

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE EMERGENCE AND RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT: A PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH

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Abstract

Conflict in societies arises as a natural and inevitable part of human relationships. This article analyzes the psychological role of religion in both the emergence and resolution of conflicts. The impact of religion on individual and social peace is examined, emphasizing the role of values such as empathy, forgiveness, patience, and justice in conflict resolution. By integrating psychological and theological approaches, the study aims to reveal the potential of religion to build peace. Furthermore, within the framework of the "religious coping" concept in modern psychology literature, the role of religion in regulating emotions such as stress, fear, and anger is evaluated.

Keywords: Religion, conflict, peace, psychology, forgiveness, reconciliation, values.

Introduction

Throughout human history, conflicts have been an inseparable part of social change and development. When managed correctly, conflict can be a factor for development; however, when managed poorly, it can lead to destructive results. The causes of conflict are multifaceted and may be based on economic, cultural, ideological, or religious factors.

Religion is one of the strongest cultural institutions shaping personal identity and social structure. Therefore, religion can be both a cause of conflict and a tool for its resolution. From a psychological perspective, religion provides meaning and purpose to human life. An individual's ability to deal with difficulties often depends on how they interpret the situation.

Psychologically, conflict is not just an external disagreement, but also an internal cognitive and emotional process. The influence of religion depends on how the individual interprets and applies religious values. While religious values can encourage empathy and forgiveness, misinterpreted religious identities or exclusionary views can deepen social polarization.



2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

This study is theoretical-analytical in nature and is based on a comparative review of scientific sources in the fields of religious psychology, social psychology, and peace studies. Conflict theories, social identity concepts, religious coping approaches, and forgiveness theories were analyzed. Psychological and theological approaches have been harmonized and different scientific views compared.

3. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The analysis shows that religion is not a neutral factor in the conflict process. Its effect depends on how religious values are interpreted and in which social context they are applied.

3.1 Religion as a Source of Conflict

Religious identity can increase intergroup differences, and concepts perceived as "sacred values" create positions closed to compromise.

The instrumentalization of religion for political purposes intensifies conflicts. Mass media and political manipulation can strengthen religious stereotypes.

3.2 Religion as a Resource for Resolution

Religious coping mechanisms reduce stress and fear, providing spiritual support to the individual.

Forgiveness strengthens psychological well-being and reduces internal conflicts. Empathy and compassion promote social behavior.

Religious rituals and collective prayers provide a mechanism for social harmony and collective healing.

The mediation role of religious leaders serves to re-establish social trust.

4. CONCLUSION

Religion is a multifaceted phenomenon that can be both the source and the solution of conflicts. Psychologically, it increases emotional stability, empathy, and forgiveness. Sociologically, it strengthens social trust and harmony. Theologically, it defines peace as a divine obligation through the principles of justice, compassion, and love. A religion-based peacebuilding process is effectively realized through the correct interpretation of religious values, an enlightened approach, and empathy-centered religious education. A religious approach based on empathy, forgiveness, and justice is an important factor in sustainable social harmony.

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