

Pilot Study of ‘Similarity’ in Judaism, Christianity and Islam and Its Relationship with Globalization

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Abstract- The factor ‘similarity’ is important in multiple ways in interpersonal relations and can be relevant to globalization, the study of similarities among Judaism Christianity and Islam, if exist, can help to facilitate globalization. To study such similarities a questionnaire based on the similarities mentioned in Torah (Jews) Gospel (Christians) and Quran (Muslims) was prepared and disseminated to the similar groups belonging to all the three faiths and after commuting the scores on similar choices the scores compiled. It was found that above 80% of the respondents from all the three groups irrespective of gender, religion and knowledge about religion maintained similar attitudes towards the hypothesized statements based on ‘similarity’. A very large *p*-value within the groups confirms the hypothesis that the proportion is same in all the three groups and the homogenous behavior exists among the groups in case of ideologies.

Index Terms- Similarities, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, globalization

I. INTRODUCTION

Many studies prove that the factor ‘similarity’ is important in multiple ways in interpersonal relations Griffith and Veitch (1974) in (Papalia and Olds, 1985) found that people wanted to keep the ones most like them and wanted to get rid of the ones least like them. ‘Both friends and spouses tend to be similar in race, age, socio-economic status, religion, education, intelligence, values and leisure activities’(Papalia and Olds, 1985). Moreover, it was found that, ‘Man who feel romantically inclined towards a women overestimate the similarity of her ideas and interests to their own’ (Myers, 1993). Further more it was proved that ‘figures similar to each other we group together. We see the triangles and circles as vertical columns of similar shapes, not as horizontal rows of dissimilar shapes’ (Myer,2004) and ‘some ones similarities to us make the person seem more attractive’(Myers, 1993). Moreover, it was found that ‘similarity generally has a positive effect on attraction, it is reasonable to expect that people help those who are like themselves’. ‘Studies in real life stress in Israel show that ‘attachments styles’ help ‘people benefit from social support’ although ‘too much similarity can sometimes be threatening and cause potential helpers to blame the victim’. (Baron et al:1998).

One of the objectives of ‘globalization’ after cold war is to find out ways to develop good and healthy relationship among the peoples of globe. Judaism, Christianity and Islam are three important religions of world and people believing these faiths are a significant part of world population. So discovery of a factor

‘Similarity’ among these three faiths can be helpful in many ways to promote globalization and the harmony of the world bringing the people of all the three faiths further close to each other for Griffith found in (Abraham 1995) that when someone attitude ‘affirms’ our own we feel ‘pleasant’ and ‘pleasure’ leads to happiness and majority likes happiness furthermore Abraham 1995 found while decision making we consider ‘others’ and ‘similarities’ in that context are likely to be helpful for judgments about ‘others’ and would serve to remove ‘conflicts’ (Hellriegel and Slocum: 1976) Moreover, Smeaton, Byrne, and Murnen 1989 in (Baron et al: 1998) conclude that during interaction each person evaluates the other on the basis of ‘proportion of similar attitudes’ Cole et al, 1997 in (Baron et al: 1998) found that ‘individuals whose attachment pattern is secure are more likely to cope effectively with stress through support seeking than are those with ambivalent or avoidant attachment patterns and since ‘pleasure’ is a reward and ‘pleasant emotional state exists when two people like each other and agree about some topics’ Newcomb 1961 in (Baron et al: 1998). In that manner the study is likely to promote globalization for Byrne 1971, Byrne and Clore, 1970, Byrne and Griffith 1966, Byrne and Rhamey, 1965 in (Abraham 1995) found that, ‘we like those others who are associated with reward’. (Abraham 1995) and ‘pleasure’ or ‘happiness’ if it is associated with the ‘similarities’ is a reward in itself, above all human problem solvers are often strongly governed by similarity: (Anderson: 1980) and solving a problem to a some degree is a rewarding behavior for ‘knowing’ that ‘ I have done a good thing is also a reward’ (Batson:1995). The study is also likely to help to reduce ‘contrast error’ that refers to the general tendency on the part of a rater to judge others in a manner opposite from the way in which he perceives himself’ (Blum, Naylor: 1984) if it exists in anyway.

II. METHOD

To determine and inquire about the factor ‘similarity’ the authentic source available was the religious books of three faiths, Torah (Jews), Gospel (Christians) and Quran (Muslims).(Since the original version of Torah was not available so Jew scholars and the representatives of Jew organizations and a few professors of comparative religion in US were approached through email. Later Bible published in USA was included in the study that includes both Torah and Gospel after conforming from the scholars belonging to the religions confirmed that authentic versions of both Torah and Gospel are included in Bible). The review of the literature revealed a notable similarity among the teachings of all the three faiths some of the similarities found are:

Creation of World: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (1 Beginning or '*Bereishith*' in Jewish terminology) Bible

He is Who created for you all that is in the earth. Then turned He to the heaven and fashioned it as seven heavens. (29- The Cow) Quran

Creation of Man: God created man in its own image (27 Beginning) Bible

He hath created man (3 The Beneficent) Quran

God appoint Messengers, *Moses (God's Messenger to Jews) Jesus (God's Messenger to Christians) Muhammad (God's Messenger to Muslims)*

The LORD said to Moses," Speak to the Israelites and say to them, 'I am the LORD your God' (Leviticus or *Vayiqra* in Jewish terminology 18-3) Bible

And you ,my child (Jesus), will be called a prophet of the Most High: for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins' (Luke-76-77) Gospel Bible

He hath revealed unto thee (Muhammad) the Scripture with truth, confirming that which was (revealed before it, even as He revealed the Torah and the Gospel. (3- The Family of Imran) Quran

Kindness

Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan (Exodus 22-22) Bible

'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. (Matthew 5-5) Gospel

Therefore the orphan oppress not. (The Morning Hours: 9) Quran

Idolatry

Then the LORD said to Moses," Tell the Israelites this: You have seen for yourselves that I have spoken to you from heaven: 'Do not make any gods to be alongside me: do not make for yourselves gods of silver or gods of gold' (Exodus: 22-23 p. 72) Bible

"A third angel followed them and said in loud voice: 'If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or the hand, he, too will drink of the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath, He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of holy angles and of Lamb. (Revelations: 9: 10 p.875) Gospel

Those who believe do battle for the cause of Allah: and those who disbelieve do battle for the cause of idols, So fight the minions of the devil. Lo! the devils strategy is ever weak.(76: Women p. 94) Quran

III. PROCEDURE

A questionnaire was disseminated among subjects of equal number to all three faiths following (Kerlinger 1964) recommendation for 'questionnaire' for such studies. The

questionnaire consisting of 11 questions containing 4 multiple choices each reflecting general attitudes towards , God, creation of Universe, man, appointment of prophets, places , religious practices like reciting holy books, moral values like truth and kindness, ideas about life after death, social approval and disapproval for social and religious groups for example 'idolatry' were made. Among the four options in each question one option was purely based on the agreed upon the general facts presented in all the three religious books known as 'Scripture' including Torah (Jews) Gospel (Christians) and Quran (Muslims) to find out that how much 'similarities' still exist in the followers of three faiths. After finalizing the questionnaire it was completed by a sample of 30 subjects consisting of 10 subjects from each religion including 5 males and 5 females, among these 5 with the background of sufficient knowledge of their faith and 5 with average knowledge about their faith irrespective of gender. Mr. Kamal Chughti an associate of Government of Punjab: Pakistan helped to get the required representative sample of Christians. Muslim sample was selected from departments of Islamic Studies and Arabic, GC University Faisalabad with the help of Professor Dr. Shahid Mehboob Rana the Vice Chancellor. Since the data about Jews was not available in Pakistan so 'Sashwm' a group of GC students arranged to get the questionnaires for Jews filled by post with the help of their friends in Australia those delivered the questionnaires to their Australian Jew friends and returned these to the researchers after completion.

IV. RESULTS

It was found that above 80% of the respondents from all the three groups belonging to three faiths irrespective of gender maintain similar preferences towards the hypothesized statements based on similarity. A very large *p*-value within the groups confirms the hypothesis that the proportion is same in all the three groups.

V. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Significant homogeneity was found among the groups to select the hypothesized items while reflecting their views about God, idolatry, appointment of prophets, religious practices like reciting holy Scripture, following social and moral laws like 'kindness' and 'speaking truth', life after death, creation of man on the earth and constituents of man

The results reflect that Torah, Gospel and Quran the religious books of all the three religions Judaism, Christianity and Islam known as 'Scripture' contain contents and possess the potential that can be helpful to find out 'similarities' among these three religion. Moreover, the pilot study reflects that people belonging to these three faiths irrespective of gender and religious knowledge react to these 'similarities' in significantly similar manner.

However a few variations from general trends were also observed. An interesting finding of the study was that all Jews responding to the question, Torah is? Unanimously selected the item, b. a book about religion instead of hypnotized, A word of God as selected both by Christians and Muslims. Since Jews are a religion as well as a race so perhaps they have their own sacred

version of Torah available with them that to them may not be common and assessable or available to non Jews for Clark 1995 found in (Sternberg;2003) that 'meanings of words are determined by conventions'. However in general the pilot study reflects that if the similarity among the religion of Scripture would be explored on large scale and with the help of representative sample and than would be communicated to the people belonging to all the faiths in an affective manner than it would not only help to promote further harmony and understanding among the people having faith in God rather it would certainly contribute positively towards the on going process of globalization.

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