

The relationship between practical bond in religious beliefs and occurrence of crime

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ABSTRACT

All celestial religions have call human being to rightness, truthfulness, and earthly and heavenly salvation. Maybe one can say that rescuing of man from moral rascality, forbidding him from obscene deeds and encouraging people towards faith, nobility and good morality have been the reason for sending holy prophets, revelations, and religious instructions.

Considering the role of religion in moral behavior, there are at least two viewpoints: some believe that the three factors – intellect, scientific achievements, and moral conscience- are sufficient to establish public order, to determine the boundaries of personal freedom and how people interact, and to diminish the improper practices; so there is no need in religion.

The other view argues that although the above-mentioned factors are of great significance in preventing improper practices, believing in religion and its obligatory principles and morals are more important in preventing people from deflection, perversity, and immoral behavior.

Considering the socio-cultural and historical situation in Iran religion and religious beliefs have special significance. Special attention to religious beliefs and practical obligation to religious thoughts have been the base of the present research that attempts to examine the relationship between doing religious rites and self-restraint from immoral behavior (in the form of crime). The statistic society of the research includes all citizens of Mashhad in 2007, and the sample consists of 384 (152 criminals and 232 normal) people. Subjects selected by cluster sampling. The data was gathered using questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire by Cronbach Alpha 82%, and its validity through content validity, was confirmed and approved. Data analyzed by Pearson correlation coefficient, ANOVA, and T-test in independent groups.

The results showed that: 1) there is a negative relation between the volume and the severe of crime conducting with practical bond in religious beliefs; i.e. the more the volume and severe of the crime, the less practical bond in religious beliefs is observed. 2) There is a difference between the volume and severe of crimes in different months of lunar year. The crime reduction is obvious and significant in lunar months of Ramezan, Moharram, and Saffar when people attend more in religious rites. 3) Crime reduction in three above-mentioned months is more true for men than women. 4) Regardless of the level of education and discipline, people who have hearty faith do less crime than those who are more knowledgeable on religious matters.

KEYWORDS: religious beliefs, practical bond, crime, moral

Religion has been introduced among human being as the root of good behavior, good thought, good deed, conscience, worship of god and morality. Religion with its clear social role, organizes the private and the social life. Many studies have been done about the role of religion in private and social life and they show that: there is no society without religion and also there's no religion with no victory and power on the behavior and cultural norms. Religion not only is in contact with culture, but also it has powerful correlation with law, politics and economy. Religion effect from these factors and effects on them. In addition, ethics, literature, art, knowledge, social and racial values even language in all civilization have been connected to religion (Ashofte Tehrani, 2005).

Although, some of scholars in 20th century belief that: religion is a negative or a neutral factor in life and mental health. These opinion bases on Freud's theory that says: religious' belief is a kind of defensive mechanism and come from a persons need to coping with his loneliness.

To Freud, religion is a kind of neurosis and to Maslo is a negative point in the history of man (Watson, 1987).

On the basis of these opinions, some of the clinical the or is accept that, believers, are doubtful, illogical, insecure and have the feel of guiltiness in comparison to others, also they're not strong enough to over come problems of life (kammer,2005).

In behaviorism like psychoanalysis, religion has been criticized as a negative factor and religious beliefs have been thought as being maladaptive (zealburg, 1962).

Religion is a gift for man that arms him with a philosophy of life it enlightens him and puts emphasis on human will basic and nurtured. It helps man to accept logic and to make fundamental spiritual needs specially for love and eternity, to become true (Aleston, etal 1997).

The history of man shows that, religious had old antiquity and what comes from the studies of archaeology and anthropology in ancient times is that, it has been as unseparable part of human life in all ages.

Will Durant believed that: Religion is so rich and complex that has different and various features in various opinions and views. In all ages religion has important role in life.

Froum (1950) considers the need for a pattern of direction and a holy thing, as mans' psychological needs. He says need for religion is the need for having a directory pattern and a source for belief and faith, also the feedback of some famous ponderings like Jung and Adler about the psychology of religion, religious and divine beliefs, is completely positive.

Pargament and Newman (1990) have described the essential and various Psychological roles of religion that help people understand and coping with life events. Religion can be effective in creation of hope, relaxation and peace ,chance of self-actualization, control of impulses, ability of problem solving, good relationship with others and friendly relation with God.

Philosophy of religion discusses about principles and beliefs of religion and the way of metamorphosis and historical evolution of those and studies the quality of it's relationship with people, culture and society's training.

There are two beliefs about the role of the religion in moral behaviors:

One of them believes that the triple factors: common sense, Scientifics' achievement and moral conscience are enough to create the general regularity and determination limitation and authority of man individuals, the how to relations among them and decrease in undeserving deeds. So there is no need for religion.

The second view says: Although common sense, Scientifics' achievement and moral conscience are valuable in preventing from undeserving and unworthy deeds, basis of beliefs, religious commandments and moral principles of religion are more important factors in preventing people from deviation, corruption and immoral behaviors (Keynia, 1991).

Religion is the system of feeling, beliefs and behaviors whose directing towards God. God will the health of society and religion is the communicator between God and society. Religion manages and controls temperament, personality and human life.

In Muslims' belief: Islam, the most complete divine religion, seeks the way of prosperity and salvation, so religious and morality commandments all have been sent in these direction. These obligatory learnt materials arise from a wise creator who is completely aware of the physical, mental, spiritual, material, social and personal needs of humanity.

These learnt materials not only include: refining, purification of soul, good attribution and getting close to God but also they are the cause of increasing social security and formation of the ways for spiritual nurture and avoiding from mistakes. Learnt material of Islam works on the publication and development of justified world, for all humanity.

There are some evidences which show that the beliefs of justified world, are essential for human in order to feel justice and equality.

The effects of adaptation of these beliefs relate with the satisfaction of life, general health, suitable social reactions and correct encountering with daily dangers and problems (Dezoka and Dalbert, 2000 and Dalbert, 2001).

Those who don't have religious beliefs, will simply fall in to passive mood or offensive and aggressive behavior for getting their rights and they experience anxiety, stress and inadequacy in social function (Satoun and Doglass 2005).

Kooing, et al (2000) and Moorfy, et al (2000) expressed that religion can have an important role in physical and mental health and have an effective role on confusing situations and uncontrollable happenings.

Religious commandments and jurisprudence in Islam (like to pray, to fast, to go Hajj, to keep veil) control health and security of individual and society. Besides, response to individual needs these religious orders and learnt materials have some social outputs such as: creation of social identity and security.

The believer Muslim, who accomplishes religious commandments like pray and benediction, is happy and satisfied, is not the one who is, criminal, offender, cruel, with no bearably, hope less. He believes to futurity and attending in God's court, will be more successful in control of instincts and passions and avoiding from crimes and sins. Because each believer knows that applying obligations and avoiding from sacred have been recommended in order to obtain some positive results like: to keep away from crimes and contamination.

Religious' rules and commandments surely are influential in decrease of crime and felony, because in Islam's religious rules, human has been recommended to arrangement, kindness justice, keep others right and avoiding from lie, hypocrisy, robbery and deeds that are against religious commandments and

The basis of Islam like all Godly religions are friendship, kindness, blessing and moderateness.

Prophets always wanted moral traits to expand in society. In Islamic instructions, Muslims have been avoided from harshness in social relations and they have been invited to blessing, pardon, generosity. They have been prohibited from telling lie, jealousy, stinginess and accusation, despising and ridiculing, insolence and injury to others (Mottahari,1995).

Observing moral deeds makes the society healthy but when morality has a protector such as religion, its power and executive guarantees will increase and avoid from emergence of sins also has a powerful influence on the decrease of crime.

Pargament (2002) believed that religion can be effective in process and capacity of coping with crisis, assessment and problem solving. It helps them to tensionally protect themselves.

Bulter (2002) understood that religious attitudes have a positive relation with self-concept and will lead to more empathy and adjustment of students.

Bent (1997) and Tomposon (1999) accepted the effects of religion as the personal coping method in creation of positive and healthy relation in the family space.

Study of relation between religion and reaction to the events of life also proves that believer students use healthier way for coping and will not involve with self-destruction and maladjusted behavior (Sandrase, 1999). Also Barkat (1993) considers religion as the source of control social incompatibility.

Perin and Stroch (2000) and Struch (2001) pointed to the relations between religious commitments and honestly and positive behavior.

Saton and Duglas (2005) considers that, those who have powerful religious beliefs will not simply involve in passive moods and offensive or aggressive behavior and they are less probable to be involved in anxiety, despair and depression.

According to social, cultural and historical conditions, in Iran religion, religious attitude and beliefs have importance. Special attention to religious beliefs and opinions, the necessity and importance for applying the religious learnt materials that have been propounded in order to arrive to the health and prosperity of human, has aroused the necessity for many psychological studies in field of religion.

The results of studies of Bankeston and Zhou (1999) and Yaghoobi, Nasrabadi, Asadollahi and Motamedi (2000) show that: to have religious beliefs and to take part in religious activities will cause the easiness in compatibility and controlling of aggressions. High decrease in committing suicide specially in Moharram, Safar, Ramazan months has been pointed out in this research.

The relationship with God and guardians of religion in these three months, have special importance in Muslim's religious beliefs. So the religious prayers increase and contain special importance.

Ebrahimi, Asadollahi and Moosavi(2000) also pointed to the effects of diary and moral-religious experience in preventing from psychosocial deviations.

Results of this survey showed that the young girls who have not any sing of behavioral pathology, meaningfully used to have spiritual experience and religious revenue in childhood, teenage and adolescence.

Bahreinian and Ilkhani (2000) founded: there is a powerful, reverse correlation coefficient between committing suicide and commitment to pray. Those who commit suicide paying less attention to pray.

Having a glance at the life some social criminal teenagers, adults and those who have disturbed the social security of society, obviously proves this point that most of them were those who didn't have any relation with praying and other religious commands, so they thought that they were free in their lives and took part in committing sins and mistakes. Not only they destructed their life but also encountered other's life with insecurity.

Mohamadi and Larigani (2000) Sadeghipoor and Rezaie Ghaale (2000) and Ghahremani, Delshadnoghi and Tavakolizade (2000) studies about the relation between the mental health and fasting in Ramazan, also the effect of fasting on the point that has been mentioned before, they have announced the decrease in the rate of stress, depression and committing suicide that fallows the prays in Ramazan.

Also prayer in this month causes improvement in individual behavior and social relationship. According to the special importance of these three months in Islam and Iran, this research executed in order to study the connection between religious ceremonies (pray, fast and...) and preventing from committing immoral behavior (all of crime).

Method:

The statistic society of the research includes all citizens of Mashhad in 2007, and the sample consists of 384 (152 criminals and 232 normal) people. Subjects selected by cluster sampling. The data was gathered using questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire by Cronbach Alpha 82%, and its validity through content validity, was confirmed and approved. Data analyzed by Pearson correlation coefficient, and T-test in independent groups.

The results showed that:

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of research variables

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness	Kurtosis		
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Volume	384	8	0	8	485	1.26	9.8E-02	1.92	3.71	1.46	.125	1.10	.248
Severe	384	72	0	72	3762	9.8	.83	16.3	265.01	1.67	.125	1.66	.248
Bond	384	35	4.00	39	9823	25.58	.4	7.91	62.55	-.093	.125	.46	.248

Table 2: The relationship between of volume, severe and bond

		volume	severe	bond
volume	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.915**	-.623**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
	N	384	384	384
severe	Pearson Correlation	.915**	1.000	-.653**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
	N	384	384	384
bond	Pearson Correlation	-.623**	-.653**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
	N	384	384	384

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

Table 3: T-Test for comparison of volume, severe and bond of criminal person with normal Group Statistics

	Criminal or normal	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
volume	criminal	152	3.1908	1.7967	.1457
	normal	232	.0000	.0000	.0000
severe	criminal	152	24.7500	17.3103	1.4040
	normal	232	.0000	.0000	.0000
bond	criminal	152	18.6645	7.3177	.5935
	normal	232	30.1121	4.0756	.2676

Independent Samples Test

		Leven's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
volume	Equal variances assumed	706.869	.000	27.068	382	.000	3.1908	.1179	2.9590	3.4226
	Equal variances not assumed			21.895	151.000	.000	3.1908	.1457	2.9028	3.4787
severe	Equal variances assumed	852.763	.000	21.793	382	.000	24.7500	1.1357	22.5170	26.9830
	Equal variances not assumed			17.628	151.000	.000	24.7500	1.4040	21.9759	27.5241
Bond	Equal variances assumed	84.662	.000	-19.636	382	.000	-11.4476	.5830	-12.5939	-10.3013
	Equal variances not assumed			-17.583	212.866	.000	-11.4476	.6511	-12.7310	-10.1642

Table 4: T-Test for comparison of volume, severe and bond of male with female Group Statistics

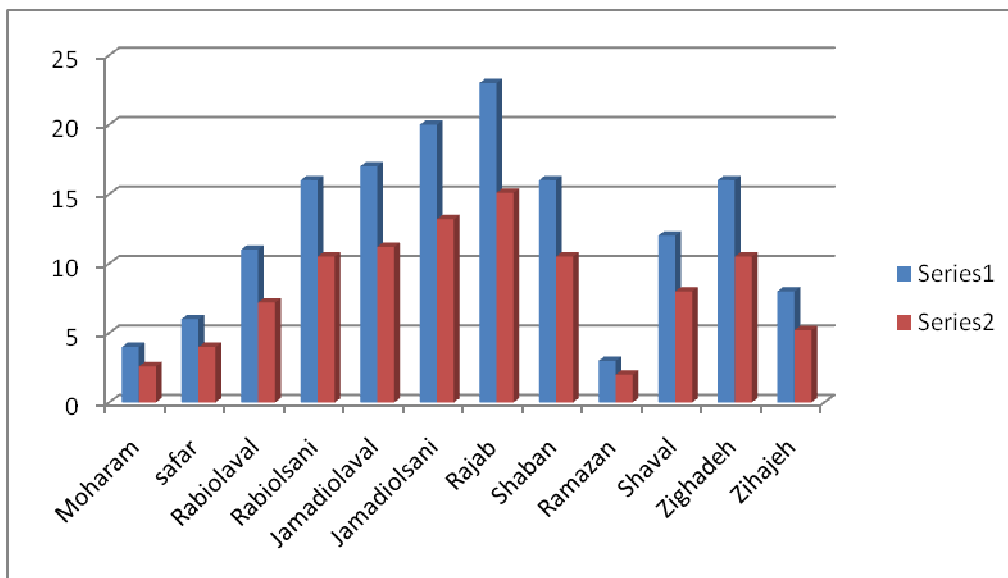
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
volume	female	140	.3357	.8189	6.921E-02
	male	244	1.7951	2.1657	.1386
severe	female	140	2.4786	6.5255	.5515
	male	244	13.9959	18.5682	1.1887
bond	female	140	28.7357	6.0390	.5104
	male	244	23.7705	8.2888	.5306

Independent Samples Test

		Leven's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Volume	Equal variances assumed	148.354	.000	-7.661	382	.000	-1.4594	.1905	-1.8339	-1.0848
	Equal variances not assumed			-9.418	342.06	.000	-1.4594	.1550	-1.7642	-1.1546
Severe	Equal variances assumed	164.202	.000	-7.089	382	.000	-11.5173	1.6247	-14.7118	-8.3229
	Equal variances not assumed			-8.789	331.98	.000	-11.5173	1.3104	-14.0951	-8.9396
Bond	Equal variances assumed	15.803	.000	6.204	382	.000	4.9652	.8003	3.3917	6.5387
	Equal variances not assumed			6.744	360.78	.000	4.9652	.7363	3.5173	6.4131

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of frequency and percent of crime in different month

MONTH	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Moharam	4	2.6	2.6	2.6
safar	6	4	4	6.6
Rabiolaval	11	7.2	7.2	13.8
Rabiolsani	16	10.5	10.5	24.3
Jamadiolaval	17	11.2	11.2	35.5
Jamadiolsani	20	13.2	13.2	48.7
Rajab	23	15.1	15.1	63.8
Shaban	16	10.5	10.5	74.3
Ramazan	3	2	2	76.3
Shaval	12	8	8	84.3
Zighadeh	16	10.5	10.5	94.8
Zihajeh	8	5.2	5.2	100.0
Total	152	100.0	100.0	



Graph 1: Descriptive Statistics of frequency and percent of crime in different month

Results:

All religions have recalled humanity to correctness, righteous and salvation. Maybe the reason for the election of prophets, revelation and religious commands is rescuing humanity from moral rascality and preventing them from indecent deeds and encouraging people toward faith, kindness and admirable morality.

The results of this investigation showed that is a negative relationship between quantity and intensity of crime occurrence and practical necessity to religious beliefs.

Islam is so spread that one cannot study it from just one view point. The meaning of religion is a combination of the beliefs, rules and moralities that is necessary for training and managing of humanistic society. In Islam, set of principals and rules have been announced, that a Muslim has to obey them.

Islam Religion's belief principals: monotheism, justice, prophecy, leadership and resurrection. Religious commandments that doing them is an obligation in some cases and have been put stress on them in some other cases, including: pray, fast, khoms and etc. In addition to these, many of

moral principals are stress have been put on them, such as: truthfulness, kindness, to pay a visit to relatives, caring about orphans and...

In Islamic belief, Ramazan, Muharam and safar month, have special importance. Ramazan is a month that the relationship with God will be more intimate by the means of special ceremonies and Muslims find themselves in a closer relation to God. Fasting is one of the most important commands of God. In this month, Muslim, not only prevents himself from eating and drinking in definite time but also he should prevent all organs of his body and thought from wrong affairs.

In this month, reading Quran, visiting relatives, feeding people and avoiding from lie, cruelty and other immoral affairs increase. These factors have special importance in acceptance of this praying. Muharam and Safar also, have special place in Islamic beliefs. In muharam one of the great leaders of Islam, Imam Hossein, has revolted for correction and retaining of religion when he had been martyred in battling against blasphemy.

After that time Muslims in addition to mourning for that great man, they also try to fallow his way with paying more attention to principles and commandments of religious, in order to protect Islam and to keep it alive.

The results of this research show: while the practical necessity to religious beliefs increase, the quantity and intensity of committing crimes decrease and these decrease is obvious in Muharam and Safar and Ramazan months, that people take part in religious ceremonies and prayers.

Different investigation show that religion can be effective in creation of hope and showing talents, controls of intensive and problem solving (Pargament and Newman ,1990).

Balter(2002), Schuartz, Everet and vertington (1994) pointed to the relation between religious beliefs and self-concept, adjustment and coping with Stress by problem solving in students. In this way sanderz (1999) and Barket (1993) considered religion as a source of mooring ?

Social mall adjust and claimed that religious people use healthier strategies for coping, they didn't engage with mall adjust and self-destructive behaviors.

The surveys of Ilkhani and Bahreinian (2000) Mohamadi and Larijani(2000) Sadeghipoor and Rezaie (2000) Ghahremani etal (2000) confirmed the relationship between practical necessity to religious beliefs and occurrence of crime.

Believe in God and resurrection are two essential points in all Godly religions. To believe in God who is real owner of human and world, who has the complete control on all human being and their behavior and deeds and who is aware of all events: evident and hidden, makes the religious person honest in society while others live besides his honesty and this is one of the positive and effective roles of religion.

The meaning of, believe in resurrection is believing to give reward and punishment (retribution) by God for human's deed. A person who believe to resurrection is responsible for his deed, doesn't need to control by anybody (police and ...) and he is not afraid of criminal rules. Because of, his religious motives keep his from immoral behavior and cause not to go away from the limitations of justice and moral obligation.

The results of the investigations of Saton and Duglas (2005) point to the role of the religious beliefs in preventing from embarrassment, Passive mood, aggressive behavior, despair and hopelessness.

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