

Fait tendencies regarding disability problems within the families

Mukaddes Sakalli Demirok*, Department of Special Education, Ataturk Faculty of Education, Near East University, Nicosia-North Cyprus, Mersin 10, Turkey

Serap Meral Karabacak, Department of Special Education, Ataturk Faculty of Education, Near East University, Nicosia-North Cyprus, Mersin 10, Turkey

Harun Aysever, Department of Special Education, Ataturk Faculty of Education, Near East University, Nicosia-North Cyprus, Mersin 10, Turkey

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Abstract

Parents of children with special needs have many duties when compared to parents of children with typical development and they face with many hardships in every stages of their lives. Parents cannot cope with hardships easily and they can fray out from emotional dimensions. This study carried out based on the idea that problems and hardships experienced by the parents of children with special needs make them to head for religion. It was aimed to determine the religious tendencies of parents of children with special needs in this research. Participants of the study consisted of 68 parents of children with special needs and 'Religious Tendency Scale' was administered to the parents. The results of the study showed that parents were undecided on general religious tendency, internal and external religious tendency.

Keywords: Family, perception, religious, relational belief, special needs children.

* ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: **Mukaddes Sakalli Demirok**, Department of Special Education, Faculty of Education, Near East University, North Cyprus, Mersin 10, Turkey. *E-mail address:* mukaddes.sakalli@neu.edu.tr / Tel.: +90 392 2236464

1. Introduction

Special needs children are considered as individuals who have significant differences according to their peers in terms of their personal, academic and developmental characteristics for various reasons (Argyropoulos & Chamonikolaou, 2016). When a child with special needs comes to the world or if the child needs special education due to an accident, illness and etc., the life balance of the parents is disturbed (Souhbi, Lima, Aitdaoud & Talbi, 2016). As a result of this situation, some parents continue their lives by adapting to this situation. Parents with special needs children in this frame go through many traumatic situations (Sengul & Baykan, 2013). In addition to situations, such as shock, denial, helplessness, guilt, frustration and rejection, there are also inevitable situations, such as resentment, inadequacy, mourning and excessive protection (Akandere, Acar & Bastug, 2009; Cambazoglu, 2011; Kula, 2012).

It has been observed that parents with special needs children exhibit some behaviours, such as being disturbed by incompatible behaviours and protecting the child excessively (Kayihan, 1995). Parents facing reality face depression or acceptance stages according to their ability to cope with problems. In the acceptance phase, parents' lives turn upside down and they try all sorts of ways to accept their child in their lives. While some parents can cope with the problems some parents can need help with coping (Demir, 2016; Kilic & Altinok, 2017; Lafci, Oztunc & Alparslan, 2014). This makes the living conditions, social and emotional situations of the parents difficult. Parents need to clarify and to understand this situation which is difficult to accept (Ichim, Barna & Dragu, 2015; Wilber, 2001). Families need support from teachers and other professionals (Kuimova, Uzunboyulu, Chen & Gerasimchuk, 2016). In addition to professionals or teachers, parents sometimes seek help from a divine power to refer to their religious beliefs and values in order to reasonably understand the difficulties they experience, to maintain social cohesion and to lead a healthy life. Religious beliefs seem to play an important role in coping with the difficulties parents often experience in tragic situations (Peker, 2003; Usta, 2009).

Religious beliefs relieve and support parents in spiritual terms (Crapps, 1986). In this context, it appears that parents have an important place in spiritual support as well as psycho-social support in difficult situations they live in (Kula, 2012). Religious beliefs help parents cope with difficulties survive and gain a positive attitude (Crapps, 1986). Parents are able to support themselves in situations where they deal with difficulties according to their religious beliefs (Kaytez, Durualp & Kadan, 2015).

Pargament et al. (1998) stated that religious orientations have taken on functions, such as problem solving, despair, pessimism and providing support to individuals. It also seems to have contributed positively to people, such as providing good communication, peace and happiness. Orientation is about adding meaning to the religious beliefs of parents. How parents perceive their religion, their orientations and developments in religious behaviour are related to forms of religious orientation (Erdogan, 2015). In this context, Gordon Allport is the first person to put forward the concepts intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientation by saying that religious feelings will be in different forms (Hunt & King, 1971). When looking at the literature, it was seen that while parents with intrinsic religious orientations use their religious beliefs, for reconciling their lives with religion, and shaping their daily lives in harmony with their beliefs (Allport & Ross, 1967; Donahue, 1985), parents with extrinsic religious orientation use religion for the benefits of their interests and social gains (Alport & Ross, 1967; Tiliopoulos, Bikker, Coxon & Hawkin, 2007). Besides, they use ego as a religious tool to provide protection, social status, consolation and social relations (Alport & Ross, 1967; Genia & Shaw, 1991; Kahoe & Meadov, 1981). Here, the greatest difference that distinguishes the intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientation is that people who are intrinsically religiously oriented see religion as an objective and extrinsic religiously oriented individuals tend to be reluctant because of trust, protection and personal needs (Aksit, Senturk, Kucukural & Cengiz 2012; Alport & Ross, 1967).

Religious beliefs have an important place in shaping and making sense of human life (Kara, 2008). Religion-related psychological studies have shown that people look for a place they feel safe in difficult

situations, where they cannot survive (Ayten, 2012). The people who are faced with obstacles due to some reasons in society are turning to 'God' to get out of their situation and this tendency makes them feel safe (Peker, 2003). Disability status is associated with fate and God according to society's point of view (Bulut, 2015).

There have not been many research studies on the oriental orientation of parents with special needs children in literature. In this study, it was aimed to determine the religious orientations of parents with special needs children. Considering that there is no research on this issue in North Cyprus and that this research will be the first, it is thought that this research is important in terms of determining the religious orientations of parents with special needs children and it is thought that this research will contribute to this field.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Design

In this research, survey method was used, as one of the quantitative research methods. The survey method aims to describe a situation existing in our day or in the past as it is (Karasar, 2012).

2.2. Study group

The study was conducted with 68 parents with special needs children living in North Cyprus. In the study group, 49 (72%) were mothers and 19 (28%) were fathers and the ages of the parents ranged from 20 to 65. Parents volunteered to participate.

2.3. Data collection

After talking with the administrators in the eight special education schools where children with special needs receive education with the permission from the Ministry of National Education of North Cyprus, the scales were distributed for the families to fill in and after a week, the scales were collected from the school. No identity information was requested from the participants and voluntary implementation was carried out.

2.4. Data collection instruments

2.4.1. Personal information form

In the personal information form prepared by the researcher, age, place of birth and educational status of the parents were asked.

2.4.2. Religious orientation scale

The original form, developed by Allport and Ross (1967), is a Likert type scale with a religious orientation score of 5. There are two sub-dimensions, in the Turkish adaptation of the scale made by Cirhinlioglu (2010) which include intrinsic and extrinsic orientation. The number of expressions in the scale is 23.1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 16, 18, and 22 (11 items) are the first Intrinsic Religious sub-dimensions of the scale. Expressions of external religious orientation are 2, 4, 9, 11, 12, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, and 23 (11 items). When the Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient of the Turkish religious orientation scale was examined, it was found that the intrinsic religious orientation subscale was $\alpha = 0.87$ and the extrinsic religious orientation subscale was $\alpha = 0.60$.

2.5. Data analysis

There are 20 questions on the Likert Type religious orientation scale applied to parents with special needs children. Each item in these materials has a scale of five expressions in the form of 'Strongly

Disagree (1)', 'Disagree (2)', 'Neutral (3)', 'Agree (4)' and 'Strongly Agree (5)'. The obtained data are coded by assigning a value of 5 to 1 to the options of the items, respectively. According to their average for the Religious Orientation Scale, they were included in the options given below. Score ranges of the scale are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Mean score ranges of the religious orientation scale

Options	Given points	Points range
Strongly Disagree	1	1.00–1.79
Disagree	2	1.80–2.59
Neutral	3	2.60–3.39
Agree	4	3.40–4.19
Strongly Agree	5	4.20–5.00

3. Results

Table 2 provides information on gender, age, place of birth and educational level of 68 parents with special needs children participating in the study.

Table 2. Demographic information of the parents participating in the survey

	N	%
Gender		
Father	19	28
Mother	49	72
Age		
20 to 30	5	7.4
30 to 40	37	54.4
40 and above	26	38.2
Place of Birth		
Turkey	31	45.6
Cyprus	37	54.4
Education Level		
Primary school	16	23.5
Middle School	10	14.7
High school	31	45.6
University	11	16.2

Table 2 contains the demographic information of parents with special needs children participating in the survey. Five of the parents (7.4%) are aged between 20 and 30 years, 37 (54.4%) are between 30 and 40 years old and 26 (38.2%) are over 40 years old. When looking at the places of birth of the parents participating in the survey, it was found that 31% (45.6%) of the parents were born in Turkey and 37 (54.4%) of them were born in Cyprus. Sixteen (23.5%) of the parents stated that they were primary school graduates, 10 (14.7%) were middle school graduates, 31 (45.6%) were high school graduates and 11 (16.2%) were university graduates.

Table 3. Mean and standard deviation of answers to religious orientation Questionnaire by Parents with Special Needs Children

	<i>X</i>	<i>SS</i>
General Religious Orientation	3.19	0.57

It was determined that the grand total averages for the Religious Orientation Scale of Parents with Special Needs Children were in the 'neutral' range. ($X = 3.19$). It can be interpreted that parents do not have a connection between having a special needs child and religious orientation.

Table 4. Percentage, mean and standard deviation distributions of responses to the religious orientation scale of the parents with special needs children

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		<i>X</i>	<i>SS</i>
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%		
1. Trying to make a comeback to fit all other areas of my religious beliefs	10	14.7	20	29.4	5	7.4	19	27.9	14	20.6	3.10	1.41
3. Religious beliefs are the basis of my life.	20	29.4	14	20.6	8	11.8	11	16.2	15	22.1	2.80	1.55
6. As long as I live an honest and moral life, what I believe is not very important.	11	16.2	2	2.9	3	4.4	15	22.1	37	54.4	3.95	1.48
7. I pray five times every day as long as the conditions are not hindered.	9	13.2	10	14.7	20	29.4	12	17.2	17	25.0	2.42	1.59
8. Once in my life. give the <i>zakat</i> 1 of my property.	14	20.6	8	11.8	7	10.3	17	25.0	22	32.4	3.36	1.54
10. I think from time to time I must compromise my religious beliefs in order to preserve my own social and economic prosperity.	17	25.0	8	11.8	16	23.5	11	16.2	16	23.5	3.01	1.50
13. I read books about my religion.	16	23.5	12	17.6	7	10.3	20	29.4	13	19.1	3.02	1.48

14. It is important for me to take the time to devote to religion	24	35.3	11	16.2	13	19.1	10	14.7	10	14.7	2.57	1.46
16. I often feel strongly that God or the presence of a sacred being exists	9	13.2	8	11.8	7	10.8	23	33.8	21	30.9	3.57	1.38
18. Even if I am a believer. I will not allow my religious thoughts to affect my daily life and relationships.	10	14.7	4	5.9	11	16.2	15	22.1	28	41.2	3.69	1.43
22. Religion is especially important for me because I have answered many questions about the meaning of life	17	25.0	12	17.6	10	14.7	11	16.2	18	26.5	3.01	1.55
Total											3.06	.49

1: Zakat: *payment made annually under Islamic law on certain kinds of property and used for charitable and religious purposes one of the Five Pillars of Islam.*

The Table includes the Intrinsic Religious orientation expressions the first sub dimension of the religious orientation scale. Parents with special needs children stated that they are 'neutral' with statements: 1, 3, 8, 10, 13 and 22 that they 'agreed' to statements'; 6 and 18 and 'disagree' with statements 7 and 14.

Table 5. Percentage, mean and standard deviation distributions of religious expressions of parents with special needs children to subordinate extrinsic religious expression

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		X	SS
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
2. The greatest benefit that religious faith has given me is to comfort me when I face sadness and misfortune.	2	2.9	8	11.8	15	22.1	26	38.2	17	25.0	3.70	1.06
4. The main reason why I pray is because I am	4	5.9	9	13.2	11	16.2	22	32.4	22	32.4	3.72	1.21

taught to do so.												
9. As long as the conditions do not interfere; I think that a person should go to <i>Hajj2</i> once in his lifetime	9	13.2	10	14.7	20	29.4	12	17.6	17	25.0	3.26	1.34
11. If I were going to participate in a religious group. I would only participate in Kuran courses or religious groups aiming at social assistance.	8	11.8	14	20.6	15	22.1	6	8.8	25	36.8	3.38	1.45
12. I believe there are many more important things in life than being religious	10	14.7	8	11.8	14	20.6	19	27.9	17	25.0	3.36	1.37
15. The fact that I am a member of a religious congregation is one of the reasons why it gives me a position in society	51	75.0	7	10.3	3	4.4	4	5.9	3	4.4	1.54	1.11
17. Worshiping will provide me with a happy and peaceful life	14	20.6	10	14.7	12	17.6	17	25.0	15	22.1	3.13	1.45
19. As long as the conditions do not interfere; I Fast in Ramazan	18	26.5	7	10.3	4	5.9	15	22.1	23	33.8	3.52	2.75
20. Place of worship is important in terms of building good social relationships	14	20.6	12	17.6	18	26.5	13	19.1	11	16.2	2.92	1.36
21. The main reason why I am interested in religion is that it gives me a warm social	23	33.8	12	17.6	13	19.1	12	17.6	8	11.8	2.55	1.41

atmosphere												
23. The most important object of worship is peace of mind and trust.	8	11.8	8	11.8	15	22.1	17	25.0	20	29.4	3.48	1.34
Total											3.26	.86

Hajj2 : *The greater Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, which takes place in the last month of the year and which all Muslims are expected to make at least once during their lifetime if they can afford to do so. It is one of the Five Pillars of Islam.*

Table 5 shows the percentage mean and standard deviation distributions of the Extrinsic Religious Expression Exposures which is the Religious Orientation Scale Subscale of Parents with Special Needs Children. Parents stated that they were ‘neutral’ with the statements; 9, 11, 12, 17 and 20. They were ‘agree’ with the statements; “ 2, 4, 19 and 23 and that they ‘strongly disagree’ with statement 15.

4. Conclusion and discussion

This research was conducted to determine the religious orientations of parents with special needs children. Religious orientation scale was applied to participants to achieve this aim. Findings show that parents are at an unstable level in their religious orientation. When parents' intrinsic religious orientations were examined, it was seen that the mostly agreed expression was ‘I do not think that what religion I believe in matters as long as I live an honest and moral life’, while the lowest agreed was ‘I pray five times every day as long as the conditions are not barred’. Parents' high involvement reflects belief in religious orientation and low participation reflects worship dimension. According to this, parents can think that being honest and moral in the aspect of belief is important in their lives but they do not do any worship.

This finding of the research is in parallel with the findings of Yilmaz (2013)'s research on the relationship between religious orientations of university students and individual values. When parents' extrinsic religious orientations are examined, the highest agreed expression was ‘the main reason I pray is because I am taught to do so’ and the least agreed expression was ‘I am a member of a religious congregation, which gives me a position within society’.

The high involvement of parents reflects the dimension of worship in the religious orientation. While parents indicate that praying is seen as a necessity for their beliefs. It can be said that they think it is not necessary to be a member of any congregation in order to have a place in society.

Religious education which is included in the education system starts in the primary school period which is important places of children’s development (Erkoc, 2009). However, until this turn the family is transmitting information about the religious faith in religion. These processes continue in formal and informal ways. There are a lot of studies in various areas related to religious orientation in the field. Dogan (2016) compared the religious orientation hope and faith in religion of families with special need children and families with healthy children and came to conclusion that even though religion is important for all individuals it has more importance for families with special needs children. Kara (2008) has found that having a child with special needs does not affect their religious beliefs and that they believe that having a special child is a test in their fate.

5. Recommendation

In this study, religious orientations of parents with special needs children were tried to be determined. Future research may be based on the determination of the religious attitudes of parents with special needs children. Future research can be conducted on the relationship between parents

with children in need of special education and the religious orientation of parents with healthy children. This research can also be done by families with special needs children living in different countries.

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