



## The relationships between personal values, moral foundations, religiosity and identity styles among adolescents

### Der Zusammenhang zwischen persönlichen Werten, moralischen Prinzipien, Religion und Identitätsstil unter Jugendlichen

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#### Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between values, moral foundations, religiosity, and identity styles among adolescents. Therefore, high school male students were selected by cluster sampling method and were administered with Berzonsky Identity Styles Inventory (ISI), Schwartz Value Survey, Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ), and the Post-Critical Belief Scale (PCBS). Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis. Results showed a significant positive correlation between informative identity style and symbolic religious thinking, while diffuse/avoidant identity style was associated with relativism and literal disaffirmation and also exhibited a significant negative correlation with inclusion of transcendence beliefs. Further, the results

showed that the personal values of tradition and benevolence were associated with the beliefs of inclusion of transcendence (symbolic and literal affirmation). All of the moral foundations except care/harm had a significant negative association with literal disaffirmation. The sceptic students with higher scores in relativism and literal disaffirmation seem to have diffuse/avoidant identity style, avoiding or postponing the more profound confrontation with religious questions and norms in a religious country such as Iran.

### Keywords

morality, personal values, religion, identity styles, adolescents

### Kurzzusammenfassung

Ziel dieser Studie war die Untersuchung der Beziehungen zwischen persönlichen Werten, Moralprinzipien, Religiösität und identitätsstil der Jugendlichen. Dafür wurden 330 männlichen Schülern Berzonsky Identity Styles Inventory (ISI), Schwartz Value Survey (1994), Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ), und the Post-Critical Belief Scale (PCBS) vorgegeben. Die Daten wurden dann mittels Pearson Korrelation Koeffizient und multiple regression analysis analysiert. Die Forschungsergebnisse zeigten eine signifikant positive Korrelation zwischen dem informativen Identitätsstil und dem symbolischen religiösen Denken. Diffuses/Vermeidungs-Identitätsstil war positiv verbunden mit dem Relativistischen Denken und der oberflächlichen Ablehnung der Religion, und war negativ korreliert mit dem Transzendenz-inklusive Glauben. Die persönlichen Werte der Tradition und Wohltätigkeit waren positiv korreliert mit Transzendenz-inklusive Glauben. Außerdem zeigten alle Moralitätsarten außer "care/harm" (sich um anderen kümmern, Nächstenliebe) eine signifikant negative Korrelation mit oberflächlicher Ablehnung der Religion. Die eher skeptischen Schüler zeigten einen diffusen/vermeidungs-Identitätsstil. Sie versuchen eine tiefere Auseinandersetzung bzw. Konfrontation mit den religiösen Fragen und Normen in einem religiösen Land wie Iran zu vermeiden oder verschieben diese Auseinandersetzung auf eine spätere Zeit.

### Schlüsselwörter

Moralität, Persönliche Werte, Religion, Identitätsstil, Jugendliche

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Iranian society

In collectivist societies, private life is invaded by group's interests, whereas in individualist societies identity is based in the individuals. Like many other collectivist societies, Iran tends to operate on the basis of personal and dependent relationships among individuals, rather than on the basis of impersonal institutions (Yeganeh & Su, 2008).

It is possible to consider two distinct vectors in Iranian culture: nationalist and Islamist. The nationalist aspect of Iranian culture is related to ancient Persian civilization and Zoroastrianism heritage which date back to 3000-2000BC but are still prevalent in different aspects of Iranian society such as calendar, New Year festivals (Nowrooz) and Persian literature. On the other hand, Islamist and subsequently Shiism aspects are relatively younger and date back to the seventh and sixteenth centuries respectively. It has been suggested that besides Persian and Islamist influences, effects of Western culture on Iranian society should be taken into consideration (Bani-Asadi, 1984 cited in Yeganeh & Su, 2008).

### 1.2 Religious attitudes

What is fundamental to every psychological interpretation of religion is the fact that religion explains and directs one's personal experiences, at the same time constituting a set of values or orientations in the life of a religious individual (Brown, 1973). Wulff (1991) discerned four religious attitudes: Literal Affirmation, Literal Disaffirmation, Symbolic Affirmation, and Symbolic Disaffirmation. The attitude of Literal Affirmation applies to individuals who define themselves as religious and interpret religious contents in a rigid, closed-minded, and dogmatic fashion. These individuals uncritically and strictly adopt religious contents as taught by a particular religious tradition. In its extreme, it is represented by religious fundamentalism or orthodoxy (Wulff, 1991; 1997). Literal Disaffirmation represents a position in which the existence

of the religious realm is rejected, but in which the possibility is lost out of sight that the religious language might have a symbolic meaning. So, like literal affirmation, religious language is understood in a literal way. The difference lies in the rejection versus acceptance of what is written or said.

According to Wulff (1991) Symbolic Affirmation represents a belief in religious ideas and objects based upon a search for "symbolic meaning that resides within and ultimately points beyond these objects". Symbolic Disaffirmation is based on a rejection of the existence of a transcendental realm. However, it goes beyond the simple literal disbelief and sees religion and its rituals as an expression of human needs and "restores to religion some fundamental, positive meaning".

### 1.3 Moral foundations

Kohlberg (1969) proposed that moral development in all cultures is driven forward by the process of role-taking. Moral foundations theory (MFT) proposes the existence of innate psychological systems, which would have been subjected to selective forces over the course of evolution (Fry & Souillac, 2013). Moral thinking and behavior is argued to be motivated both by certain types of values and certain types of emotions (Hirvala & Helkama, 2011). Haidt and Joseph (2007) divide these moral foundations in individual moral foundations (containing of harm/ care and fairness/reciprocity) and social foundations that function as group binding moralities (including ingroup/loyalty, authority/respect) and the moral foundation of purity.

### 1.4 Values

Values have been a central concept in the social sciences since their inception (Schwartz, 2012). According to Rokeach (1973) the value concept is able to unify the apparently diverse interests of all the sciences related to human behavior.

Schwartz (2006) defined values as desirable, trans-situational goals, varying in importance that serve as guiding principles in the lives of people. Traditionally, religious and institutional values serve as the standards that most individuals use to define their sense of identity (Baumeister, 1987).

### **1.5 Identity styles and adolescence**

Adolescence is widely recognized as the core developmental period for the foundation and formation of a healthy identity (Erikson, 1968). Marcia (1966) elaborated Erikson's identity framework and recognized two fundamental processes involved in the development of identity: commitment (the degree of personal investment of the individuals in their set of goals, values and beliefs) and exploration (it refers to the active and deliberate thinking of meaningful identity alternatives). Berzonsky (1989) created a process-oriented model of identity formation, where he endeavored to describe how individuals approach exploration and commitment activities using three different strategies or styles (i.e., informational, normative and diffuse-avoidant).

### **1.6 Review of literature and hypotheses**

Relation between identity processing styles (how individuals negotiate the process of identity formation) and value orientations (personal views about what values and goals should be pursued) has been demonstrated by Berzonsky and Papini (2014). The investigators could show that the informational identity style was directly associated with values that transcended selfish interest whereas the normative style was directly associated with values that emphasized security and tradition. A diffuse-avoidant identity style was directly associated with values that highlighted self-interest. This study has supported previous research conducted in Po-

land and Belgium (Berzonsky et al, 2010). In addition to values, Duriez discovered a unidirectional effect of identity styles on religiosity dimensions (Duriez et al, 2008). The research showed that exclusion versus inclusion of transcendence is directly related to a normative identity style and literal versus symbolic relates directly to an informational and indirectly to a diffuse/avoidant identity style. Duriez and Soenens (2006) found that openness to experience which is one of the five factors of personality, was consistently directly related to literal vs. symbolic and indirectly to exclusion vs. inclusion of transcendence. Whereas the former relation was mediated by the informational identity style, the latter relation was mediated by the normative identity style. Most religiosity variables were positively related to informational and normative identity styles and negatively related to diffuse/avoidant identity style. Inclusion of transcendence was predicted by normative and diffuse/avoidant identity styles (negatively) and symbolic processing was positively predicted by informational identity (Moghanloo et al, 2010).

From a theoretical point of view adolescence is a crucial period for the development of abstract thinking skills, which leads to a full integration of moral principles and values that are incorporated into the self-concept (Hardy & Carlo, 2011). Despite the fact that identity development occurs throughout one's lifetime, adolescence is the first time that individuals begin to think about how our identity may affect our lives (Erikson, 1968). So we assume religiosity, values, identity and morality are important factors in adolescence. In spite of this, research addressing the relation between religiosity and identity development is limited (Duriez et al, 2007). It seems that the findings from other cultures and other religions can be replicated in an Islamic country such as Iran. Since there has not

been enough research in surveying these variables and because these are intercultural variables so study on them in different cultures seems essential to understand the status of religious variables and identity in different countries.

## **2. Method**

The population included all male students (mean age: 15.8697,  $SD = .91492$ ) from two high schools (31 school classes) in the province Gilan and two high schools (32 school classes) in the city of Tehran; 330 students (16 school classes) were selected by cluster sampling method. They were administered with Berzonsky Identity Styles Inventory (ISI), Schwartz value survey (1994), Moral Foundations questionnaire (MFQ), and the Post-Critical Belief Scale (PCBS). Demographic information (including parents' education, their interest in religious activities, etc.) was also gathered. Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficients and multiple regression analysis.

### **2.1 Schwartz Value Survey**

Based on Fischer et al. (2010) the SVS represents 10 basic values. Respondents rated the importance of each value as a guiding principle in their life on a 9-point scale ranging from -1 (opposed to my values), 0 (not important), 3 (important), 6 (very important), to 7 (of supreme importance).

### **2.2 Moral foundations**

In order to assess the degree of a person's endorsement of each of the five foundations, each respondent was assigned a value that reflected the proportion of each foundation in her/his ethical and unethical associations. In practice, the number of ethical associations representing each of the foundations was divided by all of the ethical associations produced by the respondent. For example, if the respondent produced

four ethical associations, which were grouped to the Harm/Care foundation, and one ethical association, which belonged to the In-group/Loyalty foundation, the respondent's total number of ethical associations was five. Consequently, the value of the ethical Harm/Care foundation is  $4/5 = 0.8$  and of the ethical In-group/Loyalty foundation is  $1/5 = 0.2$ . A similar procedure was performed for the corresponding unethical foundations and the result was added to the values of the ethical foundations. Thus the sum of the foundation variables ranged from 0 to 2.00 and a higher score indicated a higher endorsement of the foundation (Mäkinen, Pirttilä-Backman & Pieri, 2013).

### **2.3 Identity Style Inventory**

This Inventory was developed by Berzonsky (1989) for the first time as well as after that it was twice revised. The mentioned scale involves 11 items for informational style, 9 items for normative style and 10 items for diffusive/avoidant style as well as 10 other items for commitment scale which is used for secondary analysis and are not accounted as an identity style. Scoring method in this scale is Likert type (1= completely disagree to 5= completely agree). In the informational style, the minimum and maximum score is in order 11 and 55, in normative style 9 and 45 and in diffusive/avoidant style is 10 and 50. For examining the reliability of this Inventory, White et al. (1998) evaluated people's responses in the three identity styles with the factor analysis method by using the varimax rotation with the main component. The correlation coefficient of each factor with the whole test for the first factor was 0.79, for the second factor was 0.81 and for the third factor was 0.84 that all of the amounts are high. In Iran, Farsinejad (2004) probed construct reliability with the factor analysis method which the sampling adequacy was 0.75. For examining the validity of mentioned scale, Berzonsky (1992) in the last

revised version, reported the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the informational subscale 0.62, normative subscale 0.66 and for diffusive/avoidant subscale 0.73. In Iran, Khosroshahi and Aliloo (2012) acquired the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for informational subscale 0.78, normative subscale 0.71 and for diffusive/avoidant subscale 0.70.

## 2.4 Religiosity

Duriez, Soenens, and Hutsebaut (2005) proposed a shortened and simplified 18 item version of the Post-Critical Belief Scale (Duriez et al, 2007). Participants completed the 18-item Post-Critical Belief Scale. All items were scored on a 7-point Likert scale. As in Fontaine et al. (2003), a level of acquiescence estimation was subtracted from the raw scores. A Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was then performed on these corrected scores. A scree test pointed to a two-componential solution for all three samples. In all samples, after orthogonal Procrustes rotation towards the average structure reported by Fontaine et al. (2003), these components could be interpreted in terms of Exclusion versus Inclusion of Transcendence and Literal versus Symbolic. In all samples, Tucker's Phi indices were above .90 for both components, suggesting good congruence (Van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). Estimates of internal consistency (Armor, 1974) were .87, .88 and .89 for Exclusion versus Inclusion of Transcendence and .80, .83 and .84 for Literal versus Symbolic in Samples 1 to 3 respectively. A high score on Exclusion versus Inclusion of Transcendence indicates a tendency to include transcendence. A high score on Literal versus Symbolic indicates a tendency to deal with religion in a symbolic way.

## 3. Results

Descriptive statistics for the research variables are presented in Table 1.

For the personal values the students have their highest mean in Benevolence (3.3432) and the lowest mean in Power (2.6573).

The highest mean of identity styles is related to Identity Commitment which is 36.3848. The students have their lowest mean in Diffuse/Avoidant identity style (27.4424).

The highest mean of moral foundations is related to Fairness (one of the individual moral foundations) which is 21.4182, and the lowest mean is related to the other individual moral foundation, namely Care/harm (18.9515).

The highest mean of religiosity (post-critical beliefs) is related to Literal affirmation (24.0485), and the students have their lowest mean in Literal vs. Symbolic (the tendency for symbolic thinking) which is -1.7364.

## 3.1 Demographic information

The demographic information was obtained together with the questionnaires- as one extra section with questions about age, parents' education, the importance of religious rituals, religious law and jurisprudence, Internet use, etc.

The age mean of students is 15.8697 (SD=.91492). Their religion is Islam/Shia and their ethnicities are Fars (91), Turk (98), Lurs (1), Mazandarani (2), Gilani (122), Kurds (13), and others (3). The number of adolescents who live with their parents is 310; 15 of them live with their mothers and 5 students live with their fathers. The number of the fathers who are illiterate is 35, 138 of them finished grade 8, 103 of the fathers hold a high school diploma, 10 of them hold an A.A/A.S., 34 fathers hold a B.A/B.S and 10 of them hold an M.A/M.S.. The number of the mothers who are illiterate is 45. 139 of them finished grade 8. 105 of the mothers hold a high school diploma, 11 of them hold an A.A/A.S, 24 of them hold a B.A/B.S and 6 of the

mothers hold an M.A/M.S. The mean of the fathers' age is 44.6727 (S.D= 5.40366) and that of the mothers' age is 40.0061 (SD= 5.27770).

The number of the students who reported not to be interested in religious rituals are 12, 14 students are interested in religious rituals very little, 14 students have little interest in religious rituals, 125 students have moderate interest in religious rituals, 91 students are strongly interested in religious rituals, and 74 students are very strongly interested in religious rituals. The number of the students who have positive attitude toward religious law and jurisprudence is 239, 79 students have neutral attitude and 12 of them have negative attitude toward religious law. The total number of students who use internet daily is 83, 183 of them report to use internet only if required, and 63 students never use internet (Table 2 – next page).

### **3.2. Relationships between religiosity and personal values**

Symbolic affirmation of religion is positively associated with the personal values of tradition and benevolence ( $\alpha=0.01$ ). Literal affirmation of religious content is also positively related to the values of tradition and benevolence ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) but is negatively associated with power. Symbolic disaffirmation shows negative correlations with the personal value of self-direction ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) and with tradition ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). Literal disaffirmation of religion is positively related to the value of conformity ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) as well as to the personal value of power ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). Literal disaffirmation shows negative correlations with the personal values of tradition ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) and hedonism ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). The highest significant positive correlation can be seen between the inclusion vs exclusion of transcendence beliefs and personal value of tradition (.283) ( $\alpha=0.01$ ). Also, inclusion vs exclusion is positively related to benevolence ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) and negatively correlated to the personal values of conformity and power

( $\alpha=0.01$ ). Literal vs symbolic interpretation of religious content is negatively associated with the personal value of conformity ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). (Table, 3).

### **3.3 Relationships between religiosity and moral foundations**

The moral foundations of Fairness, In-group/loyalty, Purity/Sanctity, and Respect to Authority show significant negative associations with Literal disaffirmation of religion, and have significant positive correlations with Literal affirmation, inclusion vs exclusion of transcendence and with literal vs symbolic. The individual moral foundation of Care/harm is positively related to relativism and literal vs symbolic. Also, all other moral foundations associate with symbolic thinking about religious contents (Table, 4). The highest significant positive correlation can be seen between symbolic affirmation and the respect to authority as a social binding moral foundation (.409) ( $\alpha=0.01$ ).

### **3.4 Relationships between religiosity and identity styles**

Symbolic affirmation of religion and inclusion vs exclusion of transcendence show significant positive correlations with informative and normative identity styles and identity commitment. Both Symbolic and literal affirmation do not associate with diffuse/avoidant identity style. There is a negative correlation between literal disaffirmation and all of the identity styles except diffuse/avoidant identity style. Symbolic disaffirmation (relativism) has a significant positive correlation with diffuse/avoidant identity style. The literal vs symbolic and the inclusion vs exclusion of transcendence have significant negative correlations with diffuse/avoidant identity style. The literal vs symbolic thinking of religious content associates positively with informative identity style and identity commitment (Table, 5). The highest significant positive correlation can be seen between inclusion vs exclusion of

transcendence and identity commitment (.388) ( $\alpha=0.01$ ).

### **3.5 Relationships between personal values and identity styles**

Informative identity style is positively related to the personal values of Tradition and Benevolence ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) and negatively related to Power ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) and security ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). Normative identity style is positively related to Tradition and Benevolence ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) and negatively to Power and security ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). The personal value of Stimulation is positively correlated to diffuse/avoidant identity style ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). There is positive relation between commitment and tradition ( $\alpha=0.01$ ). The personal values of Tradition, Benevolence and Universalism are positively correlated to identity commitment ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). Identity commitment has a significant negative correlation with the personal value of power ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) [it is the highest significant correlation (-.225)] and also with security (Table, 6).

### **3.6 Relationships between personal values and moral foundations**

The personal value of Hedonism is positively related to the moral foundation of care/harm ( $\alpha=0.01$ ). Achievement (value) is positively correlated to fairness (moral foundation) ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). None of the personal values are related to in-group/loyalty. The personal values of Conformity and Power are negatively associated to authority (moral foundation) ( $\alpha=0.01$ ), [the latter being the highest significant correlation (-.244)]. There is a positive correlation between authority and the personal values of tradition ( $\alpha=0.01$ ) and benevolence ( $\alpha=0.05$ ). Purity/sanctity is positively associated to tradition and negatively to power ( $\alpha=0.01$ ). (Table, 7).

### **3.7 Relationships between moral foundations and identity styles**

All moral foundations have positive correlations with the normative and informative identity styles but they show no associations with diffuse/avoidant identity style, (Table, 8). The highest significant positive correlation can be seen between the moral foundation of respect to authority and identity commitment (.399) ( $\alpha=0.01$ ).

### **3.8 Regression**

In this research stepwise regression analysis has been applied. The variables which are entered the regression model as independent variables and dependent variables in multiple regression analysis are as follows (Table, 9):

Independent variables of benevolence (value), tradition (value), universalism (value), security (value), authority (moral foundation), in-group/loyalty (moral foundation) and purity/sanctity (moral foundation) predict the dependent variable "symbolic affirmation".

Independent variables of tradition (value), benevolence (value), authority (moral foundation), purity/sanctity (moral foundation) and care/harm (moral foundation) predict the dependent variable "literal affirmation".

Independent variables of self-direction (value), tradition (value) and care/harm (moral foundation) predict the dependent variable "symbolic disaffirmation or relativism".

Independent variables of conformity (value), tradition (value), hedonism (value), purity/sanctity (moral foundation) and authority (moral foundation) predict the dependent variable "literal disaffirmation".

Independent variables of tradition (value), benevolence (value), authority (moral foundation), purity/sanctity (moral foundation) and



care/harm (moral foundation) predict dependent variable "inclusion vs. exclusion of transcendence (post-critical belief)".

Independent variables of conformity (value) and purity/sanctity (moral foundation) predict dependent variable "literal vs. symbolic (post-critical belief)".

Independent variables of tradition (value), benevolence (value), in-group/loyalty (moral foundation), purity/sanctity (moral foundation), and authority (moral foundation) predict the dependent variable "informative identity style".

Independent variables of benevolence (value), tradition (value), universalism (value), purity/sanctity (moral foundation), and authority (moral foundation) predict the dependent variable "normative identity style".

Independent variables of stimulation (value) and achievement (value) predict dependent variable "diffuse/avoidant identity style".

Independent variables of power (value), authority (moral foundation) and in-group/loyalty (moral foundation) predict the dependent variable "identity commitment".

Descriptive Statistics				
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Conformity (value)	.66	5.10	3.0270	.67157
Tradition (value)	.04	4.83	2.9456	.68281
Benevolence (value)	.46	4.86	3.3432	.62148
Universalism (value)	1.10	4.46	2.8690	.48961
Self-direction (value)	.66	4.91	3.0559	.59339
Stimulation (value)	-.16	5.51	3.1878	.74196
Hedonism (value)	-.04	5.46	3.2636	.82037
Achievement (value)	.96	5.12	3.2414	.66556
Power (value)	.09	4.96	2.6573	.82963
Security (value)	.57	4.62	3.0420	.57009
Informative identity style	11.00	55.00	35.9455	6.71002
Normative identity style	9.00	45.00	31.0576	6.04188
Diffuse/Avoidant identity style	13.00	44.00	27.4424	5.79577
Identity Commitment	21.00	50.00	36.3848	5.89372
Care/harm (moral foundation)	4.00	34.00	18.9515	4.76857
Fairness (moral foundation)	6.00	30.00	21.4182	4.66126
In-group/Loyalty (moral foundation)	7.00	30.00	20.8212	4.58107
Authority (moral foundation)	5.00	32.00	19.7303	5.16741
Purity/Sanctity (moral foundation)	3.00	30.00	20.7939	4.70788
Symbolic affirmation (post-critical belief)	4.00	29.00	21.9758	4.72393
Literal affirmation (post-critical belief)	5.00	35.00	24.0485	5.29587
Symbolic disaffirmation or Relativism (post-critical belief)	4.00	35.00	17.4515	4.36194
Literal disaffirmation (post-critical belief)	5.00	35.00	17.3182	6.39519
Inclusion vs. exclusion of transcendence (post-critical belief)	-36.00	50.00	11.3212	13.03770
Literal vs. Symbolic (post-critical belief)	-32.00	28.00	-1.7364	8.70315

Table 1: The descriptive statistics: Min., Max., Means and standard deviations of the research variables

AGE	Mean: 15.8697 Std. Deviation: .91492
Ethnicity	Fars: 91
	Turk: 98
	Lurs: 1
	Mazandaranian:2
	Guilanian:122
	Kurds:13
	Others:3
Living with family	Living with father:5
	Living with mother:15
	Living with both:310
Literacy rate of father	Illiterate:35
	Guidance grade 8: 138
	Diploma: 103
	A.A/A.S: 10
	B.A/B.S:34
	M.A/M.S:10
Literacy rate of mother	Illiterate: 45
	Guidance grade 8: 139
	Diploma: 105
	A.A/A.S: 11
	B.A/B.S:24
	M.A/M.S:6
Father's Age	Mean:44.6727
	Std. Deviation: 5.40366
Mother's age	Mean: 40.0061
	Std. Deviation: 5.27770
Interest in religious rituals	Not at all:12
	Very little:14
	Little:14
	Middle:125
	Much:91
	Very much:74
Attitude toward religious law	Positive:239
	Neutral: 79
	Negative:12
Rate of using internet	Permanent usage:83
	If it is needed: 183
	Never:63

Table 2: Demographic information

Correlation

		Conformity (value)	Tradition (value)	Benevolence (value)	Universalism (value)	Self-direction (value)	Stimulation (value)	Hedonism (value)	Achievement (value)	Power (value)	Security (value)
<b>Symbolic affirmation (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.075	.166**	.213**	.064	-.058	-.001	.025	.020	-.084	.013
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.175	.002	.000	.243	.296	.992	.647	.721	.130	.807
<b>Literal affirmation (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.055	.273**	.143**	.014	.038	.073	-.016	-.012	-.178**	-.050
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.323	.000	.009	.803	.486	.186	.769	.832	.001	.366
<b>Symbolic disaffirmation or Relativism (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlation	.067	-.124*	.053	.054	-.164**	-.015	-.003	-.029	.107	.090
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.224	.024	.336	.329	.003	.784	.954	.596	.051	.105
<b>Literal disaffirmation (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlation	.176**	-.164**	-.043	.031	-.038	-.090	-.122*	-.057	.132*	.077
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.003	.437	.579	.493	.103	.026	.304	.016	.162
<b>Inclusion vs. Exclusion of transcendence (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.162**	.283**	.142**	.007	.070	.086	.072	.037	-.216**	-.082
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.000	.010	.900	.207	.119	.194	.498	.000	.137
<b>Literal vs Symbolic (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.121*	-.017	.018	.061	-.063	.057	.088	.003	.005	.067
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.029	.758	.749	.270	.254	.299	.110	.964	.924	.223

Table 3: The table shows the relationships between religiosity and personal values.

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). \*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

		<b>Correlation</b>				
		Care/harm (moral foundation)	Fairness (moral foundation)	In-group/Loyalty (moral foundation)	Authority (moral foundation)	Purity/Sanctity (moral foundation)
<b>Symbolic affirmation (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlation	.222**	.232**	.362**	.409**	.364**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
<b>Literal affirmation (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlation	.040	.130*	.255**	.339**	.271**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.464	.018	.000	.000	.000
<b>Symbolic disaffirmation or Relativism (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlation	.115*	.049	.055	-.036	.011
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.036	.375	.320	.516	.846
<b>Literal disaffirmation (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.068	-.124*	-.134*	-.211**	-.218**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.217	.024	.014	.000	.000
<b>Inclusion vs. Exclusion of transcendence (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlation	.077	.169**	.276**	.393**	.334**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.164	.002	.000	.000	.000
<b>Literal vs Symbolic (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlation	.147**	.118*	.141*	.110*	.164**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.031	.010	.046	.003

Table 4: The table represents the relationships between religiosity and moral foundations.

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**Correlations**

		Informative identity style	Normative identity style	Diffuse/Avoidant identity style	Identity Commitment
<b>Symbolic affirmation (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.317**	.379**	-.052	.368**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.342	.000
<b>Literal affirmation (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.222**	.304**	-.035	.266**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.522	.000
<b>Symbolic disaffirma- tion or Relativism (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.070	-.044	.168**	-.101
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.207	.422	.002	.066
<b>Literal disaffirmation (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	-.109*	-.181**	.256**	-.252**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.048	.001	.000	.000
<b>Inclusion vs. Exclusion of transcendence (post- critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.227**	.366**	-.197**	.388**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
<b>Literal vs Symbolic (post-critical belief)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.133*	.103	-.109*	.182**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015	.063	.047	.001

Table 5: The table shows the relationships between religiosity and identity styles.

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

<b>Correlations</b>					
		Informative identity style	Normative identity style	Diffuse/Avoidant identity style	Identity Commitment
<b>Conformity (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	-.072	-.065	.097	-.102
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.191	.237	.080	.065
<b>Tradition (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.195**	.166**	-.068	.172**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.003	.221	.002
<b>Benevolence (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.146**	.214**	.029	.110*
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.008	.000	.595	.046
<b>Universalism (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.057	.079	-.051	.119*
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.304	.150	.357	.031
<b>Self-direction (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.078	.045	-.010	.061
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.158	.412	.857	.270
<b>Stimulation (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	-.030	-.059	.119*	.006
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.583	.287	.030	.916
<b>Hedonism (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	-.029	-.024	-.020	-.050
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.598	.669	.717	.361
<b>Achievement (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.017	.081	-.101	.096
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.755	.141	.067	.082
<b>Power (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	-.163**	-.190**	.078	-.225**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.003	.001	.159	.000
<b>Security (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	-.110*	-.114*	.088	-.118*
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.045	.038	.110	.032

Table, 6) The table represents the relationships between personal values and identity styles.

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

<b>Correlations</b>						
		Care/harm (moral foundation)	Fairness (moral foundation)	Ingroup/ Loy- alty (moral foundation)	Authority (moral foundation)	Purity/ Sanctity (moral foundation)
<b>Conformity (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	-0.22	-.037	.019	-.174**	-.086
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.685	.506	.732	.001	.117
<b>Tradition (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.001	-.080	.013	.200**	.146**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.991	.148	.811	.000	.008
<b>Benevolence (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.054	.026	.034	.128*	.072
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.332	.639	.535	.020	.191
<b>Universalism (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.027	.058	.075	.075	.046
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.623	.293	.176	.171	.403
<b>Self-direction (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	-.033	-.007	.024	.079	.006
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.552	.897	.660	.154	.909
<b>Stimulation (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.071	.007	.026	.019	.018
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.200	.894	.634	.730	.738
<b>Hedonism (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.133*	.071	.037	-.019	.059
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015	.200	.504	.724	.283
<b>Achievement (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.039	.119*	-.002	.082	-.005
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.479	.030	.964	.135	.933
<b>Power (value)</b>	Pearson Cor- relation	-.062	-.082	-.092	-.244**	-.157**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.261	.137	.094	.000	.004
<b>Security (value)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	-.008	-.031	.039	.012	-.004
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.891	.577	.480	.833	.945

Table 7: The table shows the relationships between personal values and moral foundations.

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).



**Correlations**

		Informative identity style	Normative identity style	Diffuse/ Avoidant identity style	Identity Com- mitment
<b>Care/harm (moral founda- tion)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.210**	.176**	.064	.191**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.249	.000
<b>Fairness (moral foundation)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.194**	.231**	.016	.225**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.768	.000
<b>In-group/Loyalty (moral foundation)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.387**	.309**	.048	.313**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.383	.000
<b>Authority (moral foundation)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.332**	.345**	-.014	.399**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.793	.000
<b>Purity/Sanctity (moral foundation)</b>	Pearson Correlatio	.340**	.398**	-.045	.295**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.412	.000

Table 8: The table represents the relationships between moral foundations and identity styles.

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Model Summary**

Independent variables	Adjusted R Square	R Square Change	Sig. F Change	Dependent Variables
Benevolence (value)	.043	.046	.000	<b>Symbolic affirmation (post-critical belief)</b>
Tradition (value)	.070	.030	.001	
Universalism (value)	.083	.016	.019	
Security (value)	.092	.013	.034	
Authority (Moral Foundation)	.165	.167	.000	
In-group/Loyalty (Moral Foundation)	.195	.033	.000	
Purity/Sanctity (Moral Foundation)	.206	.013	.019	
Tradition (value)	0.72	.075	.000	<b>Literal affirmation (post-critical belief)</b>
Benevolence (value)	.092	.023	.004	
Authority (Moral Foundation)	.112	.115	.000	
Purity/Sanctity (Moral Foundation)	.120	.010	.049	
Care/Harm (Moral Foundation)	.131	.014	.022	
Self-direction (value)	.024	.027	.003	<b>Symbolic disaffirmation or Relativism (post-critical belief)</b>
Tradition (value)	.035	.014	.030	
Care/Harm (Moral Foundation)	.010	.013	.036	
Conformity (value)	.028	.031	.001	<b>Literal disaffirmation (post-critical belief)</b>
Tradition (value)	.039	.014	.028	
Hedonism (value)	.048	.011	.049	
Purity/Sanctity (Moral Foundation)	.045	.047	.000	
Authority (Moral Foundation)	.054	.012	.043	

Independent variables	Adjusted R Square	R Square Change	Sig. F Change	Dependent Variables
Tradition (value)	.077	.080	.000	<b>Inclusion vs. Exclusion of Transcendence (post-critical belief)</b>
Benevolence (value)	.098	.023	.004	
Authority (Moral Foundation)	.152	.154	.000	
Purity/Sanctity(Moral Foundation)	.169	.020	.005	
Care/Harm (Moral Foundation)	.179	.012	.027	
Conformity (value)	.012	.015	.029	<b>Literal vs. Symbolic (post-critical belief)</b>
Purity/Sanctity (Moral Foundation)	.024	.027	.003	
Tradition (value)	.035	.038	.000	<b>Informative identity style</b>
Benevolence (value)	.056	.023	.005	
In-group/Loyalty (Moral Foundation)	.147	.149	.000	
Purity/Sanctity (Moral Foundation)	.172	.027	.001	
Authority (Moral Foundation)	.180	.011	.040	
Benevolence (value)	.043	.046	.000	<b>Normative identity style</b>
Tradition (value)	.070	.030	.001	
Universalism (value)	.087	.020	.008	
Purity/Sanctity (Moral Foundation)	.156	.159	.000	
Authority (Moral Foundation)	.177	.023	.003	
Stimulation (value)	.011	.014	.030	<b>Diffuse/ Avoidant identity style</b>
Achievement (value)	.025	.017	.018	
Power (value)	.048	.051	.000	<b>Identity commitment</b>
Authority (Moral Foundation)	.156	.159	.000	
In-group/Loyalty (Moral Foundation)	.171	.017	.010	

Table 9: The following table is related to Model Summary. It shows what variables could entered into stepwise regression model as independent variables and dependent variables. This table is about the stepwise regression analysis. Adjusted R Square is displayed.

#### 4. Discussion

This research examined the relationships between moral foundations, personal values, identity styles and religiosity among high school male students. Duriez et al. (2008) showed exclusion versus inclusion of transcendence is directly related to a normative identity style and literal versus symbolic relates directly to an informational and indirectly to a diffuse/avoidant style. According to the present research, inclusion of transcendence was directly related to a normative identity style. Also, symbolic processing was associated with informative identity style and was indirectly related to avoidant identity style.

Further, this results are supported by the research of Duriez and Soenens (2006). They alleged openness to experience which is one of the five factors of personality, was consistently directly related to literal vs. symbolic processing of religious content. The research report of Moghanloo et al. (2010) indicates that inclusion of transcendence was predicted by normative and diffuse/avoidant identity styles (negatively) and symbolic processing was positively predicted by informational identity.

This research displayed that informative and normative identity styles were directly related to symbolic affirmation, literal affirmation and inclusion of transcendence belief and were indirectly related to literal religious thinking. Also, diffuse/avoidant identity style was directly related to literal disaffirmation and relativism, and was indirectly related to inclusion of transcendence beliefs and symbolic thinking about religious contents. This result is supported by the research of Moghanloo et al. (2010) which shows most religiosity variables in Iranian students were positively related to informational and normative identity styles and negatively related to diffuse/avoidant identity style. It seems that Iranian adolescents with normative identity

style accept the inclusion of transcendence beliefs better than the adolescents with other identity styles since the belief in God and being religious are simply the norms of the society. On the other side, the adolescents with informative identity style unlike the adolescents with avoidant identity style have symbolic processing because they try to search and collect information about important issues (such as worldview).

Values have been a central concept in the social sciences since their inception (Schwartz, 2012). According to Rokeach (1973), the term "value" is able to unify the apparently diverse interests of all the sciences related to human behavior. Schwartz (2006) alleged the values are as desirable, trans-situational goals, varying in importance that serves as guiding principles in people's lives. Traditionally, religious and institutional values served as the standards that most individuals used to define their sense of identity (Baumeister, 1987). In this regard, the present research showed that conformity as a personal value was positively related to literal disaffirmation, and negatively to inclusion vs exclusion and literal vs symbolic.

Students rejecting religious norms and beliefs seem to appreciate and wish for conformity more than students with other beliefs, in order to avoid the annoyance of others, their reactions as well as not to disappoint other social expectations and norms. Therefore, adolescents with more tendency to literal disaffirmation seem to have less symbolic processing and have more tendency to show their conformity in other fields of life. Also, the results showed power as a personal value was negatively related to literal affirmation and inclusion vs exclusion, and positively to literal disaffirmation. In this case, we can say that Power as control or dominance on others cannot be integrated with inclusion of transcendence beliefs. Adolescents

with more literal disaffirmation beliefs seem to have higher scores in both conformity and power, which may reveal their need or wish of security, acceptance and conflict avoidance within their peer groups and/or society, which according to the religious norms of the society may not be an easy task.

Religion and morality have been closely intertwined (John, 2014). Kohlberg (1969) proposed that moral development in all cultures is driven forward by the process of role-taking. Moral foundations theory (MFT) proposes the existence of innate psychological systems, which would have been subjected to selective forces over the course of evolution (Fry & Souillac, 2013). In this regard, the present research indicated that the moral foundations of fairness, in-group/loyalty, purity/sanctity and respect to authority had a significant negative association with literal disaffirmation. Students with literal disaffirmation beliefs and avoidant identity style seem to also avoid the deeper thoughts about certain fixed beliefs and behavior codes. All the moral foundations were associated with symbolic thinking about religious contents. In addition, in-group/loyalty predicted symbolic affirmation .19 and purity/sanctity predicted that .20 in stepwise regression analysis. Concerning the Iranian Islamic and collectivist society and the importance of peer groups for adolescents, the loyalty to the group can predict the dominant approach to religious beliefs in this society which is the transcendence inclusive symbolic thinking approach.

## **5. Conclusion**

In the collectivist religious society of Iran, individualist adolescents studied in this research may consider themselves as minority. They hold more disaffirmation and exclusion beliefs about transcendence. The personal value of stimulation as a self enhancement value together with

the individual moral foundation of care/harm seem to be more important to them and contribute to the individualistic style of adolescents with diffuse/avoidant identity. These adolescents may feel different and rejected, therefore they tend to exhibit the need and wish for conformity and power.

The results suggest that in the Islamic context of Iranian adolescents, informative and normative identity style of students are both associated with beliefs in God, while students who tend to be more secular or sceptic seem to have a more avoidant/diffuse identity style.

The paper suggests further investigation of adolescents' values, moral foundations and kind of religiosity in regard to the differences between genders as well as social context and demographic variables.

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