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Depictions of God in the Drawings of German-Muslim Children

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Abstract

This empirical inquiry aimed to examine the qualitative differences of the ‘God’ concept of Turkish-German Sunni Muslim children living in Germany. In this study, non-anthropomorphic drawings did not increase gradually with age. Anthropomorphic God depictions seem to be ontologically moving away from people with age. In the present study, indirect God depictions occurred six times more than the direct God depictions. ‘Religious-cultural drawings’ were the most common in the sample. The girls drew more aesthetic drawings that expressed an emotional bond with God. Boys depicted God more rationally and pragmatically in regard to human life and the world.

Keywords

concept of ‘God’ – children’s drawings – sameness with humans – otherness from humans – religious-cultural drawings

1 Introduction

Various methods of researching religious thought in children could be divided into five groups: “Direct questions, tests and questionnaires, associative or projective studies, behavioral, and psycho-linguistic.”¹ The use of drawings is an example of the relational method that examines religious concepts in

¹ Oliver E. Graebner, “Child Concept of God,” *Religious Education* 59/3 (1964), 234–241.

children.² Drawing is natural for children, like play, and drawing is part of playing from an early age.³ It is more suitable for researching complex topics and can eliminate the limitations of false verbal expression.⁴ Using drawings in the study of religious thought could be an efficient method to study the emotional content of nonverbal religious experience.⁵ In understanding children's concepts of 'God,' Ernest Harms first brought together verbal and pictorial depictions of God and religion. Harms argued that the essential parts of religious meaning are in the areas of consciousness, which are often the most difficult orally and become more easily accessible through drawings.⁶

Previous research on children's drawings of God generally revealed three types of findings. First, they investigated whether there were changes in the transition from anthropomorphic to symbolic/abstract presentations by age and cognitive development.⁷ The second kind of findings relate to the relationships between children's gender and drawings of God.⁸ Third, the effects of

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- 2 Grégory Dessart, "A Multidimensional Approach to Children's Drawings of God in French-speaking Switzerland: A Developmental and Socio-cultural Account," PhD diss. (Lausanne: Université de Lausanne, 2019).
 - 3 Anna Kirova, "A Game-playing Approach to Interviewing Children about Loneliness: Negotiating Meaning, Distributing Power, and Establishing Trust," *Alberta Journal of Educational Research* 52/3 (2006), 127–147.
 - 4 Margaret Brooks, "Drawing as a Unique Mental Development Tool for Young Children: Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Dialogues," *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood* 6/1 (2005), 80–91.
 - 5 Rodney L. Bassett et al., "Picturing God: A Nonverbal Measure of God Concept for Conservative Protestants," *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 9/2 (1990), 73–81.
 - 6 Ernest Harms, "The Development of Religious Experience in Children," *American Journal of Sociology* 50/2 (1944), 112–122.
 - 7 Harms, "The Development"; Jill Kasserman & Jennifer L. Johnson, "A Comparison of Nonverbal God Concept in United Methodists," *Modern Psychological Studies* 1/1 (1992), 1–5; Kevin L. Ladd, Daniel N. McIntosh, & Bernard Spilka, "Children's God Concepts: Influences of Denomination, Age, and Gender," *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 8/1 (1998), 49–56; W. Chad Nye & Jerry S. Carlson, "The Development of the Concept of God in Children," *The Journal of Genetic Psychology* 145/1 (1984), 137–142; V. Peter Pitts, "Drawing Pictures of God," *Learning for Living* 16/3 (1977), 123–129; Dimitris Pnevmatikos, "Conceptual Changes in Religious Concepts of Elementary School Children: The Case of the House Where God Lives," *Educational Psychology* 22/1 (2002), 93–112; William Kay & Liz Ray, "Concepts of God: The Salience of Gender and Age," *Journal of Empirical Theology* 17/2 (2004), 238–251; Maare E. Tamm, "The Meaning of God for Children and Adolescents: A Phenomenographic Study of Drawings," *British Journal of Religious Education* 19/1 (1996), 33–44; and Philip A. Taylor, "The Development of the Concept of God in Children," MA thesis (Tulsa: Oral Roberts University, 1977).
 - 8 David Heller, *The Children's God* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 65–70; Ladd, McIntosh, & Spilka, "Children's"; and Kay & Ray, "Concepts."

religious schooling, religious denominations, and familial, religious parenting on God conceptions were examined.⁹

As qualitative research was analyzed based on children's detailed explanations of their drawings, the present study could contribute to the existing literature regarding its multiple perspectives on God figures. The descriptions of the children allowed us to go beyond the binary classifications made in many previous studies. We realized that most of the children's drawings did not directly express God but indirectly pointed to God. It was understood that the anthropomorphic God figures were not simply human. Some drawings were similar to humans but had characteristics beyond humans. All of the drawings that were considered under the category of anthropomorphism in most of the previous studies probably were not wholly human. According to Stewart Guthrie, in many religious traditions, perceptions of God may contain a combination of sameness and otherness with human beings. Guthrie assumed that a human God figure could be made less human by affirming inhumanity or lacking essential human characteristics.¹⁰ Sameness is concerned with anthropomorphic traits. Otherness deals with non-human qualities.

Regarding the binary categorical (anthropomorphic-concrete and non-anthropomorphic-abstract/symbolic) distinctions made in most of the above-mentioned studies, it is necessary to look at the children's drawings of God with a more detailed perspective. These studies, which are strongly based on a Piagetian developmental framework, seem to have tried to apply the process of transitioning from concrete thinking to abstract thinking suggested by Jean Piaget to depictions of God.¹¹ The Piagetian approach, which is compatible with many other areas of children's development, may not always be a good match when it comes to drawings of God. Although not the same for every child, the concept seems to emerge in a potentially complex conceptual network, with ontological categories overlapping as the concept of 'God' develops.¹² As has often been done in previous research, it does not seem to be a correct approach to view anthropomorphic figures as more abstract/symbolic than non-anthropomorphic ones. For example, a human figure drawn to depict God may not be less abstract than drawing God as light. "Both light

9 Dessart, "A Multidimensional"; Ladd, McIntosh, & Spilka, "Children's"; and Pitts, "Drawing Pictures of God"; and Sarah Demmrich, "Prayer in Religiously Affiliated and Non-affiliated Adolescents: An Exploratory Study on Socialization, Concept of Prayers and the God Image in East Germany," *International Journal of Practical Theology* 19/1 (2015), 40–59.

10 Stewart Guthrie, *Faces in the Clouds: A New Theory of Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 194.

11 Dessart, "A Multidimensional."

12 Ibid.

and human can be used as metaphors for protection and guidance, and their drawn forms do not affect their level of abstraction.”¹³ To characterize God as symbolic is more about the use of metaphorical thought than anything that goes against anthropomorphism. However, it is not possible to understand this without referring to the description and intention of the children.¹⁴ In addition, it is understood that the themes categorized as ‘symbolic/abstract’ in previous studies were applied not only to drawings that directly depicted God but also to any figure in the drawings.¹⁵ Almost all the research done on drawings of God has been in regard to children affiliated with religions other than Islam. To the best of our knowledge, very few studies have explored the concept of ‘God’ in Muslim children through the drawings method.¹⁶ Moreover, no study has compared the drawings of Muslim children about the concept of ‘God’ with drawings of children of other religions. In this study, first, it was examined whether there was a change in the depictions of God in the pictures of Muslim children according to age. Second, the study examined whether there is a gender difference in drawings about God. Third, it examined whether there is a difference between the drawings of Muslim children and those of other religious children in terms of theology and religious culture.

Because there are very few studies that utilize drawings when researching Muslim children’s ‘God’ concept, the results are discussed with regard to some studies of Muslim children living in Turkey with different methods and studies conducted with the drawings method that examined children from other religious backgrounds.

2 Method

2.1 *Participants and Procedure*

Purposeful sampling was used for selecting the students to take part in the study. Participants consisted of Turkish-German Sunni Muslim children born in Germany whose parents were Turkish and emigrated from Turkey to Germany. These children attended German public schools during the week

¹³ Ibid, 37.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ladd, McIntosh, & Spilka, “Children’s”; and V. Peter Pitts, “Drawing the Invisible: Children’s Conceptualization of God,” *Character Potential: A Record of Research* 8/1 (1976), 12–24.

¹⁶ Halise Kader Zengin, “Almanya’daki Müslüman çocuklarda Allah kavramının gelişimi: Âdem ve Havva kıssası—yaratılışı, cennetten çıkarılışları—bağlamında 1–4., 6. Sınıf çocukları üzerine bir araştırma,” *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 51/1 (2010), 213–248.

and non-formal Islamic religious education sessions at mosques in Karlsruhe and the surrounding area on weekends. After getting research permission from the parents, the study was carried out on weekends over a four-month period, with the help of the imams in charge. The sample consisted of 143 participants, including seventy-four (51.7%) boys and sixty-nine (48.3%) girls aged between eight and fifteen. There were sixteen students (11.2%) aged eight, seventeen (11.9%) aged nine, twenty-one (14.7%) aged ten, seventeen (11.9%) aged eleven, nineteen (13.3%) aged twelve, twenty-nine (20.3%) aged thirteen, twelve (8.4%) aged fourteen, and twelve (8.4%) aged fifteen.

First, students sat in rows (one by one) to prevent them from being influenced by each other. A4 paper, crayon boxes, pencils, and erasers were distributed to each of the participants. Second, the following instructions were given by the researcher: "What comes to your mind when you think of the word 'Allah'? Now, close your eyes and try to imagine and draw a picture about God." Drawing time was not limited to enable children to draw freely, and the time taken ranged between twenty-five and thirty-five minutes. The finished drawings were then collected by the researcher. The age and gender of the students were noted for each drawing. Afterwards, each child was interviewed individually about their drawings. The researcher did not interpret the pictures drawn by the children and did not ask leading questions when the children were drawing. Children, then, freely described their pictures, and the drawing interviews were written on the back of each drawing. This time ranged from five to seven minutes. In this study, thirty to thirty-five minutes were spent on average for each student.

2.2 Data Analysis

The data was analyzed by the phenomenographic method. Phenomenography, originating in Sweden, tries to reveal the similar and different aspects of people's perceptions of the phenomena around them.¹⁷ The phenomenographic method is not based on a previously formulated theory. The starting point is the information obtained from the sample.¹⁸ In this sense, the starting point of the categories emerging in this research was based on the information obtained from this sample. Children's perceptions of God have been previously

17 Ference Marton, "Phenomenography: A Research Approach to Investigating Different Understandings of Reality," *Journal of Thought* 21/3 (1986), 28–49.

18 Thomas Koballa et al., "Prospective Gymnasium Teachers' Conceptions of Chemistry Learning and Teaching," *International Journal of Science Education* 22/2 (2000), 209–224.

investigated with this method, and it was seen that it could be used as an effective method in this field.¹⁹

In the present study, there were generally multiple, different themes associated with a single picture. There were fewer drawings focused on a single theme. The various indicators seen in each drawing were coded one by one, just as is done when analyzing a text. In the analysis, the drawings and children's expressions were evaluated together. If the child did not comment on any figure in the picture or if he or she used expressions such as "I drew it just because I loved it" or "I just drew it," that figure was not coded. (Many drawings had Turkish flags because they were immigrant children; they stated that they drew them because they loved it.) If the child did not explain a figure related to the subject that stood out in the picture, considering the possibility that he had forgotten it, the researcher asked what the figure expressed in a non-directive way. Sometimes, the same drawings were encoded twice.

While the same drawing sometimes contained two different sub-themes in the same category, some of the same drawings also included themes from different main categories. For example, a single drawing might emphasize that God is like a human being but more than a human being, and he has the ability to see everything. In this case, this drawing was coded to both the themes of 'anthropomorphism-otherness' and 'God's attributes' (the ability to see everything). In this sense, there were drawings in this study that were compatible with the view that the concept of 'God' has a hybrid nature.²⁰ As a result, the themes emerging in this study are not mutually exclusive. The analysis continued until the upper and lower categories became clear.²¹ Two superordinate- and four subordinate-level categories formed. The categories were analyzed by using the MAXQDA 2018.2.3 software. The density distribution of qualitative categories in the tables (code matrix browser) is given according to age and gender groups. After coding the interviews, a chart was meticulously created from the codes according to the table suggested by Greg Guest and colleagues.²² The author, along with an associate who specializes in qualitative research, coded the data. Then, the two encodings were compared in the inter-coder agreement/min. code intersection rate of X% at the segment level [%] section in the MAXQDA. The result of the 'Kappa test' was 97.21%.

19 Tamm, "The Meaning."

20 Agustín Vicente & Fernando Martínez Manrique, "The Big Concepts Paper: A Defence of Hybridism," *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 67/1 (2016), 59–88.

21 Peter Ashworth & Lucas Ursula, "What Is the 'World' of Phenomenography?," *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research* 42/4 (1998), 415–431.

22 Greg Guest, Arwen Bunce, & Laura Johnson, "How Many Interviews Are Enough?: An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability," *Field Methods* 18/1 (2006), 59–82.

2.3 *Result*

As a result of the phenomenographic analysis of the drawings of eight- to fifteen-year-old children about God, the concept of ‘God’ has become systematic in two superordinate and four subordinate categories.

2.4 *Direct and Indirect Qualitative Categories and Age*

As seen in Table 1, direct depictions of God appeared in two main categories: anthropomorphism and non-anthropomorphism. The main category of anthropomorphism has emerged in two sub-themes: sameness with humans and otherness from humans. In drawings on the theme of sameness with humans, children depicted God by drawing an ordinary person. In contrast, the drawings in the category of otherness from humans had features that somehow explained that God is different from normal humans. The drawings reflecting sameness with humans were repeated three times more than drawings depicting otherness from humans. The theme of sameness with humans spanned the age group of eight- to thirteen-year-olds. However, there were no drawings on the theme of sameness with humans at the ages of fourteen to fifteen. There were only five drawings in the theme of otherness from humans. These belonged to children aged ten, eleven, twelve, and fourteen. There were no drawings in the theme of otherness from humans at the ages of eight, nine, thirteen, and fifteen. The main category of non-anthropomorphism consisted of religious-cultural representations and metaphorical representations. Religious-cultural representations occurred three times more than the metaphorical descriptions. Religious-cultural representations consisted of two

TABLE 1 The intensity distribution of direct God depictions in age groups (code matrix browser)

Code System	8-year-old	9-year-old	10-year-old	11-year-old	12-year-old	13-year-old	14-year-old	15-year-old	SUM
Direct God depictions									0
Anthropomorphism									0
Sameness with humans	2	3	3	2	2	3			15
Otherness from humans									0
A human with wings							1		1
A human above the clouds			1						1
An eye in the sky			1						1
A hand in the sky				1					1
A sun with eyes in the sky					1				1
Non-anthropomorphism									0
Religious-cultural representations									0
The word ‘God’	4		1	1	2	3		2	13
Infinite light				2					2
Metaphorical representations									0
Death of the Devil and all evil			1						1
Rose plant								1	1
A beautiful garden	1								1
Infinite sea	1								1
Infinite galaxies								1	1
Σ SUM	8	3	7	6	5	6	1	4	40

sub-themes: the word ‘God’ spelled out (in Arabic or Turkish) and infinite light. In the non-anthropomorphism category, there was no significant age-related density difference in the frequency distribution. However, writing the word ‘God’ was more common at a young age. Metaphoric representations were drawn by only five students. Two of them were drawn by eight-year-olds, one by a ten-year-old, and two by fifteen-year-olds.

As seen in Table 2, the main category of indirect depictions of God consisted of two sub-categories: the religious-cultural and the category of God’s place of residence. The repeated themes in the category of religious-cultural drawings included (in order of frequency): God’s attributes; places of worship; the Quran; depictions of worship; angels; and the bond of love between God and human beings. The rose representing the Prophet Muhammad, heaven and hell, heaven, Islam, all prophets, worship supplies, the Prophet Muhammad, the brotherhood among Muslims, equality, the Devil, peace, and grave-related sub-themes were also in this category.

In the category regarding the place of God’s residence, it was stated, in respective order of frequency, that God lives in a high place in the world,

TABLE 2 The intensity distribution of indirect God depictions in age groups

Code System	8-year-old	9-year-old	10-year-old	11-year-old	12-year-old	13-year-old	14-year-old	15-year-old	SUM
Indirect God depictions									0
Religious-cultural drawings									0
God's attributes									09
Creative power	4	6	7		5	8	4	5	39
The power to bestow blessings			3	2					5
The ability to see everything			1		1	2			4
Incomprehensibility				1		2			3
Oneness					1	1			2
Protectiveness				1				1	2
Mercy						1			1
Forgiveness						1			1
The desire for the good and the beautiful for humankind						1			1
Omniscience						1			1
Places of worship	3	8	5	7	8	11	7	5	54
The Quran	4	3	3	5	5	5	4	2	31
Depictions of worship	6	3	3	5	4	8	1	1	31
Angels	1	1	2	1	1	3	1		10
The bond of love between God and humans			2	1		2	4		9
Rose representing the Prophet Muhammad	1		2	1		1			5
Heaven and Hell		1	1			2		1	5
Heaven	1				1	1	1		4
Islamic religion			1		1	1	1		4
All prophets					2	2			4
Worship supplies				1		1		1	3
The Prophet Muhammad					1	1		1	3
Brotherhood among Muslims		1					1	1	3
Equality						1	1		2
The Devil		1					1		2
Peace							1		1
A grave					1				1
The place of God's residence									0
In a high place in the world	4		1	1	1				7
In the sky	3		2						5
In heaven	1		1	2					4
SUM	28	26	33	27	34	59	22	18	247

in the sky, and in heaven. In the theme of God’s attributes, children most often spoke of the power of creation, followed by the power of bestowing blessings and, third, the ability to see everything. They mostly drew mosques and, second, the Kaaba as places of worship. In the theme of worship, they mostly talked about the five daily prayers, followed by prayer in general and, third, the reading of the Quran. There was no regular decrease or increase in the distribution of religious-cultural figures according to age. However, compared to other ages, religious-cultural drawings are more intense in children aged twelve to thirteen. God as creator was generally expressed by children of all ages. The power to bestow blessings, the ability to see everything, incomprehensibility, oneness, protectiveness, mercy, forgiveness, omniscience, and wanting good and beauty for people were expressed at the age of ten and later. The theme of God’s residence was expressed between the ages of eight and twelve, but, after the age of twelve, this theme was not seen.

2.5 *Direct and Indirect Qualitative Categories and Gender*

As seen in Table 3, drawings involving the theme of sameness with humans under the anthropomorphism category belonged mostly to girls. Two of the drawings in the theme of otherness from humans belonged to girls and three of them to boys. Compared to boys in the non-anthropomorphism category, girls more often represented God by Arabic calligraphy spelling out the word

TABLE 3 The intensity distribution of direct God depictions by gender

Code System	Gender=Girl	Gender=Boy	SUM
Direct God depictions			0
Anthropomorphism			0
Sameness with humans	9	6	15
Otherness from humans			0
A human with wings		1	1
A human above the clouds		1	1
An eye in the sky	1		1
A hand in the sky		1	1
A sun with eyes in the sky	1		1
Non-anthropomorphism			0
Religious-cultural representations			0
The word 'God'	10	3	13
Infinite light	1	1	2
Metaphorical representations			0
Death of the Devil and all evil		1	1
Rose plant		1	1
A beautiful garden	1		1
Infinite sea	1		1
Infinite galaxies		1	1
Σ SUM	24	16	40

TABLE 4 The intensity distribution of indirect God depictions by gender

Code System	Gender=Girl	Gender=Boy	SUM
Indirect God depictions			0
Religious-cultural drawings			0
God's attributes			0
Creative power	18	21	39
The power to bestow blessings	3	2	5
The ability to see everything	2	2	4
Incomprehensibility	1	2	3
Oneness	1	1	2
Protectiveness	1	1	2
Mercy		1	1
Forgiveness		1	1
The desire for the good and the beautiful for humankind		1	1
Omniscience		1	1
Places of worship	21	33	54
The Quran	18	13	31
Depictions of worship	22	9	31
Angels	7	3	10
The bond of love between God and humans	8	1	9
Rose representing the Prophet Muhammad	5		5
Heaven and Hell	4	1	5
Heaven	3	1	4
Islamic religion	2	2	4
All prophets	4		4
Worship supplies	2	1	3
The Prophet Muhammad	3		3
Brotherhood among Muslims		3	3
Equality		2	2
The Devil	1	1	2
Peace		1	1
A grave	1		1
The place of God's residence			0
In a high place in the world	6	1	7
In the sky	4	1	5
In heaven	2	2	4
Σ SUM	139	108	247

‘Allah.’ Two of the metaphorical drawings belonged to girls and three of them to boys.

As seen in Table 4, boys expressed more of the sub-categories under the category of God’s attributes than girls did. Only boys spoke of the themes of peace, equality, and brotherhood among Muslims. Only girls expressed the rose representing the Prophet Muhammad, the Prophet Muhammad, and all the prophets. Girls repeated the bond of love between God and humans (eight times) more than boys (one time). The theme of God’s residence was spoken of more by girls than boys.

3 Discussion

3.1 *Direct God Depictions*

3.1.1 Anthropomorphic Drawings by Age

There were two themes under the main theme of anthropomorphism: sameness with humans and otherness from humans. When describing drawings involving the theme of sameness with humans, the children said that God is like a human. The drawings depicting the theme of otherness from humans somehow differed from the forms and characteristics of normal people. For example, Figure 149 (from a fourteen-year-old boy) depicted a human figure with wings. Figure 67 (from a ten-year-old girl) showed two eyes in the sky. She explained her drawing: “God is someone who lives in the sky and sees everything. God is not exactly human. He has organs that look like a human’s.”²³ When the children were asked why they drew God in this way, no clear answer could be obtained from the children.

A possible explanation is based on the use of the expression ‘like a human but not quite human’ by the children: although there is no definite information in the Quran and other traditional sources for Islam, due to the ongoing discussion of aniconism in Islamic literature, they may have hesitated to portray God as a complete human.²⁴ Given that such drawings are drawn by children between the ages of ten and fourteen, another explanation may be that the children have started to think abstractly. Grégory Dessart stated, in his qualitative study, that ontological belonging could be developmental, and its relationship with age may reflect cognitive development.²⁵ A third explanation may stem from the fact that expressions such as ‘the hand of God’ and ‘the face of God’ in the Quran are understood and explained by the society in a literal rather than metaphorical sense or that portraying God as human-like or as simply non-human depends on education and that drawings in this form could emerge largely within the context of socio-cultural exposure.

In this study, anthropomorphic drawings did not occur following the age of fifteen. However, anthropomorphic drawings did not decrease with age. Although children seemed to more often express that God is ontologically different from human as age increases, there was not a trend towards completely non-anthropomorphic drawings. Likewise, Dessart expressed that the

23 Quote from field notes, translated from Turkish to English by the author.

24 Nicole Kaňçal-Ferrari, “İslamda Tasvir Problemi İle İlgili Son Dönem Literatürüne Bir Bakış,” in: Nicole Kaňçal-Ferrari & Ayşe Taşkent (eds.), *Tasvir: Teori ve Pratik Arasında İslam Görsel Kültürü* (Istanbul: Klasik, 2016), 117–153, at 120.

25 Dessart, “A Multidimensional.”

de-anthropomorphization in human-based God figures throughout childhood does not move towards figures that are not anthropomorphic. In his qualitative work in his thesis, he stated that as children get older, instead of transcending anthropomorphism, they seem to continue anthropomorphic thinking by combining God with non-humanness.²⁶ However, some previous studies of Muslim children and in some studies involving Christian and other religious children, it was observed that anthropomorphic God drawings decreased with age, and abstract and symbolic depictions increased.²⁷ These differences may have resulted from methodological differences in the analysis of the drawings. Dessart, in his first quantitative study, found that older children and those having religious education may draw non-anthropomorphic God figures more often. However, it was found that age is not important in inferential statistics.²⁸

In the present study, anthropomorphic and non-anthropomorphic drawings were equal. In Maare E. Tamm's research on Christian children in Sweden, 20% of the drawings were non-anthropomorphic. In our study, although the anthropomorphic drawings did not occur past fifteen years old, in Tamm's study, anthropomorphic drawings continued after fifteen. Tamm commented on the possible causes of this result: Swedish children do not receive institutionalized religious education and do not attend church. Besides, the Bible depicts God both mentally and physically, and expressing God in a human-like way is typical for Swedish children and carries significant meaning.²⁹ One study found that all drawings, except for those by the youngest children, were anthropomorphic.³⁰ However, Harms found that anthropomorphic drawings did not occur past the age of seven.³¹

A study conducted with Muslim children living in Turkey concluded that Muslim children (in the nine-to-ten-year range) leave the idea of an anthropomorphic God behind earlier than Christian children. This difference may result from the difference in the teachings of God between Islam and Christianity.

26 Ibid.

27 For studies of Muslim children, see Mustafa Öcal, "Okulöncesi ve İlköğretim Çağı Çocuklarının Allah Tasavvurları Üzerine Bir Araştırma," *Uludağ Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 13/2 (2004), 59–80; Kerim Yavuz, *Çocukta Dini Duygu ve Düşüncenin Gelişimi* (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1987), 106; and Murat Yıldız, *Çocuklarda Tanrı Tasavvurunun Gelişimi* (İzmir: İzmir İlahiyat Vakfı Yayınları, 2007), 227. For the other studies, see Kasserman & Johnson, "A Comparison"; Ladd, McIntosh, & Spilka, "Children's"; Pnevmatikos, "Conceptual"; Kay & Ray, "Concepts"; and Taylor, "The Development."

28 Dessart, "A Multidimensional."

29 Tamm, "The Meaning."

30 Nye & Carlson, "The Development."

31 Harms, "The Development."

In their religious-cultural teachings, Muslims consistently describe God as an invisible, nothing-like, place-free entity.³² Of course, it is not always possible for young children to fully grasp this.³³ However, they can accept and adopt such expressions and definitions because they constantly hear them. Given that anthropomorphism continued until the age of fifteen, this study is more similar to research on Christian children. A possible explanation for this situation could be that Muslim children living in Turkey receive a regular religious education in state schools. Indeed, in the state of Baden-Württemberg, where we conducted this study, Muslim children do not receive Islamic religious education classes in public schools. Muslim families often send their children to mosques on weekends or to private religious classes. Considering that there are no official Islamic religious education lessons, each child's quantity and quality of religious education differs. This could affect the development of children's concept of 'God.'

3.1.2 Non-Anthropomorphic Drawings by Age

In direct depictions of God, in the category of non-anthropomorphic drawings, religious-cultural representations (the word 'God' and infinite light) and metaphorical representations (death of the Devil and evil, a beautiful garden, an infinite sea, and infinite galaxies) emerged. Although the theme of metaphorical representations in this study is reminiscent of some elements in the second group's drawings, which Harms named the individualistic stage, it could not be said to correspond exactly to this phase. This group expressed their thoughts in abstract, semi-abstract, and symbolic and original drawings, for example, in terms of lightning, light, or the sun in a dark sky. Indeed, Harms stated that this stage was seen in children aged thirteen to eighteen. However, in our study, these drawings were scattered between the ages of eight and fifteen. Such drawings were most common for eight-year-olds and, second, for fifteen-year-olds. Although the category of metaphorical representations in this research did not quite fit the category of 'God as mystery' in Tamm's research, there were similarities with some of the elements. The drawings depicted "colorful mandalas, sunsets, symbolic compositions of clouds, crosses, flowers, hearts or people."³⁴ Such drawings were seen in all participants (nine to nineteen years).

One of the sub-themes in the theme of religious-cultural representations was the word 'God' spelled out. This theme was also present in Murat Yildiz's

32 Öcal, "Okulöncesi."

33 Zengin, "Almanya'daki."

34 Tamm, "The Meaning," 38.

study.³⁵ One possible explanation for depicting God with letters is the abstract thinking of these children. However, if we assume that expressing the concept of 'God' with words is a sign of movement to abstract thinking, we must admit that children aged eight to thirteen (expressed eleven times) think more abstractly than those aged fourteen to fifteen (expressed two times). Another possible explanation is that, in the art of calligraphy, which is one of the Islamic arts, the Arabic script 'Allah' is used extensively on the domes and walls of all mosques, in some other religious-social institutions, and in Muslims' homes. Hence, children constantly see this writing in their daily lives. Another possibility is that Muslim parents and religious educators, and other people related to children, constantly advise children that God does not have a physical existence, so the children may have hesitated to draw God in an anthropomorphic way and instead depicted God with words. Considering the children's responses when asked about the meaning behind the word 'God' spelled out, the second possibility seems stronger, without excluding the influence of other possibilities, since some students stated that they saw the representation of God via writing rather than other representations of God in their social life.

There were only two drawings involving the infinite light theme. While these eleven-year-old students were describing their drawings, they stated that the shape of God cannot be known, therefore when they think of Allah, an infinite light comes to mind. When the children were asked why the infinite light might have come to mind, the children said that they heard from their elders and parents that God is like nothing and that God is something like light. Indeed, the analogy of light is used to describe the transcendent existence of Allah in the Quran and is also spoken of in Muslim social life.

In the category of metaphorical representations, there were drawings based on individual interpretations that depicted God as the death of the Devil and evil, the rose plant, a beautiful garden, the eternal sea, and infinite galaxies (see Figure 1). It has been observed that the distribution of metaphorical drawings, which often require abstract thinking, was not concentrated at older ages and was scattered at different ages. In this sense, it is not in agreement with previous studies that have stated that non-anthropomorphic drawings increase with age. As stated above, many previous studies analyzed all the data only with binary categorical distinction, such as anthropomorphic/non-anthropomorphic, abstract/concrete, or concrete/symbolic. Indeed, to divide drawings into abstract, symbolic, and metaphorical categories, it is necessary to ask the

35 Mualla Yıldız, "İlköğretim Öğrencilerinin Tanrı İmgesinin Belirlenmesi ve Farklı Değişkenler Açısından İncelenmesi," PhD diss. (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2012).

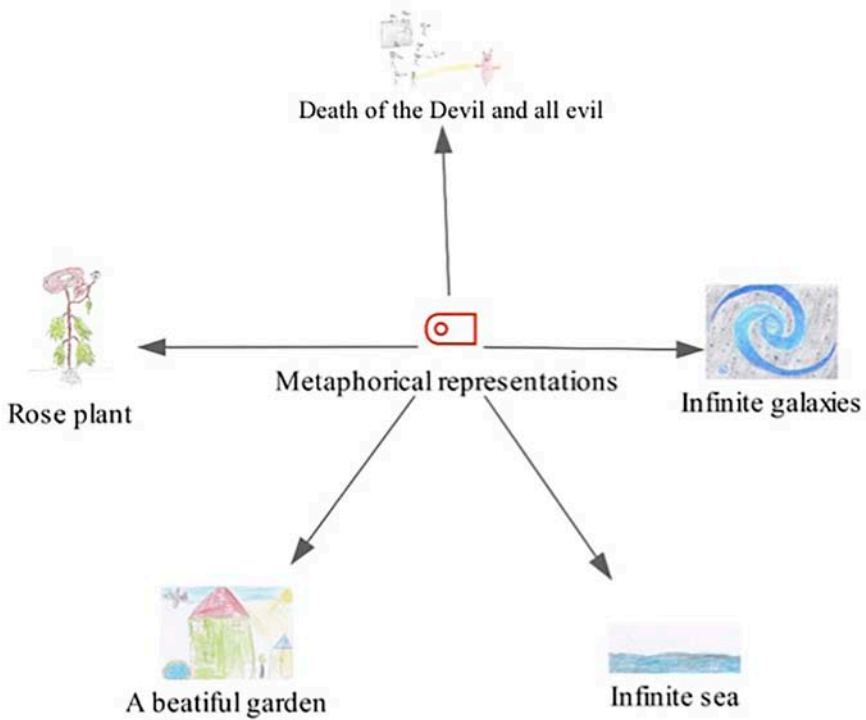


FIGURE 1 Metaphorical Representations (Single-code Model)

children what they want their drawings to say. Drawings with similar content may express ideas literally or in a purely metaphorical sense. For example, Figure 48 (a ten-year-old boy) depicts a butterfly on a flower. The boy who drew it explained that “when I think of Allah, such a scene comes to my mind.” This might appear metaphorical at first glance. However, when asked why he painted this scene, he said, “I drew these and everything because God created them.”³⁶ Hence, it is understood that he indirectly refers to God and wants to emphasize God as the creator.

3.2 *Indirect God Depictions*

3.2.1 Religious-Cultural Drawings

There were forty encodings in the direct God depictions in this study, while indirect God depictions had 247 encodings. Indirect descriptions of God emerged in two main themes: a religious-cultural one and one regarding God’s

³⁶ Fields notes.

residence. Religious-cultural drawings had the highest frequency in the whole sample with 231 codings. In this theme, children expressed many things that come to mind when they think of the concept of 'God.' Sub-themes of this theme included (in order of frequency): God's attributes; places of worship; the Quran; worship; angels; the bond of love between God and humans; a rose representing the Prophet Muhammad; heaven and hell; heaven; Islamic religion; all prophets; worship materials; the Prophet Muhammad; the brotherhood among Muslims; equality; peace; the Devil; and a grave. In the theme of God's attributes, these descriptions were generally not expressed in a single-picture paper. Sometimes, children mentioned multiple descriptors for God, with multiple depictions on one sheet of paper. Each attribute was coded separately. These attributes corresponded to some features found in *al-Esmâ'ül Husna* ('the most beautiful names'), which are the names that Allah used to introduce himself to in the Quran. These attributes that children emphasized in their drawings included the power of creation, omniscience, mercy, the power to bestow blessings, forgiveness, the ability to see everything, protectiveness, incomprehensibility, and the desire for the good and the beautiful for humankind. These features are among the most common concepts that Muslims think of when God is mentioned. In this study, the power of creation was the most often expressed attribute by children of all ages. Likewise, in Oliver E. Graebner's work, children mentioned the creative power of God most frequently.³⁷ In the same way, this attribute was defined most often in the studies of Celal Çayır and Yıldız with Muslim children.³⁸ In the present study, in line with Mustafa Öcal's results, all participants depicted God in positive terms.³⁹ In this sense, this research did not support studies that found God depicted more often in terms of punishment.⁴⁰

The theme of the bond of love between God and humans is an essential issue in Islam's religious-cultural structure. In this theme (see Figure 2), children drew hearts and flowers with the followings expressions: "My dear God, so glad you exist"; "We love you very much"; "Allah is always in our hearts"; "I love Allah very much"; and "He loves us very much."⁴¹ When children were asked to further explain the nature of a loving God, the older ones tried to explain it in their own way. However, younger ones stated that they heard this from their religious teachers, grandparents, and more senior relatives. In the Quran's

37 Graebner, "Child Concept."

38 Celal Çayır, "Çocuklarda Tanrı Tasavvuru Üzerine Bir Araştırma," *Dicle Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 15/2 (2013), 25–36; and Yıldız, "İlköğretim."

39 Öcal, "Okulöncesi."

40 Çayır, "Çocuklarda"; and Yıldız, *Çocuklarda*, 186–187.

41 Field notes.

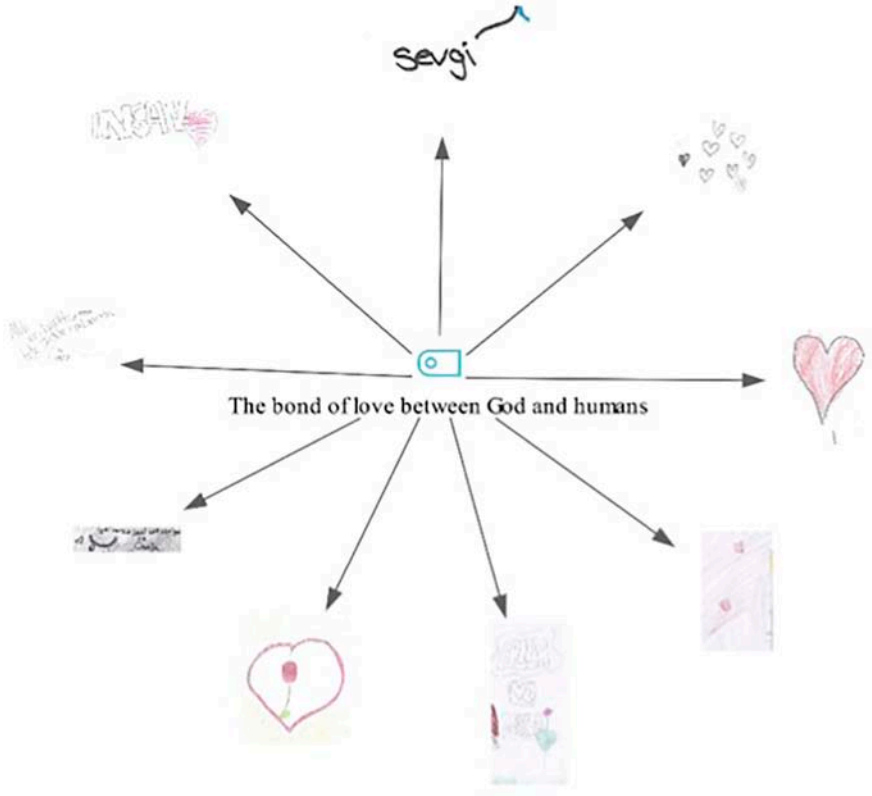


FIGURE 2 The Bond of Love between God and Humans (Single-code Model)

texts, great importance is given to the mutual love between God and humans. There are many names in *al-Esmâ'ül Husna* describing Allah's love and his closeness to people and other beings. Love of God is one of the essential issues in Islamic Sufism. This love is the knowledge that Muslims know and often speak of in their daily lives.

Another religious-cultural theme that requires attention is the 'rose' theme, representing the Prophet Muhammad. Although it is emphasized in the Quran and other authoritative Islamic sources that there is no match for God, in the religious-cultural poetry, biographies, and Islamic visual arts and literature, the Prophet Muhammad is described as the closest to God. This closeness to the divine is highlighted by some clear signs.⁴² Although the creation of

42 Christiane Gruber, "Realabsenz: Duyulur Olmayı Betimlemek, 1300–1600 Yılları Arasında İslam Sanatında Tanrı Temsilleri," in: Nicole Kançal-Ferrari & Ayşe Taşkent (eds.), *Tasvir: Teori ve Pratik Arasında İslam Görsel Kültürü* (İstanbul: Klasik, 2016), 155–186, at 160.

the rose from the Prophet Muhammad's sweat and the accuracy of the other hadiths about the rose in Sufism literature is controversial, the rose was widely used to represent Muhammad in poems and biographies and is accepted by the public.⁴³ Indeed, in our age, Muslims continue to gift each other roses on the Prophet Muhammad's birthday. When asked how they thought of drawing roses, some children did not give a clear answer, but many children said: "Allah loves the Prophet Muhammad the most because he never lied, and he saved people."⁴⁴ One possible explanation may be that the children wanted to draw the prophet that they see as closest to God because they have difficulty conceptualizing God. In addition, because of the prohibition of depiction in Islamic literature, they may have drawn the rose that they knew represented the Prophet Muhammad. Indeed, in two of the three drawings with the theme of the Prophet Muhammad, the participants wrote the words 'Prophet Muhammad.' In only one of the drawings, the Prophet Muhammad was drawn in human form from the rear perspective with his face invisible.

The most common places of worship in Islam—such as mosques and the Kaaba, the Quran, prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, praying, reading the Quran, ablutions, angels, heaven and hell, heaven, Islamic religion, worship materials—such as prophets, prayer rugs, and prayer beads, brotherhood among Muslims, equality, the Devil, peace, and graves were depictions based on religion and culture. While explaining these drawings, the children described their drawings with expressions such as "When I think of God, these come to my mind."⁴⁵ Consequently, these concepts may be reminiscent of Allah because these are the concepts that are frequently encountered or spoken of in social life. Among these, the concepts of brotherhood, equality, and peace among Muslims are related concepts of social peace that Islam refers to and recommends. Regarding the theme of equality, a thirteen-year-old boy (Figure 106), speaking about his drawings, said: "When I think of God, it comes to my mind that all Asian, European, American, and African people are equal. Equality is written in the Quran."⁴⁶ He had drawn the world with continents and people of different skin colors on each continent. A fourteen-year-old boy (Figure 139), said in regard to the theme of brotherhood among Muslims in his drawing: "When I say 'Allah,' I think of the religion of Islam and the expression 'we should be brothers' written in the Quran."⁴⁷ He had drawn people

43 Sabri Çap, "Tasavvufu Gül Sembolü ve Gül İle İlgili Telakkinin Oluşmasında Uydurma Hadislerin Rolü," *Bilimname* 36/2 (2018), 455–498.

44 Field notes.

45 Field notes.

46 Field notes.

47 Field notes.

hugging each other and holding hands. Similarly, in Tamm's study of Swedish children, the category of religious symbols included almost everything that came to mind when participants heard the word 'God': Bibles, Bible stories, churches, and graves. In Harms' study, almost every child drew the crucifix.⁴⁸ In addition, the Star of David, priests, as well as the intermediaries of God, were among the most drawn concepts. The Prophet Jesus was drawn quite traditionally. In V. Peter Pitt's work, there were many pictures "in the church building or taken from songs and liturgy."⁴⁹ Because of their beliefs, Mormon children often showed God together with "one or many wives and children." The Lutheran children drew "pictures telling a whole biblical story or set of stories in one picture." In Mennonite theology, the perception of God was very complicated, based on a strong-fearful, loving-forgiving dialectic. The pictures that reflect this have drawn God too big or too small, too unhappy or too happy. The pictures drawn by the Methodist children had no extraordinary features. The pictures were "vague and sketchy, yet biblically based." Catholic children's drawings mostly contained "religious symbolism, but very little anthropomorphism." Unitarian children drew "very abstract pictures of God," some of which were blank pages because many Unitarians are agnostic or atheist. Because Jewish children believe that it is not possible to represent God, they drew "the most abstract pictures of God." Most of the pictures consisted of "blank sheets of paper, squiggles, blobs, words, and similar abstractions."⁵⁰

3.2.2 Where God Resides

Another main theme that emerged in the indirect depictions of God was the theme of God's place of residence. It may be worth noting that this theme is expressed by children between the ages of eight and twelve and that this theme did not occur after the age of twelve. Not limiting God to a particular place after a certain age may be related to the formation of abstract thinking. In the category of God's residence, according to the order of frequency, it was stated that God lives in a higher place in the world, in the sky, and in heaven. Four of the seven drawings depicting God living in a high place in the world belonged to children aged eight. Similarly, in Yıldız's study, 58.9% of those aged seven to eleven envisaged God somewhere in the world, while 40.9% of those aged thirteen to fifteen stated that God is everywhere, not in a certain place.⁵¹ In addition, only 8.4% of children aged seven to eleven envisaged that

48 Harms, "The Development."

49 Pitts, "Drawing the Invisible," 127.

50 All above quotes from *ibid*, 125.

51 Yıldız, *Çocuklarda*, 111.

God is everywhere. In a study on children's God drawings, children were asked to draw the house where God resides. Dimitris Pnevmatikos noticed three places where God lived: on earth in a material house, in heaven in a material house, or in a spiritual, idealistic house.⁵² Pnevmatikos stated that some representations reflected not only a particular type of house but also an ontological nature attributed to God. Analyzing the pictures of the children in this study according to what he said, only four of the sixteen drawings in total had a material house figure. Three of these houses were a house in heaven. One of them was a house on earth. The other twelve drawings had no material house figures. They just stated where God lived. However, this information was not enough to establish a connection between the place where God resides and his ontological structure.

3.3 *God Drawings by Gender*

In this study, girls drew both anthropomorphic and non-anthropomorphic drawings more often than boys in the direct depictions of God. In this sense, this study could be said to not support research that found that there was no difference in the drawings of girls and boys between the concrete and abstract/symbolic categories.⁵³ In Çayır's study of Muslim children, the rate of anthropomorphism was found to be 15% in boys and 8.4% in girls.⁵⁴ However, in Tamm's study, the girls drew more anthropomorphic figures.⁵⁵

The girls more often drew aesthetic drawings that expressed an emotional bond with God than boys did. Boys more often depicted God rationally and pragmatically in regard to human life and the world. For example, the themes of peace, equality, and brotherhood were expressed only by boys, while the rose representing the Prophet Muhammad was depicted only by girls. The girls were responsible for nearly all depictions of the bond of love between God and humans. In this respect, this research is similar to some previous studies.⁵⁶

In this study, the children were not asked about God's gender while the children were explaining their drawings. However, in both the boys' and girls' anthropomorphic drawings, God was depicted as male, similar to the results of previous research.⁵⁷

52 Pnevmatikos, "Conceptual."

53 Bassett et al., "Picturing"; Zengin, "Almanya'daki"; and Kasserman & Johnson, "A Comparison."

54 Çayır, "Çocuklarda."

55 Tamm, "The Meaning."

56 Heller, *The Children's*, 70; Yavuz, *Çocukta*, 166–168; Nye & Carlson, "The Development"; and Kay & Ray, "Concepts."

57 Ladd, McIntosh, & Spilka, "Children's"; and Zengin, "Almanya'daki."

3.4 *Limitations and Future Research Directions*

Conducting this study with a qualitative methodological procedure does not allow generalization of the findings; the findings are limited by the study's participants. In the study, pictures were analyzed with content analysis as when analyzing a text. Future research may analyze the aesthetic uses associated with the divine in drawings through an art-based approach. One hundred forty-three participants were included in the study. Some may consider this number too high for qualitative research. However, participants were scattered in the Karlsruhe training area. The investigation continued until there was a satisfactory amount of information about the children.⁵⁸ In other words, the same information was repeated in the children's drawings.

Children aged eight to fifteen years were included in the study. Because parents with young children were more worried about aniconism, permission could not be obtained from the parents of preschool children. More information about anthropomorphism could be obtained if children from the age of four could be included in the study. This study sample was cross-sectional. Longitudinal studies are needed to reveal the developmental processes of the concept of 'God' in children. Considering that an individual may have many representations of God that could occur in different times and contextual situations, researching drawings of God several different times and at different ages could better reveal the developmental processes of the concept in children.⁵⁹ The subjects were from a homogeneous group of Turkish-German Sunni Muslims. For this reason, the sample does not represent Muslims of other ethnic origins and immigration backgrounds who are living in Germany. Future research could represent all Muslim groups and dominations living in Germany. Almost all heterogeneous studies have involved Christian denominations or children from religions other than Islam, such as Judaism or Hinduism. Inter-religious studies are also needed to compare conceptions of 'God' in different religions and faiths with Muslim children. The concept of 'God' was dealt with only in terms of age, gender, and religious-cultural differences. This study did not examine other factors, such as parental influence on the understanding of God, the religion of the family at large, the nature of the relationship between the child and the parent, religious practices at home, the nature of conversations about God, participation in church and mosque activities, quality and quantity of formal and informal religious education, or

58 Egon G. Guba & Yvonna S. Lincoln, "Epistemological and Methodological Bases of Naturalistic Inquiry," *Educational Communication and Technology* 30/4 (1982), 233-252.

59 Nicholas J.S. Gibson, "Measurement Issues in God Image Research and Practice," *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health* 9/3-4 (2007), 227-246.

the impact of teachers of religious classes, peers, or media.⁶⁰ Combining future research with these important contextual factors can help identify the root causes of the conception of 'God' in Muslim children.

4 Conclusion, Recommendations, and Educational Applications

The drawings in this study not only depicted God directly but also included indirect indicators of God. This study revealed that the meanings of the symbols in the drawings and socio-cultural context surrounding the drawings often remains unclear without verbal explanation. For this reason, it is necessary for children to describe their drawings.

In this study, two main categories emerged: direct and indirect depictions of God. The category of direct depictions of God displayed the two themes of anthropomorphism and non-anthropomorphism. The theme of anthropomorphism was divided into two further sub-themes: sameness with humans and otherness from humans. The theme of non-anthropomorphism was also further divided into two sub-themes: religious-cultural representations and metaphorical representations. The category of indirect depictions of God displayed a religious-cultural theme and a theme regarding God's place of residence. Sub-themes included God's attributes, places of worship, the Quran, worship, angels, and the bond of love between God and humans. The rose representing the Prophet Muhammad, heaven and hell, heaven, Islam, all prophets, worship materials, the Prophet Muhammad, brotherhood among Muslims, equality, the Devil, peace, and a grave were other sub-themes in this category. In the category of God's place of residence, it was stated that God lives in a high place in the world, in the sky, and in heaven.

In this study, non-anthropomorphic drawings did not increase as age increased. In addition, it was observed that metaphorical drawings based on particular meanings were not concentrated at older ages and were, instead, scattered. As a result, it does not always seem accurate to say that non-anthropomorphic God figures reflect a more mature and developed understanding

60 Simone A. De Roos, "Young Children's God Concepts: Influences of Attachment and Religious Socialization in a Family and School Context," *Religious Education* 101/1 (2006), 84–103; Jurjen Iedema, & Siebren Miedema, "Young Children's Descriptions of God: Influences of Parents' and Teachers' God Concepts and Religious Denomination of Schools," *Journal of Beliefs and Values* 22/1 (2001), 19–30; Dessart, "A Multidimensional"; Jane R. Dickie et al., "Parent-child Relationships and Children's Images of God," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 36/1 (1997), 25–43; Öcal, "Okulöncesi"; and Pitts, "Drawing Pictures of God."

of God as has been previously claimed. In this study, as age progressed, the anthropomorphic depictions of God became increasingly distinct from humans. However, more evidence is needed here to say that cognitive development alone could explain the development of the concept of 'God.' Without ignoring that the degree of the ontological distinction between God and humans may be developmental to some extent, it could be said that religious and socio-cultural factors may have a role in such drawings as well. In the present study, the indirect depictions of God occurred six times more frequently than direct depictions of God, and the religious-cultural theme was the most often expressed in the sample. In this theme, the children described God mostly with the attributes of God dictated to them by their parents and educators and the Islamic symbols most common in their social circles. Therefore, these representations seemed to be affected by the theological style of education and exposure to religious-cultural visuals.⁶¹

There are some gender differences in drawings of God. Girls produced more aesthetic drawings expressing the emotional bond with God than boys did. Boys depicted God rationally and pragmatically more often than the girls.

Finally, given the complex nature of representations of God, it should be kept in mind that these representations expressed by children at a given time could correspond to a single God schema that was put forward at that time.⁶² This study shows that there was sometimes more than one representation of God on a single paper, which included many pictures. In summary, it could be said that children's drawings of God may reflect their thoughts, cognitive abilities, their mastery of religious-cultural symbols, their socio-cultural testimony, and some other contextual factors. It seems that more research is needed to say which of these factors has more of an effect.

One of the most effective methods of revealing the relationships between concepts that individuals are trying to learn or understand is phenomenographic research. In religious education, all the concepts that affect children's concept of 'God' should be considered. Religious teachers and parents should not worry about the fact that some children do not have an idea of a supernatural God. It is not very meaningful to force young children to think abstractly about God. Even though God is described in abstract terms, children have not reached cognitive maturity, so they often try to understand the concept by embodying God. Older children could be informed about the supernatural

61 Paul Duncum, "Visual Culture: Developments, Definitions, and Directions for Art Education," *Studies in Art Education* 42/2 (2001), 101–112.

62 Gibson, "Measurement."

nature of God.⁶³ There is no innate fear of God in children. Fear of God in children could mostly be attributed to what they are told.⁶⁴ The young need to be taught to conceptualize God in terms of forgiveness, mercy, protection, help, and love if a positive perception is desired since positive and negative views and attitudes about God typically begin to take shape at an early age. A positive understanding and attitude could contribute to a child taking a positive approach towards the world, the meaning of life, and religion. Educators should allow children to apply their knowledge of God to their lives instead of making them memorize information about God. Children's attention should be drawn to actions in the universe attributed to God, and educators should ensure that children build and develop a concept of 'God' on their own.⁶⁵

In general, studies on God, including this research, try to reveal that the development of children's drawings of God does not occur randomly but rather may be affected by age and gender and by religious, socio-cultural, and other contextual factors. In this sense, they can be considered "a reformulation of a well-known song."⁶⁶ So how can these drawings be evaluated for the benefit of religious educators? Can we go beyond using the drawings only as a research tool? In this research process, I noticed that the children were very eager to explain their drawings and the differences in their narratives. These observations have shown me that this method could be a useful activity for concept teaching in religious education. Namely, drawings seem like an appropriate way to explore and construct the concept of 'God' in a child's mind.

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63 Nye & Carlson, "The Development."

64 Öcal, "Okulöncesi."

65 Pnevmatikos, "Conceptual."

66 Hans Günther-Heimbrock, "Images and Pictures of God: The Development of Creative Seeing [1]," *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 4/1 (1999), 51–60, at 54.

Statements on Ethics and Conflict of Interest

The author declared that there was no conflict of interest in the authorship or the publication of this article. This research titled “Depictions of God in the Drawings of German-Muslim Children” was approved by Hacı Bektaş Veli University Ethics Committee in the number twenty-two meeting dated 23 December 2020.

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