





# The Impact of Religious Officials on Social Life: A Research on Scale Development, Validity and Reliability

## Din Görevlilerinin Toplumsal Yaşam Üzerindeki Etkisi: Ölçek Geliştirme, Geçerlilik ve Güvenilirlik Araştırması

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### ABSTRACT

Tradition and religion are two important sources that affect the construction and continuity of social relations throughout history. Before the modern period, when the secular social structure was widely accepted, these two sources served as the primary determinant resource of social ties, sometimes alone and frequently together. This study aims to develop a scale to determine the effect of the level of clerics (imams and muezzins) working under the Presidency of Religious Affairs, the institution authorized to serve religious services in Turkey, on social life. In this context, a survey was conducted with 1208 people in 12 provinces and 42 districts, based on a face-to-face interview method. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were used to test the reliability and validity of the scale made for this study, in which the universe is taken as a whole. The scale, whose reliability and validity were tested, can be used to assess the impact of religious officials on family, kinship, neighborliness, and work life as well as the impact of religion on state-society relationships.

**Keywords:** Sociology of Religion, Psychology of Religion, Religious Officer, Society, Social Life.

### Öz

Gelenek ve din, tarih boyunca toplumsal ilişkilerin inşasını ve sürekliliğini etkileyen iki önemli kaynaktır. Seküler toplum yapısının yaygın olarak kabul gördüğü modern dönem öncesinde bu iki kaynak bazen tek başlarına, çoğu zaman da birlikte toplumsal ilişkiler üzerinde temel belirleyici kaynak olarak işlev görmüştür. Bu çalışma, Türkiye'de din hizmeti sunmakla yetkili kurum olan Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı'na bağlı olarak çalışan din görevlilerinin (imam ve müezzinler) düzeyinin toplumsal yaşam üzerindeki etkisini belirlemek amacıyla bir ölçek geliştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu kapsamda 12 il ve 42 ilçede 1208 kişi ile yüz yüze görüşme yöntemine dayalı bir anket çalışması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Evrenin bir bütün olarak ele alındığı bu çalışma için yapılan ölçeğin güvenilirlik ve geçerliliğini test etmek amacıyla keşifsel faktör analizi (EFA) ve doğrulayıcı faktör analizi (CFA) kullanılmıştır. Güvenilirliği ve geçerliliği test edilen ölçek, din görevlilerinin aile, akrabalık, komşuluk ve iş hayatı üzerindeki etkisinin yanı sıra dinin devlet-toplum ilişkileri üzerindeki etkisini değerlendirmek için de kullanılabilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Din Sosyolojisi, Din Psikolojisi, Din Görevlisi, Toplum, Sosyal Hayat.

## INTRODUCTION

Religion is a belief system that explains the reason for the existence of the world and the universe, and especially of human beings, in connection with the creator and that accepts the existence of life after death<sup>1</sup>. Throughout history, just as religions have had an influence on human and public life at varying levels<sup>2</sup>, on the other hand, religions have also been discussed by people in varying ways<sup>3</sup>. Two separate sources stand out in the emergence of differences in the approach of religions to social relations. Some of these differences appear prominently in sacred texts, which are considered the main sources of religion. Some others are based on the decisions and practices of the people and institutions authorized to speak on behalf of religion or have the task of providing religious services.

Islam is a religion that started in the early seventh century. It has many things that make it different from other religions, but it also has some things in common with other religions. The Quran, which is believed to have been conveyed to Muhammad by Allah through revelation, is accepted as the main source of Islam. Sunnah, which is a record of the Prophet's religious talks and actions, is used as a secondary source. Over time, the discourses of the ulema, who have knowledge and experience in religious sciences, on religious issues have also been accepted as one of the important resources of the religion.

The influence of religion on social relations varies depending on time and space. This variance may be caused by the internal dynamics of religion, as well as by social conditions. In this context, the interpretation of the Quran and Sunnah, which are accepted as the religion's main texts, and the acceptance of these interpretations as the religion's main source over time resulted in the sanctification of personal views and historical texts. The sanctification of the personal and the historical has set the stage for the settlement of traditional religious understanding. This shift in the world of faith in societies has altered religion's impact on society.

The transformation of political and social separations, originally originating in the power struggle, into a matter of belief in due course has also changed the social impact of religion. In addition, with the spread of Islam, many people of different races, languages, ethnic origins, and cultures have become Muslims. Within this period, traditions in addition to religion affected the formation of social relations.

In the history of Islam, the institution of politics has been a determining power in social relations. While politics shaped the course of relations between politics and religion, it also influenced relations between religion and society at large. After the reign and caliphate ended in Republican-era Turkey, the decisiveness of politics on religious and religious and social relations continued through various means and methods. The founders of the Republic argued that there should be a sharp distinction between religion and state in the country. But, taking into account the situation, the founding power decided that religion should be run by the state.

In the Ottoman Empire, sheikhulislamlik, the official religious organization, continued its existence as the Ministry of Sher'iyeh and Evkaf (Religious Affairs and Endowments) during the period of the parliamentary government system and also continued to exist as the Head of Religious Affairs in 1924. Adopting secularism, the constituent power was skeptical of religious structures operating in the civil sphere and banned their activities. The Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet) operated as the only legal institution in the country that was authorized and charged with carrying out religious services. The number of personnel of Diyanet, whose existence and activities are discussed by some social groups in the country, has increased day by day. Diyanet is organized as a central organization with provincial branches. Most of the staff of the institution are imams and muezzins who work in mosques. Imams and muezzins, who have a large numerical weight in the staff of the institution, have a close relationship with the public due to their positions and duties. Imams and muezzins, who are the visible face of the institution to the public, also perform the function of bridges between the institution and the people.

While performing religious services within the field of their duties, authorities, and responsibilities in mosques, imams and muezzins also carry out some other activities devoted to social life inside and outside the mosque. These activities of imams and muezzins can affect many areas such as family, kinship, neighborliness, working life, state-society relations, and political life. The level of impact of these activities may vary according to time, space, and circumstances.

<sup>1</sup> Peter L. Berger, *Dinin Sosyal Gerçekliği*, çev. Ali Coşkun (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 1993).

<sup>2</sup> Nureddin Topçu, *Sosyoloji*, haz. Ezel Erverdi ve İsmail Kara (İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> G.F. Wilhelm Hegel, *Din Felsefesi Dersleri*, çev. Doğan Naci Kadioğlu (İstanbul: Pinhan Yayıncılık, 2016).

Many large-scale studies have been conducted to measure religiousness and the effect of religion on human and social life. However, a study devoted to developing a scale to measure the impact of an institution such as Diyanet, where the number of imams and muezzins working in mosques is approximately seventy thousand, on social life has not been conducted so far. Measuring the level of influence of mosques and officials in mosques, who are the Diyanet's closest unit to the public, on the social life of the country, as well as determining the demands and expectations of society from religious officials in mosques, will make a significant contribution to various institutions and organizations, particularly the Presidency of Religious Affairs, and the relevant segments of society.

Within the scope of this large-scale development study, 12 different provinces representing the whole of Turkey were identified as samples. Within the scope of the sample, 1208 people were interviewed face-to-face, and they were surveyed for scale development. With the study, the reliability test of the scale prepared to determine the level of impact of Diyanet on Turkey's social life is carried out through religious officials in mosques. The scale developed within the scope of the study and tested for reliability will allow for the determination of the level of impact of Diyanet on social life in particular. In addition, it will be used to determine the level of impact of religious activities on social life and other professions, institutions, and organizations.

### 1. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Religion carries many other meanings such as path, law, judgment, day of reckoning, customs, punishment, recompense, worship, sharia, and obedience<sup>4</sup>. Man's belief in the existence of a transcendental power dates back to early humans<sup>5</sup>. Religion influences human relationships with the creator, people, things, and the universe<sup>6</sup>. In this context, religion has an aspect concerning the inner world of a person, as well as an aspect concerning the relationship that a man establishes with his environment<sup>7</sup>. As the impact of religion on people and society may differ according to person, time, and space, the relationship between religion and economy can be subjected to different evaluations<sup>8</sup>.

People have had to live together for a variety of reasons. The transformation of this togetherness into a sustainable life with a strong sense of solidarity through the beliefs, rules, and institutions that provide and mediate the fulfilment of basic needs has led to the construction of the social structure. In the construction and maintenance of the social structure, the resources that enable the formation of social relations such as economy, politics, law, and culture have a great influence. These resources provide important opportunities for the provision and maintenance of social unity on the one hand, while on the other hand, they can form the basis of social disintegration. Furthermore, these resources, which serve as integration for their society, have the potential to mediate differences with other societies.

The social field based on solidarity, like politics, has a significant impact on social life. Politics is based on the relationship between the economy and power based on financial gain. Space, tradition, and religion<sup>9</sup> have a special place in shaping social relations based on cooperation and solidarity among people. In addition to serving as a determining resource in spatial planning<sup>10</sup> and the formation of value judgments<sup>11</sup> religions have been very sensitive to the protection of many social structures and relationships in traditional societies, especially the family<sup>12</sup> too. The religion of Islam states that people should be in close solidarity in the social field, especially in the family, relatives, and neighborhood relations. Also, some of Islam's basic values about the relationship between work and the government have something to do with how people interact with each other.

<sup>4</sup> Günay Tümer, "Din", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Ansiklopedisi* (Erişim 12 Haziran 2021).

<sup>5</sup> Aristoteles, *Metaphysics* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1933); Ahmet Cevizci, *Felsefe Tarihi* (İstanbul: Say Yayınları, 2009); Mircea Eliade, *The Quest; History and Meaning in Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969).

<sup>6</sup> Seyyid Hüseyin Nasr, *Modern Dünyada Geleneksel İslam* (İstanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 2001).

<sup>7</sup> Platon, *Devlet*, çev. Cenk Saraçoğlu-Veysel Atayman (İstanbul: Bordo Siyah Yayınları, 2013).

<sup>8</sup> Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (New York: Collier Books, 1962); Karl Marx ve Friedrich Engels, *On Religion* (New York: Dover Publications, 2008); Cemil Meriç, *Sosyoloji Notları ve Konferansları* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1993); Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993a).

<sup>9</sup> Joachim Wach, *Sociology of Religion* (London & New York: Routledge, 2019).

<sup>10</sup> Farabi, *İlimlerin Sayımı (İhsâ'ül Ulûm)*, çev. Ahmet Ateş (Ankara: MEB Yayınları, 1990); Ahmet Kahraman, *Dinler Tarihi* (İstanbul: Marifet Yayınları, 1984).

<sup>11</sup> Hüsameddin Erdem, "Platon'un Din Anlayışı". *Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 18 (Temmuz 2004), 7-15.

<sup>12</sup> Eliade, *The Quest; History and Meaning in Religion*, 58.

It has been argued that classical sources of legitimacy such as mythology, religion, tradition, and charisma will lose their influence in traditional societies in their entirety, together with modernization and secularization based on reason and scientific knowledge. However, although the level of determinism of religion and tradition on social relations decreased over time, especially in modern Western societies, it was observed that religion and tradition reproduced themselves and continued their influence in social life outside the field of faith.

The separation between religion and state, which started in the Ottoman Empire, went to a different stage with the abolition of the caliphate in the Republic period, other revolutions, and finally the entry of the principle of secularism into the constitution. Even though the caliphate was abolished during the Republic period, the state established the Directorate of Religious Affairs to control the religious scene, according to some, and to provide religious services to society, according to others. The human resources of the Presidency of Religious Affairs have increased greatly over time, depending on the social demands or the political approaches of the governments, and the service area has expanded. In addition to the expansion in service areas, the increase in the number of mosques and the number of officials in these mosques plays an important role in Diyanet's adoption of a multi-layered bureaucratic structure.

Religious officials in the mosque are obliged to fulfil the duties specified in the law as civil servants. However, due to the service they provide, religious officials, who are positioned in a different place than the classical civil servants and who are valued by society, expand their service area or go outside this field due to social expectations and demands. Expectations and demands regarding social life expand the scope of activities for religious officials and increase their influence on social relations. At the same time, since some duties and responsibilities regarding the social life that Islam imposes on every believer bind religious officials, they may have to perform some activities that are not included in their official duties. This situation allows religious officials to be more active in the society they live in.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Religion, which is an important part of human and social life, has also been one of the important fields of study in the scientific world. In addition to the belief dimensions of religion such as creator, revelatory knowledge, life after death, and prophecy, the determinativeness or effect of religion on social relations has also been discussed in many scientific studies<sup>13</sup>. It has long been assumed in religious literature that the decisiveness of religion in social relations would fade with the modern era's rationality and science. Indeed, some scholars have argued that, with the secularization process, religion would completely lose its influence on social relations<sup>14</sup>. However, although the level of influence of religion on social life has varied over time, it has been observed that this variability does not occur only as a decrease in the effect of religion<sup>15</sup>.

Reasons why religion's impact on social, economic, political and cultural life, degrees of this impact and its reflections have been among research subjects of not only sociologists<sup>16</sup> but also scholars from all fields of social sciences, and among the research topics of scientists working in the field of social science, particularly theologians<sup>17</sup>.

In the studies mentioned above, the direct and indirect impact of religion on social life has been emphasized. There is a great quantity of qualitative and quantitative studies aiming at determining the impact of Islam on social life in the world and in Turkey<sup>18</sup>.

In some of the studies which were carried out in Turkey, the direct effect of religion on social life has been discussed whereas in some others, the effect of religion was tried to be determined through intermediate institutions such as congregations

<sup>13</sup> Berger, 1969; Durkheim, 1962; Farabi: 1990; Max Weber, *Sosyoloji Yazıları*, çev. Taha Parla (İstanbul: Hürriyet Vakfı Yayınları, 1993b).

<sup>14</sup> Marshall Goodwin Hodgson, *İslam'ın Serüveni, Bir Dünya Medeniyetinde Bilinç ve Tarih* (İstanbul: İz Yayıncılık, 1995); Phil Zuckerman, *Din Sosyolojisine Giriş* (Ankara: Birleşik Kitabevi, 2006).

<sup>15</sup> Yasin Aktay, "Cumhuriyet Döneminde Din Politikaları ve Din İstismarı", *İslamiyat* 3 (Eylül 2000), 37-47; İsmail Kara, "Din ile Devlet Arasında Sıkışmış Bir Kurum: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı", *Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 18 (2000), 29-55.

<sup>16</sup> Walter Houston Clark, *The Psychology of Religion: An Introduction to Religious Experience* (New York: Macmillan, 1958); Eliade, 1969; Hans Freyer, *Din Sosyolojisi* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1964).

<sup>17</sup> Şuayip Özdemir, "Ceza Evlerinde Din Eğitiminin Temel Problemlerine Genel Bir Bakış", *Değerler Eğitimi Dergisi* 9 (Temmuz 2005), 163-175.

<sup>18</sup> Sadık Albayrak, *Türkiye'de Din Kavgası* (İstanbul: Kişisel Yayınları, 1973); Bahattin Akşit vd., *Türkiye'de Dindarlık, Sosyal Gerilimler Ekseninde İnanç ve Yaşam Biçimleri* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2012); Abdülkerim Bahadır, "Dindarlığı Etkileyen Faktörler", *Din Psikolojisi* ed. Hayati Hökelekli (Eskişehir: Anadolu Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2010); Amiran Kurtkan Bilgiseven, *Din Sosyolojisi* (İstanbul: Filiz Kitabevi, 1985); Charles Y. Glock "Dindarlığın boyutları üzerine" *Din Sosyolojisi* (Ankara: Vadi Yayınları, 1998); Hasan Kayıklık, "Bireysel Dindarlığın Boyutları ve İnanç-Davranış Etkileşimi", *İslâmi Araştırmalar Dergisi* 19/3 (Temmuz 2006), 491-499.

and religious cults. However, within the studies carried out in Turkey, where the state has a high degree of decisiveness in social relations, the Presidency of Religious Affairs, a constitutional institution in Turkey, has been studied in the context of secularism from a political point of view<sup>19</sup>. However, even though Diyanet is an institution that has a significant impact on the functioning of social relations and thus on social life in the country, few studies on Diyanet have been carried out. In addition, studies have focused on institutional structure<sup>20</sup> or the personal characteristics and professional experiences of the personnel<sup>21</sup>.

Even though social life needs to be investigated in detail through institutions and relationships, it is observed that many studies in this field are superficial<sup>22</sup> or emphasize just one aspect of social life and are far from being holistic<sup>23</sup>. In this study, social life is scrutinized from the aspects of family relations, kinship and neighborhood relations, relations in working life, and state-society relations. In addition, it was not neglected that all these relations that make up social life should be tackled in an interrelated manner. This study, which aims to determine the level of the impact of religion on social life, will make a significant contribution to the literature as a comprehensive and detailed research.

### 3. METHODS

Determining the extent to which religion has an impact on social life in detail using quantitative research methods will contribute significantly to studies aimed at understanding the relationship between religion and society. At this point, the scale to be prepared in this context must be reliable and functional. This scale, formed to determine the impact of religious officials who are employed as Diyanet staff, has the characteristic of determining the impact of some other occupational groups on social life.

In the scope of the scale study, 12 provinces and 42 districts in Turkey were included. The survey consists of 57 questions and was prepared on a five-point Likert scale. It was applied face-to-face to 1208 people in total in Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Bursa, Adana, Antalya, Konya, Trabzon, Malatya, Diyarbakir, Erzurum, and Edirne provinces with high population density in Turkey. The incumbent controller kept a daily report for the questionnaire to be administered consistently. Surveys were applied to a maximum of one person in each street and household, in the province and district centers, and in at least four different neighborhoods.

The survey application was made by taking into account the population statistics data of the Turkish Statistical Institute for 2018. (Gender, age, occupation, income, education, etc.) To check the reliability of the survey application, the mobile or work phone number of the survey respondents from each district was recorded as not less than 15% of the total survey respondents. The accuracy of these records was checked using the random-sounding method technique. Surveys were conducted in the district centers mentioned above in at least four different neighborhoods. The survey was given to no more than one person on each street and in each home.

The ethical appropriateness of this study and obtaining participant informed consent were sensitively considered. In addition, the approval of Inonu University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee dated 22.01.2019 and numbered 2019-2-2 was obtained for this study. Written informed consent was obtained from the all participants who participated in this study.

<sup>19</sup> Berna Zengin Arslan, "Aleviliği Tanımlamak: Türkiye'de Dinin Yönetimi, Sekülerlik ve Diyanet", *Mülkiye Dergisi* 39/1 (Eylül 2015), 135-158; Ömür Aydın, "Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Üzerine Bir Tartışma: Temsil Meselesi", *Atatürk Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi* 33/3 (Temmuz 2019), 891-918; Martin Van Bruinessen, "The Governance of Islam in Two Secular Polities: Turkey's Diyanet and Indonesia's Ministry of Religious Affairs". *European Journal of Turkish Studies* 27 (Aralık 2018), 45-70; İhtar Gözaydın, "Diyanet and Politics", *The Muslim World* 98 (Nisan 2008), 216-227; İhtar Gözaydın, *Diyanet: Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Dinin Tanzimi* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2016); İsmail Kara, (2000); Bayram Koca, "Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı ve Aleviler Arasındaki Meseleye Liberal Bir Bakış", *Liberal Düşünce Dergisi* 74 (2014), 39-61; Fazlı Polat, "Din-Devlet İlişkisi ve Diyanet", *EKEV Akademi Dergisi* 10 (2002) 119- 128; Zeynep Yanaşmayan, "Role of Turkish Islamic Organizations in Belgium: The Strategies of Diyanet and Milli Görüş", *Insight Turkey* (2010), 139-161.

<sup>20</sup> Gözaydın, 2016; Özdemir, 2005.

<sup>21</sup> Ercan Çelik, "Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığında Çalışan Din Görevlilerinin Modernite Algısı (İzmir/Aliağa Örneği)", *İnsan ve Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 2/2 (Ekim 2019), 297-316; Şeref Göküş, "Din Görevlilerinin Örgütsel Güven Düzeyleri İle Mesleki Doyum Düzeyleri Arasındaki İlişkinin İncelenmesi", *Mediterranean Journal of Humanities* 9/2 (Aralık 2019), 285-309.

<sup>22</sup> Sevgi Adak, Expansion of the Diyanet and the Politics of Family in Turkey under AKP Rule, *Turkish Studies* 22/2 (Eylül 2020), 200-221; Kemaleddin Taş, *Halkın Gözünde Diyanet* (İstanbul: İz Yayınları, 2002).

<sup>23</sup> Samed Yağcı, "Öğreticilere Göre Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı ve Müftülüklerin 4-6 Yaş Grubu Kur'an Kursu Çalışmaları", *Balıkesir İlahiyat Dergisi* 11 (Haziran 2020), 195-221.

In this study, the structural validity of our survey is examined by using both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Before we start analysis, the data is randomly split into two sets of equal size. In the first set, the EFA is conducted to examine the factor structure in the study population. On the second set of the sample, the CFA is conducted to test the fit of the resulting factor models from EFA. The frequency distribution of demographic characteristics is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Statistics Describing Demographic Characteristics

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Gender</b>	Women	573	47.4
	Man	635	52.6
	Total	1208	100.0
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	721	59.7
	Single	453	37.5
	Divorced/Widower	34	2.8
	Total	1208	100.0
<b>Age</b>	18-24	224	18.5
	25-29	262	21.7
	30-34	186	15.4
	35-39	184	15.2
	40-44	154	12.7
	45-49	95	7.9
	50-54	55	4.6
	55-59	34	2.8
	Over 60	14	1.2
	Total	1208	100.0
<b>Education</b>	Illiterate	7	.6
	Primary-Secondary School	203	16.8
	High School	662	54.8
	Undergraduate	321	26.6
	Graduate	15	1.2
	Total	1208	100.0
<b>Monthly household income</b>	Under 1500 TL	38	3.1
	1500 -2500 TL	224	18.5
	2500- 4000 TL	613	50.7
	4000-7000 TL	263	21.8
	Over 7000 TL	58	4.8
	Doesn't want to share	12	1.0
	Total	1196	100.0
<b>Occupation</b>	Business owner/tradesman	88	7.3
	Civil Servant	128	10.6
	Worker	486	40.2
	Self Employed	66	5.5
	Retired	41	3.4
	Housewife	252	20.9
	Unemployed	32	2.6
	Student	108	8.9
	Other	6	0.5
	Doesn't want to share	1	0.1
Total	1208	100.0	
<b>Ideology</b>	Conservative	216	17.9
	Nationalist	262	21.7

	Democrat	104	8.6
	Nationalist-Conservative Atatürkist	120	9.9
	Islamist	292	24.2
	Socialist	80	6.6
	Left Nationalist	74	6.1
	Liberal	18	1.5
	Other	32	2.6
	Total	10	0.8
		1208	100.0
<b>Residence</b>	House	112	9.3
	Flat	1062	87.9
	Villa	1	0.1
	Public Housing	2	0.2
	Dormitory	13	1.1
	Building Estate	18	1.5
	Total	1208	100.0

Source: Created by the authors.

#### 4. RESULTS

Within our scale study, descriptive analyses of our questionnaire questions have been conducted. The analysis is shared in Table 2 below. Scale value has varied from 1 to 5 (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-no opinion, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree).

**Table 2:** Analyse Descriptive of Questionnaire Questions

	N	Mean	SD
Q.1 Urban life affects our lives positively.	1208	3.408	1.143
Q.2 In our country affinity and family relations are strong.	1208	3.649	1.132
Q.3 Neighbourhood relations are intimate where I live.	1208	3.531	1.157
Q.4 Our society has a strong social structure.	1208	3.526	1.123
Q.5 There is neighbourhood culture where I live.	1208	3.461	1.174
Q.6 Sanctuaries are parts of social life.	1208	3.608	1.128
Q.7 Religious officials have an important role in the construction of social integration.	1208	3.100	1.183
Q.8 I care about the messages given by religious officials in mosques and other spaces.	1208	3.194	1.212
Q.9 I go to the mosque at least once a week.	1208	2.666	1.324
Q.10 I go to the mosque every day at least once.	1208	2.223	1.050
Q.11 Religious officials of the mosques should be in social life	1208	3.261	1.208
Q.12 Existence of a religious official in a place affects both the subject spoken and how it is spoken, positively.	1208	3.275	1.148
Q.13 I know the religious official of the mosque in our neighbourhood.	1208	2.483	1.240
Q.14 I know the religious official of the mosque near my workplace.	914	2.553	1.162
Q.15 It would be beneficial if the religious official served as an advisor to the families in the neighbourhood.	1208	3.056	1.196
Q.16 Whenever I have a psychological, social or economic problem I feel that the religious official of the neighborhood mosque will help me.	1208	2.811	1.185
Q.17 I got in contact with a religious official at least once about any problem I encountered.	1208	2.657	1.216
Q.18 It would be beneficial if religious officials had an active role in children's education.	1208	3.168	1.222
Q.19 My relatives make their children have religious education at mosques during summer holidays.	1208	3.231	1.258
Q.20 It would be beneficial if religious officials played active roles in the education of children.	1208	3.228	1.174

Q.21 It is important that it exists religious officials at weddings and spousal ceremonies.	1208	3.280	1.219
Q.22 A religious official served at the wedding and spousal ceremonies of my relatives.	1208	3.259	1.206
Q.23 When I need information about a person who I don't know, I consult to the religious official of the neighbourhood where hor she lives.	1208	2.633	1.167
Q.24 It would be beneficial if religious officials played an active role in the settlement of parental discords.	1208	3.035	1.189
Q.25 Divorces would decrease if religious officials played an active role in the settlement of parental discords.	1208	2.984	1.197
Q.26 Religious officials played an active role in the settlement of parental discord experienced between people close to me.	1208	2.778	1.177
Q.27 It would be beneficial for both patients and patient relatives if a religious official visited the patient.	1208	3.106	1.198
Q.28 Religious officials og our neighbourhood had a visit when I or one of my relatives was patient.	1208	2.812	1.193
Q.29 It would be important for me if a religious official in my neighbourhood visited in case of the death of one of my relatives.	1208	3.459	1.281
Q.30 A religious official had condoled with us when one of our relatives had passed away.	1208	3.175	1.181
Q. 31 Mosques have an important role in strengthening neighbourhood relations.	1208	3.115	1.224
Q.32 It would be beneficial if a religious official played an active role in the settlement of problems among neighbours.	1208	2.999	1.175
Q.33 A religious official had played an active role in the settlement of a problem among our neighbours.	1208	2.832	1.160
Q.34 Opinions of the religious officials of the neighbourhood are important for the distribution of welfare benefits.	1208	3.065	1.223
Q.35 Religious officials of our neighbourhood had played an active role in the distribution of welfare benefits.	1208	2.896	1.165
Q.36 Opinions of religious officials of mosques are important for me when I want to help needers.	1208	3.092	1.208
Q.37 It would be beneficial if religious officials played an active role in the settlement of commercial disputes.	1208	2.928	1.196
Q.38 A religious official had an active role in the settlement of a commercial dispute.	1208	2.522	1.171
Q.39 It would be beneficial if religious officials played an active role in transmitting the problems relating to local governments such as substructure, transportation, waste collecting, etc. to proper authorities.	1208	2.754	1.149
Q.40 Religious officials of our neighbourhood had played an active role in transmitting the problems relating to local governments such as substructure, transportation, waste collecting, etc. to proper authorities.	1208	2.689	1.158
Q.41 It would be beneficial if religious officials stood between public services and people.	1208	2.832	1.225
Q.42 Religious official of our neighbourhood informs us about the Works of public institutions.	1208	2.861	.912
Q.43 It would be beneficial if national issues were discussed in mosques.	1208	3.014	1.213
Q.44 National issues are frequently discussed at mosques.	1208	3.111	.965
Q.45 It is important that a religious official is up to date and develops himself by the requirements of his age.	1208	3.355	1.207
Q.46 Religious officials bring the current problems to the agenda with their speeches.	1208	3.224	.909
Q.47 I am in virtual contact with the religious official of my neighbourhood.	1208	2.129	1.072
Q.48 I talk about the ideas and views of the religious official when I am with my family and friends.	1208	3.041	1.253
Q.49 Religious officials are reliable people.	1208	3.178	1.206



Q.50 The Political vision and thoughts of religious officials of my neighbourhood are important to me.	1208	2.722	1.248
Q.51 Political vision and thoughts of religious officials of my neighbourhood are important for my relatives.	1208	2.833	1.219
Q.52 I approve that a religious official may canalize people around him by his political vision and thoughts.	1208	2.674	1.225
Q.53 The Religious official of the mosque in my neighbourhood impresses me with his political vision and thoughts.	1208	2.705	1.237
Q.54 The Religious official of the mosque in my neighbourhood impresses people around me with his political vision and thoughts.	1208	2.813	1.249
Q.55 Religious officials had an active role prevention of the July 15 coup d'eta attempt in our country.	1208	3.113	1.208
Q.56 Religious officials should play a role more actively in the fight against terrorism.	1208	2.982	1.153
Q.57 Sanctuaries should be far away from the political sphere.	1208	2.603	1.324

Source: Created by the authors.

#### 4.1. The Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy coefficient from the EFA results was 0.94, and the result of Bartlett's test of sphericity was 4325.789,  $p < 0.0001$ . As a result of the analyses, it was found that the data were suitable for factor analysis. To determine the most appropriate number of factors, different methods were used: the eigenvalue criterion<sup>24</sup>, scree test<sup>25</sup> and parallel analysis<sup>26</sup>. It is jointly proposed that four factors. All calculations are done with the "fa" function of the *psych* package in R. For an extraction method, the principal factor solution was chosen. The resulting factors were rotated into a varimax solution. The factors are given in the following Table 3.

**Table 3:** Factors and Their Respective Objects

Name of the Factors	Number of Question
The Impact of Religious Officials on Social Life (F1)	7,8,11,12,15,16,18,19,20,21,22,24,27,29,31,32,34,36,43,44,45,46,48,49,55,56
Citizens' Approach to Social Life (F2)	1,2,3,4,5,6
Religious Officials' Impact on Political Life (F3)	17,23,26,33,35,37,38,39,40,41,42,47,50,52,53,54,57
The Level of Relationship of the Religious Official with The Society (F4)	9,10,13,14,28,30

Source: Created by the authors.

#### 4.2. The Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The structure obtained as a result of EFA was tested with the CFA approach for the measures of reliability and convergent and discriminant validity. All calculations are done with the "CFA" function of the *lavaan* package in R. The following CFA fit indices were chosen to assess the goodness-of-fit between the hypothetical models and the actual data: the  $\chi^2$ -statistic, the Goodness-of-Fit-Index (GFI), the Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit-Index (AGFI), the Comparative-Fit-Index (CFI), the Root-Mean-Square-Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and the Standardized-Root-Mean-Square-Residual (SRMR). Multiple criteria were chosen since each index has different strengths and weaknesses and can only give evidence for a good fit in its collectivity. To evaluate the goodness-of-fit, the following criteria were chosen: the ratio of the chi-square to its degrees of freedom ( $\chi^2/d.f.$  ratio)<sup>27</sup> and preferably<sup>28</sup>, GFI and AGFI<sup>29</sup>, CFI<sup>30</sup>, RMSEA and SRMR. We use the following Table 4 for threshold values.

<sup>24</sup> F. Henry Kaiser, "The Application of Electronic Computers to Factor Analysis", *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 20/1 (1960), 141-151.

<sup>25</sup> Raymond Bernard Cattell, "The Scree Test For The Number Of Factors", *Multivariate Behavioral Research* 1/2 (1966), 245-276.

<sup>26</sup> John Leonard Horn, "A Rationale and Test for the Number of Factors in Factor Analysis", *Psychometrika* 30/2 (1965), 179-185.

**Table 4:** Goodness of Fit Indices and Acceptable Limits

Indices	Acceptable limits
$\chi^2/df$	$\leq 5$ acceptable fit, $\leq 3$ perfect fit
RMSEA	$\leq 0.10$ weak fit, $\leq 0.08$ good fit, $\leq 0.05$ perfect fit
CFI	$\geq .90$ acceptable fit, $\geq .95$ good fit, $\geq .97$ perfect fit
IF	$\geq .90$ acceptable fit, $\geq .95$ good fit, $\geq .97$ perfect fit
TLI (NNFI)	$\geq .90$ acceptable fit, $\geq .95$ good fit

Source: Savci - Griffiths, 2019.

In this study, we consider two models for CFA. The first model is the structure obtained from EFA. In this model, we observed that the results are moderately good. See the following table. To improve this model, we used the Modification Indice (MI) which is examined again to help identify focal areas of misfit in the CFA solution using the aforementioned criteria for parameter revisions. We consider two types of revisions. The first is to remove items with high cross-loading or residual correlations, and the second is to add a path between items that have correlated. All revisions are done one by one, and we re-ran the CFA after each revision. When there are no higher values of MI among items, a model revision is completed. The critical values of the final model are given in the following Table 5.

**Table 5:** The Outcome of CFA Goodness Indices

	First Model		Final Model	
$\chi^2/df$	3.717	Acceptable fit	1.957	Perfect fit
RMSEA	0.077	Good fit	0.046	Perfect fit
CFI	0.889	Weak	0.974	Perfect fit
IFI	0.889	Weak	0.975	Perfect fit
TLI	0.879	Weak	0.970	Perfect fit

Source: Created by the authors.

We also test the reliability, convergent, and discriminant validity of the measures. To ensure internal consistency<sup>27</sup> suggested that the factor loading should be a threshold of 0.5 and above. To assess the convergent validity, by following<sup>28</sup> the values of composite reliability (CR) should meet the minimum cut-off point of 0.7, and Fornell and Larcker, suggest<sup>29</sup> that the values for average variance extracted (AVE) should meet the minimum criteria of 0.50. Our results in Table 8 present that the criteria have been met by the values of CR and AVE, respectively. On the other hand, we further test the reliability and internal consistency of the study with Cronbach's alpha values<sup>30</sup>. According to Nunnally's book<sup>31</sup> a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.80 signifies a good level, as it is shown in Table 6.

**Table 6:** Summary of Construct Reliability and Validity

	Items	Loadings	CR	Cr. Alpha	AVE
<b>The Impact of Religious Officials on Social Life (F1)</b>	s.8	0.941	0.920	0.939	0.561
	s.11	1.041			
	s.12	0.950			
	s.15	0.958			
	s.18	1.070			
	s.19	1.001			
	s.20	0.975			

<sup>27</sup> Richard Bagozzi vd., "Assessing Construct Validity in Organizational Research", *Administrative Science Quarterly* 36/3 (1991), 421-458.

<sup>28</sup> Wynne Chin, *How to Write up and Report PLS Analyses* (Berlin: Springer, 2010), 655-690.

<sup>29</sup> Claes Fornell - David Larcker "Evaluating Structural Equation Models with Unobservable Variables and Measurement Error", *Journal of Marketing Research* 18/ 1 (1981), 39-50.

<sup>30</sup> Lee Cronbach, "Coefficient Alpha and the Internal Structure of Tests", *Psychometrika* 16/3 (1951), 297-334.

<sup>31</sup> Jum Nunnally - Ira Bernstein, *Psychometric Theory* (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 1994).

	s.21	0.991			
	s.27	0.883			
<b>Citizens' Approach to Social Life (F2)</b>	s.2	0.911	0.881	0.859	0.596
	s.3	0.753			
	s.4	0.810			
	s.5	0.879			
<b>Religious Officials' Impact on Political Life (F3)</b>	s.50	1.112	0.863	0.915	0.679
	s.51	1.008			
	s.52	0.964			
	s.53	1.029			
	s.54	1.065			
<b>The Level of Relationship of the Religious Official with the Society (F4)</b>	s.9	1.031	0.903	0.844	0.699
	s.13	1.108			
	s.14	0.944			

Source: Created by the authors.

To ensure discriminant validity, by following Fornell, Larcker and Chin<sup>32</sup>, the square-rooted AVE value for each factor should be higher than the inter-correlations of the construct with other constructs. This validity is met as it is demonstrated in Table 7. Overall, the final model of CFA was acceptable and has evidence of its reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

**Table 7:** Table of the Discriminant Validity

	<b>F1</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>F3</b>	<b>F4</b>
<b>F1</b>	0.749	0.732	0.389	0.517
<b>F2</b>	0.732	0.772	0.293	0.485
<b>F3</b>	0.389	0.293	0.824	0.123
<b>F4</b>	0.517	0.485	0.123	0.836

Source: Created by the authors

## 5. LIMITATIONS

This study is limited by the fact that the survey was administered face-to-face to 1208 individuals in 12 provinces with a high population density and 42 districts throughout Turkey.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In this study, we aimed to develop a scale to investigate the effect of religion on social life (ERCL). The structural validity of our scale, which is called ERCL, was evaluated using both EFA and CFA. The EFA was performed using principal factor solutions with varimax rotation. For four-factor solutions, we used the scree test and the Kaiser-Guttman criterion, parallel analysis for estimation, and the Minres extraction method. To interpret the meaning of each factor, the variables with low-level factor loading for each extracted factor are omitted. The results of the EFA study support the factorability of the data and ensure sampling adequacy along with Bartlett's test of sphericity and the KMO test. To assess the reliability and validity of the scale, the CFA was conducted. Since the initial model of CFA has poor goodness of fit indices, we slightly refined the structure of the construct by eliminating variables that have high modification indices. The final model after the re-specification process fits perfectly.

<sup>32</sup> Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Chin, 2010.

There exist various studies in the literature aiming at determining the effects of religion on social relations. However, it has been observed that most of the studies aiming at determining the effects of religion lack abstract criteria (indicators). This study tries to measure the effects of Islam, the religion which has some principles, values, prohibitions, and some guidance not only on individual beliefs but also on social lives, on Turkish society through the mosque personnel of the Presidency of Religious Affairs, is committed to filling a gap in understanding the functioning of social life in Turkey. A survey of 57 questions was applied to a sample of 1208 people, which is considered to represent Turkey in general.

As a result of the survey applied and the analysis related to this survey, a scale of 21 questions with high levels of validity and reliability that will enable scholars to measure the effects of mosque personnel on social life depending on four factors has been successfully created. The existence of such a scale will make understanding and defining social interactions easier. The scale developed through this study can also be used for other societies other than Turkish society, as well as for the effects of other occupation groups on social life other than religious men.

**Ethics Committee Approval:** The approval of İnönü University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee dated 22.01.2019 and numbered 2019-2-2 was obtained for this study.

**Informed Consent:** Written informed consent was obtained from the participants who participated in this study.

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## GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Toplumsal ilişkilerin inşasında etkili olan kaynaklar bulunduğu gibi, bu ilişkilerin devamlılığını sağlayan kurallar ve kurumlar vardır. Tarih içerisinde gelenek ve din toplumsal ilişkilerin inşasına ve devamlılığına etki eden önemli iki kaynaktır. Seküler toplum yapısının genel kabul gördüğü, modern dönem öncesinde, bu iki kaynak bazen tek başına çoğu zaman ise birlikte toplumsal ilişkiler üzerinde asli belirleyici kaynak işlevi olmuştur. Sekülerleşen toplumlarda dinin siyasal, ekonomik, sosyal ve kültürel yaşamda asli belirleyici kaynak işlevini kaybettiği genel kabul görmüştür. Ancak süreç içerisinde farklı düzeylerde de olsa, dinin toplumsal ilişkiler üzerindeki etkisini devam ettirdiğini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Dinin toplumsal ilişkiler üzerindeki etkisinde bazen dinin asli kaynakları, dini otorite veya dini hizmet sunanlar öne çıkarken bazen de toplumsal zemin belirleyici olabilmektedir.

İslam tarihinde siyaset kurumu, toplumsal ilişkiler üzerinde belirleyici bir güç olmuştur. Siyaset bir taraftan siyaset ile din ilişkilerinin seyrine yön verirken, diğer taraftan din ile toplum ilişkilerini de büyük ölçüde etkilemiştir. Saltanat ile halifelik sona erdiği Cumhuriyet dönemi Türkiye'sinde siyasetin din ve din ile toplum ilişkileri üzerindeki belirleyiciliği farklı araç ve yöntemlerle devam etmiştir. Görev yeri olan camilerde görev, yetki ve sorumluluk alanına giren dini hizmetleri yerine getirmekle yükümlü imam ve müezzinler, sosyal hayata yönelik cami içi ve dışı faaliyet de yürütmektedir. İmam ve müezzinlerin bu faaliyetler aile, akrabalık, komşuluk, çalışma hayatı, devlet toplum ilişkileri ile siyasal hayat gibi pek çok alana etki edebilmektedir. Bu faaliyetlerin etki düzeyi, zaman ve mekân ile içinde bulunulan süreçlere göre değişkenlik gösterebilmektedir. Toplumsal hayata ilişkin beklenti ve talepler, din görevlilerinin faaliyet alanını genişletmekte ve toplumsal ilişkiler üzerindeki etkisini artırmaktadır. Aynı zamanda İslam'ın her mümine yüklediği toplumsal hayata ilişkin bazı görev ve sorumluluklar din görevlilerini de bağladığından, resmi görevleri içinde yer almayan bazı faaliyetleri de yerine getirmek zorunda kalabilmektedirler. Bu durum, din görevlilerinin içinde yaşadıkları toplumda daha aktif olmalarını sağlar.

Dinin insan ve toplum hayatına etkisini ölçmeyi amaçlayan birçok ölçek çalışması yapılmıştır. Ancak camilerde görev yapan imam ve müezzin sayısının yaklaşık yetmiş bin olduğu Diyanet gibi bir kurumun sosyal hayata etki düzeyini ölçmeye yönelik bir ölçek geliştirme çalışması yapılmamıştır. Diyanetin halka en yakın birimini oluşturan camiler ile camilerdeki görevlilerin ülkenin sosyal hayatına etki düzeyini ölçmek, toplumun camilerdeki din görevlilerine yönelik talep ve beklentilerini belirlemek, Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı başta olmak üzere farklı kurum ve kuruluşlar ile toplumun ilgili kesimlerine önemli katkısı olacaktır.

Yürütülen bu ölçek geliştirme çalışması kapsamında Türkiye genelini temsil eden farklı 12 il örneklem olarak belirlenmiştir. Örneklem kapsamında 1200 kişiyle yüz yüze görüşülmüş ve bu kişilere ölçek geliştirme anketi uygulanmıştır. Çalışma ile camilerdeki din görevlileri üzerinden Diyanetin Türkiye'nin sosyal hayatına etki düzeyini belirleme amacıyla hazırlanan ölçeğin güvenilirlik testi yapılmaktadır. Çalışma kapsamında hazırlanan ve güvenilirliği test edilen ölçek, özelde Diyanet'in sosyal hayata etki düzeyinin belirlenmesini sağlayacağı gibi, dini faaliyet yürüten kurumlar ile diğer meslek, kurum ve kuruluşların sosyal hayata etki düzeyinin belirlenmesinde de kullanılabilir.

Ölçek çalışması kapsamına Türkiye'nin 12 il 42 ilçe dâhil edilmiştir. İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Bursa, Adana, Edirne, Trabzon, Konya, Diyarbakır, Malatya, Erzurum ve Antalya ile bu illere bağlı 42 ilçede toplam 1208 kişiyle yüz yüze görüşülerek anket uygulaması yapılmıştır. Uygulamada camilerde görevli imam ve müezzinlerin sosyal hayata etkisini ölçmeyi amaçlayan soruların yer aldığı ve beşli likert ölçeğine göre 57 soruluk bir anket formu oluşturulmuştur. İnönü Üniversitesi Etik Kurulundan alınan onay alındıktan sonra uygulanan anketin güvenilirlik ve geçerlik testleri yapılmıştır. Anket uygulamaları yukarıda bahsi geçen ilçe merkezleri ile en az dört farklı mahallede uygulanmıştır. Uygulama her bir sokak ve hanede en fazla bir kişiye yapılmıştır. Anket uygulaması 2018 yılı Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu nüfus istatistik verileri (Cinsiyet, yaş, meslek, gelir, eğitim vb.) dikkate alınarak yapılmıştır.

Bu çalışmada, anketimizin yapısal geçerliliği hem keşfedici faktör analizi (EFA) hem de doğrulayıcı faktör analizi (CFA) kullanılarak incelenmiştir. Analize başlamadan önce, veriler rastgele eşit büyüklükte iki kümeye ayrılmıştır. İlk set üzerinde, çalışma evrenindeki faktör yapısını incelemek amacıyla EFA gerçekleştirilir. Örneklem ikinci setinde ise EFA'dan elde edilen faktör modellerinin uyumunu test etmek için EFA gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Uygulanan anket ve bu ankete ilişkin analizler sonucunda, cami personelinin sosyal yaşam üzerindeki etkilerini dört faktöre bağlı olarak ölçmelerini sağlayacak, geçerlilik ve güvenilirlik düzeyi yüksek bir ölçek başarıyla oluşturulmuştur. Böyle bir ölçeğin varlığı, sosyal etkileşimlerin anlaşılmasını ve tanımlanmasını kolaylaştıracaktır. Bu çalışma ile geliştirilen ölçek, Türk toplumu dışındaki diğer toplumlar için de kullanılabilir gibi, din görevlileri dışındaki diğer meslek gruplarının sosyal hayata etkileri için de kullanılabilir.