

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW ON THE CULTURE OF SACRED TIME IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL LEARNING

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Abstract

The coexistence of religion and culture emerges in folk beliefs at sacred times. Sacred times play a mediating role between God and his believers. The endeavour to access the Sacred Being results in the productivity of human beings and cultural heritage. Religious references to sacred time are associated with the behaviours of people and enable the emergence of many cultural elements. The representation of the Sacred over time creates “the culture of sacred time” unique to each society. Cultural practices in different forms at sacred times contribute to the acquisition of religious feelings and behaviours in religious education. The study aims to reveal the contribution of the culture of sacred time to the development of behaviour through social learning in religious education. Since the phenomenon of sacred time is a common problem in folklore and religious sciences, the study is carried out by an interdisciplinary approach. The method of the study is a systematic literature review of the resources of both disciplines. The study reveals the contribution of the culture of sacred time to the development of religious behaviours through Bandura’s social learning theory and Vygotsky’s cognitive development theory.

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Ethical Statement: It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited. The article was reviewed by at least two referees, a similarity report was obtained using Turnitin, and compliance with research/publication ethics was confirmed.

Keywords: Religious Education, Culture, Sacred time, Social learning, Bandura, Vygotsky.

SOSYAL ÖĞRENME BAĞLAMINDA KUTSAL ZAMAN KÜLTÜRÜNE DİSİPLİNLERARASI BİR BAKIŞ

Öz

Din ve kültürün birlikteliği, kutsal zamanlarda beliren halk inanışlarında kendini göstermektedir. Kutsal zamanlar, inanan kimselerin Kutsal ile ilişki kurmasında aracı bir rol üstlenmektedir. Kutsala erişme gayreti insanoğlunun üretkenliği ile dışa vurulmakta, kutsal zamana ilişkin kültürel birikimi beraberinde getirmektedir. Zamana kutsiyet kazandıran dini referanslar halk davranışlarına yansımakta, çok sayıda kültürel ürünün ortaya çıkmasını sağlamaktadır. Kutsal'ın zaman üzerindeki tecellisi, bu zamana eşlik eden kültürel öğelerle birlikte her inanan topluma özgü bir "kutsal zaman kültürü" oluşturmaktadır. Toplum içerisinde kutsal zamanlarda farklı formlarda tezahür eden kültürel oluşumlar din eğitiminde amaçlanan dini duygu ve davranış gelişimine katkı sağlamaktadır. Çalışma, din eğitiminde kutsal zaman kültürünün sosyal öğrenme yoluyla istendik davranış gelişimine katkısını ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Kutsal zaman olgusunun halk bilimi ve din bilimlerinin ortak problemi olması sebebiyle araştırma disiplinlerarası yaklaşımla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmada her iki disiplinin kaynakları üzerine sistematik literatür taraması yöntemine başvurulmuştur. Kutsal zaman kültürünün dini davranış gelişimine olan katkısı Bandura'nın sosyal öğrenme kuramı ve Vygotsky'nin bilişsel gelişim kuramı çerçevesinde ortaya konulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Din Eğitimi, Kültür, Kutsal zaman, Sosyal öğrenme, Bandura, Vygotsky.

Introduction

Interdisciplinarity is defined as a method that brings together the perspectives and theories of multiple disciplines and draws attention to new alternatives (Ellis, 2009, s. 3). This approach searches for answers to comprehensive and complex questions, and multiple disciplines are integrated, and the research problem is solved from a broader perspective (Keskin, 2019, ss. 925-927). The intersecting dimensions of complex issues can be described, and scientific data can be analysed from a holistic perspective by removing the monopoly of a single discipline (Kanatlı & Çekici, 2011, s. 275).

The co-existence of culture and religion integrates different disciplines that deal with both phenomena. Two separate disciplines of social sciences, folklore, and religious sciences have to rely on each other while analysing a common problem within their framework. Folk behaviours related to belief are accepted as the intersection point where religion, tradition, and folklore (Oğur, 2019, s. 114).

Folklore is the discipline that examines “all traditions, customs, cultural heritage, cultural elements, all kinds of beliefs, music, play, fairy tales, legends, folk songs, local theatre, folk medicine, folk painting, art, riddles, curses, dream interpretations, all tools and equipment related to belief and culture, behaviour and habits of a society” (Tanyu, 2007, s. 123). Religious sciences describe religious phenomena and explain them to people and societies (Waardenburg, 2008, s. 180). The discipline of religious education, which is a sub-discipline of religious sciences, refers to “the field in which people learn about religion formally or informally, voluntarily or implicitly” (Doğan & Ege, 2021, s. 65). Therefore, the informal aspect of religious education intersects with the culture of belief in folklore.

Religious education aims to develop religious feelings and behaviours (Aydın, 2019, s. 81). Religious feelings and behaviours can be developed through socio-cultural stimuli in addition to formal education. Cultural teachings and practices play an important role in the transmission of religious knowledge and practices to the younger generations. Hence, it becomes important to utilise the discipline of folklore in religious education research and vice versa.

1. Aim and Method

The study aims to investigate how sacred time culture contributes to the development of religious feelings and behaviours in Turkey. Related studies on the relationship between religious education and culture reveal that religious education is effective in the transfer of cultural heritage as in the case of Ahilik (Yiğit, 2021), and contributes to the formation of the cultural world (Gündüz, 2022). Another study discusses on the possibility of cultural religious pedagogy by focusing on the effect of culture on religious education (Okumuşlar & Bilecik, 2019). This study differs from others in that it explores the relationship between religious education and culture with a particular focus on the phenomenon of sacred time through an interdisciplinary approach. It discusses the impact of cultural practices on the development of religious feelings and behaviours through social learning with the example of Turkish Ramadan culture.

The research is conducted through a systematic literature review by using relevant sources of social sciences, mostly folklore and religious sciences. Based on a comprehensive literature review, the connection between disciplines is analysed, synthesised, and integrated with an interdisciplinary approach (Choi and Pak, 2006, s. 351). The phenomenon of sacred time constitutes the main problem of the study, which is a common problem in both religious education and folklore studies.

2. Religion and Culture

A mutual and inseparable interaction exists between religion and culture (Okumuş, 2016, s. 275). If cultural elements are removed from religion, religion will become rigid and barren. However, cultural practices related to religion cannot be characterised as a religion per se (Özden, 2005, s. 128). Although religion and culture differ in scope and content, they continue to interact with each other. The interaction between religion and culture occurs in harmony or conflict (Okumuş, 2016, s. 275). For instance, cultural practices in visiting shrines do not comfort religion itself. Considering the process of action-reaction between culture and religion, it becomes natural that religion sometimes harmonises with culture while sometimes contradicting it (Erdoğan & Taşdelen, 2009, s. 1300).

Religion has emerged as one of the most powerful elements in the formation and preservation of culture. Although the level of commitment to religion has changed throughout human history, the fact of that religions and Gods are influential instruments in the emergence of different cultures and civilisations has been accepted as a priori (Kaynak, 2012, s. 675). Various teachings and worship in religions have resulted in the emergence of several cultural practices, and each society has produced different cultural elements in line with its own religion (Kaynak, 2012, s. 681; Özden, 2005, s. 123). Rituals and worships make a great contribution to both the formation and transmission of cultural heritage. The rituals and ceremonies are remarkable activities that transfer tradition from the past to the future. Societies which strive to exist with their own identity in the future can carry their material and spiritual culture to the future through religious ceremonies and rituals (Kapağan, 2019, s. 48). While religion is effective in the development of culture, culture also contributes to the interpretation and transfer of religion to today (Özden, 2005, s. 122). The dynamic structure of culture breaks the rigid form of religion and enables the interpretation and updating of religious rules. Therefore, cultural contribution towards religion reinforces its function and ensures its continuity by virtually embedding it in the whole of social life. For instance, cultural codes on keeping sacred places clean are good examples of the contribution of culture to religion.

Each community, tribe, or nation struggles to keep its tradition alive and pass it on to the future (Kapağan, 2019, s. 47). All traditions allow change, renewal, and updating while preserving their essence. If the essence disappears, the tradition also disappears (Ekici, 2008, s. 38). In this regard, religion is one of the basic elements constituting the essence of tradition. The religious references to social life enable the formation of various cultural practices. Thus, religious codes have a great impact on the cultural heritage of society. Eliot (1987, s. 20) claims that "Culture is the embodiment of a society's religion" hence, if religion disappears, culture will too." As religion existed long before the culture in human history, culture is mainly based on religion.

3. Religion and Sacred Time

Human beings' perception of their own existence and other beings requires them to grasp the concept of time. Humans need to have a certain understanding of time for both intellectual and practical activities of daily life. Otherwise, we cannot comprehend the concrete and inconcrete beings through our relationship with time. For this reason, the concept of time requires utilizing the data of different disciplines and conducting an interdisciplinary study (Oktav & Taslaman, 2017, ss. 719-720).

Time is defined as "a cultural existence for human beings and an endeavour to ensure the continuity of human existence (Bıçak, 2004, s. 215). In the religious literature, time is characterised as circular and linear (Yıldırım, 2007, s. 71). Circular time repeats in history, while linear time starts from the zero point of history and progresses linearly (İrğat, 2017, s. 32). Similarly, Eliade (1991, ss. 48-51) divides time into "historical and non-historical time". Historical time refers to sacred time and non-historical time to non-religious time. While sacred time is the transposition of a primordial mythical time into the present time and it is cyclical, non-sacred time refers to the ordinary period which lacks of religious meaning (Bıçak, 2004, s. 112). Shortly, ordinary times gain sanctity through the relationship with the Sacred being.

The Sacred being has a crucial place in human life in all religions (Gündüz, 2009, s. 10). The human being has a relationship with the Sacred being in the dimensions of time and space. The times when the person establishes a closer relationship with the Sacred and the places where the Sacred makes himself feel more, are called sacred times and places (Güç, 2000, s. 251). Time and space are sanctified in two ways: the first is a sanctity that comes after suffering and hardship, and the other is a sanctity appointed by God or the Prophets (Kaynak, 2016, s. 446). In both cases, sacred time and place are associated with the Sacred being (Dölek, 2014, s. 372). The limitation of direct experience of the Sacred imposes an instrumental value on sacred time and place. Sacred times and places mediate the relationship between human beings and the Sacred being (Kaynak, 2016, s. 453).

Sacred times remove the believer from daily life for a while and draw his/her attention to religion. In this way, man gets away from the chaos of life for a moment and places religion on his agenda (Demir, 2017, s. 318). Sacred times provide the individual who is stuck in social life with the opportunity to maintain his relationship with the Sacred through time management skills. Through practices specific to sacred times, he reveals his devotion to the Sacred. As a result, the worship acted at certain times both provides time management and increases religious sensitivity (Kandemir, 2021, ss. 418-419).

4. Culture and Sacred Time

Sacred times vary in every culture and belief, but the tradition of repeating the sacred time never varies (Cengil & Tekin, 2016, s. 37). Religious calendars were developed early

in history to enable the repeated celebration of sacred times. These calendars were inspired by the movements of the moon and the sun and were created in a cyclical progression. Since cyclical calendars allow a return to the first moment, they establish the eternity of the Sacred (Ünal, 2008, ss. 18-19). Through festivals, holidays, and carnivals which the members of the same religion in different countries celebrate at certain times of the year, common values and meanings are relived and updated (Günay, 1998, s. 243). The sacred days associated with the gods in ancient Egypt (Ünal, 2008, s. 25), the birthdays of religious figures in Hinduism (Schimmel, 2004, s. 105), the days of the Jews commemorating painful events in the past, the holidays of Christians associated with the life of Jesus Christ, and the festivals and ceremonies organised by Buddhists for Buddha allow the commemoration of the events in the past (Cengil & Tekin, 2016, ss. 37-39).

Sacred times have been the tools that make religion effective in social life (Demir, 2017, s. 317). Thanks to sacred time, people have been able to fix and give meaning to certain events and to display their loyalty and obedience to the Sacred at these times (Kaynak, 2016, s. 446). Time has gained sanctity in many cultures, and it can destroy everything but itself and can refer to anything. In ancient times when the idea of God had not yet developed, time even surpassed God's role (Enveri, 2019, s. 292).

The basic element of religions, the Sacred is embodied and unites societies with certain rituals (Demir, 2017, s. 316). Sacred times also have a unifying effect on the lives of believers (Erođlan, 2017, s. 172). On the other hand, sacred times also have the function of separating societies and cultures from each other. While religious practices in sacred times unite believers of a society, the common feelings and experiences shared within this unity distinguish that community from others (Erođlan, 2017, s. 159).

The establishment of religion in culture is possible by the lasting impact of religious practices on believers. Each community creates a subculture of sacred time with unique practices and symbols in sacred times. Sacred times encourage societies to produce the feeling created to the sanctity attributed by history or God and contribute to the cultural heritage of each society. All nations experience sanctity over time and space through the emotional bond with a Supreme Being (Kirtorun, 2018, s. 181). The influence of religion on social behaviour arises in sacred times. Religious sensitivity, which does not appear in ordinary times, influences even non-believers with cultural stimulus and positively changes their attitudes and behaviours toward believers. The activity at sacred nights and the sensitivity during the month of Ramadan are clear examples of the influence of the sacred time on the entire population and are considered to be a reflection of cultural transmission rather than religious necessity (Ođur, 2019, s. 118).

5. Sacred Time in Turkish Islamic Culture

Turkish people have interpreted and adopted religions according to their own philosophy in the process of acquiring religious identity. In Turkish history, many religions have been

contacted, and each one has contributed to the cultural heritage of the Turkish people and has been passed on to the present day (Çay, 2014, s. 61). However, no religion has left more traces in Turkish culture than Islam. Just as every nation has preferred the religion that suits its own culture, most Turkish people have embraced Islam which is close to their own culture. Therefore, Turkish culture is virtually integrated with Islam (Özden, 2005, ss. 124-125). The religious and ethnic identity of the Turkish people is united under the name of Turkish Islamic Culture. The political history, ethnic identity, and moral and religious values of the Turkish people have formed the Turkish Islamic Culture in the Islamic civilisation.

In Turkish Islamic culture, sacred times are of great value in terms of their meaning and function. The meaning of sacred time differentiates it from other times (Musahan, 2015, s. 135). Sacred times such as Ramadan and the night of Qadr have an existential value for believers. Sacred time also differs from other times in that it can be carried from the first time it was experienced to the present time. Since the night of Qadr is the sacred time for the revelation of the Holy Qur'an, Muslims leave ordinary time, return to primordial time, and experience the revelation of the Qur'an every year at the night of Qadr (Yavuz, 2006, ss. 57-60).

The months of Rajab, Shaban, and Ramadan, known as the three months in Islam, are a period when Muslims increase their religious sensitivity, spend more time in worship, dhikr, and prayer, and engage more in charity (Sancaklı, 2017, s. 41). In particular, the month of Ramadan is crucial because Allah Almighty has commanded Muslims to fast (Al-Baqarah 2/183) and the Holy Qur'an was revealed in this month. The verse "The night of Qadr is better than a thousand months" (Qadr 97/3) proves the sanctity of this night and it is a motivation for Muslims to reconstruct their Islamic identity sincerely.

6. Turkish Ramadan Culture as a Social Learning Experience

Religious education is a multidimensional activity that includes cognitive and social processes. This is why religious education cannot refer only to formal education (Yıldız, 2014, s. 156). Religious education aims to teach religious values to believers (Kalkan vd., 2021, s. 19). Informal religious education can be as effective as formal education as socio-cultural stimuli contribute to religious development. Bandura's social learning theory argues that the socio-cultural environment is effective in the development of the individual (Bandura, 1999, s. 25). Similarly, Vygotsky's cognitive development theory reveals that the child learns and develops within the social context (Nicolopoulou, 2004, s. 147). Social context is seen as a favourable learning environment for children (Montessori, 2002).

Vygotsky argues that children, despite their innate physiological and psychological tendencies, are mostly shaped by cultural practices and their way of thinking of society (Nicolopoulou, 2004, s. 146). Thus, the environment is the basic element of development

(Y. Yıldırım, 2016, s. 622). The child learns by interacting with his/her social environment and the environment affects his/her learning (Atak, 2017, s. 170). Individuals internalise the social teachings and apply them. In other words, an experience becomes meaningful for the individual because of its interaction with society (Karslı, 2018, ss. 63-64).

Culture and environment are seen as important factors in the development of beliefs and religious attitudes (Ay, 1994, s. 1; Köylü, 2004, s. 139). The influence of culture on the perception of religion begins from childhood (Bedir, 2017). For instance, social and cultural elements are found to affect children's perception of God (Zengin, 2010, s. 239). In a similar vein, Ramadan traditions shape children's faith, morality, and worship life. Children born and raised in the Turkish Ramadan culture start to recognise the cultural practices of Ramadan at a very early stage of their lives.

Vygotsky attributed a central role to culture and cultural transmission in the development of children, arguing that they develop through communication and social interaction within a social framework, as well as through the transmission of conceptual and symbolic elements of cultural heritage. According to Vygotsky, children adopt and appropriate the cultural accumulation transferred to them (Cited in Nicolopoulou, 2004; Vygotsky, 1978, 1986, 1987). The transmission of cultural tools constitutes the essence of the cognitive development process, so cognitive development does not take place independently of these tools (Karslı, 2018, s. 64). In this regard, Turkish society has a deep-rooted cultural heritage (Selçuk, 1999, s. 255). The month of Ramadan is one of the best examples representing the productivity of Turkish culture. Ramadan has had an impact on Turkish literature, humour, street culture, and cuisine, and has led to the emergence of many cultural elements. The pecic game is played by two teams using seashells on Ramadan nights (Karabudak & Bozoğullarından, 2020, s. 126) and kupecik game is played collectively by children during Ramadan days (Ateş, 2015, s. 35). Memories, poems, and jokes about the month of Ramadan (Özden, 2006, s. 95), Ramadan-specific desserts, pitta bread and folder (Demirci, 2021, s. 70), entertainment tents, horse acrobats, circuses, and jugglers (Ayverdi, 2007, ss. 40-41) are some elements representing Turkish Ramadan culture. As Beyatlı (2012, 19) describes the month of Ramadan in his poem: "The spirituality of Ramadanturned the silence into a sweet inquietude; the fasting people of the neighbourhood, those with pale skin, quietly returning from the market one by one...", Ramadan traditions form the individual's perception of religion by proving that religion is not disconnected from daily life, but is integrated with ordinary experiences such as eating, drinking, and having fun. In short, religion and values in social life have an impact on all areas of life (Serinsu & Doğan, 2020, s. 159). These elements, which are not directly related to religion, but specific to the month of Ramadan are crucial for the formation, transmission, and acquisition of religious culture. According to Vygotsky, children adopt and appropriate the cultural accumulation transferred to them (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986, 1987, Akt. Nicolopoulou, 2004).

Vygotsky analyses the development of the child from birth within a social, historical, and cultural context (Atak, 2017, s. 170). According to him, development is a process that includes the development of previous generations in socio-cultural history. The human mind is derived from social and cultural processes; therefore, it is necessary to investigate socio-cultural processes to understand the human mind (Yıldırım, 2016, s. 623). Therefore, it is important to look at the historical background of Turkish Ramadan culture. Some Ramadan traditions that have become a part of Turkish culture were inherited from the Ottoman Empire. The month of Ramadan affects the whole life from commercial activities to social relations (Georgeon, 2018). Cannon firing in iftar, mahya, drum, and zimen book (credit book) are practices that still exist in Turkish Ramadan culture today. Traditions such as the peace lectures held with the participation of the sultans at that time, the warnings announced to the public before the month of Ramadan, the charity stones placed in certain parts of the city for poor people, and the tooth rent given by the hosts to their guests who come to iftar (Çetin, 2020) are the source of today's Ramadan culture. Ramadan traditions that the Ottoman poets wrote for the Sultans and Semai coffeehouses, which hosted the semai and manis of minstrels on Ramadan evenings (Çetin, 2020, ss. 24-26) are Ramadan traditions that Turkish society today endeavours to maintain in different forms. In that period, the Holy Qur'an was recited in mosques by competent karis (reader) during Ramadan, the food, sherbet, and iftar meals were distributed by palace women to the public, the poor and orphans were clothed, and the leprosy patients were cared for by others (Maydaer, 2021, s. 30). These practices are still being continued with the same sensitivity for the sick, poor, and disadvantaged people. Similar traditions help people acquire values such as solidarity, patience, empathy, generosity, and compassion. The aim of religious education is to provide new generations with positive feelings and values is served mostly by cultural practices. From early childhood, the individual begins to adopt the beliefs and traditions of society (Fowler, 1981, s. 149).

Vygotsky coins the term "zone of proximal development" and argues that learning occurs at this stage by drawing attention to the difference between what an individual can learn alone and the level of development he/she can reach with the help of others (Kaya, 2010, s. 92). An individual can learn very little when alone, but can only reach his/her potential in a social environment (Yıldırım, 2016, s. 623). Socialization and acculturation are among the goals of education (Yiğit, 2021, s. 92). Activities that require both physical intimacy and intellectual productivity have an educational function. Vygotsky's theory claims that the mental process starts with social interaction and mental development can be realised through interaction with peers as well as adults (Ünveren Kapanadze, 2019, s. 182). This interaction and learning environment becomes during the holy month of Ramadan by the Muslim youth. They encourage each other to fast and go to the salah of tarawih during Ramadan. The young people meet at the mosque for the salah of fajr in Ramadan, have an iftar meal, and go to the salah of tarawih together. They perform religious behaviours

that are not performed alone in ordinary times. It proves the effect of social learning on the development of religious behaviour.

Bandura's social learning theory, also known as social cognitive theory, is based on similar foundations to Vygotsky's theory and argues that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and interaction within the social environment. To him, social learning takes place in two ways: "modelling and imitation" and "operant conditioning". First, individuals accept some people as models through observation and imitate their behaviours (Bandura, 2006, s. 61). Bandura claims that one can learn many things by observing the experiences of others (Bayrakçı, 2007, s. 200). Children unconsciously imitate the behaviours they observe around them, and then these imitations turn into conscious behaviours. For this reason, the skill of imitation is useful in the process of developing religious feelings and behaviours of children. Imitation which is an effective method in religious education (Orhan & Dağcı, 2015, s. 121) makes children easily perform religious practices and develop positive behaviours during Ramadan. Through direct and indirect imitation, people adopt the traditions and customs (Öcal, 2007, ss. 193-194).

Religious education involves the observation and adoption of models (Serinsu & Doğan, 2020, s. 155). Bandura argues that the status of the modeled person is effective in imitation. If the model is superior to the observer in terms of status, imitation occurs, and vice versa, imitation is not seen (Tatlıoğlu, 2021, s. 23). For this reason, children often model and imitate those who are superior to themselves in terms of age, knowledge, and experience. Not only psychomotor behaviour but also moral values are imitated through social learning. This is because Bandura discusses on moral development and value acquisition within the scope of social learning and bases it on the role of social reinforcers and model behaviours on the child's moral judgements (Gürel, 2014, s. 103). With the concept of vicarious emotion, Bandura states that the emotions of models are also imitated by the person observing him/her. The individual can indirectly experience many emotions such as fear, love, and anxiety that he/she observes in others (Tatlıoğlu, 2021, s. 23). In this regard, the month of Ramadan when religious feelings are experienced most intensely, has a critical impact on the development of aimed feelings in children and young people. The emotional sensitivity that the child witnesses during Ramadan also reflects his/her own emotions.

Ramadan fasting is positioned in a more important place than other obligatory religious practices in Turkish culture. While not performing salah may be accepted in Turkish society, not fasting during Ramadan is seen as "disrespectful to the community spirit" (Güngör & Polat, 2015, s. 131). Therefore, cultural codes are very effective in the realization and continuity of fasting. The social perception of fasting is observed in the sensitivity towards the fast itself and the fasting person. People who fast during Ramadan but do not perform other religious practices prove the fact that cultural codes may be more effective in the development of religious behaviours than religious provisions.

Religions secure their existence by emphasizing sacred times. Rituals performed at sacred times in different religions create a sense of religious belonging. In Islam, Ramadan and the night of Qadr are the most emphasised sacred times and the sense of belonging arises more during these times (Demir, 2017, s. 318). This is because the survival of a religion or belief system by the next generations is possible through the practice of individuals and society. Social cohesion is also ensured through rites and rituals at sacred times when believers share common feelings (Kaynak, 2016, s. 444).

Turkish people make material and spiritual preparations before the month of Ramadan. Preparations such as cleaning houses and mosques, planning socio-cultural programmes, organizing charity works, and giving up drinking and smoking are psychological and sociological grounds for fasting (Güngör & Polat, 2015, s. 128). Such stimuli, which make the person ready for worship, are meaningful for the internalization of religious feelings and their transformation into practice. The individual blends psychological tendencies such as belief, attachment, and shelter with religion and shapes them with environmental stimuli in the process of transforming from a biological being into a social being (Osmanoğlu, 2014, s. 183). The cultural practices of sacred times produced by society are precious stimuli for both believers and non-believers. Human beings are affected by all purposeful or purposeless stimuli coming from their environment (Bayraklı, 1989, s. 133).

Second, behaviours reinforced or rewarded by operant conditioning are more likely to be performed in social learning theory (Tatlıoğlu, 2021, s. 16). The individuals who witness that the religious behaviours are rewarded and the opposite behaviours are punished develops behaviour in line with the expectations of society (Orhan& Dağcı, 2015, s. 128). Therefore, the children appreciated and rewarded for their religious and moral behaviours such as prayer, fasting, tarawih, sahur, patience, and cooperation during Ramadan are more likely to sustain their behaviours. Thus, learning is not only behavioural but also cognitive. Behaviour is not always imitated, but it is also developed by its consequences (Tatlıoğlu, 2021, s. 21) as feedback has an important effect on the sustainability of behaviour in social learning (Bandura, 1977, s. 190).

For the sustainability of behaviour, Bandura draws attention to the term of self-efficacy in the social learning process. To Bandura, there are four main sources of self-efficacy: (1) Successfully performed activities make the person believe that they can be done in the future. (2) Indirect experiences enable the observer to develop the belief that the model will also succeed by looking at the success and failure of the model. (3) Verbal stimulus encourages or discourages others and affects the learning process of the person (4) Physical and emotional state reveals that self-efficacy will decrease in case of anxiety and increase otherwise (Bandura, 1994, s. 2). According to these principles, human feelings and behaviours are strongly influenced by external stimuli. Interaction with others has a direct or indirect effect on the learning, maintenance or abandonment of any behaviour in the process of social learning. The development of religious feelings and behaviour is

also shaped to a great extent by the influence of the social environment, and cultural codes and social stimuli are effective in religious education.

The emphasis on unity in the essence of religion is essentially embodied in the phenomenon of culture. Therefore, the sanctity that Allah Almighty assigns to time occurs differently in each society and leads to the formation of a local culture. The localised culture of sacred time serves religion and contributes to religious education with the dimension of faith and worship. Therefore, the coexistence of religion and culture requires a good understanding of the culture (Çevikoğlu, 2005, s. 202), and the inclusion of culture in the process of religious education (Gündüz, 2022, s. 48).

Conclusion

Many disciplines have discussed the interaction of religion and culture with various arguments. Just as religion plays a dominant role in the formation of culture, it is not possible to separate culture from religion. The common problem of folklore and religious sciences, the phenomenon of sacred time is analysed with an interdisciplinary approach in the context of social learning in this study.

Sacred times have enabled each society to create a unique sacred time culture. Cultural elements specific to these times help to carry the sanctity assigned by the Creator into human and social life. Cultural practices can be as effective as formal education. The research reveals that culture contributes to the development of feelings and behaviours aimed at religious education in the context of social learning and that cultural practices in sacred times stimulate people's religious feelings. As a result, sacred times refer to critical times to benefit from their impact on the develop religious feelings and behaviours for educators and parents.

Turkish society distinctly reflects its cultural heritage of the sacred time during the month of Ramadan. Turkish Ramadan culture represents the influence of sacred time culture on the formation of religious feelings and behaviours. The diversification of religious stimuli with cultural practices during sacred times and the integration of religious realities with Ramadan traditions in different forms for a month enables them to adopt and imitate them through social learning. The study reveals the contribution of the culture of the sacred time to the development of religious behaviours through Bandura's social learning theory and Vygotsky's cognitive development.

It is recommended to address common problems of religious education and other social science disciplines and conduct similar interdisciplinary research that reveals the relationship between culture and religious education.

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