivation and religiosity in terms of academic motivation and intrinsic religious motivation and aims to reveal the incentive impact of religion on human, two measures were used. These were Hoge's (1972) *Intrinsic religious motivation scale* and Bozanoglu's (2004) *Academic motivation scale*. A questionnaire that consists of the two measures was used in this research, and some items were added to the questionnaire to gather the data about the demographic features and factors affecting academic motivation. Academic motivation scale that was prepared to measure academic motivation by Bozanoglu (2004), consists of 25 items and Likert type ratings from 0 to 4. Point scoring system as follows: "0" strongly disagree, "1" disagree, "2" undecided, "3" agree, and "4" strongly agree. The highest point of the scale is "80" and the lowest is "0". Improvement, reliability, and validity of the measurement were made by Bozanoglu. The measurement is more useful as a single factor, but also can be used to measure three factors. Those factors are: Self-transcendence, using information, and exploration. Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale that was prepared to measure intrinsic religious motivation by Hoge was adapted into Turkish by Karaca. Karaca had done his research and scale adaptation on the university students. The scale consists of 10 items. Seven questions of the measurement are positive (like; my religious faiths determine my aspects of daily life) and the others are negative (like; I believe that there are more important things than religion in life). Reliability and validity of scale shows that the measurement is useful and reliable to measure intrinsic dimension of religiosity in Turkey (Karaca, 2001).

Results

Findings and Comments Relating Academic Motivation: As a result of statistical analysis, participants received (M=53.89) average points from academic motivation scale with (S.D. 10.90). The scale's total point was 80. That sample scored slightly above the middle in terms of intrinsic religious motivation total score.

Table 1: Relation of Demographic Variables and Academic Motivation

Demographic Variables Academic Motivation
Age   -.147**

Sex	-.041	
Socio-economic level	-.035	
Class	-.159**	
Education department	.072	

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

As it is seen in Table 1, statistically there was significant negative relation between academic motivation and age (r = -1.47), and class (r = -.159). Accordingly, the hypothesis "Academic motivation level of respondents increases as long as the education level increases" was not supported. However, there was no significant relation between academic motivation and sex, socio-economic level, and education department. In terms of this result, the hypothesis "Socio-economic status" is an important factor for academic motivation. The hypothesis that "respondents, who have low socio-economic status, have a higher academic motivation level than respondents who have high socio-economic status." was not supported. It can be said that students, who were included in the sample, don't think socio-economic status as a factor that effect academic motivation. Socioeconomic status is not important for them in terms of academic motivation.

According to the class levels, academic motivation averages as follows:

Table 2: The Sample's Academic Motivation Levels according to the Class Variable

Class		N	M	S. D.
High School	1	163	56.49	11.034
High School	2	52	53.71	10.856
High School	3	25	50.00	12.251
University	1	59	55.39	8.785
University	2	94	51.64	9.938
University	3	60	50.20	11.766
University	4	18	55.50	10.331
Total		471	53.89	10.909

In Table 2, while high school 1 students had the highest academic motivation average (M= 56.49), high school 3 students had the lowest academic motivation average (M=50.00). As in high school, university 1 students had the highest academic motivation average (M= 55.39). While university 3 students had the lowest academic motivation average, university 4 students have academic motivation average that was near the highest average (M= 55.20) $(F_{(4, 464)}=4.31; p< ,001)$.

According to the Tukey HSD post-hoc analysis that was applied to the data; there were significant differences with high school 1 between university 2 and university 3. As it is seen there is no important academic motivation average difference in both high schools and university class levels. As a reason for this it can be showed as students' busy and complex education life and course schedule. Next to official school attendance students participate in many other private educational activities like extra classes on weekends with the aim to prepare for exams that will prepare them to the university entrance exam. This busy life affects their success and academic

motivation level. So it can be said that students' academic motivation average is so close-range to each other because of the negative states and same factors.

As noted earlier, several questions which related to academic motivation factors were added to the questionnaire. Aim of these questions is obtaining information about students' thoughts about academic motivation and factors that affect it. The questions were prepared following academic literature trends in research. Every question was related to a particular academic motivation factor. Correlations were observed between the independent variables (factors that effect academic motivation) and academic motivation in table 3.

Table 3: Correlations between Independent Variables and Academic Motivation

Self-efficacy	.345**
Self-determination	.047
Parents' attitudes	-.055
Success of sibling	.193**
Positive or negative attitudes of teacher	.345**
Reward and punishment	.358**
Competition	.221**

As it is seen in Table 3, there was significant relation between academic motivation and self efficacy, success of sibling, positive or negative attitudes of teacher, competition, and reward and punishment. However, there was not significant relation between academic motivation and self-determination and parent attitudes. Also it was applied variance analysis to data that obtained from independent variables that have significant relation with academic motivation and was examined for the consequences for every independent variables.

Findings and Comments Relating Intrinsic Religious Motivation: As a result of statistical analysis, respondents got (M= 31.15) average points from intrinsic religious motivation scale (S.D. 5.67). The scale's total point was 80. That sample scored above the middle or even high the middle in terms of intrinsic religious motivation total score. The correlations between demographic variables and intrinsic religious motivation as follows:

Table 4: Correlations between Demographic Variables and Intrinsic Religious Motivation

Demographic Variables Intrinsic Religious Motivation

Age	.090
Sex	.005
Socio-economic Level	.004
Class	.125**
Education Department	-.152**

*p<.05,**p<.01, **p<.001*

As it is seen in Table 4, there was significant relation between intrinsic religious motivation and class (r =.125), and education department (r = -.152). However there was no significant relation between intrinsic religious motivation and other variables. According to these results, intrinsic

religious motivations of students increase as long as class level increases. This can be explained by different factors. But basically, developmental process is very important in this state. When people grow up, their mental capability and thinking ability increase and they can think and interpret better. Students in higher class levels can comprehend the complexity of religious subjects better than those in lower class levels. Because their age level is quite appropriate to make true assessment in terms of developmental stage. In these times, they almost complete their hard and complex stage of development in terms of understanding and interpreting religious belief. Therefore students' intrinsic religious motivation level can be high. Respondents' intrinsic religious motivation averages were analyzed according to the class levels. The results are as follows:

Table 5: Intrinsic Religious Motivation Levels according to the Class Levels.

Class	Levels	N	M S	D.
High School	1	163	30.50	5.60
High School	2	52	29.65	5.41
High School	3	25	30.60	4.41
University	1	59	31.97	5.49
University	2	94	32.43	5.85
University	3	60	32.28	5.10
University	4	18	29.11	7.86
Total		471	31.15	5.67

As it is seen in Table 5, intrinsic religious motivation averages are similar in high schools classes and university classes. While high school 3 students have the highest academic motivation average (M= 30.60), high school 2 students have the lowest academic motivation average (M= 29.65). Besides university 2 students have the highest academic motivation average (M= 55.39), university 4 students have the lowest academic motivation average (M= 29.11). According to the ANOVA and Tukey HSD analysis, there was no significant differences between class levels ($F_{(4, 464)}=2,85$; $p< ,010$). Accordingly, it is seen that intrinsic religious motivation averages of the high school and university class levels are so close-range to each other. One possible implication of these results could be that students have same familial, religious, cultural, developmental characteristics. Another variable that had significant relation with intrinsic religious motivation was education departments. According to the variance analysis of the data, the results are as follows:

Table 6: Intrinsic Religious Motivation Levels according to the Education Departments

Education Department	N	M	S.D.
Department of Theology	110	32.53	5.22
Department of Geography Education	121	31.55	6.23
Religious High School Religious Super High School	120	30.32	5.50
General High School	120	30.33	5.41
Total	471	31.15	5.67

As it is seen in Table 6, similar averages were also observed between participants in educational departments. Students of department of theology had the highest intrinsic religious motivation rate (M= 30.60). Religious high school's and religious super high school's students' intrinsic religious motivation rate (M= 30.32) and General High School's student's intrinsic religious motivation rate (M= 30.33) were almost same. Furthermore students of Department of Geography had second highest intrinsic religious motivation rate (M= 31.55") (F(4, 467)=4,13; *p< ,007*). According to ANOVA and the Tukey HSD no significant difference was detected between The Department of theology, Religious High School, and Religious Super High School. According to these results the hypothesis "Intrinsic religious motivation level of respondents changes according to the education level and department. It is thought that respondents who are students in theology faculty, religious high school, and religious super high school have high intrinsic religious motivation level than the others." was not supported. It is thought that students, who have religious education coupled with positive sciences, have higher intrinsic religious motivation than the others. The results did not support this idea. Although the students have religious education, they have intrinsic religious motivation similar to others. There may be different reasons for this observation. Influences such as family, social environment, friends, technology, teachers, etc. may affect students' religious/educational life and their concentration. As a result of statistical analysis of the data, there was no significant relation between academic motivation and intrinsic religious motivation (r = .050, p= .279). Therefore the basic hypothesis of the study "There is significant relation between academic motivation and intrinsic religious motivation" was not supported. Possible reasons for this may be:

- The sample is geographically centric to Turkey and students may compartmentalize their motivations between the secular and religious. Further research would need to explore connections in other national contexts.

- Students are simply not motivated by scholastic achievement and therefore religious motivation does not play a factor in their academic aspirations.

- Respondents have no useful structure to integrate their religious faiths, because they are in a sensitive period in terms of development.

- When the respondents answer the questionnaire, they did not pay enough attention and took the questionnaire serious which indicates more a trait error present in the participants. Other possible explanations may explain the limitations.

The basic hypothesize in this study are not supported, but it is thought if a study is done with respondents who have higher academic motivation rate and intrinsic religious motivation rate, a relation between intrinsic religious motivation and academic motivation may be found. As in other subjects, there is a need for additional research on respondents who have different ages, occupations, and features clarify the consequences about relation between academic motivation and intrinsic religious motivation.

Conclusion

One of the challenges of research such as this is in finding data rich inferences within a complex society such as Turkey. Analysis which does not find relationships can be just as useful as statistically significant findings. Religion has such as strong cultural and social influence; it

would be expected to find relationships with motivation. This study suggests that those influences appear not to exist suggesting a compartmentalization of individual motivations as it relates to education and religion. Furthermore, this finding is interesting as Turkish educational systems incorporate religious theological systems into public education which would lead outside observers to expect a relationship. The secular agenda of Turkish politics may play a role. Further and more complex statistical analysis would need to explore public/social influence on motivation within the educational and public sphere. This study draws attention that religion can be a point of reference in motivation of human in all fields and the increase of human's efficiency. This paper explores the related literature motivating impact of religion is not a subject that examined much. There are a plethora of possible points for motivation and its factors, but religion is not as thoroughly researched as a motivating factor in human life. Especially in the field of educational, research is so far from religion's motivating impact. Many religions seek an understanding of knowledge inferring cognitive complexity of understanding in education. The reading of religious text, the exploration of religious teachings, and one's personal religious quest all provide meaning an interpretation of life experiences. An educated person is an empowering person and this paper would assert that religion provides empowerment in terms of behavior and belief. It is through acts and influence, religion attempts to better the society.

Recommendations

1. School management and government should ensure that students are encouraged to participate in private educational activities like extra classes on weekends as preparation for exams due to the fact that this affects students success and academic motivation level.

2. Students should ensure that they motivate themselves academically and as well build self-efficacy in themselves.

3. Finally, students should be encouraged at all times with religious motivations in order to increase as long as class level increases. This is very necessary because religion is a point of reference in motivation of human in all fields and the increase of human's efficiency.

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