



## Research Article

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# The Role of Religious Beliefs in Crime Prevention

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## Abstract

Crime prevention is a set of actions and measures that fundamentally prevent the occurrence of crime and the fruition of criminal thoughts and fight against the roots and causes of crime. Criminal and non-criminal prevention is inevitable, and what today is considered a new approach to how to analyze crime, consists of all individual and public actions with the aim of eliminating favorable grounds for committing acts that are considered crimes. And among the crime prevention factors, the role of religious beliefs in improving the social environment and reducing violations and crimes is of special and sensitive importance. The reviews of scientific studies and deep research studies indicate the valuable fact that religious, spiritual, moral and faith teachings have a very important role in mental and psychological peace and balanced behaviors based on rationality. And they also have tremendous effects in preventing crime, social deviation and delinquency. Crime and guilt is one of the topics that has existed in all historical periods. And the prevention of crime and sin is one of the basic issues in human life, which has always been applied in different ways. But one of the effective and efficient factors in relation to crime prevention is the role and influence of religious teachings on people; Teachings that cause self-control in people and we will no longer need formal or informal control. Considering the necessity and importance of the influence of religious and heavenly teachings in the prevention of deviance and social harm, the author decided to examine this topic under the title of the role of religious beliefs in crime prevention.

**Keywords:** Crime; Prevention; Religious; Religious Beliefs; Crime Prevention

## Research Methodology

The methodological policy and method of conducting research is descriptive-analytical according to the nature of the subject, goals and method of gathering information and basically the organization and structure of the research. In the descriptive-analytical method, along with the real and systematic description of the characteristics of a subject and the expression of the available information about it, efforts are made to improve the current conditions and to provide suggested solutions and models in the discussed field. Therefore, the explanation and analysis of the subject is done in order to discover and learn the truth.

It is a method of collecting library information.

1. It is a tool for collecting information through the review of works available in libraries and scientific-research centers, which will accept the necessary verification. Also, in order to enrich the topics, sometimes valid articles are studied by referring to some databases and searching the internet.

2. The data analysis method will be done qualitatively. The method of reasoning is also in the form of evidence.

## Introduction

In general, religion is considered a part of the social control system. According to the nature of religion, two individual and social functions can be considered for it. The individual function of religion, by influencing people's inner feelings, causes a kind of self-control and social function, religion favors systems and organizations that are exposed to changes and also provides social solidarity through people's participation in religious ceremonies and respect for sacred things. According to common models of prevention, especially social prevention, which pays attention to the roots of crime and the motivation of the criminal, religion tries to prevent the formation of criminal thoughts and as a result the occurrence of crime. In general, it can be said that religion plays a major role in controlling people in dangerous and crime-causing situations, and although it uses all its efforts for prevention, it is also used to reform the criminal and prevent repeated crimes. His socialization (third prevention) predicts repentance.

Crime prevention and the causes of crime are very important and common topics that will never be ignored and forgotten by criminologists, sociologists, psychologists, and the science of criminal politics and criminal sociology in general. Because crime and sin have always existed since mankind stepped into the material world and in the field of life, and mankind has always tasted deviations, deviance from the proper standard, destructions and crimes with their bitter taste. Looking at the religious teachings, we see that what is referred to today as crime prevention was a combination of heavenly messages and the guidance of prophets and divine saints. And above that, since the mission of religion is to liberate man from corruption and misguidance; Therefore, the religious leaders did not spare any efforts to realize it and before fighting the disability, they fought the cause and background of sin and crime, and on this basis, prevention of deviation and crookedness is one of the duties of religious leaders [1].

The role of religious beliefs on the actions and behavior of believers is undeniable. Religious beliefs are reflected in all the actions and behavior of a believer, it encourages him to do God's commands and prevents him from doing evil [2]. Today, one of the methods used in most countries of the world to prevent crime and violations, which has shown an important effect, is the religious therapy method. When in society, spiritual and religious factors become more prominent; Undoubtedly, the crime rate will decrease significantly. According to the studies and research, it has been determined that the majority of criminals are people who have strayed from religion and have been brought up in families where spiritual and spiritual values have faded and material values have taken their place.

## The Nature of the Realm of Religion

In general, different views on the realm of religion can be divided into two main views: 1. Minimal view; 2. Maximum view.

Both Muslim scholars and non-Muslim scholars have commented in this field.

The theory of minimal religion is popular among religious

intellectuals and neo-thinkers today. By confining religion to the happiness of the hereafter, they deny the involvement and presence of religion in social and political affairs. In fact, the scope of religion in social, political, moral and jurisprudential affairs has been reduced to a minimum, and Sharia in these cases is the minimum required. We have learned. In fact, the "minority vision" has limited and limited itself in the affairs of the hereafter, and in the affairs of this world, it has satisfied itself with the minimum necessary, and in this way, it has secularized the religion and believes in the separation of religion from politics (or religion and the world) are [3].

Dr. Soroush's perception of the interference of religion in various fields is first minimal and then arbitrary; That is, "God has sent down religion first and foremost for the affairs of this world and to organize our helpless livelihood in this world. Religious teachings are basically oriented towards the afterlife; That is, they are for regulating the livelihood and happiness of the hereafter" [4]. As a result, all religious teachings are first and foremost expressed for the betterment of our hereafter and have no other purpose, such as health, mental, economic, cultural needs, etc. [5]

On the other hand, a group of Christian theologians considered revelation as a substitute for all human knowledge, including empirical, moral, and metaphysical sciences, and they believed that God has brought everything that mankind needs in the Bible. This group, which gave maximum scope to religion, believes that only Sharia should be learned and there is no need to learn anything else, not even philosophy [6].

In the meantime, the view that is opposite to the hereafter [7] and worldly view is the holistic view. The comprehensive perspective in interpreting the orientation of the prophet's call is based on the belief that the teachings of the prophets include all aspects of human life, including the worldly and the afterlife, and that the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) brought a comprehensive and complete message to mankind due to his finality. The dominant image of the comprehensive scholars of the comprehensiveness and completeness of the message of the beloved Messenger of Islam (PBUH) is that God has given him not the minimum, but the maximum of what is needed by mankind, therefore the religion of Islam is responsive to all human needs and every Whoever turns to religion with any need will not be without luck.

## Intellectual and Philosophical Foundations

Different views about the social role of religion have caused the formation of different approaches to religion. Among social science experts, there are two main approaches in the study of religion:

- a) The first approach includes the opinions of experts who have emphasized the practical aspect of religion; Like Smith and Durkheim [8].
- b) The second approach is the semantic approach to religion. This approach is specific to experts who have emphasized on the semantic and mental aspects of religion, such as Geertz, Berger and Luckmann (Ibid.: 274).

Religiosity has different dimensions and degrees. It is necessary to pay attention to this diversity and consider different aspects of religiosity in the sociological study of religion. Eliade (1996), Mager (1997) and Glock and Stark (1965) [9,10] can be mentioned among those who tried to analyze the different dimensions of religion by considering the diversity of dimensions and levels of religion and religiosity. Eliade recognized five dimensions in religions, which are symbols, salvation, rituals and rituals, sacred places and objects, and religious experience (Eliade, 1996:73-76). Mager (1997) with a social approach, has considered four main dimensions for religion, which are beliefs, rituals, religious experience and religious community (quoted by Talebi, 2013: 81) [11]. According to Glock and Stark, despite the fact that they are very different in details, all the religions of the world have general areas in which religiosity is manifested. These domains, which can be considered as the main dimensions of religiosity, include belief, ritual, experience, and consequence (Glock & Stark, 1965:2-19) [10].

Also, there are various sociological viewpoints and theories to respond to the causes of delinquency. In general, two different social views (or theories) have been proposed to explain the occurrence of crime:

- a) One of the views is based on the assumption that crime is the result of a gap as a whole; It appears in a place where social cohesion is weak and loose; And it is basically a deviation from the normal norms of society [12].
- b) In another point of view, it is assumed that the society is scattered and divided; Therefore, the main effort of the society should be to control the mainly selfish interests of the people that weaken the functioning of the society. In this view, crime is a natural phenomenon that can only be prevented with a strict system of social controls (ibid.).

Since delinquency is a complex phenomenon and due to the fact that so far, no comprehensive and complete theory has been proposed to explain the dimensions of religiosity in preventing delinquency, therefore, we need to adopt a composite point of view to understand and explain the dimensions of religiosity in preventing delinquency. For this reason, it is appropriate to use an integrated method to explain the relationship between religiosity and delinquency. This approach is a combination of two main components: the first component is the dimensions of religiosity, which according to the theories of some sociologists and religious researchers, are effective when they have a deterrent role in the delinquency of young people; And the second component is the indicators of social connection (dependency, commitment, involvement and belief).

## Effects and Benefits of Religion in Crime Prevention

### Giving meaning to life

Perhaps this benefit is one of the most important benefits of religion, because life has meaning for humans when they know what its purpose and meaning are and what it was created for. In fact, if we explain the meaning of life in order to ensure human immortality, we have achieved one of the greatest and main benefits

of religion; Therefore, they have said that the root of man's need for religion is his immortality and his afterlife, and if immortality is not mentioned, life will be canceled.

### Guidance to live peacefully

Religion provides information to man so that life becomes possible and pleasant for him in the whole of existence, and in a sense, reconciliation is established between man and the world, his life and himself, and he sees everything in a positive light [13]. Peace of mind is the missing thing of man, and he is trying to achieve it with all his heart. From the point of view of religion, the only thing that can fulfill this need is God. The Holy Quran declares with full emphasis that peace of mind is possible only in the shade of attention to God [14].

### Educating and perfecting people with talents

Human beings are different in terms of understanding perfection and learning knowledge and acquiring virtues because human minds are different. In other words, because people's minds are different and perfect people are rare, prophets are sent to make every person capable of achieving the highest possible perfection [15].

### Eliminating fear

Due to the existence of reason, if a person wants to do an action, he is afraid that it may not be allowed, and if he wants to leave the same action, he is afraid that he may not have done his duty. Therefore, there is a fear of God's wrath everywhere, but through the sending of prophets and the expression of the limits and activities of man, this fear will disappear, and he will perform his duties without fear.

### Responding to feelings of loneliness

One of the constant pains that people suffer from is the feeling of loneliness. One of the benefits of religion and religion is that a person who believes in God never feels alone because he believes that God is closer to him than the jugular vein.

### Introducing beneficial and harmful things to humans

Intellect understands the benefits and harms of things if it has experienced and tested them, and testing and experience also require the passage of long periods of time and bear many losses.

The benefit of Ba'ath is that according to the guidance of revelation, man knows beneficial and harmful things without any danger or harm to him.

### Individual and community reform

A society that does not adhere to religion loses its realism and intellectualism and spends its precious life in delusion, pretense and neglect, trampling on reason, and lives short-sightedly and without wisdom like animals. He suffers from the ugliness of morals and baseness of actions, and thus, he completely loses human privileges. Such a society, apart from the fact that it will not reach its eternal happiness and ultimate perfection, in the short and fleeting life of this world, it will see the evil results and the unfortunate effects of

its deviations and perversions, and sooner or later it will eat the wood of its negligence and will clearly understand that The only way to happiness has been religion and faith in God, and eventually he will regret his actions [16].

### Social solidarity

Solidarity and agreement are the basis of a social life, and its deterioration causes the collapse of society and the disintegration of social life. On the other hand, each person, based on the instinct of self-love, seeks his own benefit, even if it comes at the expense of others, and this instinctive state causes differences and conflicts. Religion provides this coherence and solidarity by explaining life and reading it as a prelude to the afterlife, as well as calling for spiritual tendencies and special moral education. Brotherhood and feeling of sharing are arranged on the axis of religiosity. Durkheim, a famous sociologist, writes: "Rituals of religion are as necessary for the proper functioning of our moral life as food is necessary for maintaining our physical life, because it is through these rituals that the group confirms and preserves itself [17].

### The Role of Belief in God in Crime Prevention

The meaning of believing in God is to believe in God who is the real owner of man and the world and the only deity worthy of worship. God, who is all-hearing and all-seeing, hears what people say, sees their actions, and is aware of everything that happens to them. The God who surrounds all human beings and watches over their movements and behaviors at all times and is aware of all their open and hidden realities.

Human beings are in the thought of absolute perfection and have infinite desires; Limited material things not only do not meet his unlimited needs, but by reaching material pleasures and blessings and attaining wealth and worldly positions - which sometimes has negative consequences and makes him infected with sin - he is careless and heartless. He is beaten and continues to search endlessly to satisfy his unlimited desire and calm his restless conscience. In one sentence, only God is the answer to all human desires. Remembering God as a variable has a significant individual and collective effect on human behavior. Just as forgetting to remember and remember God is the basis for self-forgetfulness and going astray, remembering and remembering God, especially prayer, is the source of prevention from deviance and sin. In religious teachings, remembrance of God is a source of peace of mind and prayer is one of the biggest and most effective mechanisms for preventing crime and sin. In the monotheistic worldview, prayer is a tool and mechanism of communication between man and God Almighty, and it is this relationship that, if realized in its true meaning, is the biggest obstacle to deviance, delinquency, and sin (Torabi, 2010).

Faith and belief in the divine teachings makes a person always consider himself under the endless knowledge and strict supervision of the Almighty God and not only refrains from evil deeds and bad actions on the outside, but also on the inside, bad thoughts and evil intentions. Don't give way to your heart. Since human actions and behavior are the crystallization of his thoughts

and intentions, it is natural that by controlling thoughts and ideas, human behavior will also be corrected, and the root of deviations and anomalies will be cut off from the roots (Khosrowshahi, 2002).

Paying attention to the fact that God watches over the entire system of existence and, among other things, over human actions, and no small work or even human thought is hidden from Him, has many social effects. Doing good deeds, abandoning ugly deeds, patience in the face of hardships and problems and motivation for effort are examples of these works. Of course, this insight will be effective if it goes beyond the stage of science and reaches the stage of faith and belief in the heart. When doing any action, if there are onlookers watching his actions, every person is careful to do the right and decent behavior and to avoid unseemly things. Even if a child watches his actions, he refuses to do inappropriate things. No matter how big and great this observer is for a person, he takes care of his behavior more. Now, if this viewer is the Almighty God, and people also pay attention to his awareness of their behavior and actions, it will have a greater effect on their behavior and will have many effects.

Belief in God, Resurrection and Day of Judgment has many positive effects for individuals and society in preventing and reducing crimes and corruption; Because man is self-seeking in terms of his natural and innate desire, and he hates and runs away from his losses. Attracting benefits and avoiding losses, both material and spiritual, forms the center of his activities in all periods of life. A wise person never knowingly does something that is 100% harmful to him [18]. The existence of human beings is a proof of physical resurrection and no matter what age people are, there was no trace of them before birth. Who created us, and who created our parents, and if we go back chronologically, we will understand that the creator of man is a superhuman being, that he is the same God and God who created us from nothing; It has the ability to create us again after death, the remains of the bones; Therefore, the second creation is easier. Although for God, the first and second creations are the same.

Undoubtedly, true belief in these teachings creates the biggest barrier against any oppression and violation of the rights of others. Humans naturally love to gain benefits and pleasure, and the belief in resurrection makes the fleeting and perishable benefits that a person obtains by violating the rights of others, compared to the amount of hardship and severity that is put against it, so insignificant. And it is insignificant that no wise and far-sighted person will agree to such harmful treatment

### Spirituality and Crime Prevention

Studies and research findings on the history of the rights of criminals show that human societies mainly used punishment to combat crime, including its severe forms (i.e., criminal prosecution), but the findings of criminal law and various schools of philosophy- The criminality of this intensity and the criminal system has not been able to curtail or eliminate the curve of the crime as expected [19]. Spirituality and creating a sense of spirituality in the people of a society is the best means that can establish security and comfort in a society, and its desirable effects will be visible in the long



term; Unlike criminal prevention and other common methods of prevention, this model can play a very important role in eliminating or significantly reducing crimes and violations as an inspiring and effective example.

Spirituality means that a person refers to himself; Refer to your divine nature; And when a person refers to his divine nature and makes it the basis of his thoughts and behavior, he will no longer commit actions that conflict with this aspect of his existence. Now let's imagine that in a society, this approach becomes the dominant culture, and in general, spirituality and faith are the main characteristics of society; Although it is not possible to lead a society unanimously towards spirituality and religiosity, we can hope to create a general culture of spirituality in society. At the same time, religious rituals and ceremonies also play a significant role in reducing the crime rate. For example, according to statistics obtained from research in Iran, the rate of crime in the months of Ramadan and Muharram has decreased by 91% (Abu Talebi, 1392).

## Conclusion

The failure of all or most of the human solutions in the field of trial and error in various fields clearly proves the fact that human beings cannot create a comprehensive plan for preventing editing and fight against anomalies and deviations accordingly. Therefore, it is necessary to use religious teachings in order to prevent crimes and their spread. In the research conducted, it has been found that the majority of criminals are individuals who have strayed from religion and were brought up in families where spiritual values have faded and material values have taken their place. Revolution and religious teachings bring a kind of guarantee of internal implementation and self-control for people, which when combined with the external regulations and supervision of society, creates a strong deterrent for people against committing crimes, and a person who grows in the scope of religious teachings in any situation.

He sees God watching over his behavior and actions. Research conducted in Iran indicates that during certain days such as Ramadan and Muharram, the amount of crime decreases significantly. The presented statistics indicate that the rate of crime in the month of Muharram decreases by 91%. Also, investigations in the police force show that the statistics and figures of crimes in the month of Muharram decrease to a great extent every year, and this is due to the effect of these days on people. Therefore, it is proved that prevention of crimes is obtained as a result of revelation teachings and religious beliefs and there is a direct relationship between religious beliefs and the reduction of crimes. In the research done, it has been proven that religious groups and basically religious

people are less prone to crises such as identity crisis and less social crimes spread or spread among them.

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