# The Effect of Teachers' Spirituality and Ethical Ideology on Their Preference of Reporting Wrongdoings at Schools

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## Abstract

This paper aimed to examine whistleblowing in point of individual level. Three sets of hypotheses were developed concerning the relationships between (1) religiosity and ethical ideology, (2) ethical ideology and intentions to different modes of whistleblowing, and (3) religiosity and intentions to different modes of whistleblowing. Descriptive statistics, Correlation matrix, and regression analysis were used to analyze the data. The sample includes 323 teachers in Turkey. The results confirmed that religiosity was negatively associated with relativism, and positively associated with idealism while they rejected any relation between the ethical ideology and intention to whistleblowing modes. The results confirmed only the positive relationship between religiosity and internal whistleblowing, while rejecting the other hypotheses. Few studies have investigated the relationship between whistleblowing modes and ethical ideology. Therefore, examining religiosity, ethical ideology, and whistleblowing in an education context in Turkey, this paper believed to contribute the literature with regard to Islamic perspective.

**Keywords:** education, ethical ideology, whistleblowing, spirituality, teacher, Turkey

## 1. Introduction

As it has been widespread throughout the world, workplace deviance has become an important issue for researchers for years. As Miceli and Near (2005) pointed out, members of organizations have the power to decrease unethical behaviors in organizations; therefore, their willingness to report the wrongdoings to management is substantial for organizations.

Whistleblowing is a process of giving information about the acts resulting in harm to others (Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, 2010). It is considered as a prosocial behavior in organizations. An individual's decision to report a wrongdoing is based on organizational, situational and personal factors (Near et al., 2004). Personal factors include gender, moral standards (Miceli et al., 1991; Toker-Gökçe, 2013a), and religion (Woiceshyn, 2011). Since decision-making to report wrongdoings has a crucial step for whistleblowing, significant research (i.e. Near et al., 2004; Ohnishi et al., 2008) has been conducted to investigate the whistleblowing in respect to demographic factors, and decision-making processes. Nevertheless, relatively little direct empirical evidence has found to support proposed relationship between individual characteristics and decisions to report the wrongdoing (Barnett, Bass, & Brown, 1996). Besides, Barnett et al. (1996) examined whistleblowing in relation to religiosity, and ethical ideology, and developed a model for peer reporting process. They proved a negative association between religiosity and relativism, while they could not prove a positive relationship between religiosity and idealism. Finally, they concluded that ethical ideologies were significantly associated with ethical judgments.

Whistleblowing has not been known clearly as a concept in Turkey. In addition, people could not report wrongdoings in organizations because of the threat of retaliation for whistleblowing for years in the country. For example, V. Mungan, who was the top manager of the Roche, a big medical firm, was fired after he had reported the corruption of the firm through internal channels. After he had fired, he blew the whistle to the prosecution office, which was named as 'Roche Scandal' in 2004 (Kesler, 2013). Not only the case was closed because of the 'lapse of time' in 2013, but also Mungan has been called as 'mole' since 2006, the time the case opened officially in Turkey (Başaran, 2010). Similarly, there has been lots of news about wrongdoings such as stealing, sexual abuse, and bribery at schools, and educators who blow the whistle have been punished (i.e. Being suspended,

charged another city or school) (DHA, 2012; Milliyet, 2013) in Turkey. Therefore, teachers generally prefer being silenced when they observed ethical misconducts at schools (Toker-Gökçe, 2013a).

One of the few studies contributing to our understanding of whistleblowing in Turkey was carried out by Park et al. (2008), Nayir and Herzig (2012), and Toker-Gökçe (2013a, 2013b). Park et al. (2008) could find no direct link between culture and whistleblowing tendency. Nevertheless, they emphasized the necessity to examine the relationship between culture and intention to whistleblowing. In addition, Nayir and Herzig (2012) examined Turkish managers' attitudes to whistleblowing in relation with their values. Furthermore, Toker-Gökçe (2013b) explored teachers' attitudes to whistleblowing in relation with their values. This study builds upon studies by Barnett et al. (1996), Nayir and Herzig (2012), and Toker-Gökçe (2013b), and aims to examine the relationship between the two concepts (religiosity and ethical ideology), and intention for whistleblowing. As studies suggested close relationships between religion and attitudes, this study is expected to contribute to the literature addressing an important question about whistleblowing.

Furthermore, few studies have investigated the relationship between whistleblowing and spiritually. For example, Park et al. (2005) studied the relationship between whistleblowing and the cultural traits of Confucian ethics in Korea. Actually, Turkey is a secular country, which means the country has not an official religion. However, the majority involves Muslims, many of which are Sunni Hanafi and few of which are Alaouite in Turkey. The population of the country includes Christians, Jews, and atheists even if just a bit. Despite secularism, many governmental decisions have been implemented prioritizing Sunni Hanafi form of Islamic religion, especially at schools for years in the country. Hence, examining whistleblowing related to religiosity alongside of ethical ideology in an education context in Turkey, this study contributes an Islamic perspective to the literature.

## 2. Theoretical Background

### 2.1 Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is a dangerous opposition form, including high risk for the whistleblower. A whistleblower releases information intentionally, and goes to third parties out of the organization to make the disclosure, when internal disclosure channels have failed in the organization (Liyanarachchi & Newdick, 2009). Park et al. (2008) developed a typology of whistleblowing based on the channels used by the whistleblower for reporting the wrongdoing. According to the typology, whistleblowing in the identified mode refers to using real names during reporting the wrongdoing. In contrast, anonymous whistleblowing refers using a nickname, or giving no information about identity while blowing the whistle. Toker-Gökçe (2013a) examined Turkish teachers' preference for different modes of whistleblowing, and found that they had used both identified and anonymous mode of reporting.

A whistleblower initially needs to realize the wrongdoing, and then makes a decision to whistleblow (Near et al., 2004). During the decision-making process, an individual has two dilemmas; a dissent between personal and organizational values, and a dissent between engagements owed to the organization and to parties beyond it (Liyanarachchi & Newdick, 2009). Therefore, moral reasoning appears one of the most important factors to understand one's tendency to whistleblow, along with personality variables (Gundlach et al., 2003; Rocha & Kleiner, 2005). Actually, significant research (i.e. Miceli et al., 1991) found empirical evidence that moral reasoning influence an individual's decision-making process related to whistleblowing. For example, Liyanarachchi and Newdick (2009) proved that the higher the individual's level of moral reasoning, the more likely s/he is to do the right thing. In addition to moral reasoning, both contextual and individual factors, such as religious and ideal values (Barnett et al., 1996; Sims & Keenan, 1999) are the possible influences on an individual's decision to blow a whistle.

### 2.2 Ethical Ideology, Ethical Decision-Making, and Whistleblowing

Moral philosophy is a framework used by individuals to decide on an ethical dilemma, and it influences individuals' ethical decision-making process (Forsyth & Nye 1990; Forsyth 1992; Barnett et al., 1996). According to Forsyth (1980) relativism and idealism are the two basic dimensions of personal moral philosophies that have a profound impact on business ethical decisions. Idealism refers the individual's concern for the welfare of others. Highly idealistic individuals believe that ethically correct actions will consistently produce desirable outcomes. Therefore, they always avoid harming others. In contrast, relativism indicates the degree to which individuals apply universal moral principles as the basis for ethical decisions. Relativists generally feel that moral actions depend on the nature of the situation. Consequently, it might be claimed that idealists with higher levels of ethical reasoning are more likely to blow the whistle than relativistic individuals are (Forsyth, 1992). Although idealists generally act out of a sense of duty (Vinten, 1996); relativist individuals might be less concerned when they observed an ethical misconduct in their organization. Thus, Nayir and Herzig

(2012) claimed that more idealistic employees might prefer internal disclosure without trying to hide their identities.

As mentioned above, studies (Barnett et al., 1996; Nayir & Herzig, 2012) have explored the relationship between ethical ideology and intention to blow a whistle. They concluded that ethical philosophies affect individual's ethical judgments and behavioral intentions to whether or not to engage in the practice. Therefore, the first set of hypotheses is as below:

H1a: More idealistic individuals are less likely to prefer whistleblowing anonymously.

H1b: More relativistic individuals are more likely to prefer whistleblowing anonymously.

*2.3 Religiosity, Ethical Decision-Making, and Whistleblowing*

Researchers have tried to develop adequate definitions of religiosity and religious belief, but a precise definition is lacking (Barnett et al., 1996). Although religiosity is defined in terms of three distinct components such as knowing, feeling (effect), and doing, Allport (1967, as cited in Singhapakdi et al., 2000, p. 308) suggested that religiousness is as a personal practice of religion. 'Knowing' refers to religious knowledge and beliefs, while 'affect' indicates emotional attachment or feelings about religion. Finally, 'behavior' is associated with such as church affiliation and attendance, Bible reading, and praying (Barnett, 1996). O'Fallon and Butterfield (2005) claim that individual's behaviors are generally be affected by major social institutions such as religion and religious institutions. In addition, Hunt and Vitell (1993, as cited in Singhapakdi et al., 2000) argue that religiousness can affect the ethical decision-making process in three ways; as a part of the cultural environment, as a personal characteristic, and as a dominant basis for individual deontological norms. They concluded that both deontological and teleological theories must be taken into account in decision-making. Therefore, there is a positive relationship between religion and ethical decision-making process.

Highly religious people apply the holy law as the basis for ethical decisions, and avoid committing sin. Therefore, they are supposed to realize unethical acts, and to avoid harming others with regard to the cognition, feeling, and behavior dimensions of religiosity. Besides, the three dimensions of the religiosity might be related to Rest's four-component model. The model has four dimensions, including moral awareness, moral judgments, moral intention and moral behavior of the highly religious individual. In addition, Singhapakdi et al. (2000) argued religion and religious institutions could generally affect individual's behavior. They argue that highly religious people tend to criticize unethical behaviors more negatively than less religious people do; because they regard such behaviors sinful. Therefore, religiousness may create a kind of moral courage that gives people the ability to make decisions that are more ethical in difficult cases. Consequently, it might be claimed that religious individuals are more likely to report wrongdoings than their counterparts are.

Islam religion orders to the Muslims to be fair, and to perform their duties properly. In addition, they have to behave fairly even though their interests will be damaged in any case. Therefore, they are supposed to disclose the wrongdoings in organizations, even without hiding their identities.

H2a: Individuals that are more religious are more likely to prefer identified whistleblowing.

H2b: Individuals that are more religious are less likely to prefer anonym whistleblowing.

Kohlberg suggests that religion affects moral reasoning (Korniejczuk, 1993); and Woiceshyn (2011) argues that religiosity as a personal characteristic, consistently shows a direct effect on ethical decision-making. In addition, Narvaez, Getz, Rest, and Thoma (1999) claim that religious fundamentalism and moral judgment are interrelated, that means if a person is exposed to or reinforced with religious fundamentalism, that person obeys religious authority. However, when the person comes up with a civil authority (e.g., school principals, judges, and university presidents), then s/he transfers his/her obedience from strong religious authority to strong respect for civil authority. Consistent with this argument, Barnet et al., (1996) hypothesized the positive relationship between religiosity and idealism, and the negative relationship between religiosity and relativism. They suggested that religious people believe strongly in universal moral principles, and religious commitment influences individuals' ethical ideology. They developed a model, introducing the relationship between religiosity, and ethical ideology. Although they could not find evidence confirming the positive relationship between religiosity and idealism, their work was considered a prominent investigation of the direct effect of religiosity on moral ideology. They concluded that religiosity was positively associated with ethical ideology of non-relativistic individuals. In addition, individuals whose ethical ideology could be described as idealistic were more likely to report the wrongdoing of peers. As it is noted, this study was partly built upon the work by Barnett et al. (1996). Therefore, the last set of hypotheses is as below:

H3a: Religiosity is negatively associated with relativism.

H3b: Religiosity is positively associated with idealism.

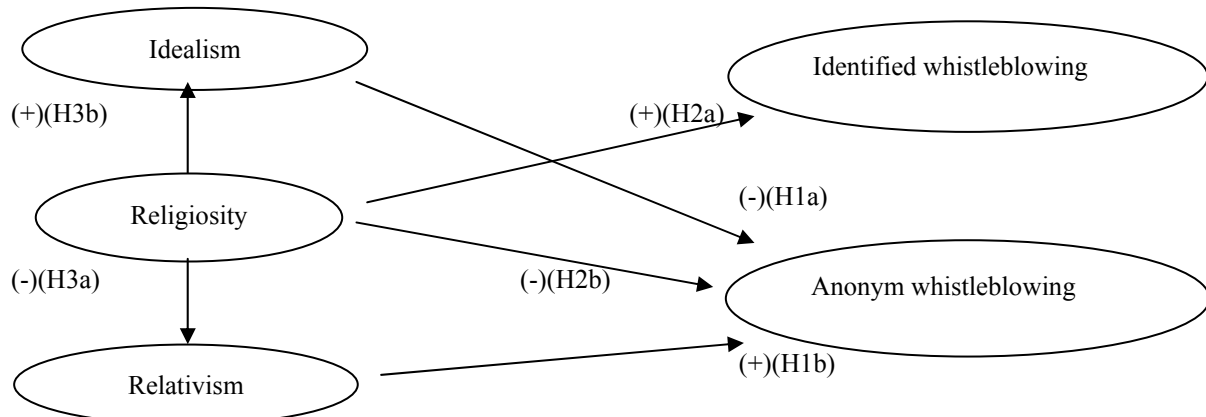The model that the study suggests is shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. The model of the study

Teachers face different ethical cases, particularly in the classroom, and they are supposed to be competent to deal with the ethical cases that they come up against in schools (Cohen et al., 2001). Besides, they are supposed to be just and fair while they were evaluating students' academic performance along with exam scores. In addition, since the students accept them as models, they must be just and behave fairly especially during the communication with students, and lecturing at schools. For example, they should not smoke while they are with students, because smoking is a kind of misbehavior in schools. Besides, they should handle their students' wrongdoings objectively regardless of the students' religion, economic condition, gender, etc. As noted earlier, religion, alongside of the other factors, influences individuals' personal and moral development. Therefore, answering the question that 'how someone can be sure whether educators decide related to ethical cases without any effect of their religion in line with the other factors influencing individuals' ethical decision making at schools?' appears as a crucial issue for educators. This is an important point to prevent educators' misbehaviors, and even discrimination in schools. So studying the influence of religion, and ethical philosophy on teachers' ethical decision-making is necessary to enhance quality of education, and to solve educational problems such as ethical misconducts, and discrimination in schools.

## 3. Method

### 3.1 Sample

The population of the study involves 1950 secondary school teachers in Kocaeli (Kocaeli Governorship, 2014), a big industrial city in Turkey. The sample size of 322-500 is acceptable standard when the population is 2000 based on the amount of .05 deviations (Büyüköztürk et al., 2008). Therefore, the sample selected through incidental sampling from Kocaeli in 2013-2014 academic year. While 350 teachers were selected as sample, 27 questionnaires were not filled properly. Then 323 Turkish secondary education teachers who were voluntary to participate in the study were included in the research group. In order to recruit the research group, the author announced the aim of the study to the teachers who are students at a master program at the Faculty of Education in the University of Kocaeli. Besides, the author announced the study through social media like Facebook, and Twitter to access teachers in Kocaeli. After the announcement, the sample was recruited according to the willingness to participate in the study. All of the participants are Muslims. Since the sample selected through accessibility, the instrument administered individually. Some of the participants received the instrument via mail/email, while the others were reached by the author face to face.

Of the 323 educators more than half (59%) were female, and 42% were male participants. Besides, more than half of the participants (58%) were between 25-34 years old, while 28% were between 35-44 years old. Besides, 14% were more than 45 years old. Half of the participants (50%) had had less than 10-year work experience, while only 5% had more than 26 years work experience. Finally, most of them (87%) held a four-year undergraduate degree.

*3.2 Instrument*

The author used three scales for the study. The first scale is a questionnaire, which was developed by Park et al. (2008), was used to examine the teachers' attitudes toward the ways of reporting. The second scale, the Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ) that was developed by Forsyth (1980), was used to measure the ethical value orientation of the participants. The last scale developed by McDaniel and Burnett (1990) was used to measure religiosity of the participants.

The participants were given in the descriptions of wrongdoing and whistleblowing at the beginning of the questionnaire; "There are numerous wrongdoings from serious to minor deviants at schools. For example, leaving early, and smoking with students are minor wrongdoings while accepting kickbacks, sabotaging equipments, stealing school stuff, stealing from the school staff, verbal abuse, and sexual harassment are some of the serious wrongdoings at schools". This study excludes the minor deviants, and includes only serious wrongdoings, and the scale developed by Toker-Gökçe (2013a) was used in this part of the instrument. Then the participants' attitudes toward the four ways of reporting when they observed a wrongdoing were asked by the questions developed by Park et al., (2008), and had already been translated into Turkish and transformed into education context by Toker-Gökçe (2013a) in the first part of the instrument. This questionnaire was ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The questionnaire included four questions representing two ways of reporting: identified, and anonymous. The questionnaire was developed by Park et al. (2008), and was used by them, Nayir and Herzig (2012), and Toker-Gökçe (2013a). So the author did not do further analysis of the construct validity of the scale (See Table 1).

Table 1. Reliability measures mean scores and standard deviations of the variables

|                            | Scale description | Number of items | Reliability | Mean | Standard deviation |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------|------|--------------------|
| Identified whistleblowing  | 5-point           | 2               | -           | 3.53 | 1.22               |
| Anonymous whistleblowing   | 5-point           | 2               | -           | 2.53 | 1.19               |
| Idealism                   | 5-point           | 7               | .75         | 4.57 | 0.53               |
| Relativism                 | 5-point           | 5               | .69         | 3.24 | 0.90               |
| Religiosity                | 9-point           | 3               | .82         | 6.58 | 2.04               |

The second scale, the Ethics Position Questionnaire, was used to measure the ethical value orientation of the participants, idealism and relativism. The scale was originally developed by Forsyth (1980), and was translated into Turkish by A. Yazıcı and S. Yazıcı (2010). The scale consisted of 20 items; 10 items for measuring idealism, and 10 items for measuring relativism. The scale was ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Nayir and Herzig (2012) used that scale and deleted some items from the scale after the validity analysis. Therefore, factor analysis using a principle component solution with varimax rotation was applied to the 20 items. While the analysis yielded two factors like original scale, eight items (items 7, 8, and 10 from idealism, and items 12, 13, 14, 19, and 20 from relativism) were deleted from the scale as it correlated very little with the other items (below 0.3) and had a low loading (below 0.5). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test (index: 0.788) and Bartlett's test of Sphericity (Barlett's = 803.500, p<0.001) indicated that these data were deemed fit for factor analysis (See Table 2). The reliability of the measure was assessed with Cronbach's alpha .75 for the idealism, and .69 for the relativism sub-scale (See Table 1).

Table 2. Factor analysis for the ethics position questionnaire

|  | Component | |
|---|---|---|
|  | Idealism | Relativism |
| 5. One should not perform an action, which might threaten in any way the dignity and welfare of another individual. | .804 | |
| 2. Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be. | .702 | |
| 1. People should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another, even to a small degree. | .698 | |
| 4. One should never harm psychologically or physically another person. | .697 | |
| 6. If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done. | .632 | |
| 3. The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained. | .570 | |
| 9. It is never necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others. | .528 | |
| 15. Questions of what is ethical for all can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual. | | .744 |
| 16. Moral standards are simply personal rules that indicate how a person should behave, and are not being applied in making judgments of others. | | .414 |
| 18. Rigidly codifying an ethical position that prevents certain types of actions could stand in the way of better human relations and adjustment. | | .697 |
| 17. Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate their own individual codes. | | .666 |
| 11. There are no ethical principles that are so important that they should be a part of any code of ethics. | | .504 |

KMO: .788; approx. chi-square: 803.500, df: 66; Bartlett significance value: .000, p<0.001.

Finally, religiosity was measured using the four-item scale. The scale was originally developed by McDaniel and Burnett (1990), and was consisted of three items. The scale was developed to measure the cognitive commitment component of religiosity. It was translated into Turkish by the author, and two English teachers, and was back translated by two different English teachers. One item was added to the scale after piloting. The original items included three items (1. I am very religious; 2. My religion is very important to me; and 3. I believe in God). One item (I try to live according to the religious rules) was added to the scale after the piloting; and the scale was re-piloted. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with these items on a nine-point scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (9). As a preliminary analysis, the scale was factor analyzed. One item (item 3. I believe in God) was dropped from the scale as it had a low loading (below 0.5). Afterwards, the principal components factor analysis was re-performed with the scale. Exploratory factor analysis revealed one-factor solution for this scale. The principal component analyses yielded .901 loading for the item 4 (I try to live according to the religious rules); .873 loading for the item 2 (My religion is very important to me); and .823 loading for the item 1 (I am very religious). The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test (index: 0.698) and Bartlett's test of Sphericity (Barlett's = 383.733, p<0.001) indicated that these data were deemed fit for factor analysis. According to Büyüköztürk (2004), the factor analysis showed that: (1) the sub-scale exceeded the acceptable standard of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's value of 0.6, (2) the sub-scale was significant in Bartlett's test of Sphericity, (3) the scale had eigenvalues larger than 1, and (4) the items included in the scale exceeded factor loadings of 0.60. The factor solution indicated that 75.025 percent of the total variance was explained by the one factor. The reliability of the measure was assessed with Cronbach's alpha, and was found .82 for this scale (See Table 1). Personal information (gender, age, and work tenure) of the participants was asked at the beginning of the questionnaire.

*3.3 Data Analysis*

The data were analyzed by using SPSS 17 package program. Coefficient alphas and factor analysis were determined for appropriateness of the scales. Because this is an exploratory study, Pearson correlation test was conducted to examine the relationship between religiosity, value orientations and forms of whistleblowing.

Besides, Regression analysis was conducted on the data to find out the effects of the factors on modes of whistleblowing.

## 4. Results

Means and standard deviations for the items for the mode of whistleblowing intentions (identified, and anonymous), philosophical values (idealism and relativism), and religiosity used in the analysis are presented in Table 1. It is noteworthy that the mean value for anonymous whistleblowing (Mean=2.53), tended to lie below the middle of the scale, and indicated that there was considerable disagreement among the respondents concerning anonymous whistleblowing. These results are consisted with the results of Park et al. (2008) whose study revealed that the mean score of the Turkish students was 2.98 for anonymous whistleblowing; and results of Nayir and Herzig (2012) whose study revealed that the mean score of the Turkish managers was 2.61 for anonymous whistleblowing. However, the mean score for the identified whistleblowing (Mean=3.53) is higher than the middle of the scale. The mean score for the identified whistleblowing indicated that respondents seem to have considered they blow the whistle middle level by using their names or identities.

As Table 1 shows, the mean score for the idealism (Mean=4.57) had the highest level among the values, while the mean score for the relativism was 3.24. Finally, the mean score for the religiosity was 6.58. The religiosity sub-scale was ranging from 1 to 9, while the others were ranging from 1 to 5, thereby the mean score of this variable was not significantly higher among the other scores. The mean idealism score of 4.57 indicated that, in general, the sample had a strong idealistic ethical ideology. The mean relativism score was 3.24, indicating that as a whole, the respondents were not strong relativistic. These results are partly consisted with the results of Nayir and Herzig (2012), and Toker-Gökçe (2013b). The results by Nayir and Herzig (2012) revealed that the mean score for idealism was 3.98, and the mean score for relativism was 3.34 of the Turkish managers. In addition, the results by Toker-Gökçe (2013b) showed that the mean score for idealism was 4.67, and the mean score for relativism was 3.71 of the Turkish teachers. Finally, the mean religiosity score 6.58 (maximum score=9) tends to lie above the middle of the scale, and indicated that, overall, the participants considered themselves to be relatively strongly committed to general religious beliefs. Since no study has been encountered in the literature, examining religiosity and whistleblowing in Turkey, the last finding could not be compared to any result.

A correlation analysis was carried out to examine the direction and the strength of the association between the variables. Table 3 presents the correlation matrix for the variables used in the analysis. The results in Table 3 confirmed significant relationships between religiosity and ethical value orientations of teachers and the way wrongdoing within the school is reported.

Table 3. Pearson correlations between religiosity, value orientations and forms of whistleblowing

|  | Religiosity | Idealism | Relativism | Identified | Anonymous |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Religiosity | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| Idealism | .225** | 1 |  |  |  |
| Relativism | -.277** | .031 | 1 |  |  |
| Identified whistleblowing | -.127* | .026 | .085 | 1 |  |
| Anonymous whistleblowing | .118* | .027 | .018 | -.414** | 1 |

*p<.05, **p<.001.

As can be seen in Table 3, there was a significant positive correlation between religiosity and idealism, while there was significant negative correlation between religiosity and relativism. Second, religiosity correlated positively with the use of anonymous reporting channels, while it correlated negatively with identified whistleblowing. These results are in line with the results by Barnett et al. (1996) revealing that high level of religiosity was associated with non-relativistic. Besides, they hypothesized that there was a positive relationship between religiosity and idealism. The result of this study confirmed the hypothesis of Barnett et al. (1996) while they could not support it in their study. On the other hand, any relationship can be found between the ethical ideologies (idealism and relativism) and whistleblowing modes. These results are also consisted with the results of Toker-Gökçe (2013b) who could find a relationship between the idealism and intention to blow the whistle anonymously.

The first part of the first set of hypotheses (H1a and H2b together) suggested that idealism was negatively and

relativism was positively related to the willingness to blow the whistle in anonymous mode. Since the results of the Pearson Correlation Analysis in the Table 3 rejected these hypotheses, further analysis did not perform.

The second set of the hypotheses (H2a, H2b) suggested that religiosity was positively related to the willingness to blow the whistle in identified mode while negatively related to in anonymous mode. To test the hypotheses the regression analysis was performed. The results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Regression analyses for religiosity, identified and anonymous whistleblowing

|  | Identified | | | | Anonymous | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | B | β | Std Error | t-value | B | β | Std Error | t-value |
| Religion | -.213 | -.127 | .093 | -2.285* | 068 | .118 | .032 | 2.110* |
|  | R=.127 | R²=.016 | F=5.219 | | R=.118 | R²=.014 | F=4.454 | |

β =standardized beta, p<0.05.

As shown in Table 4, religiosity appeared to have a negative effect on the identified whistleblowing while having a positive effect on the anonymous mode. These results rejected the H2a and H2b. Since any study can be found examining religiosity and whistleblowing modes, this finding could not be compared to the literature.

The last set of the hypotheses (H3a, and H3b) suggested that religiosity was negatively associated with relativism, and religiosity was positively associated with idealism. The results in Table 3 supported this hypothesis. Further, the answers of the participants were analyzed to explore whether religiosity was the reason for thinking less relativist or not, and whether religiosity was underlying influence on thinking idealist or not. The regression result is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Regression model for relativism and idealism

|  | Relativism | | | | Idealism | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | B | β | Std Error | t-value | B | β | Std Error | t-value |
| Religion | -.123 | -.277 | .024 | -5.108** | .059 | .225 | .014 | 4.100** |
|  | R=.277 | R²=.077 | F=26.096 | | R=.225 | R²=.051 | F=16.807 | |

β =standardized beta, p<0.001.

As shown in Table 5, religiosity appears to have a strong negative influence on relativism while have a positive effect on idealism. These results support the first set of the hypothesis (H3a and H3b), as the results of the correlation analysis in Table 3. This result is consisted with the results by Barnett et al. (1996), and by Singhapakdi (2000) revealing that there is a negative relationship between religiosity and relativism, and a positive relationship between religiosity and idealism.

## 5. Discussion

In the first set of hypotheses, it was claimed that the ethical value orientation of teachers would influence their preferences for particular whistleblowing modes. None of the hypotheses in this set could be confirmed by the results of the study, while Nayir and Herzig (2012) confirmed that idealism and relativism affect individuals for potential reporting the wrongdoings anonymously. Besides, these results are not in line with the argument by Barnett et al (1996) who claim that individuals whose ethical ideology could be described as idealistic were more likely to report the wrongdoing of peers. However, these results are in line with the results by Toker-Gökçe (2013b).

The second set of hypotheses predicted that religiosity affect internal and identified reporting positively, while it influences negatively external and anonymous mode of whistleblowing. Since the internal and external mode of whistleblowing could not be examined, H3a and H3b could not be tested in the study. Fear of being labeled a troublemaker, appearing disloyal, and the possibility of victimization by school managers might work as powerful deterrents for the participants to explain their channels (internal or external) used about organizational wrongdoings. Surprisingly, the expected positive relationship between religiosity and identified mode of

whistleblowing did not materialize. Contrary to the hypothesis, the results showed that religiosity influenced negatively identified mode of whistleblowing. Consistent with this result, religiosity seemed to have an effect on anonymous mode of whistleblowing. Barnett et al. (1996), Singhapakdi (2000), and Woiceshyn (2011) argued that religion has a direct effect as well as an ethical philosophy of ethical decision-making. Barnett et al. (1996) suggest that idealistic individuals are more likely to whistle blow. According to Singhapakdi et al. (2000) individual's behavior could be affected by religion and religious institutions generally. They argue that highly religious people tend to evaluate unethical behaviors more negatively than less religious people do, because they consider such behaviors sinful. Therefore, religiousness may create the kind of moral courage that gives people the ability to make decisions that are more ethical in difficult circumstances. Consequently, religious individuals are likely to report more ethical intentions than are their counterparts.

In the last set of hypotheses, it was claimed that religiosity negatively associated with relativism, and positively associated with idealism. Strongly confirming the hypotheses, the results demonstrate that religiosity influences individuals' ethical ideology; higher level of religiosity is more likely to be a higher level of idealist, and lower level of religiosity is more likely to be a lower level of the relativism. These results are in line with Barnett et al. (1996) and Singhapakdi (2000) both of whom examined religiosity (with majority of Judaism and Christianity) in the U.S. Therefore, examining Muslims in Turkey, this study contributes the literature with regard to Islamic perspective.

The unexpected result of this study is that potential whistleblowers with higher levels of religiosity prefer choosing an anonymous mode of whistleblowing. To the extent, there is evidence of support for the view expressed by Nayir and Herzig (2012) that whistleblowing in Turkey is often viewed as risky for individuals. However, Islam religion orders Muslims to be fair, and perform their duties properly. Above all things, Muslims must behave fairly even their interests are damaged in any case. Because the Prophet Muhammad (ND) says 'if you see a wrong, you fix it by hand; if you cannot do this, you fix it by your speech; even if you cannot do this you resist this in your hearth'. Therefore, the participants were supposed to be willing to fix problems even the possibility of losing their job.

## 6. Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the relationship between religiousness, and ethical ideology of Turkish teachers in school settings, and their preferences for particular modes of whistleblowing. The analysis revealed that there was a strong relationship between religiosity and both relativism and idealism. Besides, there was a relationship between religiosity and identified and anonymous whistleblowing. Not surprisingly, there was a strong relationship between identified and anonymous whistleblowing. Finally, there was not any relationship between the ethical ideologies and the modes of whistleblowing.

Turkey is a multicultural country, and maintains different religious such as Christians and Jews as well as Islam. Therefore, teachers and school principals need to handle various ethical cases without any effect of their religion. They should be objective, and be reasonable models for all students at schools. Therefore, teacher-training programs should involve courses such as philosophy, sociology, ethics, and religious culture to create and enhance awareness of prospective teachers about multicultural and multi-confessional condition of the country. Besides, their ethical evaluation skills need to be improved through these kinds of courses. These measurements are needed to be taken for school principal recruitment and training programs. Therefore, this study is supposed to bring attention to the importance of training and recruiting teachers, and school principals to be skilled to evaluate ethical cases based on universal philosophical values instead of religious or cultural basis.

In choosing Turkey as context, the study was built upon previous study by Park et al. (2008), and Nayir and Herzig (2012). In choosing the religion as context, the study was built upon previous study by Barnett et al. (1996), and Singhapakdi (2000). Finally, in choosing education as context, the study is supposed to bring attention to the organizational behavior by examining the relationship between religion and value orientations and preferences for particular modes of whistleblowing in school settings to the third parties (i.e. Education policy makers, educational administrators, and researchers). Some scholars (Barnett et al., 1996, Singhapakdi, 2000) examined religiosity (with majority of Judaism and Christianity) in the U.S while some (Nayir & Herzig, 2012; Park et al., 2008) studied partly Muslims. Therefore, this study contributes the literature related to ethical ideology, religiosity, and whistleblowing, with an Islamic perspective. So this paper concluded with a consideration of directions for future research. There are good grounds for assuming that studies replicating the present research design could be worthwhile.

There are several limitations of this study, and the results must be considered in the light of these. Firstly, this study is conducted using secondary school teachers who work in a big industrial city, and hence, the results may

not be extendable to all teachers in the country. As Nayir and Herzig (2012) argued that, there might be significant variations in the individual orientations even within the same country. Therefore, secondly, the results of this study compare well with other studies using Muslim teacher samples; country-specific factors may warrant consideration when extending results to other Islamic countries. Thirdly, the comparatively small size of the sample of this study warrants caution when comparing its results with those of similar studies.

Turning the focus to directions for future research, studies could extend research on whistleblowing behavior to examine balance between teachers' beliefs about employee loyalty and ethical conduct in order to better understand the challenges of improving not only an ethical awareness but also to encourage ethical conduct when these teachers witness serious wrongdoing at schools. Toker-Gökçe (2013a) examined the relationship between whistleblowing and job satisfaction and organizational loyalty at schools in Turkey. However, a study is not enough to understand the tension between the factors. In addition, future researchers may also examine the conditions under which mode of whistleblowing can be effective in organizations. Finally, an examination of cultural factors causing effective whistleblowing may enhance understanding of the phenomenon of whistleblowing.

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