03. The Impact of Family Communication on a Child's Religious Life and Development[1]

Bilal SARIÇİÇEK[2]

Hasan TİLEĞİ[3]

Abstract

The pathway that should be followed in a child's self-development has always been a subject of debate. In the communication age, where control over everything has become more challenging, this issue has gained even more significance. With the advancement of internet and television technologies in a globalized world, the influence of parents on their children is no longer absolute. In pedagogical literature, discussions on internal discipline and self-control are increasing. A child first interacts with the family and learns self-perception from their immediate environment, namely their parents and other family members. An individual who completes their initial education within the family also acquires a certain level of religious knowledge. If the family is religious, the child tends to be religious; if not, the child automatically adapts to the family members and may not be religious. From this perspective, the education provided within the family and communication with the child is of significant importance for the child's development. Every person is necessarily a member of a family and inherently communicative. According to anthropologists, humans are obliged to live within family life. Since the beginning of their existence, humans have never lived solely for themselves nor led a life that only concerns themselves. A child born into the smallest communication group we call a family actually learns from their parents what it means to be "human."

Keywords: Family, communication, religious life, development, religious education, spiritual development.

28 / *Rumeli Journal of Education Studies* 2024.5 (December)

Aile İçindeki İletişimin Çocuğun Dini Hayatına Ve Gelişimine Etkisi / Sarfıçiçek, B. & Tileği, H.

Aile İçindeki İletişimin Çocuğun Dini Hayatına Ve Gelişimine Etkisi[4]

Öz

Çocuğun benlik gelişiminde nasıl bir yol takip edilmesi gerektiği her zaman üzerinde tartışmalar bulunan bir konu olmuştur. Her şeyin kontrolünün zorlaştığı iletişim çağında bu konu daha da önemli hale gelmiştir. Küreselleşen dünyada internet ve televizyon teknolojilerinin gelişmesiyle birlikte ebeveynin çocuk üzerindeki etkisi artık mutlak değildir. Pedagoji literatüründe iç disiplin ve otokontrol kavramlarına dair tartışmalar çoğalmaktadır. Çocuk ilk olarak aile ile etkileşime geçer ve benlik algısını ilk çevresi yani anne-babası ve ailenin diğer bireylerinden öğrenir. İlk eğitimini ailede tamamlayan birey dini açıdan da belli bir bilgi donanımına sahip olur. Aile eğer dindar ise çocuk dindar, aile dindar değilse çocukta otomatik olarak aile bireylerine uyum sağlayacak ve dindar olmayacaktır. Bu açıdan aile içerisinde verilen eğitim ve çocukla olan iletişim çocuk açısından çok önemli bir boyuttadır. Her insan zorunlu olarak bir ailenin üyesidir ve yine zorunlu olarak iletişimseldir. Antropologlara göre insanlar aile hayatın içinde yaşamak zorundadır. İnsan kendi varoşlundan beri hiçbir zaman sadece kendi için yaşamamış ve yalnızca kendini ilgilendiren bir hayat geçirmemiştir. Aile adını verdiğimiz en küçük iletişim grubu içerisinde doğan bir çocuk anne ve babasından aslında "insanın" ne olduğunu öğrenir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Aile, iletişim, dini hayat, gelişim, dini eğitim, dinsel gelişim.

1. Introduction

Research shows that parents spending emotional time with their children, particularly during the first five years, is crucial for their development. It is noted that during these years, positive contributions to the development of the central nervous system of children are significant. Parents need to set aside their daily tasks and dedicate specific time solely for their children. It is a common situation that fathers spend less time with their children due to various challenges. The religious development of a child is also influenced in this context.

For a child's religious development to reach the desired level, attention must be paid to family communication, and the child should not be neglected. Recent educational literature suggests that the early years of a child's development are more critical compared to later years. Children achieve a certain level of development before starting school, indicating that their primary education begins at home and is well-established before school age. It is evident that family communication significantly impacts a child's religious life and development. The influence of parents on a child is

substantial, and it can be confidently stated that a child's primary education starts within the family.

Besides being the foundation of society, the family is the environment where a child receives all kinds of material and spiritual nourishment and absorbs the atmosphere that will shape their entire future life. The family is the institution where the child first experiences socialization and learns the concept of self. The foundations of a child's self are laid in the family, with the type and quality of communication within the family being pivotal.

This study focuses on the impact of family communication and education on a child's religious life and development. Utilizing various books, articles, and master's theses on the subject, we have tried to clearly explain and support this viewpoint. The study discusses concepts such as family communication dynamics, interpersonal relationships, discipline, development, and communication, examining how family interactions influence a child's development and religious life.

2. Method

In this research, a literature review methodology has been employed to gather information pertinent to the topic. The study is grounded in primary sources focusing on subjects such as Religious Education in the Family, Moral Education in the Family, and the Impact of Family Communication on a Child's Religious Life and Development. Additionally, contemporary publications on Religious Education, including books and numerous articles, have been consulted to provide necessary references. Interpretations and analyses have been made in light of these primary sources, aiming to contextualize the topic for modern readers and make it relevant to contemporary issues in religious and moral education within familial settings. This approach ensures a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, integrating traditional insights with current perspectives in the field.

3. Family and Communication

3.1. Definition of Family

The smallest community consisting of parents and a child is called a family (Çakır, 2022). According to another definition, a family is a group consisting of parents and children, where there is mutual love, respect, solidarity, and a sense of belonging among its members (Aydın, 2021). The family is at the forefront of fundamental institutions. It is a small social unit consisting of individuals connected by marriage and blood relations and is considered the foundation of society. The family system is a whole, not just the sum of individuals; it is an order formed by the interaction of individuals within it. Each family member has a relationship with the other. Within this network of relationships, each individual structures their self-awareness and personality (Demir, 2021).

Every human is necessarily a member of a family and inherently communicative. According to anthropologists, humans are required to live within family life. Since their existence, humans have never lived solely for themselves nor led a life that only concerns themselves. A child born into the smallest communication group, which we call a family, learns what it means to be "human" from their parents. All thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and behaviors learned are codes received from the

30 / *Rumeli Journal of Education Studies* 2024.5 (December)

Aile İçindeki İletişimin Çocuğun Dini Hayatına Ve Gelişimine Etkisi / Sarfıçiçek, B. & Tileği, H.

previous generation. When a child grows up and forms their family, they are expected to pass these codes to the next generation. (Güven, 2013)

As can be seen, a family is defined in many descriptions as a social unit where members are interrelated and influence each other in various ways throughout life. The family is the smallest unit of society, and socialization begins in the family. Thus, the first education a child receives is also in the family before mixing with society. From this perspective, the importance of communication within the family is an undeniable aspect.

An ideal family is a system where roles do not conflict with each other, forming a harmonious team, and meeting the needs of individuals. The most significant difference between the communication of family members with each other and communication with other people is the presence of genuine communication beyond masks or roles. The family environment is, in a way, a safe place where sincere and warm relationships are established, a refuge from the exhausting relationships outside. When the family fails to be such a sanctuary, the psychological problems that arise will create problems in society at large.

3.2. Communication

The term 'communication' in Western languages corresponds to the word "iletişim" in Turkish (TDK, 2023). Derived from the Latin word "communis," which means a community or association formed by those who are similar, the concept refers to the transfer of attitudes, judgments, thoughts, and feelings within the communal life created by humans who inform each other about changes in objects, events, and phenomena in the environment and share their similar life experiences and emotions. (Oskay, 2007)

The interaction of parents and other family members with the child determines the child's place within the family (Kaya, 2022). The family is where a child gains their first social experiences. Communication within the family facilitates these experiences being acquired more effectively. Positive behavior and attitudes towards the child, and the nature of communication with them, are important for instilling initial life experiences and are also significant for religious development. As previously mentioned, initial acquisitions begin in the family, and the religious dimension of these acquisitions should be sufficient for the child. The religious development intended to be instilled in the child should be imparted without overlooking communicational differences, within a certain dimension, without imposing responsibilities that exceed their capabilities.

It is a fact that behaviors like gluttony, miserliness, and aggression observed in adults develop in relation to experiences during infancy and childhood, and these experiences reflect on the individual's personality. Regarding an individual's religious development, it can be said that the findings will be more noteworthy. Specifically, an individual's religious development, particularly in cases of religious doubt and conversion, requires investigating experiences from infancy - at least from early childhood - and determining whether there is a connection. It is stated that a child is not born with a specific belief but is inclined to believe, and parents shape their religious beliefs according to their own. (Aydın, 2010)

3.3. Family Communication

We have stated that the first environment for a child is the family. We are all born into a family or an environment that substitutes a family. This initial environment educates us on understanding and interpreting the realities of society and guides us on how they should be applied in our lives, teaching us how to cope with problems.

Intra-family communication, or the communication of children with their parents, among siblings, and between spouses and their children, plays a special role in understanding children, and in transferring feelings and thoughts to each other. Communication allows people to know you and to create mutual understanding. Particularly, the process of communication within the family is even more crucial in terms of the attitude adopted towards children (Tancan, 2022).

In the early years of childhood, an individual exhibits selfish behaviors. They want everything to be theirs and demand immediate attention and fulfillment of their desires. Inconsistent behaviors displayed in the family or occasional punishment in response to these behaviors can lead to the emergence of inconsistent and negative behaviors in the child. Positive communication within the family serves as a positive example for the child. As previously mentioned, communication within the family is influential in a child's development. Strong bonds between family members will significantly impact the individual. The outcomes of this impact are related to the communication within the family.

"There are four fundamental sources of communication within the family that are crucial for establishing healthy communication with the child, preparing them for life, and contributing to healthy personality development. These are; eye contact, physical communication, focused attention, and discipline.

- **Eye Contact:** It means looking directly into someone's eyes.

- **Physical Communication:** It is the contact of an individual with another through touch or body language.

- **Focused Attention:** It is directing our complete attention to a child in a way that makes them feel fully loved.

- **From a child's perspective, discipline;** is about educating them to be a constructive member of society in terms of mind and character. (Campbell, 1991)"

The communication and interaction of parents and other family members with the child also determine the child's position within the family. The family is where a child acquires their first social experiences. The behavior directed towards the child and the attitude taken against them are important for the clarification and establishment of these initial experiences. "Studies on social adaptation have proven that the family's initial impact on the child is extremely important" (Çın, 2020).

In a family environment with strong social interaction, children who grow up with sufficient trust, love, and affection can gain the necessary experience for their development. Children in families

32 / *Rumeli Journal of Education Studies* 2024.5 (December)

Aile İçindeki İletişimin Çocuğun Dini Hayatına Ve Gelişimine Etkisi / Sarfıçiçek, B. & Tileği, H.

where they are scorned, punished, or both loved and treated coldly tend to develop a dependent personality. The child's relationships with family members form the basis of their attitudes, adopted behaviors, and perspectives towards other individuals, objects, and everything else. The family also instills in the child the consciousness of being a member of the family and society and lays the foundations for forms of adaptation. "The attitudes of a father who has not had healthy communication with his own parents during childhood years and has not received enough love and affection, or a mother who grew up under excessive pressure, can also be negative" (Karataş, 2009).

In addition to the negative attitudes and behaviors of parents, the widespread use of the internet and the increase in TV channels bring certain risks to parent-child communication. These technological developments can lead our children to drift away from us and exhibit behaviors that could be described as socially autistic. Preventing these risks is one of the most important duties of parents. To fulfill this role, parents need to maintain continuous communication with their children through an empathic attitude and behavior, understanding their child and not disregarding their values and attitudes.

3.4. Principles of Family Communication

Family communication is fundamentally an interpersonal communication process. However, due to their closer acquaintance with each other, the development of deeper relationships, and the experience of more intense emotions, family communication is more in line with the interpersonal communication definition mentioned above by Stewart than general interpersonal communication definitions. It is the communication carried out by parties who have set aside their roles and masks towards each other and communicate directly through their selves. Family communication is a process that encompasses intrapersonal communication along with interpersonal communication among communication types. The messages a person receives from and gives to themselves are definitive in determining their self-state. The self plays a leading role in communication to be established with others (Sevinç, 2021).

There are certain principles expected in ideal family communication, such as self-awareness, understanding family members, effective listening, empathy, using 'I' language, and developing a 'we' consciousness. These principles are extremely important for the creation of a happy and peaceful family environment.

2.4.1. Self-Awareness

The concept of self-awareness has been one of the most frequently discussed ideas in philosophy, mystical thought, and religions for centuries. Despite appearing simple at a superficial level, this concept actually delves deep into the depths of human identity.

In order to express oneself, one must first understand oneself. The mirror that reflects the human soul can be found in "others." The mirror of spiritual experience is others. It is only possible to look into different mirrors and possess the knowledge to recognize and understand the resulting images.

The Prophet Muhammad emphasized the social and communicative nature of the concept of self when he said, "A believer is a mirror to another believer, a believer is a brother to another believer, and when he is in need, he fulfills his needs, protects him from harm, and defends him when he is

Rumeli Eğitim Araştırmaları Dergisi 2024.5 (Aralık)/ 33

The Impact of Family Communication on a Child's Religious Life and Development / Sarfıçiçek, B. & Tileği, H.

absent" (Ebu Davud, Edeb, 49). This highlights that the concept of self is a social and communicative phenomenon.

In family relationships, it is essential for family members to strive for self-awareness while communicating with each other. Effective communication between spouses, parent-child communication, or communication between siblings, where all parties are aware of their own "selves" can prevent many problems from arising before they even begin (Güven, 2013).

2.4.2. Understanding Family Members

Understanding family members is not independent of the concept of self-awareness, as mentioned above. Self-awareness is intertwined with understanding others, and understanding others is also linked to self-awareness. In family communication, it might be assumed that family members already know each other because of their blood ties and shared living space. However, knowing each other in this context goes beyond superficial awareness and involves sharing emotions and thoughts within the current moment.

In healthy family communication, it is crucial to have individuals who are constantly aware of each other's feelings and thoughts, in other words, individuals who truly know each other.

Human relationships are constantly evolving and being redefined. Therefore, family members' efforts to open up to each other should not be a one-time occurrence. In family communication, spouses should open up to each other without hiding anything. This should be done regularly, in an intimate and understanding manner, free from factors that hinder communication.

3.5. Effective Listening

Effective listening is not only about understanding and internalizing the information received from the speaker but also about encouraging, motivating, and clearly demonstrating interest in the speaker's communication. Listening is a behavior that encompasses both physical communication and internal thinking. In effective listening, the skills of participation, following, and reflecting should be appropriately applied (Güven, 2013).

The creation of a desired framework for communication within the family is also crucial for fostering an environment of effective listening. When a child feels noticed and understood, they will have a better sense of self-esteem and confidence. This sense of security will enable them to express their feelings more effectively and make efforts to be better understood.

Providing opportunities for children to express their emotions is highly beneficial. Above all, the expression of emotions is a form of sharing. The famous saying, "Joy shared is doubled, sorrow shared is halved," beautifully captures this idea. Some people mistakenly believe that they can get rid of painful emotions by suppressing or forgetting them, but in reality, expressing emotions openly can help diminish them. By listening to their children's emotions, parents not only gain a better understanding of them but also encourage their children to share their feelings (Aydın, 2010).

34 / *Rumeli Journal of Education Studies* 2024.5 (December)

Aile İçindeki İletişimin Çocuğun Dini Hayatına Ve Gelişimine Etkisi / Sarfıçiçek, B. & Tileği, H.

3.6. Empathy

Self-awareness, understanding others, and becoming an effective listener naturally lead to the ability to empathize within a family member. The definition of empathy, which is widely accepted in the literature and attributed to Rogers, is as follows: "Empathy is the process of a person understanding, feeling, and communicating the feelings and thoughts of another person correctly by placing oneself in their shoes." Empathy is the ability of an individual to put themselves in someone else's place based on common characteristics found in all people and make predictions about their behaviors. Empathy is the ability of an individual to emotionally put themselves in someone else's place and understand them correctly. It involves adopting an understanding attitude towards others by sensing their emotional state.

Empathy consists of three basic elements. The first element is putting oneself in someone else's shoes and viewing the world from their perspective. This is not a superficial activity; rather, it is a phenomenological process. To truly understand a person means to enter their existential realm, to be in their field of perception of the world and events. Secondly, it is necessary to understand both the thoughts and feelings of the person with whom empathy is being established. Understanding only one of them is not sufficient. Cognitive perspective-taking helps understand the thoughts of the other person, while emotional perspective-taking helps understand their feelings. The last element is conveying these feelings and thoughts to the person with whom empathy is established. Without this feedback process, empathy is not truly achieved. Feedback can be verbal, but it can also be done through non-verbal communication and body language.

3.7. Using I-Language

The utilization of "I-Language" in communicative exchanges does not imply the orator's self-centric positioning, boasting, or egocentrism within the dialogue. "I-Language" represents a communicative strategy where the speaker identifies behaviors that are considered undesirable, unwelcoming, or unacceptable by the originator. This strategy involves explicating the concrete effects of these behaviors on the speaker and delineating the emotions engendered, employing a vernacular marked by honesty and accountability. Communications delivered through "I-Language" eschew the pejorative undertones often associated with "You-Language." They function as expressions of an individual's personal feelings, cognitions, and experiences. In the domain of intrafamilial communication, the adoption of "I-Language" engenders a milieu amenable to salubrious communicative practices.

In the application of "I-Language," the emphasis and affect articulated by the speaker are oriented towards the conduct of the other party, rather than their persona. This approach in familial discourse accentuates the critique of actions rather than personality traits. As a result, messages framed in "I-Language" do not undermine the interlocutor's self-regard or personal identity, nor do they destabilize their confidence. The incorporation of "I-Language" in marital interactions has been documented to diminish altercations and engender more constructive exchanges (Güven, 2013).

Rumeli Eğitim Araştırmaları Dergisi 2024.5 (Aralık)/ 35

The Impact of Family Communication on a Child's Religious Life and Development / Sarfıçiçek, B. & Tileği, H.

3.8. Creating We Awareness

Individuals intrinsically aspire for both a sense of affiliation and autonomy. A failure to strike a healthy equilibrium between these needs within the familial context can engender dependency or weaken familial ties. Family communication should nurture mutual bonding, eschewing dependence as it is detrimental.

For the attainment of quality in family life, it is pivotal for family members to be robust as individuals while concurrently feeling a part of the family collective. Balancing independence and belonging is vital in parent-child dynamics, marital relations, and sibling interactions.

The "You" construct entails an inclination where one expects others to bear responsibility for their life. This stance involves a relinquishment of personal accountability for daily activities, commitments, or undertakings, and is rooted in a sentiment of impotence. The "You" construct meets the need for belonging but does not suffice for individual autonomy. In familial settings where an individual adheres to the "You" mindset, the "I" mindset is often predominant in the parents.

Conversely, the "I" mindset is characterized by mistrust towards others, deeming them as inept, and thus endeavoring to keep them under control. This mindset is primarily driven by a compulsion to dominate. Individuals with this mindset are impeded in engaging collaboratively and lack trust and respect for others. The "I" mindset addresses the need for independence but neglects the need for belonging.

In families where a salubrious "We" consciousness is cultivated, individual attitudes and perceptions manifest as follows:

- "I acknowledge my existence with inherent limitations and responsibilities. The onus for my well-being, dignity, thoughts, attitudes, and emotions resides with me. No one else can occupy these confines or undertake my roles. Recognizing my limitations marks a critical stride in my developmental journey."

- "You possess your distinct boundaries and responsibilities. Your life is your sole accountability. Acknowledging your limits and duties signifies a further crucial stride in my developmental journey."

"We" coexist within a nexus of interaction; it is incumbent upon me to comprehend how each of my thoughts, emotions, attitudes, and behaviors impacts others within the totality of my relationships (Güven, 2013).

4. Family And Development

4.1. Definition of Development

The terminologies 'Growth' and 'Development,' while often intermixed, represent inherently disparate notions and cannot substitute for one another. 'Growth' refers to a structural increase, encapsulating quantitative bodily alterations (such as increments in weight and height). The concept of growth transcends mere physical expansion; it also entails modifications in the

36 / *Rumeli Journal of Education Studies* 2024.5 (December)

Aile İçindeki İletişimin Çocuğun Dini Hayatına Ve Gelişimine Etkisi / Sarfıçiçek, B. & Tileği, H.

architecture and magnitude of the brain and internal organs. Brain maturation engenders an incremental enhancement in a child's cognitive faculties, including learning, recollection, and reasoning capabilities. Therefore, in conjunction with physical growth, a child experiences cognitive development as well.

In contrast, 'Development' involves both quantitative and qualitative transformations. This notion signifies a systematic, cohesive, and continual advancement (Yavuzer, 2005).

The prime phase for efficacious familial communication is the early childhood period. During this epoch, specific developmental traits in children hold particular pertinence. These include:

- Acquiring the ability to love, be loved, and express endearment

- Fostering positive engagements with the surrounding milieu

- Developing the aptitude to contribute positively to society

- Learning to forge suitable connections with siblings, parents, and the broader social environment

- Comprehending cultural delineations of morality and immorality and cultivating a moral conscience.

4.2. Religious Development in the Family

Religion necessitates belief, commitment to faith, and embracing the responsibilities that come with such commitment. For instance, an individual believing in God, the Prophet, and the Holy Scriptures inherently develops a bond with these entities, desiring to incorporate divine commands and recommendations into their daily life. This commitment ushers in a set of responsibilities and new behavioral norms, aligning one's daily life with the tenets of their faith. In contrast, non-believers often struggle to adhere to established principles and are reluctant to accept such responsibilities, preferring to set and follow their own rules, sometimes in contradiction with general laws and norms (Atik, 2015). The role of familial education is pivotal in this context, as it forms the foundation of a child's initial learning and progressively becomes more pronounced in shaping their life and beliefs.

Studies in child psychology and the psychology of religion have identified the family as a significant psycho-social and pedagogical influencer in a child's development, particularly in the cultivation of religious feelings and thoughts, which are largely dependent on the religious education provided within the family (Armaner, 1980).

The early emergence of religious consciousness is attributed to psychological factors, yet it can also be shaped through early religious education. Observations converge on the idea that those close to the child are the primary influencers in the development of religious attitudes. The main factors in religious formation are, in order of significance, a) family, b) personal thought, and c) school (Armaner, 1980).

Rumeli Eğitim Araştırmaları Dergisi 2024.5 (Aralık)/ 37

The Impact of Family Communication on a Child's Religious Life and Development / Sarfıçiçek, B. & Tileği, H.

The close association between family and religion, and its undeniable impact on a child's life, has been widely acknowledged. The religious teachings and consistent behaviors observed and learned in the family become deeply ingrained in a child's memory, shaping their future beliefs and practices (Dondurgalı, 2010).

In families where religion is an integral part of life, a child's natural religious abilities are likely to flourish. The child's perception of the sacred forms within the context of their life and belief system. A child who does not believe in their family's religious framework may face significant psychological and spiritual disruptions.

The reciprocal nature of love between parents and children makes the family environment emotionally rich and significant in a child's education. Parents who fail to establish positive communication with their children, characterized by neglect, contempt, and rejection, adversely affect their psychological development (Dondurgalı, 2010).

The family is a crucial social setting where emotions develop and are intensely experienced. The love between parents not only enriches this environment but is also vital for a child's education. A child raised in an environment lacking love and dominated by mutual disdain will develop accordingly. The Quran emphasizes relationships based on love and mercy, as exemplified in the verse: "He has created mates for you from yourselves so that you might find tranquility with them, and He has set love and mercy between you; in that are signs for people who reflect." (Rum 30/21) (Dondurgalı, 2010).

To comprehend a child's religious feelings, thoughts, and behaviors, it is essential to understand how religion is formed, emerges, and develops in their world. Two prevailing theories in this context are:

Innate Religious Sentiment: This perspective posits that children are born with an inherent propensity for belief, which is likely to manifest and be shaped primarily under the influence of family and environment. This concept, known in Islamic culture as 'fitrah', suggests that a child is inherently predisposed to faith, which then evolves and is molded over time, especially under familial and environmental influences. This view is supported by the notion, "Every child is born on fitrah; then his parents make him a Jew, Christian, Magian, or, according to another narration, a polytheist." (Kayıklık, 2011).

Neutrality in Religious Sentiment: Another view argues that children do not inherently possess religious feelings. They are considered religiously neutral, neither inclined nor averse to religion. According to this perspective, a child's religiosity or lack thereof is shaped by the influence of family and environment.

Upon examining these views, it becomes apparent that despite their differing starting points, both theories converge on the significant role of family and environment in a child's religious development. This underscores the formative influence of family and environment during the critical period of childhood. As a child's interaction with their environment intensifies, they begin to exhibit varied behaviors. At the ages of two to three, as children start to understand and interact with their surroundings, imitation emerges, leading them to mimic the actions of family members. Therefore, positive behaviors should be modeled, and negative reactions like shouting, scolding, or

38 / *Rumeli Journal of Education Studies* 2024.5 (December)

Aile İçindeki İletişimin Çocuğun Dini Hayatına Ve Gelişimine Etkisi / Sarfıçiçek, B. & Tileği, H.

showing a lack of love and approval should be avoided to foster healthy communication and desired behaviors in children.

The belief that religious sentiment is innate and fulfills a fundamental human need, serving as a primary source of comfort and security, is acknowledged by both Abrahamic religions and many psychologists. It is important to note that negative life experiences are often not due to religious belief but rather a lack of deep engagement with religious faith (Aydın, 2010).

The Quran provides examples of how religion can be taught to children within the family. For instance, Prophet Jacob instructs his sons, "My sons! Allah has chosen the faith for you; so die not except in the faith of Islam." At his deathbed, asking his sons whom they would worship after him, they respond affirming their devotion to the God of their forefathers - Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac. Similarly, Prophet Luqman advises his son against associating partners with God. These verses underscore the importance of parental guidance in the religious upbringing of children.

The influence of childhood experiences is profound in shaping attitudes in subsequent life stages, with the role of parents being particularly critical. Negative experiences during childhood, such as natural disasters, the death of a loved one, physical disabilities, or injustices, can facilitate doubts about religion, especially affecting belief in God. If parents and other caregivers fail to logically and religiously explain these adversities, it can negatively impact the child's religious development. Thus, addressing children's queries seriously, especially regarding death and emphasizing the belief in the afterlife, explaining death as a transition to a new, eternal existence, and dispelling doubts are essential.

4.3. The Relationship Between Family Communication and Religious Development

Communication is a fundamental phenomenon persisting throughout centuries among all living beings, especially humans. It is an essential and indispensable aspect of social life, both at individual and institutional levels. The family, being the most crucial institution in an individual's development and education, plays a vital role in communication. The effective religious development of children is contingent on the establishment of effective communication between parents and children. The family structure varies from country to country and culture to culture, and even within the same country, differences exist between urban and rural areas, economic statuses, and regions. Therefore, providing a definitive and universal definition of the family, considering sociological, geographical, and economic diversities, seems impractical.

Humans, being intelligent, mobile, and social creatures, live within societies and continue their existence through interactions with others. The realm of human relationships expands from the center to the periphery in concentric circles, with the family at the core. The family is the primary environment that significantly influences an individual's personality, preparation for life, and religious development (Doğan, 2023). The family environment, which profoundly impacts an individual throughout their life, is the initial sphere of human relationships and, consequently, plays a pivotal role in the religious developmental stage. Therefore, establishing effective and positive communication with children within the family is crucial for fostering their religious development. Harmonious family relationships contribute to a peaceful family environment, where individuals tend to be problem-free, successful, and complete their religious development

The Impact of Family Communication on a Child's Religious Life and Development / Sarfıçiçek, B. & Tileği, H.

positively. In contrast, individuals raised in discordant and uneasy family settings often exhibit lower success rates and more behavioral disorders.

Individual development is analyzed through a multidimensional lens encompassing physical, cognitive, psycho-social, moral, and religious growth. These developmental domains are intricately interconnected, with attributes in one domain influencing outcomes in another. Specifically, a child's emotional maturation is contingent upon their physical development, while their spiritual evolution is significantly impacted by cognitive maturation, leading to a spectrum of outcomes ranging from positive to negative (Aytaç, 2023). For effective and healthy religious education of a child, it is crucial to consider their physical, psycho-social, emotional, and cognitive development, along with their religious developmental traits (Köylü, 2004). One of the key characteristics of childhood is a tendency towards 'easy belief.' Children are naturally predisposed and receptive to religion. They tend to believe without doubt, skepticism, or contradiction, accepting teachings sincerely. This sincerity in belief, both external and internal, empowers children and brings them closer to God, as they construct and enhance their personal world of belief (Yavuzer, 2005).

Children in families with effective communication tend to develop more autonomous and independent personalities. They acquire the freedom and habit of expressing their thoughts and feelings. Conversely, in environments lacking effective communication, with prevalent communication barriers, children's development is hindered, including their religious growth. Development is a lifelong process, but childhood is a crucial phase, significantly influenced by communication within the family. Negative family communication can impede a child's religious development, leading to dependent individuals who struggle to think freely or express their thoughts and feelings, and who may fail to fulfill religious obligations. Future problems often arise in such cases. Therefore, establishing effective communication between family members, especially between parents and children, is of utmost importance.

The relationships a child forms with family members lay the foundation for their attitudes, behaviors, and approaches to other individuals, objects, and life in general. The family instills the awareness of being a member of the family and society and lays the groundwork for patterns of adaptation. The parent-child relationship fundamentally depends on the parents' attitudes. Many cases of disharmony among children are attributed to inadequate and inappropriate initial parent-child relationships. The parents' experiences during their own childhood can influence their current attitudes.

As previously discussed, the importance of communication within the family is paramount. Negative family communication adversely affects a child's religious development.

Humans, by nature, possess an inclination towards belief, a trait embedded in their creation. The consensus suggests that nurturing this inclination towards Islam requires providing quality education within the family, which also facilitates achieving desired communication outcomes. Thus, establishing an egalitarian, empathetic, principled family structure, where family discipline is maintained without harming anyone, is crucial. Such an environment fosters robust communication, aiding children in adopting social roles effectively. This results in establishing a solid foundation for both intra-family and extra-family communication, thereby facilitating the anticipated religious development in children. Therefore, the significance of nurturing strong familial bonds through effective communication cannot be overstated.

Aile İçindeki İletişimin Çocuğun Dini Hayatına Ve Gelişimine Etkisi / Sarfıçiçek, B. & Tileği, H.

Research has consistently demonstrated that parental behaviors exert a profound influence on children, with positive behaviors directly reflecting in the child's religious life. The family serves as a model for religious behaviors and relationships. Religious values enter a child's world as represented within the family. Close relatives' religious behaviors and expressions symbolize deep-rooted experiences for the child. In this regard, religious education in the family deeply impacts the child.

In summary, understanding and enhancing communication within the family is essential for fostering a child's religious growth and development. This approach ensures that children are raised in an environment conducive to developing a well-rounded, religiously inclined personality, capable of positively contributing to their community and society.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

When examining studies focused on individual development, it is evident that family communication plays a significant role in child development. Positive family communication is crucial for beneficial outcomes for the child. The absence of religious practices in the presence of children within the family can impede their religious development. Children in their developmental stages often imitate what they observe in their environment. Therefore, it is essential not to shy away from engaging with children, instead embracing interactions and involvement with them. Consequently, the communication established between parents and children during childhood is crucial due to its effective role in various aspects of development, including personality growth, self-confidence, independence, and most importantly, self-awareness.

In fostering such an environment, certain behaviors should be actively practiced. These include showing adequate love, respecting their thoughts, providing opportunities for self-expression, appropriately using reward and punishment, maintaining balanced discipline, acknowledging the child as an integral member of the family, and ensuring healthy communication within the family. It is vital to remember that during the initial stages of development, a child is heavily influenced by the family and surrounding individuals, and their development is shaped accordingly. Our lives should be structured with this understanding in mind.

Efforts should be made to contribute to a child's personality development and socialization, enhancing their ability to establish and maintain relationships with others and share experiences. If achieved, a child can internalize religious contents or secular concepts, integrating them into their identity. This allows for conscious religious choices without internal conflict, fostering a well-rounded and harmonious development.

References

Armaner, N. (1980). Din Psikolojisine Giriş-I. N. Armaner içinde, *Din Psikolojisine Giriş-I* (s. 89). Ankara.

Atik, A. (2015). Dini Gelişim Kuramlarına Din Eğitimi Bağlamında Genel Bir Bakış. *İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri*, 728-743.

Aydın, M. Z. (2010). Ailede Ahlak Eğitimi. M. Z. Aydın içinde, *Ailede Ahlak Eğitimi* (s. 311). İstanbul: Timaş Yayınları.

Aydın, M. Z. (2021). *Müslüman Ailede Çocuk ve.* dergipark.org.tr: https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/2167820

Aytaç, B. K. (2023). *Hz. Peygamber'ıN Hayatını Konu Alan Çocuk Kıtaplarının Dın Eğıtımı̇ Bakımından İncelenmesı̇: İlkokul Dönemı̇.* https://openaccess.izu.edu.tr/: https://openaccess.izu.edu.tr/xmlui/bitstream/handle/20.500.12436/5463/788635.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Bolay, S. H. (2009). Din Kültürü ve Ahlak bilgisi. S. H. Bolay içinde, *Din Kültürü ve Ahlak bilgisi* (s. 33). Ankara: Nobel Yayınları.

Campbell, R. (1991). *Çocuk Sevgiyle Büy*ür. İstanbul: Çıra Yayınları.

Cüceloğlu, D. (1993). *İçimizdeki Çocuk*. İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi.

Çakır, D. D. (2022). Gelenek ve Modernite Arasına Sıkışmış Bir Kurum: Aile. *Aile Sosyolojisine İlişkin Temel Kavramlar Bir Aile Sosyolojisi Terimleri Sözlüğü Denemesi*. İstanbul: Kitap Dünyası Yayınları.

Çın, A. (2020). Erken Çocukluk Dönemi Din Eğitiminde Ebeveyn Tutumlarının Etkisi. *Batman Akademi Dergisi*, 47.

Demir, Z. (2021). Değişen Toplumlarda Ailenin Değişmeyen Özellikler. *Çukurova üniversitesi ilahiyat fakültesi dergisi*, 2.

Doğan, M. (2023). Araştırma Makalesi. *Kocatepe İslami İlimler Dergisi*, 544.

Dondurgalı, A. (2010). Ailede Din Eğitimi. A. Dondurgalı içinde, *Ailede Din Eğitimi* (s. s.150). İstanbul: Timaş Yayınlar.

Güven, A. (2013). Çocukta Benlik gelişiminde aile içi iletişimin rolü: İslam Dini Açısından bir İnceleme. A. Güven içinde, *Yüksek Lisans Tezi* (s. 5,17). İstanbul.

Karataş, N. (2009). Çocuk Gelişim Psikolojisi. N. Karataş içinde, *Çocuk Gelişim Psikolojisi* (s. s.17. s.42-43). İstanbu: Mozaik Yayınları.

Kaya, A. M. (2022). *Farklı Kültürlerdeki Anne ve Babaların Çocuk Tutumlarının Değerlendirilmesi*.acikerisim.fsm.edu.tr:https://acikerisim.fsm.edu.tr/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11352/4304/Kaya.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y adresinden alındı

Kayıklık, H. (2011). Bireysel Dindarlık Üzerine, , . H. Kayıklık içinde, *Din Psikolojis* (s. 95). Adana: Karahan Yayınları.

Köylü, M. (2004). Çocukluk Dönemi Dini İnanç Gelişimi ve Din Eğitimi. M. Köylü içinde, *Çocukluk Dönemi Dini İnanç Gelişimi ve Din Eğitimi*. İzmir: Kur'an-ı Kerim meali diyanet yayınları.

Oskay, Ü. (2007). İletişimin ABC'si. Ü. Oskay içinde, *Ünsal Oskay, İletişimin ABC'si, Der Yay., İstanbul, 2007, s.9* (s. 9). İstanbul: Der Yay.

Sevinç, S. (2021, Eylül). *Kur'an Mesajları Bağlamında "Aile İçi İletişim": Sistematik ve Niceliksel Bir İnceleme*. https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/1373199

Tancan, B. N. (2022). *Aİle İçi İletişimin Bireyin Gelişimine Etkisi*. http://acikerisim.harran.edu.tr/: http://acikerisim.harran.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11513.3115.765950.pdf?sequence=1

TDK. (2023). *https://sozluk.gov.tr/*. https://sozluk.gov.tr/: https://sozluk.gov.tr/

Yavuzer, H. (2005). *Çocuk Psilolojisi*, 27. Basım, İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi.