Cognitive Conflict and Well-Being Among Muslim Clergy

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Summary

This paper surveys the relationship between Clergy Vocational Conflict, cognitive conflict (religious conflict and Quest) and psychological well-being in a sample of 178 Muslim clergy in Turkey. It was found that Clergy Vocational Conflict is accompanied by religious conflict and Quest. Those who experienced Clergy Vocational Conflict and religious conflict (but not Quest) suffered from poor psychological well-being. Quest, which does not affect psychological well-being, and religious conflict, which adversely affects it, are more common among the younger stratum of the sample. However, well-being prevails among the older layer and among the more educated clergy. Finally, psychological well-being, self-esteem, Quest and religious conflict were found as predictors for Clergy Vocational Conflict.

Introduction

In order to carry out their work and feel no conflict with their role, imams need to find "healthy ways of maintaining a strong sense of self for effective functioning as a professional helper" (Grosch & Olsen, 2000). However, professional life does not always proceed according to plan and imams may suffer from stress and conflict in their professional lives. Feeling stress and subsequent exhaustion may be caused by internal or external factors or a combination of both. Job routine, cognitive and interpersonal contradictions, role conflicts, identity crises and personal transformations can be counted as examples of such sources of tension. Or it may be the type of personality of the

cleric that does not fit with the practices of Mosque service (Francis, 2005, p. 101).

The clerical "vocation" is perhaps one of the professions most closely linked to the identity of its followers, their world-views and life-styles. That is, clergy is a way of life before it is a profession, within and beyond one's institution, and there is no clear boundary between work-place and private life. For instance, imams tend traditionally not to walk about in swimming-shorts at the sea-side nor to earn interest on their bank deposits. This is not peculiar to Muslim clergy only.

> To be effective as leaders they [clergy] must behave in their own lives in a way that is consistent with what they urge upon their followers. A failure to practice what they preach is likely to be seen as a lack of sincere beliefs on their part. Since other people expect to turn to clergy to help find a sense of meaning and purpose when they face crises, they might not welcome expressions of doubt or questions about the search for meaning from those they believe should already have achieved clarity on these issues (Profitt, Cann, Calhoun, & Tedeschi, 2007).

As with other vocations, imams are expected to commit themselves to their "jobs" and to provide satisfactory service to the public. However, unlike other professionals, they are often expected by the public to adjust their life in accordance with their job and to be in congruence and harmony with it. Furthermore, they are assumed to get enough appreciation, support and respect from their community and the wider public. However, personality features, individual faith development and/or other psychological transformations may not always remain consistent with the flow of these external factors. Indeed, the contradictions between such internal and external stimuli seem to occur very often in this social networking.

Cognitive stress, in particular, can be regarded as the major potential obstacle and, at the same time, the motivating force in the study of theology among past and modern-day theologians. As Tillich (1948) noted many years ago, "splits and gaps" may be theological hurdles for many people, lay or professional; and truth claims often follow a process of uncertainty and doubt. In the meantime, conflict may not always necessarily be related directly to the tenets of belief but also to matters related in any way to religion. This study investigates the level of cognitive conflict faced by Muslim clergy or theologians[1]

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[1] In Turkish society, being a theologian is often associated with, or is widely equated with being a member of the clergy.

with regard to their faith and clergy role and its relation to the level of psychological well-being.

Cognitive conflict or religious stress in general, as the author has called it (Ok, 2002 and 2004), has close links to the perspectives of a number of different conceptualisations, such as *burnout, role conflict* and *identity confusion* among others. In the burnout condition, for instance, clerics are thought to have been undergoing "a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion caused by long-term involvement in emotionally demanding situations" (Pines & Aronson, 1988, p. 9) or by low self-esteem (Pines, Aronson and Kafry, 1981, p. 202). Religious stress can lead to such emotionally demanding conditions. Furthermore, as the word "exhaustion" indicates, the relation of burnout to psychological well-being is obvious. Thus, it would seem useful to examine whether cognitive contradictions play a role in burnout experience and what relation cognitive conflict has with the level of clergy well-being.

Sociological perspectives may contribute to our understanding of cognitive contradictions. Clergy who experience religious conflict may be struggling to consolidate their personal or group identity or seeking coherence in the conflicting demands between their personal identity and the role-expectations of their community (Gennerich, 2007). In the period of young adulthood in particular, clergy may seek to build and preserve "sameness" or "wholeness" (Mol, 1976) within themselves in a social context. If they fail to establish such consistency while strengthening social boundaries and, contrariwise, making contact with out-groups, then they may begin to doubt their own life style and its principles. This can then lead to a disaffection with the ethos of the in-groups (Shaffir, W. 1978, p. 52). As Hardin and Kehrer put it (1978), "a belief system is a set of related ideas (learned and shared), which has some permanence and to which individuals and/or groups exhibit some commitment" (p. 84); it may be seen as the cognitive aspects of identity (p. 85). Therefore, any conflict regarding this belief system can threaten one's identity.

This sociological perspective can be furthered by the theory of role conflict. In a recent study on Protestant clergy Gennerich (2007) shows empirically that role-expectations from practitioners are sometimes in conflict with each other. Therefore, the clergy is in a situation in which the fulfilment of one demand results in the non-fulfilment of a conflicting other demand. Gennerich (2007, p. 309) argues that such vocational conflict may lead clergy to experience stress and burnout. Similarly, studying the nature of role conflict among Roman Catholic priests, Reilly (1978) argues that "the occupants of a role experience conflict either within themselves because they cannot fulfil all the expectations of their role, or because their conception of the role differs from the expectations

of others in the society … Thus they may be subjected to conflicting demands from practitioners of the same role, reference and significant others, or other persons in society" (p. 78). As Reilly aptly puts it, the differential expectations of significant others, cultural change, theological development and personal identity crisis seem to account for a good deal of the conflict experienced by the clergy (p. 7). However, conflicts in the lives of Muslim clergy have not so far been addressed in empirical research and the question of how these psycho-logical and sociological perspectives apply to their life remains open.

The sociological remarks above can be contextualised to the life of Muslim clergy. For instance, the traditional majority of the public in Turkey would expect that an imam or a Muslim religious educator should display a certain way of thinking and belief in Islam, a given life-style and even a religiously "legitimate" outlook which is ideally consistent, more or less, with their own. Others, however, would want to see imams as "intellectual", a term which characterizes a more liberal or secularized outlook in the Turkish context and appeals to those who take religion only as a subsidiary reference point in their thinking. In contrast, while some Muslim clergy would tolerate variety, others would expect their colleagues to utter similar religious discourse. Otherwise, they would feel dissonance. Therefore, the main sources of cognitive stress in the clergy could be sought within the conflicting demands from the expecta-tions of significant others, colleagues and the cultural contexts, as well as from their personal faith development and critical transitions in life.

Although Grosch and Olsen (2000) classify the sources of burnout in pas-tors into external (such as too much work, bureaucracy, difficult parishioners and so on) and internal (such as suffering from low self-esteem, high idealism) (p. 620), it seems that the internal source of burnout in their study takes little or no account of cognitive stress (contradiction or doubt) with regard to faith and its effects on the life of the clergy. Similarly, they do not refer to the con-tradictions and perhaps inhibitions on the part of pastors, arising from the clash between their clerical identity and the tendency sometimes seen in rigid anti-religious secular sectors of the Turkish public to humiliate them. This is perhaps because of the dissimilarities between more secular and less secular contexts or those of the two faiths, Islam and Christianity.

The Conceptualisations of Cognitive Stress—Quest and Conflict

Religious conflict is defined by Funk (1958) as "simultaneous tendencies to react in opposing and incompatible ways to the same religious attitude object".

In a somewhat similar way, Havens argues that respondents who admit to feeling "dissatisfaction or uncomfortableness over perceived *differences* or *contradictions*" are assumed to experience religious conflict (Havens, 1964). In contrast, Allport (1961) evaluates doubt as a secondary condition of mental life and defines it as "an unstable or hesitant reaction, produced by the collision of evidence with prior belief, or of one belief with another." Furthermore, doubt, to him, represents the onset of disbelief because it originates from the same psychological sources (p. 112). In this view, if conflict is a state of cognitive tension about certain values, doubt could be regarded as the focus of this tension in a negative form on attached values. Religious conflict is not regarded in itself as a way of being religious but as a provisional condition, in particular in adolescence or young adulthood. However, it has often been discussed in the literature of the psychology of religion concurrently with the notion of Quest, which was formulated in the 1970s.

Quest was formulated as a type of religious orientation which involves active seeking on existential questions rather than a temporary cognitive condition like religious conflict (Batson and Schoenrade, 1991a, s. 426). Quest-oriented people, in Batson's premise, view religion as an endless process of probing and questioning and pursue an open-ended, responsive dialogue with the existential questions generated by the tensions, contradictions and tragedies in their own lives and society (Batson 1976, p. 32; Batson, Schoenrade and Ventis 1993, p. 169) while at the same time refusing to be dominated by the religious institutions of society (p. 167) and resisting clear-cut, pat answers (p. 166).

Nevertheless, there have been discussions on what Quest really means. As Kojetin, Danny, Bridges and Spilka (1987) concluded "a quest orientation may be a troubled faith that represents an underlying trait pattern suggestive of broad individual distress and coping difficulties". Or, "it could be a manifestation of an enlightened and constructive deviance" (p. 114). However, Batson et al. (1991b) insist that Quest is different from troubling religious conflict:

> Conflict, in the sense of troubling doubt and confusion, is positively related to the Quest scale (correlations from .35 to .45). Yet this conflict is not the same thing as the Quest scale is measuring; the Quest items load on different factors. Just as children's ages and their heights are correlated but not the same thing, so, it seems, the Quest scale and religious conflict are correlated but not the same thing. Rather than measuring conflict per se, the Quest scale seems to be measuring a more active search in which doubts are central and, although they produce some anxiety, are viewed as positive and not simply as a threat (p. 425).

Thus, it can be argued that, although religious conflict and Quest are not defined in the same way, they display some major overlaps. Is Quest, then, something different from religious conflict? Are there variables to explain the differences, if there is any, between the two? What are their relations to vocational conflict among Muslim clergy?

According to Hood, Spilka, Hunsberger and Gorsuch (1996, pp. 93-94), the findings in Hunsberger, Alisat, Pancer and Pratt's (1996) study indicate a positive association of doubt with several adjustment variables, such as measures of stress, depression and daily hassles and a negative relation to self-esteem, relationship with parents, optimism and adjustment to university life. These data were evaluated as weak, but are considered to indicate a consistent association of doubt with progressively poorer adjustment, in particular among first-year university students. Therefore, it is worth investigating the relation of cognitive conflict to well-being and also to the developmental stage at which the former is commonly experienced.

Well-Being

The conceptualisations underpinning the indices of well-being vary; they include positive and negative affects (Bradburn, 1969), life satisfaction (Neugarten, Havignhurs, & Tobin, 1961), self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965), morale (Lawton, 1975), locus of Control (Levenson, 1974) and so on. Initially, Ryff criticised earlier measures of well-being as neglecting consistent theoretical backgrounds ("defining essential features of Well-being") (Ryff, 1989) and probably not comprising all aspects of well-being. As an alternative, she attempts to develop a theory-based new scale of well-being. First, she argues that the proper translation of the word *eudaimonia* (a Greek word used by Aristotle to mean the "highest of all good") would be "the realisation of one's true potential rather than happiness" (p. 1070). Developing this core idea, she points to humanistic approaches as the potential sources in which to ground her envisaged conceptualisation. In this regard, she believes that such overlapping concepts as self-actualisation (Maslow, 1968), being a fully functioning person (Rogers, 1967), individuation (Jung, 1933), maturity (Allport, 1961) and the psycho-social stage model (Erikson, 1959), among others, are viable for developing a new definition of well-being. Depending on these theoretical approaches she presents operational definitions (see Ryff, 1989, p. 1072) of six dimensions of a scale of well-being devised by herself. Then, she constructs and psychometrically tests these six dimensions. They are Autonomy, Self-acceptance, Positive Relations with others, Personal Growth, Envi-

ronmental Mastery and Purpose in Life, three of which (Positive Relations with others, Personal Growth and Purpose in Life), she contends, measure what is missing in earlier studies. Compared to ongoing research in the literature concerning well-being and its relation to various conceptualisations in other fields, the investigations into the relation of well-being with variables in the religious domain and into religious conflict, in particular, seem to be a step behind. Therefore, research designs which seek patterns between well-being and religious stress may help them to keep pace.

Briefly, then, it is posited that the combination of religious stress, clergy role conflict and well-being has direct connections with Muslim clergy life which may explain some of its dimensions. Before phrasing the questions of the study, however, in order to fully comprehend the point it may be helpful to start by introducing Muslim clergy, their education, the Turkish context in which they work and their experience of religious stress.

Clergy in the Turkish Context

Although the notion of the clergy as a separate social class is not proposed by Muslim theologians, it seems to be a *de facto* phenomenon in the regulations of religious service in Turkish society. This fact results from the way in which religious service is organised by the Turkish secular state. Despite the fact that the country approved the political concept of *laicite* (the separation of religion and state affairs, or keeping religion apart from the public realm) in the very early years of its establishment, formal religious education in school, mosque services and Koran instruction schools is financed, supervised and its curriculum fixed by the Presidency of Religious Affairs, the only legitimate state institute responsible for public religious affairs, in collaboration with the Head of Religious Education, a sub-branch of the National Ministry of Education (see Figure 1 for the overall structure of religious institutions). This means that the principle of *laicite* is breached by the state itself and religious education and socialisation are controlled by its direct intervention, since it is impossible to imagine a state in a neutral position with regard to religion so long as it has a direct link to the regulation of religious activities. Thus, sociologically at least, two broad versions of the interpretation of Islam exist in Turkey: the state version and the public version. This form of organisation of faith is naturally reflected in the construction of the Muslim clergy and their education. The institutional structure of the organisation of the clergy and their educational units can be illustrated as follows:
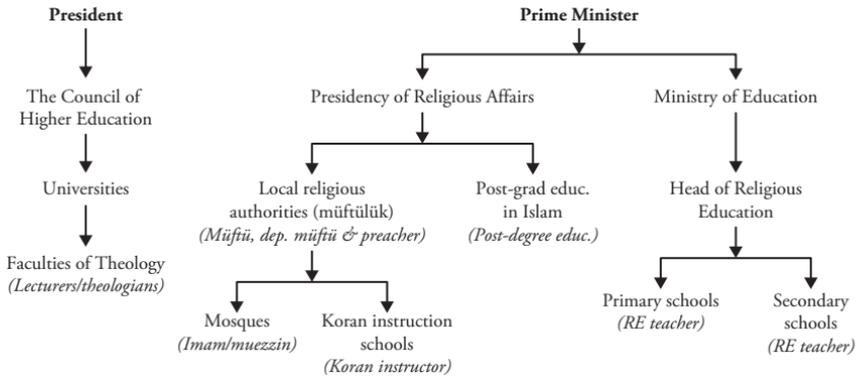
Figure 1. The administrative hierarchy of clergy-related institutions

The figure shows that the organisation of religious affairs (for example, education, public service), is clustered mainly under two different authorities, which in practice, however, are closely connected. This fragmentation in the main and sub-structure can lead to a lack of harmony and integration between the units of religious affairs, which ultimately affects the practice of the clergy. For instance, as academic units, the theology faculties have no clear ethos and vision, in that it is not known whether they are training imams who are expected to be faithful to the teachings of Islam or intellectual academics who are able to question the tradition and put forward suggestions and revisions when required. Furthermore, the Presidency of Religious Affairs addresses the spiritual needs (regarding belief, ethics and prayers) of "orthodox" (Sunni) Muslims and provides services accordingly. Thus, the state excludes all different (versions of) faith and spirituality, both within and outside Islam.

To unpick the features and formation of the clergy in the diagram above, imams, under the current regulations, have to graduate from four-year divinity courses in the faculties of state universities and following four-year education in Imam Hatip schools, the vocational secondary schools for training them, in order to be ordained to hold services. One of the problems in this area is that the graduates of Imam Hatip schools are forced to attend divinity courses through an unequal grade weighting system and are thus left with almost no option except to join the class of clergy if they want to pursue a career at university level. This method of curriculum enforcement has predictably become one of the main potential sources of stress and contradictions in the minds of people who, at one stage or another and for one reason or another, may want to leave the clerical profession. In addition, this policy

has resulted in a situation whereby female students outnumber males in the theology faculties.

Mosque services include leading daily prayers, responding to the religious questions of the congregation, performing religious rituals with regard to marriage, conducting funeral services and teaching the basics of Islam to young people (for instance, learning how to read the Koran from the original Arabic, basic moral rules, Islamic history). The state's control is felt in all these areas. For instance, the Friday sermons, both in theme and content, are mostly passed on ready-made to the mosques by the Presidency of Religious Affairs or its sub-branches. This method limits the freedom of imams and leaves them as mere mediators or agents of the official state version of Islam. At the same time, such public services as visiting hospitals, university chaplaincies and dealing with the daily problems of congregants seem to be less common among Muslim clergy than in Christian contexts, because these are not among the official duties prescribed for Muslim clergy. This "aloofness" in the official role of religious leaders leaves room for, if does not lead to, the formation or revival of a wide web of civil religious congregations which survive with their own traditional ethos and ways of tackling the religious (and non-religious) problems of their congregants.

In contrast, Müftüs (its literal meaning is "givers of *fatwa*"), who are graduates of theology faculties and a follow-up 1.5 years of education in Islamic studies, with further experience in related work positions, have the responsibility of supervising religious institutes (Mosques, Koran instruction schools) and dealing with religious-related matters, either in cities or in what are called districts, units which are smaller than a city but bigger than a village. They are directly responsible to the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet Işleri Başkanliği) located in Ankara. Müftüs are based in buildings which are called *Müftülük*. Similarly, preachers, who are often different from imams in status and education, use the *Müftülük* as their base and, being responsible to Muftüs, preach sermons, respond to the religious questions forwarded by the public in the Mosques on Fridays or on the anniversaries of important religious dates and perform other duties as assigned to them by Müftüs.

Koran instructors work under the supervision of Müftülük in the Koran instruction schools teaching the Koran and basics of Islam to students aged around 14[2] or above. They are also required to have a first degree from a theology

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[2] Those who have not yet completed the 8 years of primary education, which is compulsory, are not by law allowed to attend the Koran schools.

department. Religious educators, a different group, who are graduates of a theology faculty and trained in pedagogical skills, work in the state or private primary and secondary schools, which are under the supervision of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The clerical role of a female body of clergy, also in line with the common perception of Islamic theology, is restricted to the instruction of the Koran to females in equivalent Koran instruction schools, to being deputy Müftü or other administrative workers in the Müftülüks and to being RE teachers in state schools. There are few lecturing women in the academies of theology compared to men.

Preliminary Findings on Stress among Muslim Clergy in Turkey:

In a study of theology students (Ok, 2004) it was reported that 13.6% (m=3.79) experienced *uncertainty* "fairly" or "severely",[3] 13.6% (m=3.73) felt *confusion*, 39.1% (m=2.87) experienced *questioning*, 10.9% (m=4.04) felt *contradiction*, 7.7% (m=4.26) felt *doubt*, 18.6% (m=3.69) felt *anxiety* and 5.2% (m=4.52) felt *loss of faith* in their thinking about religious matters (Ok, 2004). The combination of these concepts was composed into what is called a *religious stress scale* (alpha=.87; mean=3.70). The percentage of those who scored less than 2.5 (which can be taken as the cutting point) in this five-option *stress scale* was 10.7. Thus, it seems possible to assume that around 1 in 10 Muslim clergy trainees are experiencing "high or very high" levels of religious stress. The students who experienced religious stress tend to attribute its sources primarily to "encountering different ideas on religion", second, to "lack of knowledge about religion" and, in third place, to "social pressure", among other predetermined options in the scale.

   In another study of theology students in a Turkish university (Yapici & Zengin, 2003) it was found that 66% of the students (n=164 out of 248) reported that they were attending the divinity faculty against their will and 25% reported that they could not reveal their clerical identity with ease everywhere. It was also found that those who attended the divinity faculty against their will were less exclusivist, felt the effect of religion less, felt lower self-esteem and felt less loneliness than those who willingly attended the faculty. In contrast, those "who could not reveal their clerical identity with ease everywhere" felt lower self-esteem but less loneliness than those "who could reveal their clerical identity with ease everywhere."

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[3] The other options were *Moderately*, *Little* and *Not at all*.

Briefly, in order to raise the quality of clerical service, Muslim clergy should have peace of mind and inward harmony with regard to their faith, a sense of religious service and of a social context and well-advanced interpersonal communication and ministry skills. Therefore, it seems that the relationships between personal stress, social constraints and well-being among members of the clergy is worth investigating. This study is designed to deal mainly with cognitive stress, which has a strong connotation with the socio-psychological trajectory of the clergy. The question regarding conflict and the well-being of Muslim clergy is put in this study as follows:

What is the relationship between Clergy Vocational Conflict (CVC), religious stress (such as religious conflict and uncertainty) Quest and psychological well-being among Muslim clergy? Regarding this generic question, 3 main sets of variables have been determined and the relationships between them have been investigated: (a) *Psychological Well-being* (including two other related scales of *Self-esteem* and *Self-actualisation)*; (b) *Clergy Vocational Conflict* together with *Religious Conflict* (and *Quest);* and (c) Demographic variables *(age, education and gender)*. These variables are related to each other in the frame of a number of hypothetical propositions:

Clergy Vocational Conflict (a) is basically an indication of an underlying more generic cognitive conflict with regard to religious tenets, among other things, and (b) those who experience Clergy Vocational Conflict (and religious conflict) feel discomfort psychologically. In other words, lack of psychological well-being can be predicted by Clergy Vocational Conflict. (c) Although CVC may have a positive link to Quest (as it had to religious conflict), Quest-oriented clergy are not expected to suffer as poor psychological well-being as clergy with religious conflict do. (d) In contrast, more educated and middle-aged clergy feel better psychologically than younger clerics with less education because religious conflict and CVC are expected to be more common among young people (though not necessarily among less educated clergy).

Method

Measures and Participants

In order to seek answers to the question above, the author designed and distributed a survey pack to 178 clergy or clergy trainees, which included the following scales:

(1) *Clergy Vocational Conflict Scale*
This was developed by the author in collaboration with his five post-graduate students, all of whom had their first degrees in theology, who were studying the module on "research methods in the psychology of religion". Initially a pool of 90 items was constructed in a series of discussions. On the basis of the results of a pilot study with 50 theology students and a follow-up component analysis, 36 of these items were selected. Next, these were applied to an initial sample of 211 clergy or clergy candidates. According to the result of a one-component principal component analysis and a subsequent item analysis (also observing the construct validity), the 10 items (see Appendix) with the highest alpha (.71) scores, were selected (explaining 31% of the variance) and included in the survey pack.

(2) *Scale of Psychological Well-Being*
Developed by Ryff (Ryff & Singer, 1996; Ryff, 1995; Ryff, 1989), this scale has nine items in each of its six components: Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relations, Purpose in Life and Self-acceptance. In addition, two more scales related to Well-being have been added for the present research: a form of Self-esteem scale with 16 items, which is known as the Texas Social Behavior Inventory, which was developed by Helmreich and Stapp (1974); and a short index of Self-actualization with 15 items which was devised by Jones and Crandall (1986).

(3) *Quest and Religious Conflict Scales*
In addition, 9 items from the *Quest* scale, developed by Batson (Batson & Schoenrade, 1991a; Batson & Schoenrade, 1991b; Batson & Ventis, 1982), and 5 items from the conflict scale (developed by Funk, 1958 and cited in Shaw & Wright, 1967) were added to the survey. The reason for selecting 9 Quest items from the original 12 was that in a previous application in Turkey (see Ok, 2006) its alpha with 12 items was found to be rather low compared with the number of items (.60). Therefore, 3 items which reduced the alpha were abandoned ("I was not in interested in religion until.....", "God was not very important for me until....." and "I am constantly questioning....."), on the assumption that 9 items are enough to represent the Quest orientation.[4] In the selection of 5 conflict items, those which are evaluated to

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[4] As Batson and Schoenrade indicate (1991a, s. 418f) the Quest dimension has passed three stages in its development. Initially, it started with 9 items (Batson 1976), then these were reduced to 6 (Batson and Ventis 1982) and finally it included 12 items. Batson and Schoenrade argue

be the most representative of the "troubling tension" in religious thinking or which correspond to the content of religious stress (composed of four closely related words: *uncertainty*, *contradiction*, *questioning* and *loss of faith*) were selected, again because of the results of an earlier application (Ok, 2005) with the highest satisfactory alpha score (.65).

All but the Self-actualization scales have five responses arranged on a Likert-type scale, starting with "Disagree strongly" and ending with "Agree strongly". The Self-actualization rates answers on the basis of 6 options. The items on the scales of Well-being, Self-esteem, Self-actualization, Quest and Religious Conflict were translated into Turkish by the author.

The survey was completed in 2006 by 178 participants from different cities of Turkey (mainly in Sivas and Erzurum) (51.5% male and 48.5% female), whose ages were grouped as 18-25 (33.9%), 26-35 (49.4%) and 36-52 (16.7%). 30.4% of the participants were graduates of Imam-Hatip schools, 56.7% went to four-year divinity schools and 12.9% had a post-graduate degree. Their clergy vocations ranged from religious leaders (imams), RE teachers and Koran instructors to lecturers in divinity faculties and local religious office personnel. Some were clergy trainees (students) in theology departments; others were working as clergy and still others were both occupying a clerical post and at the same time studying at various levels (graduate, post-graduate).

Results

The 14 items (9 from the Quest and 5 from the religious conflict scales) were exposed to a three-component principal component analysis with Varimax rotation.[5] The loadings of the items into factors can be seen below:

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that "all measure much the same dimension" with the justification that the correlations between these versions were high. Deriving from this, it could be argued that the Quest dimension with 9 selected items demonstrated high correlations with 12 items (.94 in Ok, 2006 and .96 in Ok, 2005) and explained more variance (23.93% with 9 items and 21.83% with 12 items in Ok 2006). Thus it is proposed that the 9 items measure what is intended by the conception of Quest. Even so, it may be assumed that including 9 items from 12 can be counted among the limitations of the present study and the researchers should include all 12 items in future research.

[5] Initially, four factors emerged with an eigenvalue higher than 1. However, in order to obtain three interpretable components, the items were exposed to a three-component principal component analysis. The difference between these two applications was that all three components in Table 1 also had a place in the initial analysis except the last two items of the third factor, which composed the fourth factor in this initial application. In the first instance, it explained 55% of the variance and in the second it explained 47%.

Table 1. Component loadings for quest and religious conflict items

Rotated Component Matrix(a)		Components		
		1	2	3
Conflict	I cannot decide what to believe about religion.	**.78**		.14
Conflict	I wish I could be sure my religious beliefs are correct.	**.73**		.10
Conflict	I feel that I shouldn't question my religion, but I sometimes do, anyway.	**.61**	.24	.17
Conflict	I am in danger of losing my religion	**.51**	.17	.17
Quest	My life experiences have led me to rethink my religious convictions.	.19	**.71**	−.13
Quest	There are many religious issues on which my views are still changing.	.16	**.64**	.40
Quest	As I grow and change, I expect my religion also to grow and change.		**.62**	.21
Quest	I have been driven to ask religious questions out of a growing awareness of the tensions in my world and in my relation to my world.	.38	**.60**	
Conflict	Education has led me to question some teachings of my religion.	.38	**.52**	.16
Quest	For me, doubting is an important part of what it means to be religious.	.24		**.75**
Quest	(-) I find religious doubts upsetting.			**.69**
Quest	It might be said that I value my religious doubts and uncertainties.	.16	.18	**.54**
Quest	Questions are far more central to my religious experience than are answers.		.40	**.49**
Quest	(-) I do not expect my religious convictions to change in the next few years.	.26		**.42**

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.
Note: The number of items subjected to factor analysis were 9 from Quest and 5 from religious conflict.

The first factor is called Religious Conflict, which, at face value, seems to represent what is called "troubling and upsetting conflict or confusion"; the second factor is Openness to Change, which covers "openness to change and questioning"; and the third factor is Doubt-positive, which characterizes "valuing doubt as positive". It is seen that, in accordance with the initial assumption, all the selected items of the Religious Conflict scale are loaded on a single factor, except one ("Education has led me to question some teachings of my religion") which seems to be similar to the content of the second factor, namely, Openness to Change, since, rather than connoting tension in present conditions, it apparently refers to a follow-up state of this type of tension experience. The doubt-related items are loaded in one factor, as devised by Batson and his colleagues (Batson et al., 1991b), except that they have an additional item from Openness to Change as a subcomponent of the original Quest scale.[6] The inter-correlation of religious conflict, Quest (total), CVC, well-being and its components along with demographic variables can be seen in Table 2.

To predict each of the results concerning Clergy Vocational Conflict, Well-being, Religious Conflict and Quest, the data were also subjected to multiple regression analysis for comparisons. The results are presented in two tables. The reason for this is to avoid multicollinearity between well-being (total) and its subcomponents (Environmental mastery and self-acceptance) and to determine if any of the subcomponents of well-being predict the dependant variables. In Table 3, well-being (total), Religious Conflict, Quest, CVC, demographic variables (age, sex and education) and in Table 4 the subcomponents of well-being and demographic variables were entered (in that fixed order) as predictors to investigate their distinct impacts on selected dependant variables.

Regarding Tables 2, 3 and 4, comments can be made on four topics.

Firstly, the CVC has an important positive correlation with Religious Conflict (.41) and Quest (.30). This confirms the hypothesis that CVC is accompanied by cognitive conflict on religious matters. CVC's close link to Religious Conflict and Quest is also been confirmed in the regression analysis. With regard to the parametric feature, it is noticeable that the newly developed CVC scale with 10 items seems to be working well enough, with a sufficient alpha score (.76 in general, .79 in males and .73 in females).

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[6] This sort of attempt to clarify Quest and religious conflict has also been made by Kojetin. He (1988) has distinguished, in the light of the results of a factor analysis, between "religious doubt or confusion" and an "Active Questioning Scale". Like that in the present study, his "religious doubt or confusion" scale includes items from only the conflict scale but no item from the Quest scale. (Batson and Schoenrade, 1991a, p. 425). It seems that underlying these attempts at revision is a concern for conceptual clarification.

Table 2. Inter-correlations among CVC, religious conflict, Quest, well-being (including its subcomponents) and demographic variables

N=178	M	SD	RC	Q	CVC	WB	AU	EM	PG	PR	PL	SA	SE	ST	AGE	EDU
RC (4)	2.04	0.82	.66													
Q (9)	2.89	0.72	.52**	.71												
CVC (10)	2.29	0.67	.41**	.31**	.76											
WB (54)	3.60	0.37	–.31**	–.11	–.45**	.89										
AU (9)	3.48	0.47	–.19*	–.02	–.24**	.56**	.55									
EM (9)	3.50	0.56	–.34**	–.19*	–.41**	.84**	.38**	.74								
PG (9)	3.43	0.40	–.07	.11	–.21**	.58**	.24**	.39**	.78							
PR (9)	3.90	0.56	–.13	–.02	–.34**	.78**	.27**	.54**	.41**	.47						
PL (9)	3.84	0.48	–.31**	–.16*	–.36**	.71**	.16*	.58**	.30**	.46**	.66					
SA (9)	3.47	0.55	–.27**	–.13	–.37**	.83**	.40**	.65**	.31**	.60**	.56**	.68				
SE (16)	3.49	0.72	–.08	.24*	–.33**	.50**	.33**	.38**	.42**	.40**	.30**	.35**	.79			
ST (16)	3.81	0.52	–.10	.12	–.30**	.41**	.29**	.32**	.24**	.26**	.30**	.38**	.54**	.46		
AGE	1.83	0.69	–.21**	–.20*	–.09	.17*	.19*	.20*	.18*	.07	.03	.08	.08	.02		
EDU.	1.82	0.64	–.03	.01	.06	.18*	.12	.15	.11	.15	.13	.14	.11	.05	.35**	
SEX	1.49	0.50	–.01	.08	–.10	–.05	–.03	–.05	.01	–.04	–.06	–.02	.11	–.01	–.34**	–.47**

**. P < 0.01 level.*. P < 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Scales: CVC=Clergy Vocational Conflict; RC=Religious Conflict; Q=Quest (total); AU=Autonomy; EM=Environmental Mastery; PG=Personal Growth; PR=Positive Relations; PL=Purpose in Life; SA=Self-acceptance; SE=Self-esteem; ST=Self-actualization; WB=Well-being (total). EDU.=Education

Notes:

(1) In the comparison of well-being (total) and its subcomponents, the compared component is not included in the mean of well-being.

(2) Entries on the diagonal are the reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) for each scale.

(3) The numbers in the brackets next to the scale names show the number of items in the scale.

Table 3. Regression model: predicting CVC,
religious conflict, quest and well-being

Predicted Variable= CVC		Increase					
Predictors	R²	R²	F	Sig.	Beta	t	Sig.
AGE	0.008	0.008	1.390	0.240	–0.018	–0.247	0.805
EDU.	0.018	0.009	1.560	0.213	0.102	1.327	0.186
SEX	0.030	0.012	2.001	0.159	–0.087	–1.150	0.252
WB	0.235	0.206	43.614	0.000	–0.390	–5.599	0.000
RC	0.310	0.075	17.499	0.000	0.212	2.652	0.009
Q	0.328	0.018	4.167	0.043	0.157	2.041	0.043
Predicted Variable= WB							
AGE	0.027	0.027	4.630	0.033	0.051	0.669	0.505
EDU.	0.045	0.018	3.107	0.080	0.186	2.365	0.019
SEX	0.050	0.005	0.819	0.367	0.004	0.050	0.960
RC	0.129	0.079	14.707	0.000	–0.180	–2.156	0.033
Q	0.133	0.003	0.616	0.434	0.123	1.532	0.128
CVC	0.275	0.142	31.353	0.000	–0.421	–5.599	0.000
Predicted Variable= RC							
AGE	0.042	0.042	7.244	0.008	–0.097	–1.379	0.170
EDU.	0.044	0.002	0.306	0.581	–0.019	–0.251	0.802
SEX	0.049	0.005	0.907	0.342	–0.073	–0.999	0.319
WB	0.128	0.079	14.707	0.000	–0.156	–2.156	0.033
CVC	0.214	0.085	17.499	0.000	0.198	2.652	0.009
Q	0.371	0.157	40.042	0.000	0.426	6.328	0.000
Predicted Variable= Q							
AGE	0.038	0.038	6.487	0.012	–0.090	–1.224	0.223
EDU.	0.044	0.007	1.126	0.290	0.076	0.979	0.329
SEX	0.047	0.003	0.499	0.481	0.113	1.475	0.142
WB	0.056	0.008	1.421	0.235	0.118	1.532	0.128
RC	0.289	0.233	52.777	0.000	0.470	6.328	0.000
CVC	0.307	0.018	4.167	0.043	0.162	2.041	0.043

Scales: CVC=Clergy Vocational Conflict; RC=Religious Conflict; Q=Quest (total); WB= Well-being (total); EDU.=Education

Table 4. Regression model: predicting CVC,
religious conflict and quest by subcomponents of well-being and
demographic variables

Predicted Variable= CVC		Increase					
Predictors	R²	R²	F	Sig.	Beta	t	Sig.
AGE	0.008	0.008	1.390	0.240	–0.111	–1.422	0.157
EDU.	0.018	0.009	1.560	0.213	0.144	1.770	0.079
SEX	0.030	0.012	2.001	0.159	–0.085	–1.037	0.301
AU	0.083	0.053	9.376	0.003	–0.064	–0.800	0.425
EM	0.200	0.117	23.511	0.000	–0.151	–1.462	0.146
PG	0.201	0.001	0.279	0.598	0.047	0.577	0.565
PR	0.221	0.020	4.078	0.045	–0.107	–1.147	0.253
PL	0.246	0.025	5.250	0.023	–0.172	–1.878	0.062
SA	0.247	0.001	0.300	0.585	–0.037	–0.346	0.730
SE	0.264	0.017	3.506	0.063	–0.108	–1.169	0.244
ST	0.270	0.006	1.238	0.268	–0.095	–1.113	0.268
Predicted Variable = RC							
AGE	0.042	0.042	7.244	0.008	–0.212	–2.568	0.011
EDU.	0.044	0.002	0.306	0.581	0.052	0.613	0.541
SEX	0.049	0.005	9.907	0.342	–0.086	–1.007	0.316
AU	0.071	0.022	3.757	0.054	–0.076	–0.912	0.363
EM	0.145	0.075	14.044	0.000	–0.211	–1.937	0.055
PG	0.154	0.009	1.701	0.194	0.093	1.098	0.274
PR	0.155	0.001	0.151	0.698	0.091	0.926	0.356
PL	0.189	0.034	6.580	0.011	–0.222	–2.310	0.022
SA	0.191	0.002	0.484	0.488	–0.078	–0.700	0.485
SE	0.194	0.002	0.467	0.496	0.055	0.568	0.571
ST	0.194	0.000	0.008	0.931	0.008	0.087	0.931
Predicted Variable = Q							
AGE	0.038	0.038	6.487	0.012	–0.226	–2.781	0.006
EDU.	0.044	0.007	1.126	0.290	0.096	1.144	0.254
SEX	0.047	0.003	0.499	0.481	–0.004	–0.043	0.966
AU	0.047	0.000	0.016	0.898	–0.010	–0.120	0.905
EM	0.080	0.032	5.620	0.019	–0.218	–2.032	0.044
PG	0.122	0.042	7.714	0.006	0.146	1.736	0.085
PR	0.122	0.000	0.087	0.768	0.023	0.243	0.808
PL	0.135	0.013	2.348	0.127	–0.157	–1.656	0.100
SA	0.137	0.002	0.322	0.571	–0.078	–0.717	0.474
SE	0.215	0.078	15.502	0.000	0.306	3.199	0.002
ST	0.217	0.002	0.463	0.497	0.060	0.680	0.497

*Scales: CVC=Clergy Vocational Conflict; RC=Religious Conflict; Q=Quest (total); AU=Autonomy;
EM=Environmental Mastery; PG=Personal Growth; PR=Positive Relations; PL=Purpose in
Life; SA=Self-acceptance; SE=Self-esteem; ST=Self-actualization; EDU.=Education*

Secondly, CVC has important negative correlations with all components of well-being, as well as with Self-esteem and Self-actualization. Thus, it is possible to assume that the clergy who experience CVC tend to feel less well and show low self-esteem and self-actualization. Which components of well-being are unique predictors of CVC, independently of the impact of the other facets? Well-being (total) apparently linked to CVC along with Quest and Religious conflict. However, CVC related neither to the subcomponents of well-being nor to the demographic variables. If the scales of Quest and religious conflict are added to the subcomponents of well-being and demographic variables, CVC related negatively to self-esteem ($B=-.19$, $t=-2.15$, p < 0.05) beside its positive relation to Quest ($B=.24$, $t=2.93$, p < 0.01) and Religious Conflict ($B=.19$, $t=2.32$, p < 0.05) altogether explaining .32% of variability. In contrast, the well-being of clergy was predicted negatively by CVC, Religious Conflict and positively by Education.

Thirdly, all subscales of well-being have important positive inter-correlations at varying levels from as low as .15 (between Autonomy and Purpose in Life) to as high as .65 (between Self-acceptance and Environmental mastery). In the comparison of the subscales with well-being (total), it is seen that Environmental Mastery, Self-acceptance and Positive Relations are the components with the three highest correlations (.73, .73 and .64 respectively) with the total score for well-being. Another noteworthy point is that, in line with theoretical expectation, each of the Self-esteem and Self-actualization scales has a moderate correlation (.50 and .41 respectively) with total well-being. The three variables with the lowest mean scores are Personal Growth (3.43) Self-acceptance (3.47) and Autonomy (3.48). The variable with the highest mean score is Positive Relations (3.90). This could be an indication that collective life style is given a higher place by the clergy than individual-centred values, such as personal growth and autonomy.

Fourthly, the correlation between Religious Conflict and Quest is moderately positive (.52). This may be interpreted as showing that Religious Conflict and Quest tend to measure similar phenomena. However, if the result is considered of the factor analysis above, in which Religious Conflict items constituted a different factor, then other factors must be found to explain the difference, if any. Is there in fact any difference between the two? They relate to Well-being and its sub-components in a different way. While Religious Conflict has a negative correlation with 5 variables out of 9 (and no positive correlation at all), Quest has a negative correlation with only 2 variables (Purpose in Life and Environmental Mastery) and a positive correlation with one variable (Self-esteem). In addition, both have different relations to total

well-being: while Religious Conflict has a negative correlation, Quest has no important correlation, positive or negative). This correlational pattern would mean that a person with Quest orientation tends to feel better psychologically than a person with Religious Conflict.

The difference between Quest and Religious Conflict can also be traced in regression analysis in which both are predicted by each other and by CVC. However, although Religious Conflict was predicted negatively by well-being, Quest was not. Furthermore, while both were predicted negatively by age, Religious Conflict was predicted by Purpose in Life and Quest by Environmental Mastery. The most distinct feature of Quest is that it was additionally predicted positively by Self-esteem. Thus, it seems that Quest and Religious Conflict have major overlaps but they seem to have some differences with regard to well-being.

Finally, in terms of demographic variables, it is seen that Quest and Religious Conflict, being negatively related to age, tend to be more common among the younger stratum of the clergy. In contrast, Well-being seems to be more common (though with low correlation) among more educated clergy and the middle-aged group in the correlation analysis; while the former statement was confirmed by regression analysis, the latter was not. Although education has a positive correlation with age in general (.35), it has a negative correlation with gender; that is, women obviously lag behind men (−.47) in this regard. This can be explained either by the role allocated to women in clergy work (as mentioned above, clergy women commonly become teachers in the Koran schools) which do not often require a post-graduate degree, or by the role assigned to them in Turkish society, which generally requires them to take on onerous professional responsibilities and most of the housework.

Discussion and Concluding Remarks

To summarize the results, the construct of what has been called CVC in this study seems to possess robust parametric features. Observing the items composing the scale, CVC can be described as follows:

> Those who experience CVC are assumed to feel discomfort with their clerical identity either because of the conflict they experience between the role idea or way of life which they maintain for themselves and the one attributed to them by the public, or because they have not yet developed a thorough clerical role identity for some reason, such as studying theology against their will and/or feeling cognitive contradictions in their belief or loss of faith.

CVC exhibited a positive relation to both Religious Conflict and Quest and negative relation to Well-being (including Self-esteem and Self-actualization); this confirms the assumption that CVC seems to reflect a deeper cognitive tension, indicating poor psychological well-being.

Although Quest and Religious Conflict seem to share communality in their nature, it has been possible via factor solution and subsequent analyses to distinguish between them. In particular, people with religious conflict seem to be failing to build purpose in their life and to develop a satisfactory level of self-esteem. In contrast, while Quest-oriented clergy feel enough self-esteem, they tend to fall behind in managing their environment. Therefore, both differ in terms of self-esteem in particular and well-being in general. At face value, it can be assumed that Quest religious orientation seems to be a follow-up condition of troubling Religious Conflict. That is, Quest-oriented people may have passed a period of intense Religious Conflict in their faith vocation. Furthermore, because a complete solution of this conflict may not have been found, they may have accommodated religious conflict in such a way as to be accustomed to it in its alleviated and sublimed form. This is because people have as a rule passed a period of tensional experiences before they see doubt as positive and become open to changes in their world view. In this sense, it recalls the characteristics of stage 5 described in the theory of faith development. Stage 5-oriented people are able to live with cognitive complexity and exhibit openness to diversities in belief (for details, see Fowler, 1981 and other works). Therefore, the frequency and distinct features of religious orientations can also be investigated as developmental approaches (Ok, 2006).

Quest and Religious Conflict tend to be seen as phenomena of late adolescence and early young adulthood in this sample, confirming earlier studies. Although not confirmed in the analysis, considering the correlations of CVC with Quest and Religious Conflict, it is also possible to assume that CVC can be more intensive on early young adulthood. Therefore, young Muslim clergy who are at the beginning stages of their profession should be given care, support and rehabilitation in order to adapt them to religious service and to increase their level of well-being and self-esteem.

Quest orientation seem to feel psychologically well (at least, respondents do not feel "not well") but Religious Conflict and Clergy Vocation Conflict do not. This may mean that Quest and Religious Conflict, though it could be constructive for growth, can be encouraged in theological education to the extent that it does not shake individual well-being.

Furthermore, the negative conditions caused by "troubling conflict" and CVC can be improved by taking certain measures. For instance, clergy may be

given a chance to abandon or change their theological education, if they want, as well as their clerical vocation without facing the dilemma of either earning a living in uncongenial work, or gaining freedom at the cost of losing their job and social security. Again, the social perceptions and biases which cause the clergy to feel contradictions and inhibitions in certain social circles can be cleansed by proposing appropriate political educational and social reforms and actions.

Considering that those people with lower socio-economic status are more vulnerable to physical illness as well as having little chance to live their lives fully (Ryff and Singer, 2006, p. 18), measures could also be taken to improve the social status and educational and economic level of Muslim clergy. The imbalance in educational level between men and women in this sample should also be questioned seriously, in particular in view of their social status.

As the results of the study showed, well-being is nourished mostly through a collective way of life compared to more individual values of autonomy and sense of growth. However, the model of well-being proposed by Ryff is far from perfect and should be re-evaluated, with particular reference to different cultural contexts. It is known that Autonomy, for instance, is regarded as "the most western" of all the components.

> In some circles, the human potential movement itself was seen as little more than an arena of narcissistic self-spelunking and ego-diving (see Ryff, 1985). Preoccupations with personal growth were depicted as crippling basic social institutions (e.g., the family) and thus ensued countervailing calls to elevate social responsibility and concern for others as the highest good (Ryff and Singer, 2006, p. 21)

Although it can be assumed that one's way of interaction with the society and cultural values affect one's well-being, it seems obvious that Ryff's model of well-being is overwhelmingly individually-centred and does not relate people to their society. Therefore, the intercultural validity of well-being and the role played by the organisation of social interactions in gaining happiness is worth investigating in the future, with particular reference to different social contexts.

It should be noted that there are some shortcomings in the parametric features of some of the scales used. In terms of reliability, the two components of well-being, namely, Autonomy and Personal Growth, have low alpha scores. As their item analysis hints, although the translation of few items into Turkish may partly have contributed to this, the reason lies mainly in the fact that the values represented by these two scales, i.e. Autonomy and Personal Growth, are emphasized more in North American and West European contexts than in

Muslim communities. Research can be conducted in the future in order to replicate the findings of present work done with a relatively small sample.

A number of questions for further research in this area may be suggested, as follows: Is there a method of achieving maturity represented by such individual values as openness, Personal Growth and Autonomy, without sinking into deep troubling conflict and losing the sense of relatedness to the social environment? Future studies may also be interested in the place of personal crises (financial, for example) and theological developments in CVC. This research has offered a glimpse of the conditions for Muslim clergy in Turkey; researchers in the future have plenty of other aspects of the topic to explore in further depth.

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Appendix: **Items of Clergy Vocational Conflict scale**

Clergy Vocational Conflict

CVC 1	(–) I would like people to recognize me as of the clergy ("ilahiyatci")
CVC 2	I cannot express some of my thoughts when I am with people who are not sympathetic towards religion.
CVC 3	Sometimes, a question asked about which faculty I graduated from bothers me.
CVC 4	Sometimes I hide my religious identity.
CVC 5	Clerics should be given the chance of putting their clerical identity to one side.
CVC 6	As a cleric, I could not feel comfortable in some social contexts.
CVC 7	There occur times in which my personality is not consistent with my clerical side.
CVC 8	I feel uncomfortable if my clerical identity is highlighted in my social relations.
CVC 9	If I were in the position of applying for university entrance again, I would not put the theology faculty among the options of my preference.
CVC 10	I feel the fear of being excluded if I put forward an opinion which is different from the commonly known ones.