

# The Investigation on the Relationship between Religion and Development: By Focusing on Islam

Dalal Benboutrif

**Abstract**—Religion and Development relation is one of the most arguable phrases amongst politicians, philosophers, clerics, scientists, sociologists and even the public. The main objective of this research is to clarify the relations, contrasts and interactions between religion and the major types of development including social, political, economic and scientific developments, by focusing on Islam religion. A review of the literature was performed concerning religion and development relations and conflicts, by focusing on Islam religion and then the unprocessed tips of the review were characterized. Regarding clarification of the key points of the literature, three main sectors were considered in the research. The first sector of the research mainly focused on the philosophical views on religion, which were analyzed by main evaluation of three famous philosophers' ideas: 'Kant', 'Hegel' and 'Weber', and then a critical discussion on Weber's idea about Islam and development was applied. The second sector was specified to 'Religion and Development' and mainly discussed the role of religion in development through poverty reduction, the interconnection of religion, spirituality and social development, religious education effects on social development, and the relation of religion with political development. The third sector was specified to 'Islam and Development' and mainly discussed the Islamic golden age of science, major reasons of today's backwardness (non-development) of most Islamic countries, and Quranic instructions regarding adaptability of Islam with development. The findings of the current research approved the research hypothesis as: 'Religious instructions (included Islam) are not in conflict with development', rather, it could have positive effects mainly on social development and it can pave the way for society to develop. Turkey was considered as a study model, as a successful developed Islamic country demonstrating the non-conflicting relation of Islam and development.

**Keywords**—Development, Islam, philosophy, religion.

## I. INTRODUCTION

THE relationship between development and religion has caused much debate among scholars. Some of the discussions are based on rational achievements and some on biased or personal beliefs. The major reason for the complication of this contest is that religion is something celestial, but development is secular. Religion talks about human relationships with the God and the world after the death, whereas development is a process of making human life better, more comfortable and more lawful. Today's complex political world and its behind-the-scenes games of strong players with effective instruments of power, money and advertisement, and the existence of extreme or biased religious

beliefs were the reasons to do a spread and without prejudices investigation on religion and development relation. Therefore, the current research tried to show the position of religion in developing and developed countries and its available challenges, and to find the right place of religion in a developed society by focusing on Islam religion. The research also tried to remove those misunderstandings on Islam by clarification of its relationship with development.

*Research hypothesis:* 'Religious instructions (included Islam) are not in conflict with development'.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

During the current research, first, the key findings of the literature review were expressed; second, the unprocessed tips of the literature were indicated, and the research main structure was designed based on those tips.

### A. Key Findings of the Review Results

The roots of development tree are not from the religion seeds and the starting of modernity was ahead of agnosticism of the enlightenment. These beliefs are opposite to Weber's belief and Louis Dumont who even believed that modernity has arisen from Christianity [1].

Islamic nations and countries have not had the chance of enlightenment era and the experiments like the Western secularization, during the history and this is one of the main reasons that why the Western modernity is not seen in Islamic countries [1]. This is the religion itself that sometimes brings the conflicts and creates problems between different religions through the wrong religious educational systems, which could make some barriers on the way of development [1].

We ought not to critic religion by the standards of science, and the science by the viewpoints of religion. Science and religion talk about the same reality from different viewpoints, providing explanations that are not matched to each other, but are complementary [2].

The contrast between secular materialistic development and spiritual faiths may be fixed by developing a holy feeling in all things and beings. The unity of life must be understood as all its forms are interconnected. Over such realization, development and religion can be considered as a monolithic whole [3].

Religion can become a functional problem when religious leaders try to block development in societies [4].

Dialogue has been limited in the Islamic nations, because of the marginalized of rationalism, which prevents Islam to be in the sector of modernization and development. Rationality has importance in direct and effective role of dialogue and debate

Dalal Benboutrif, PhD student at the Social Philosophy Institute of the Ural Federal University, Yekaterinburg, Russia (phone: +37066339391; e-mail: razavim86@gmail.com).

in religious pluralism, within Islam and amongst the different "Islamic branches", in order to break the vicious circle of the self-legitimation of authoritarian in Islam [5].

Capitalism was the solution in the Western countries leading the west towards the way of development, which was absent in Islamic nations [6].

#### *B. Unprocessed Tips of the Literature Review*

Regarding the results and outcomes of the reviewed sources in the current research, a prejudices investigation of religion and development relation is needed, so the following notable points must be considered, analyzed and discussed, which would be a main factor of the current research structural design:

- Religious education effects on social development;
- The meaning of development from the vision of religion;
- Effects of religion omission from the society;
- Politics and religion, relations and effects;
- The misinterpretation in Weber's idea about Islam and development;
- The scientific facts mentioned in the Quran;
- Islamic basic instructions regarding sustainable economic and social developments;
- The reasons for the underdevelopment of Islamic countries;
- The role of dialogue (through institutionalism) between Islamic branches and non-Islamic sectors;
- The solution for development in Islamic countries;

Regarding clarification of the above unprocessed tips of the literature, three main sectors were characterized in the research.

### III. PHILOSOPHICAL VIEWS ON RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT RELATIONS AND CONFLICTS

*Kant's* assumption of religion as a link between the perfect morality and everyday life of human becomes applicable at present. It is highlighted that religion alongside the law, most suitably apply the idea of moral perfection in the world. Presently, due to a shortage of morality and the constant search for the methods to conserve and develop it, the *Kant's* assumption of religion as a way between morality and the world is worth to be considered. A general opinion is that *Kant* effectively reduces religion to morality. Thus, *Kant's* work acts as an essential step in releasing humanity from the control of authoritarian and ritualistic religion.

*Hegel* was viewed in comparison to *Kant*, as a better presenter of religious philosophy [7]. *Hegel* considered Christianity as a vital symptom that provided a determinate form to the abstraction religion. *Hegel's* theoretical version of connection between morality and religion provided the following related ideas: The difference between the positive and subjective religion; consideration of phenomenon of the traditional religion, and the difference between morality and ethical life. On several cases, *Hegel* voiced his intense disagreement to the concept of a radical separation between religion and the ethical institutions of political power. In 1798 he wrote that 'if the principle of the state is a complete totality,

then church and state cannot probably be unconnected', and similar opinions were expressed in many other writings, as well as *Hegel's* lectures on the Philosophy of Religion in 1831 [8].

*Weber's* research declared that religion which was founded on cultural demands of human has now added new aspects to the human life and human development. *Weber* indicated that the protestant institution and its ethics have performed an essential role in the development of the economy. His research declared how far religion could affect the economic behavior of its followers. Calvinist sect of protestant Christian religion had greatest impacts on the development of capitalism. As he stated, it was the thoughts and beliefs world view of human civilizations that led the way their supporters acted, even in the economic sphere [9]. Generally, *Max Weber* was not interested in Islam as a religion. His emphasis was on the Islam that was opposing to capitalism. He did not deliver full-blown study outputs on Islam, and his commentaries on Islam looked to be a kind of sociological approach for his assessment of the Protestant ethic. He left his study on Islam unfinished. He achieved the conclusion that Islam contrasted with Puritanism.

A picture of the Weberian structure of Islam might be expressed from the Islamic ethic viewpoint: *Weber* indicated that rational law, independent cities and political solidity were entirely missing in Islam. However, as it is, he does not look to connect the absence of capitalism in Islam to the lack of some requirements. In contrast, he mentions two elements responsible for stopping the development of Islamic countries: *first*, as he believed, the monotheistic Islam of Mecca was unsuccessful to develop into an ascetic religion, as its major carrier was a warrior band. The subject of the religious idea was altered into a set of values similar to a warrior band. The spiritual aspect of Islam was changed to a quest for every day's life benefits. *Second*, the original message of monotheism was exposed to change under the effect of Sufism (Islamic mysticism), which organized for the emotional requirements of the followers. As a result, Islam was dragged in two contradictory directions by these two groups: The warrior group dragged Islam in the direction of a military ethic; and the Sufism in that of spiritual flight. Both the paths of Islam demonstrated failing of Islamic ethics.

*Weberian Islam: A Critique.* In the first discussion, *Weber's* claim that the warrior ethic had a destructive transformative effect on the character of Islam is minimally tenable, and at the same time factually an exaggeration. Indeed, the warrior group was one of the parts of the converts to Islam; as *Gibb* categories and recognizes, three such social groups in terms of their commitment to Islam exist [9]: The first was the honest followers, who agreed totally with the spirit of Islam and who showed absolute loyalty to the Prophet. The second group included the businessmen of Mecca for whom Islam did not restrict their economic freedom and they indicated a commitment to the utilitarian objectives of Islam. The third group was the Bedouin warriors that their benefits of Islam were brought about by the promise of booty.

Regarding Weber's second discussion, it can be said that the Islamic ethic was built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Mecca and Medina, and the evaluation of patrimonialism was correlated with the development of a military bureaucracy under the Umayyads and its fulfillment under the Ottomans. One possible reason for the failure to link these two separately strong views is that, as Turner indicates, "... Weber thought that religion was indelibly stamped by its early history, particularly by its original carriers" [10], but evidentially, this is a mistake. All religions of the world undertook changes as carriers and time changed.

#### IV. RELIGION AND DEVELOPMENT

##### *A. The Role of Religion in Development through Poverty Reduction*

The role of faith and religion has become more important by recognizing the value of "wellbeing". Nearly all religions have basic rules on how a society must be managed, what properties should a good society have, and what ideas it should show for development. Religious groups make a major impact on poverty reduction via humanitarian aids, the service delivery, enabling the poor, creating peaceful countries and communities, and providing support for development. By considering 'poverty reduction' factor as an element of social development of a society, religious groups can provide support for development by battling with the poverty (both material and spiritual poverty). Religious groups can affect society attitudes and push governments to consider poverty reduction policies.

##### *B. The Interconnection of Religion, Spirituality and Social Development*

Spirituality is a visible element of popular cultures these days, which is correlated to social and psychological analysis of religion. This is correct to say that religion is something different from spirituality, but in most cases, religious concepts could help most humans to reach higher level of spirituality, as religion and spirituality are in overlapped condition [11]. Moreover, spirituality has a direct positive effect on social development, which means religion and faith could have progressive impact on social development through spirituality as a mediator, by assistance of religious institutions [12], [13]. Spiritual and religious viewpoints affect social work with religious establishments delivering spiritual values of service. Generally, the attention of social development should move outside of the social-political and cultural developments that happened in the setting of social institutions, to social-emotional and moral development in individual levels. The awareness that it had a major flaw to differentiate the micro perspective from a macro perspective, led to a call for the expression of both aspects as social development [14].

##### *C. Religious Education Effects on Social Development*

A study [15] demonstrated the significance of the presence of religious teaching in the social programs. This is important for the development of culture of peace, which is vital in the modern society with its multicultural property. Religious

education requires to take into consideration and indicates these aspects. Indeed, cultural multiplicity comprises the religious diversity of a society and the world. Beginning from this principle, it is essential to develop a dialogical education, enable of opening intercultural educational improvement, that can be enhanced in students' awareness and understanding of religious pluralism in civil society [16]. Teaching about other religions is important for numerous following reasons:

1. Understanding the religion and cultures of those who do not follow our faith is one of the methods in which religious schools should represent the call to love the one's neighbor and to increase people's religious toleration.
2. It is necessary by the religious advisers to try to recognize better the religion of one's neighbor, and to understand something of their religious life and culture.
3. All children and young people, as well as those of other faiths should have the same opportunities for arriving at the knowledge of their own religion, alongside with elements that characterize other religions.
4. Teaching about other religions organizes the students in schools for living in the modern society providing them an insight of the beliefs of others. This, in turn will enhance social structure by boosting mutual respect between those of different religions.

##### *D. The Relation of Religion and Political Development*

In case of religion and political development combination, a dictatorial system arises, which weakens all creative strengths of society and lessens it to passivity (examples: the role of the church in Medieval Europe, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Saudi Arabia). Separation of religion from politics does not make religion weak or helpless. Real power of religion remains in the beliefs, in its accuracy and not in patronization and defense of the state. History is a witness that whenever politics is called to help religion, it applies it for its goals and tries to subservient it with consequently weakens religion and its principles. Furthermore, whenever religion seeks to interfere in economy or politics, and cannot hold pace with changes, it turns into criticism. It is evident that in the present period, there is a quick development in social and natural sciences and religion is not capable to hold all these changes or to explain them in religious words, hence, the best way is considered to be the separation of religion from politics (called secularization). However, as also Weber explained, classic secularization theory suggested that with the growth of modernity the chains of religion would be chucked off and society would become gradually more secular. But things did not work out as anticipated and it soon became obvious that religion was not moving away. Indeed, more orthodox religiosity was growing with fundamentalisms increasing throughout the world, even in the countries like the USA. Thus, the secularization theory requires improvement by reconsideration the role of religion and looking at it as having a visible public face. This gives the myth of secularism tolerance, as even in the Western civilizations religious tradition have an important role in civic life.

## V. ISLAM AND DEVELOPMENT

Islamic resurrection helped democratization via elimination of the authoritarian regime, like in Iran at 1979, while democratization opened an environment for Islamists in the form of Islamic groups getting power in Turkey. However, in the case of Iran, the religious revolution with the propaganda of democracy and freedom later changed to a hidden dictatorship of the clerics. In other words, Islamic resurrection can be explained in the framework of the democratization process in the Muslim world as a social movement for wider political involvement, even though it does not mean that Islamists have battled for democracy or founded democracy once they are in power.

Most Western researchers who found Islam contradictory to democracy viewed Islam as a uniform ideology, that is fundamentally against democratic and liberal ideals [17]-[19]. On the other hand, regarding the commentary of Islamic theological sources and juridical concepts like Ijma (consensus), Shoura (consultation), and Ijtihad (sovereign judgment), the researchers who believed in the symbiosis of Islam and democracy found evidences in the Quran, Hadith and Sunnah (texts of descriptions about statements and activities of the Prophet Mohammed) to support their assertions [20]-[25]. For instance, in defense of Islam and development adaptability, Quran says in verse 2:256 that “Let there be no force in religion”, and prophet said in the Hadith that “Differences of views within my society is a sign of the God’s mercy,”, in defense of Islam and development adaptability.

Let’s take *Turkey* as a model study; the political power in Turkey is that the government pursues liberalization policies. Turkey is one of the countries, which support the liberal trade and investment policies permitting opening trade with the European countries. In 1996, Turkey made a custom union agreement to authorize Turkish companies to be expanded and to be successful in the international economic system. Turkey has high movement of foreign investments by this significant business transactions; Turkey has increased the speed of economic growth by the privatization method and has been able to build high quality infrastructure. As we know, this country has majority of Muslims, which could develop and progress their country and their life without having any conflict between Islam and development.

### A. The Islamic Golden Age of Science

Islamic nations practiced a golden age of science (800 AD – 1258), which was a period of cultural, economic and scientific flourishing in the history of Islam. However, a question arises that why the most Islamic nations have not developed in scientific fields like European countries. When the Muslims began to abandon their approach to the seeking of science and knowledge, and began to devote themselves to political conflicts, the westerns began to rise and joined the age of modernity and industrial revolution. At the time when Muslims stopped continuing in science and progressing advocated by the Sharia, Muslims found themselves in the scientific and cultural backwardness situation at the end of the

18<sup>th</sup> century. There are many reasons for scientific backwardness in Muslim countries, including:

- *Material reason* is due to the dominance of the major powers on the wealth of the Islamic world, either directly through the occupation of the state and militarily controlled, or indirectly, such as controlling wealth and linking its interests to exploitation.
- *Moral reasons*; The absence of proper application of Islamic instructions as a comprehensive system of life in most Muslim countries, and the internal feeling of many contemporaneous Muslims (leadership and individuals) of defeat, backwardness and weakness in front of major world powers, and the absence of an environment conducive to scientific and technical progress under the political despotism that dominant in most countries of the Islamic world today are the main moral reasons of the current scientific backwardness of the most Islamic countries.

### B. Major Reasons of Today’s Non-Development of Most Islamic Countries

Democracy in the West has developed and has been complemented by the fight for freedom and humanism, such as religious freedom in the form of religious restoration, and public freedom in the form of the French Revolution. Contrasting this fantastic experience in the West, Muslim societies have not had the opportunity to achieve democratic development for the following reasons:

- The colonialism of the Muslim countries during the history, which did not give many opportunities to develop the Islamic countries, pushed people to stick to the very basic religious beliefs as their identities. During the history, religion has been a source of identity alongside unity against the Western colonialism.
- Domination of religious views and theology in the most Islamic countries with close connection to politics prevents development in these countries; it is necessary to mention here that almost most of the religious views in Islamic countries against development are inadvertently or intentionally misinterpretation from the main Islamic instructions, the holy book Quran and Hadith. For instance, Muslims are not allowed to convert to other religions in Islamic countries, but there is a straight verse (2:256) in Quran, which declares there is no force to have a specific religion.
- Democratization in the Muslim world is not taking place because of the prevention of liberalization of thoughts and religious dogmas by the autocratic Islamic governments; so, a free dialogue is needed as a primary starter in moving towards development.
- In order to have adaptability of Islam and democracy, an urgent of restoration in the Islamic thoughts is needed, that could facilitate the simple access of the new generations to the real messages of Islam that is “loyalty to the God”.
- The God discussed in the Quran about the freedom of belief and speech.

So, there is almost no doubt that religion does not affect negatively on democracy, but some religious parties use religion for their own objects and goals, because of this we cannot see ideal democracy in the most Islamic area.

### *C. Quranic Instructions Regarding Adaptability of Islam with Development*

*Islam and social development:* Islamic instructions discuss about human equality and social cohesion. The methods of achievement of social justice are presented through the control of self-conscience and the application of the provisions of Islamic law in life. Social justice is one of the features of Islamic civilization, which includes ensuring the rights of people in society, stressing the equality of rights and duties of people in society. These duties have been provided for human to protect a sustainable society. Sharia or Islamic law is important for teaching morality. This contains beliefs, worship, dealings and moral structure stating the principles of rules of behavior and etiquette for a cultured society. The Islamic ethics has been taken from the Quran's teachings and Prophet Muhammad's Sunnah, which present "perfect character". Islam offers a code for living, which is set by ethical values; all Islamic aspects whether political, social or economic are replete by moral teachings. The significant features of the Islamic ethics, which are stated several times in the Quran contain bravery, attention, fairness, justice and honesty; referred to verses (68:4) and (20:46) for bravery, to (2:83) and (49:12) for attention (Islam teaches us to be friendly, and respecting the feeling and emotions of others), to (4:58) for fairness and justice (the meaning of justice in Islam is acting towards others fairly), and to (9:119) and (57:19) for honesty (in Islam, honest behavior is expected when cooperating with other people and serves to unite notions of frankness and truthfulness in actions, relationships and verbal exchanges). In addition, the following evidences from the holy book Quran, also demonstrate the positive effects of Islam on development:

- Effect of faith on deeds: In Islam, the faith is that the God revealed the true way to people during history through the prophets and messengers as Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed as the last prophet. In Islam, the Quran talked clearly about the good deeds through verses: (98:7-8); (18:30); (67:2); (16:97).
- Equality between race and culture: God emphasized in the Quran on making different races in the world. Clearly, the Quran indicated that the God believes in creation of different races and does not order to just make a single nation as Islamic society: (49:13)
- Equality between man and woman: The Quran emphasized on the equality in creation and in responsibility through the following verses: (4:124); (16:97)
- Equality between different religions: The Quran mentioned the freedom of religion in the world, as the God says: "...For you is your religion, and for me is my religion" (109:6)

- Justice: the God stressed on justice through the following verses of the Quran: (16:90); (4:58)

*Islam and scientific development:* The following evidences from the Quran indicated the adaptability of religion (Islam) with scientific development of today's world. Quran mentioned about some facts around 1400 years ago, where science was able to discover these facts only around 100 years ago.

- Expansion of the Universe: The Quran mentioned that the universe is expanding in verse 47 of the chapter 51. This fact was proved through the observation in 1929, by analyzing the sky through a giant telescope.
- The seas are not combining with one another; the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean; the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea. This incredible fact clarified in the following verses of the Quran, 14 centuries ago: (55:19-20); (25:53).

*Islam and economic development:* Islam has presented some basic mechanisms to ensure sustainable economic growth in society. Among the mechanisms presented by Islamic instructions, which are mandatory, payment of Zakat in verse (2:43) (form of alms-giving treated in Islam as a religious obligation or tax, which, by Quranic ranking is next after prayer in importance), making of Waqf (mortmain property) in verse (2:177), prohibition of Reba (usury) in verses (30:39), (4:160), and (3:130), and voluntary payment of Sadqah (voluntary charity) in verse (2:43) are the significant ones. All these aspects are effective for reducing poverty and helping to build a sustainable society towards economic development.

## VI. DISCUSSION ON RELIGION (ISLAM) AND DEVELOPMENT

### *A. Problematization of Religion and Development Interconnection*

Religion could become a serious challenge when religious leaders prevent development or consider it as a threat as they think it promotes European liberal secular culture and human rights. The current research has tried to evaluate the opinions given by both European and Muslim researchers around religion (mainly Islam) and development. Most European researchers have known Islam and Muslims with feudal, fatalistic and other challenging factors, which make them to conclude that Islam is an obstacle and barrier to development phenomenon [17]-[19]. In contrast, when considering those of research applying the Islamic instructions, it looks that their conclusions are basically inconclusive as they count on just limited part of Islamic principles and ignored other relevant parts. As Islam is a wide-ranging and multidimensional religion with the interconnection and with its dimensions, it should be recognized in a complete way as well. Studying Islam from a limited view almost will result in misconception. Furthermore, Muslim researchers who supported Islam from the accusation appear to be more academic and persuasive in their speech [20]-[25]. They brought opinions from several sources and applied numerous approaches like historical, conceptual and empirical. They are seemingly objective

enough in the discussion by clearly understanding the domestic weaknesses of Muslims civilization.

With the aim of getting a wider image of connection between religion and development in Islamic viewpoints, there is an important need to see how the Quran discusses about the issue. In the Islamic viewpoints, religion and development are basically related in a positive, direct and fundamental manner. The level of development is greatly dependent on the use of religion in the society. This sort of positive connection between religion and development is stated by the Quran, as lots of examples were mentioned during the research.

#### *B. Religion and Political Development (Democracy)*

Democracies rely on the existence of a particular ethos for citizens to follow laws and rulers to prioritize the public good over individual activities. Therefore, religion can perform an important act as democracy cannot succeed without commitment to moral principles. Hence, the huge debt of democracy to religion is exposed as follows: religions as supporters of morality can work as the best sponsors of democracy. While democracies require to be neutral on worldviews including religious views, they do depend on specific sources of morality, for which religion could act as a morality supplier.

#### *C. Islam and Political Development (Democracy)*

One key reason of the lack of democracy in the Islamic world is the existence of very powerful and aggressive authoritarian regimes. In these situations, even though the citizens desire democracy, the present government refuses democracy to keep its power and profits. Hence, some will claim that the emphasis of democratic research must not be on cultural preconditions, but instead, it must be on essential social and political actors. This is essential for the Islamic areas, which are controlled by authoritarian governments and dictators. People in Islamic societies wish to have democracy, but what makes it less feasible for them to reach democratic political state is the authoritarian regimes (in most cases) in power, at present. In other words, many Muslims keenly try for a democratic political system, but aggressive dictators try to silence them. Since Islam defends democracy and Muslims desire it, so Islam contrasts with democracy holds no truth. However, there is an absence of democratic development in the most Islamic areas and it is affected by several things other than religion, including socio-cultural priorities and aggressive authoritarian governments. Democracy has become a necessity for many Muslims, who wish political involvement, liberal rights, and responsible regime. With a chance to construct their own democracy, their societies will grow, and the clash of cultures will stop.

#### *D. Religion and Social Development*

There are two main perspectives regarding the role of religion in human social life: for some thinkers such as Karl Marx [27], ideology and social functions just supply the interests of the dominant class and justify their domination over other classes, and religion as a problematic and hectic issue causes the alienation and the downfall of the

revolutionary energy of the other classes. For these reasons, real happiness (wellbeing) is desired for people through elimination of religion as a delusion and fake happiness. In rejection of this theory, in the current research the role of religion in development through poverty reduction was emphasized. The work of states alone will certainly not be sufficient. For sustainable adjustment, governments should engage with civil society groups like faith groups. Most people in developing countries involve in some types of spiritual practices and consider that their belief is essential and empowers them to relate to the world. The significance of faith and religion in development is rising in several parts of the world. Since 1950, the number of religious adherents in developing countries has increased more than population growth. The role of faith and religion has become more important by recognizing the value of "happiness". Nearly all religions have rules on how a society must be managed, what properties should a good society have and which ideas for development should it show. Lots of people feel that there is a shortage of holistic understanding of human happiness in development of their societies. Generally, poor people frequently stated that having a peaceful place to read the Bible and pray, performing Mecca pilgrimage, or attending religious rituals was part of what they imagined as living a good life [17]. This belief that poverty is something beyond of lacking money means development must concentrate on developing what people have reason to value, too.

The second group stresses on the role of religion in public. One of them is Max Weber who considers that ideologies and social phenomena, in addition to connection with other social aspects may cause social changes containing the change in the productive system. He considers that the modern world is based on rationality, computation and prediction, and with the arrival of religions based on books, this rationality has grown in religions and this situation has achieved the peak in the Protestant ethic. International nature of the societies, in which most of the European areas now live in, requires cultural and also religious pluralism. This, in turn considers the ideas of freedom of thought and tolerance in these societies. Religious education has responsibility to consider and indicate these factors. Indeed, cultural multiplicity involves the religious multiplicity of a society and even the world. Starting from this principle, it is essential to develop a dialogical instruction enabling of proceeding intercultural educational improvement, that can be improved in people' knowledge and understanding of religious pluralism in civil society. The overall development of personality can only grow in society, when spiritual development is granted equal value in our educational system as other developmental values, which are considered essential like mental development, social development and ethical developments. On the basis of current research results, it can be said that in order to attain mental, national and global peace in today's difficult life, we have to instruct the spiritual knowledge along with its application in the actions of young groups, which eventually will lead them in the direction of greatness; this process would speed up by considering religious instructions.

### *E. Islam and Social Development*

The current research claims that Islam covers the basic individual and social features of life with stress on fundamentals like attempts to obtain knowledge, living and benefiting from life blessings, hard work, discipline, abolition of poverty, reduction of waste, social justice, etc., which facilitate the way for a suitable route of development. Even though, some verses and Islamic instructions give validation to the development of society, there are some chief reasons for the absence of development in most Islamic areas such as: absence of practice of Islam after the Prophet Muhammad, deviation from unique Islam, preferring own benefits over the benefits of Islam, presence of civil war in the land of the Islamic areas and damaging army attacks on Islamic nations, colonial domination on Islamic countries and following the Western models to attain development which might be in contrast with Islamic culture.

### VII. CONCLUSION

Religion cannot be entirely isolated from other elements at work within and among individuals and societies. This research was mainly focused on and viewed religion and development connections through philosophical, political, economic, social and also religious factors.

There are two different opinions concerning the connection of Islam to development. The major concern is about the adaptability issue whether Islam influences development negatively or in contrast impacts it in a positive way. Most Western researchers [17]-[19] supported the first opinion accusing that Islam is in contrast with development, whereas Muslim researchers and even some western researchers [20]-[25] believed in the second opinion convincing that Islam is effectively adaptable to development.

The backwardness of many current Islamic areas is accused by some scholars on different sides of Islamic beliefs and behavioral restrictions [17]-[19]. It was indicated in this research that many of these claims are not true and the matter of whether Islam contrasts with development was dealt with. An attempt was made to propose a better description for underdevelopment of many Islamic areas. The colonialism of the Muslim countries during the history; domination of religious views and theology in the most Islamic countries with close connection to politics; prevention of liberalization of thoughts and religious dogmas by the autocratic Islamic governments are the basic reasons for the present backwardness.

Muslim societies require education for the preparation of their people. Knowledge leads them to success, while great economy benefits them to meet their needs of life. They additionally require strong moral persuasion for the protection of political stability and peace, only then can their education and economy become beneficial. The efficacy of their moral system, however, is just found in the traditions of the religion, which aids them to administer justice and tolerance. The role, the nature and connection between religion and society have been often put under study by academics and theorists, and in

spite of religion being seen by some as outdated, it stays active in and helpful to social development. In the light of what have been argued, the research declared the following findings:

- This belief that poverty is something beyond just lacking money means that development must concentrate also on developing of what people have considered as value, which demonstrates the importance of considering the role of religion and faith in development arena.
- Religious groups make a major impact on poverty reduction via humanitarian aids, the service delivery, enabling the poor, creating peaceful countries and communities, and providing support for development.
- By considering "poverty reduction" factor as an element of social development of a society, religious groups can provide support for development by battling with the poverty (both material and spiritual poverty).
- Religion and spirituality are not the same matters, but also are not entirely different matters; and it is better to declare that religion and spirituality are different but overlap each other. Generally, the attention of social development should move outside of the social-political and cultural developments that happened in the setting of social institutions, to social-emotional and moral development in individual levels, by assistance of religion and faith.
- Educational programs must be reviewed to accurate the false image of Islam made by westerns. It is essential to develop a dialogical education enabling of opening intercultural educational improvement, that can be enhanced in students' awareness and understanding of religious pluralism in civil society.
- The principles of religions (including Islam) are in the line with the principles of democracy, as all religions talked about individual freedom, freedom of belief and justice.
- In general, God has discussed in the Quran about the freedom of belief and the right of people to power. Thus, there is almost no doubt that Islam religion does not affect democracy negatively, but most current religious parties in Islamic countries use religion for their own objects and goals, therefore, the ideal democracy cannot be seen in the most Islamic areas.
- The ethics of Islam must appear in the lives of Muslims in order to acquaint those Westerners who misinterpret Islam with the truth of Islam.
- There is a necessity for intellectual dialogue, debating religion as a moral source of assistance and its significance to Muslims scientific, economic, social and political life of the society.
- The socio-economic development of industrial capitalism, which leads into industrialization of the middle class of the society, will promote a democratic religion as well. Currently, the most effective mechanism of such change is globalization. Thus, Muslim societies should have a part in globalization to develop.
- Religious restoration has been one of the major aspects of capitalism's development in the West. But the Muslim societies did not find the opportunity of development.

This is true that the Muslim societies have lots of restrictions towards the modernity and development, but the real reason is not the Islamic religion itself, and the scholars should find and focus on other reasons, such as long-term colonialism, abusing of religious authority, false perceptions of religion by extremist groups and political games.

- On the basis of the current research results, it can be said that in order to attain mental, national and global peace at today's life, we have to instruct the spiritual knowledge along with its application in the actions of young groups, which eventually will lead them in the direction of greatness; this process would speed up by considering religious instructions.
- Turkey, as an Islamic model study shows that Islam is not an obstacle for the development of the country, and the country can develop in parallel to religion.

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