



## Family Structure in the Abrahamic Religions and Its Adaptation to Psychological Theories: A Comparative Analysis

Batoul Doust Mohammadi<sup>1</sup>

Ali Rafie Moghadam<sup>2</sup> (Corresponding author)

Mohammad Akbari<sup>3</sup>

| ARTICLE INFO  | ABSTRACT   |
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| <p>Received: 10 November 2020<br/>           Revised: 31 December 2020<br/>           Accepted: 31 January 2021<br/>           Online: 15 January 2022</p>            | <p>Globalization and the spread of immigration have affected family structure through the marriage of people with different religious backgrounds. In the first step, religious differences directly affect the circle of marriage. In the meantime, marriage is more common among people belonging to the Abrahamic religions. The purpose of this study was to analyze the family structure (circle of marriage) in the Abrahamic religions and explain its compatibility with psychological theories. The research method was comparatively qualitative and for data collection and analysis the documentary method and cumulative content analysis method were used respectively. The first research finding revealed that there is a similarity between all Abrahamic religions in terms of attention to the structure of marriage. This structure is based on the distinction between <i>Mahrms</i> and <i>Non-mahrms</i>. The second finding shows that the scope of family structure in terms of the circle of marriage in Judaism is extensive, in Christianity is limited and in Islam is between the two religions. The third finding indicated that all three religions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism, in defining the circle of marriage, support the theory of "natural hatred" and family cohesion and do not take into account the views of scientists like Freud and Foucault. According to the research findings, it seems that psychological theories can provide new perspectives to explain the structure of the family to religious scholars. Also, these theories can provide common intellectual and educational backgrounds for analyzing the circle of marriage in the young generation regardless of religious affiliations.</p> |
| <p>KEYWORDS</p> <p>Abrahamic religions<br/>           Family<br/>           Marriage<br/>           Physiological structure<br/>           Psychological theories</p> |  |

<sup>1</sup> Ph.D. Student, Department of Private Law, Faculty of Literature & Humanities, Yazd Branch, Islamic Azad University, Yazd, Iran, Email: betty 198582@yahoo.com

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Law, Faculty of Literature & Humanities, Bahonar University, Kerman, Iran, Email: ali.rafiie@uk.ac.ir

<sup>3</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Literature & Humanities, Bahonar University, Kerman, Iran, Email: makbari@uk.ac.ir

## 1. Introduction

The structure of family has undergone many changes over the last hundred years. Collective families are declining and nuclear families are expanding. Also, marriage of people with different racial, linguistic, economic, cultural, educational and religious backgrounds has been on the rise. Globalization, the advent of information and communication technologies, the expansion of means of transportation and the increase in travel along with the increase in the number of immigrants have led to greater communication between men and women and their marriage to each other (Livingston & Brown, 2017). For example, Murphy (2015) shows that almost one in ten Americans (39%) who have been married since 2010 have a spouse who belongs to another religious group. One of the important differences between couples is the difference in religious beliefs. Naturally, these marriages have many and sometimes unforeseen consequences. One of the important differences between couples is the difference in religious beliefs, while main religions have several "do's and don'ts" regarding marital relations and family formation (Mullins, 2016). For example, when a Muslim man marries a Christian woman, with whom can their children marry or not? The answer to this question is not necessarily the same in all religions. While a Muslim boy can marry his cousin daughter, such permission is not granted to a Christian boy. In the current state of the world where interfaith marriages are on the rise, main question is that "what is the circle of marriage and incest of Jewish Abrahamic religions, Islam and Christianity, and how can it be explained in terms of psychological views". To answer this question, it is necessary to examine the structure of the family in these three religions more carefully.

Attention to the family system is one of the common aspects of Abrahamic religions. The Torah, the Bible, and the Qur'an contain numerous stories, advices, and laws concerning various aspects of the family system — such as marriage, man-woman relationships, childbirth, and child-rearing. One of the topics that have always been of interest to the leaders of the three Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam is the physiological structure of family formation and the permissible frameworks for marriage (Blidstein, 2016). While physiology is the study of the natural function of living organisms, one of the aims of this science is to study the reproductive system (Shakweer, 2015). This subsystem includes the study of how the fetus is created and nurtured, the effect of gene combination on body structure, degree of health and possibility of physical and mental illness. In this regard, one of the topics that have been jointly considered by religious scholars, physicians, physiologists and family specialists is the impact of consanguineous

marriage on child health (Alvarez, Quintiro & Suarez 2011; Bittles, 2003). In genetics, individuals are divided into six degrees according to the proximity or distance of kinship and hereditary similarity (Akrami, 2006).

Table 1: Kinship classification and proportion of common genes

| Degree | Members   | Ratio of common genes |
|--------|---|-----------------------|
| 1      | Father, mother, child, sister, brother                  | 1.2                   |
| 2      | Uncle, aunt, uncle, nephew                              | 1.4                   |
| 3      | Uncle's boy or girl, aunt's boy or girl (first cousin ) | 1.8                   |
| 4      | Uncle grandson, Aunt granddaughter(second cousin)       | 1.16                  |
| 5      | Uncle and aunt result                                   | 1.32                  |
| 6      | Uncle nephew, Uncle nephew                              | 1.64                  |

Akrami, 2006, p. 361

Numerous studies have shown that the incidence of diseases and disabilities in children with inbred parents is higher than other children (Corry, 2014; Rabah et al. 2013; Reuter et al. 2017). In consanguineous marriages, we see more births of children with disabilities, and according to global statistics, 3 to 4 percent of infant mortality occur due to genetic disorders. The risk of congenital disease in any pregnancy in the general population is about 2.5% (WHO, 2020). The closer a consanguineous marriage is (such as cousin girl marriage to a cousin boy), the greater the risk of congenital diseases of the fetus and infant, sometimes up to 12 times (Bowirrat & Armaly 2013). The most common problems of children from consanguineous marriages are mental and physical disabilities, metabolic diseases, visual disorders and thalassemia. In consanguineous marriages, a man and a woman inherit common genes from a certain ancestor, and the likelihood that a defective gene is present in both of them is greatly increased (Akrami, 2006).

With regards to these medical facts, as well as the existence of children with disabilities, three other important issues are important: First, what is the difference between countries in terms of the prevalence of consanguineous marriages; Second, from a religious point of view, what is the circle of marriage - which has a direct impact on the prevalence of children with disabilities, and third, from a psychological point of view, how can the scope of the circle of marriage be explained? Regarding the first point, the available information indicates that from a legal point of view, marital relations with first-degree relatives are prohibited in almost all countries. This prohibition applies to both blood and causal families. In European countries and North America, consanguineous marriages are either forbidden or culturally hated (Schulz, 2016). Of course, many countries - such as China, Taiwan, South Korea, North Korea, the Philippines, and many US states - have enacted

various laws prohibiting consanguineous marriages up to the third degree of relatives (Paul & Spencer, 2008).

Despite unpleasant consequences of consanguineous marriages, the trend of these marriages in developing countries shows an upward trend (Bhinder, Sadia, Mahmood, Qasim, Hussain, & Rashid, et al. 2019). For example, in Iran, the prevalence of consanguineous marriages is 40% in most cities and 70% in rural areas - where all residents are directly and indirectly relatives of each other - (IRNA, 2019). Statistics from the National Organization for Civil Registration of Iran show that cousin's girl to cousin boy marriage tops the list of consanguineous marriages in Iran with 24%. Also, one brother's daughter marries another brother's son make up about 20%, marriage of a nephew to a nephew 16.5% and cousin-son marriages 10% of consanguineous marriages (Mashreq News Agency, 2018). Marriage of fourth-degree relatives (grandchildren of aunts and uncles) at a rate of 7.5 percent is also very common. The consequence of consanguineous marriages in Iran is the annual birth of 30 to 40 thousand disabled children (Jomeh, 2016). According to the Ministry of Health and Medical Sciences, 3 to 4% of newborns in Iran have a genetic defect or disease (IRNA, 2019).

What has been said draws our attention to the fact that marriage is not just a personal matter and is influenced by various social factors such as culture, religion and scientific and educational knowledge of couples (Saadat, 2002). Accordingly, the second issue to reduce the number of disabled people in a society is to pay attention to the religious context of the society. In fact, religion is one of the most important factors in determining the circle of marriage, which means that the greater the religious authorization of the range of choice of spouse among genetic dependents, the greater the likelihood of having a disabled child and vice versa (Rowthorn, 2011). Thus, some religions are generally in favor of consanguineous marriage, and some have restricted the circle of marriage. In the meantime, it is important to examine the views of the three Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Research by Hosseini Chavoshi, Abbasi Shaozi & Beatles (2014) highlighted that Jews have the highest rate and Christians the lowest rate of consanguineous marriage. In fact, the followers of these religions, according to the teachings of the scriptures and their prophets, cannot marry anyone they want, and they are limited in choosing a spouse from among their relatives and dependents. Therefore, the scope of marriage of followers of different religions in the issue of consanguineous marriages is closely related to the scope of incestuous people, which means that the greater the range of people who are considered incestuous; the scope of consanguineous marriages will be more limited. The opposite is also true. The smaller the scope

of incest and the fewer relatives are considered incestuous, the greater the scope of consanguineous marriages and the more a person will have the right to choose a spouse - from among his relatives and families. Thus, the intersection and determining point of kinship marriage in religions is the issue of incestuous marriage (Rowthorn, 2011).

The third issue that arises here is how psychologically important the relationship with the incestuous is for religions and their followers. In fact, the basic premise of an incestuous relationship depends on the psychological analysis we believe to accept or deny the relationship. In other words, from a religious point of view, who we can marry - or cannot marry - depends solely on religious reasons. Therefore, some religions are more tolerant and some are stricter. Of course, in religious texts sometimes we can find rational reasons for accepting or rejecting marriage with family members (Gholami & Bustan, 2017). It seems that these rational reasons mainly refer to the physical effects of marriage (Falsafi, 2015). However, psychological theories are looking for more effective reasons to deny marriage with an incestuous woman. Therefore, recognizing the degree of agreement between religions and psychological theories can provide new perspectives for explaining marriage with an incestuous person to religious scholars, population policymakers, and educational planners — to educate the young generation not to marriage with relatives to prevent the birth of children with disabilities. Indeed for young societies - such as Iran, where more than half of the population is under 33 years of age and are of marriageable age (Tasnim , 2020) - comparing the structure of marriage in Islam - as the main religion of the country - with other Abrahamic religions and also psychological theories is an undeniable necessity. Also, the necessity of the present study is evident from the fact that we realize that by increasing the circle of incest, the birth of 40,000 disabled children in Iran can be prevented annually (Kashfi Nejad, 2020). Considering this necessity, the aim of the study was to comparatively explain the family structure in the Abrahamic religions and its adaptation to psychological theories. The specific objectives of the research are:

- What is family structure according to the circle of marriage in the Abrahamic religions?
- What are the psychological theories that explain the denial of incestuous marriage?
- What are the similarities and differences between the Abrahamic religions regarding the scope of marriage?
- Regarding the structure of the family, to what extent are there similarities between the Abrahamic religions and psychological theories?

## 2. Research Method

According to the purpose of the research, a qualitative comparative method was used. Researchers have used the paragraph analysis method and duplicate data strategy - which means avoiding using data in more than one category (Shiri & Azimi, 2012) - for collection of data. Primary sources included three books of Quran, Torah and Bible and secondary sources including books and articles related to the purpose of the research (n = 52). Purposeful sampling method was used to select secondary data. Also, for data analysis, the method of summative content analysis and categorization system were used. In this method, the researcher's goal is to discover the principled meanings of the studied themes (Krippendorff, 2004). To determine validity of data, the consensus method (using multiple sources) and for reliability and with help of two religious scholars, two techniques of "detailed and accurate note-taking" and "data analysis" were used.

## 3. Findings

Before presenting the findings, it is necessary to refer to two points: First) in the present research, we mean the relatives of people who have a common ancestor or ancestors and as a result have received the same genes from them. Therefore, people whose  $(1/2)$ ,  $(1/4)$ ,  $(1/8)$ ,  $(1/16)$  and  $(1/32)$  genes are common, are considered as a first, second, third, fourth and fifth of relatives respectively (Mowaffaq, 2009, p. 102). Second, in the present study the Abrahamic religions refer to the three religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, which are expressed their opinions about family structure - in terms of the scope of marriage and incest - separately. According to the sub-goals and data analysis, the research findings are presented in four general groups: Family structure in the Abrahamic religions, psychological theories explaining the negation of incestuous marriage, the adaptation of the Abrahamic religions to psychological theories, and the similarities and differences of the Abrahamic religions and psychological about scope of marriage.

### *A) Structure of family in the Abrahamic religions*

The family structure means the permissible framework for people to marry each other according to their causal and blood relations with each other in terms of the three religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, and who each of these religions allows people to marry each other.

#### *First: Judaism*

According to the canons of Judaism, a person cannot marry the following people: father, mother, grandfather, grandmother, sister, brother, children and grandchildren. Therefore, other people are

not in the realm of incest and marriage with them is allowed. The most important reference in this regard is the Old Testament, which identifies women with whom marriage is forbidden (Leviticus chapter 18 - commandments 8 to 18 and chapter 20 - commandments 11 to 21 and also in the book of Deuteronomy). According to the explicit order of the Torah, no Jew has the right to marry his incestuous partner, and such an act is considered adultery (Glen & Marten, 2000). In any case, such marriages are legal, and consanguineous marriages are still practiced among Jews. Marriage between second-degree relatives is also common in Judaism, and is one of the most important causes of inbreeding among Jews (Kang et al, 2017).

### *Second: Islam*

In Islam, in addition to the incest prescribed in Judaism, there are others who are incestuous. These people include brothers and sisters of father and mother. Given that polygamy is recognized in Islam, it is not possible to marry two sisters at the same time. In Islam, due to the explicitness of the Qur'an on the issue of incest, the differences between Islamic sects on this issue are minimized. In the Holy Quran, incestuous marriage is strictly forbidden (Makarem Shirazi, 1993). Of course, in the narrations and practical life of Shiite Imams, two different views can be found in this regard: First) the narrations that forbid marriage with an incestuous woman. For example, the Prophet of Islam is quoted as saying, "Marry a stranger so that you do not have a weak child" (Sharif al-Radi, 2001). Elsewhere, he was quoted again as saying: Do not marry close relatives; because a weak child is born (Ibn Manzoor, 1993). Second) Marriage is permissible and there is no obstacle, as the first Imam of Shiites Ali - who was the cousin of the Prophet of Islam and his son-in-law - said: No woman is better for marriage than a cousin (Majlisi, 1983, p. 236). Also, one of the wives of the Prophet of Islam named Umm Salma was his cousin. Of course, a review of historical sources shows that among the 12 Shiite Imams, only 2 of them married their 3rd degree incest and the rest chose unrelated or non-Arab wives (Babaei Amoli, 2001).

### *Third: Christianity*

In Christianity, in addition to the incest prescribed by Judaism and Islam, other incest has been added: the children of uncles, aunts, and cousins . Of course, in different times and eras, Christian leaders have expressed different views about incest in terms of social and political situations (Schultz, 2016). Also, because the Torah gave detailed instructions on incestuous marriage before Christ, the Bible does not explicitly mention incest. However, Christians do not allow marriage to uncles and cousins, and in addition to prohibiting marriage to first- and second-degree relatives,

marriage to third-degree relatives (children of uncles and aunts) and fourth-degree relatives (grandchildren of uncles and aunts) and fifth degree (results of uncle and aunt) are also not allowed in Christianity (Akrami, 2006). Of course, the laws governing Christian countries are not the same. In the United States, for example, 24 states prohibit marriage between third-degree relatives such as cousins, and the like, and are allowed in 19 states (Wolfson, 2005). In addition, there is disagreement among Orthodox, Catholics, and Protestants about incest (Schultz 2016).

### *B) Psychological theories explaining the negation of incestuous marriage*

Given that incestuous marriage has historically been a common taboo in human societies, two fundamental questions arise: First, why do human societies - despite their very religious, cultural, social, and educational differences -, prohibit incestuous marriage. Second, why, despite this commonality, the scope of the marriage ban has not been and is not the same in all societies. For the first question, various theories have been presented so far, which are mainly psychological. In this section, these theories are briefly mentioned:

#### *First: Natural hatred theory*

This theory was first proposed by the Finnish anthropologist Edvard Alexander Westermarck. In his view, the long coexistence of people with each other causes the loss of attractiveness and a state of hatred between them (Blankenhorn, 2007). Therefore, people are naturally dissatisfied with marrying those who have been with them since childhood, and for this reason, all societies strongly hate marrying a first-degree incest. Despite this argument, the question remains as to why some people tend to marry incest.

#### *Second: Freud's theory*

In explaining the hatred of incest, Sigmund Freud refers to the Oedipus complex and the suppression of sexual desire for guilt (Spencer, 2020). In explaining the Oedipus complex, Freud emphasizes that in primitive societies a man had several wives. So the sons killed their father and the women took over. In the next stage, there was a dispute between the boys over the possession of the women and a war broke out between them. In this situation, along with the murder of his father - who both hated and admired him - led men to swear that no one had the right to marry an incestuous woman. In this way, men escaped being killed by each other and by their sons (Cessario, 2003). Thus, incestuous marriage as a taboo caused men to reach out to women of other groups,

thereby strengthening their bond with their own family and other tribes and maintaining their survival.

*Third: Family strength theory*

Scholars such as the Polish anthropologist Bronisław Malinowski and the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss believe that the prohibition of incestuous marriage is to prevent the breakdown of the family through expansion of social relations (Lévi-Strauss 1971; Malinowski, 2008). They argue that there is no evidence that the taboo on incest - which, according to Freud, was the result of the agreement of the male herds - has been genetically passed on to future generations. Therefore, the assumption of the existence of a "collective and hereditary unconscious" is not accepted by other scientists. In addition, existence of the Oedipus complex is not approved by the psychological society. While rejecting Freud's theory, Malinowski believed that the existence of patriarchal societies is the best reason to reject the Oedipus complex (Malinowski, 2008). Lévi-Strauss also believed that incestuous marriage was due to "overestimation of family ties" and the killing of a father or brother was "due to underestimation of kinship", which caused great harm. The prohibition of incestuous marriage created a balance between extreme love and extreme disregard for the institution of the family (Meyer, 2013).

*Fourth: Michel Foucault's theory*

The famous French philosopher Michel Foucault believes that the rejection of incestuous marriage in Western societies is due to the fact that these societies accept sexual relations within the framework of the family institution and control any sexual relations within it to maintain family (Foucault, 2004). According to Foucault, in the West, the prohibition of incestuous marriage is considered a universal agreement, an absolute social matter, and a stage in the development of society. Foucault also sees the transformation of the family institution into the central part of what he calls the "system of sexuality" as opposed to the "system of connection" that guarantees the survival of the family (Deveaux, 1994).

*C) Adaptation of the Abrahamic religions to psychological theories*

All Abrahamic religions have been sensitive to the nature of sexual relations from the beginning, and this sensitivity can be found in the Torah, the Bible, and the Qur'an, as well as in speeches of religious leaders. Accordingly, the main reason for explaining the "do's and don'ts" in sexual relations is to resort to the fact that it is said in the Torah, the Bible or the Qur'an. Naturally, for the

strong followers of any religion, this reason can be the strongest reason because it is based on religious faith. However, there is still the question of whether religions have other reasons for refusing to marry an incestuous woman. The most common reasons given by scholars of all three Abrahamic religions for opposing incest are very common among them. The first reason mentioned in all three heavenly books is the power of sexual desire, which causes the family unit to collapse. The Qur'an (verse 28 of Surah An-Nisa') emphasizes that man is weak against sexual lust, and because he is in constant contact with family members, he controls his lust by forbidding incest. The second factor refers to the hatred of having sex with an incestuous woman. In the Qur'an (Surah An-Nisa', verses 22/23) marriage with an incestuous partner is considered ugly and hateful. The third factor refers to the destruction of the family institution through the birth of weak children. According to all three religions, incestuous marriage results in the birth of unhealthy children. In Jewish sources, it is pointed out that by linking a part of a tree to itself, a healthy fruit is not produced (Gilman, 1998). The fourth factor, which is similar to the previous factor, is the expansion of the generation through marriage to multiple people. The fifth factor refers to preventing sexual restraint to strengthen the family structure. In all three religions, marriage is considered sacred and should not be subject to sexual desire. According to what has been said, various cases can be deduced regarding the conformity of the views of the three Abrahamic religions with the psychological foundations of the prohibition of incestuous marriage. This inference is expressed in turn for each of the psychological theories:

- Content of religious sources in Judaism, Islam, and Christianity shows a close affinity with the theory of natural hatred. In fact, both in the three books of the Torah, the Bible and the Qur'an, as well as in the speeches of religious leaders, the hatred of incestuous marriage is strongly emphasized and various punishments such as murder, torture, stoning, exile, flogging and eternal divorce are considered for offenders. For this reason, it can be said that Edward Westermarck's theory has more religious support.
- Content of religious sources in Judaism, Islam, and Christianity does not show much affinity with Freud's theory, although there is agreement among all three religions with Freud's view that "sexual desire" is very strong. Also in some religious stories - such as the marriage of Cain and Abel to their sisters, the marriage of Jacob to two sisters - there are signs of Freud's confirmation of incest before its prohibition.
- Contents of religious resources in Judaism, Islam and Christianity reveal similarity with theory of family strength, although the angle of religion is not the same with the views of those such as Malinowski and Levi Strauss. The experience of these two researchers is mainly due to the result of the life of primary tribal tribes and the role of Totem and taboo in their social relations, while the family strength from the perspective of Ebrahimi religions indicates a "divine duty" to expand the number of servants of the Lord.

- Content of religious resources in Judaism, Islam and Christianity does not show a lot of continuity with Foucault's theory. In fact, from Foucault's perspective, monitoring sexual behavior - whether by religion or government – is a kind of "behavior control"

#### *D) Similarities and differences between the Abrahamic religions*

The similarities and differences between the three religions of Judaism, Islam and Christianity can be divided into two general groups according to the previous sections of the article. In the first group, the views of three religions about incestuous marriage are examined from different dimensions. The second group compares the three religions according to psychological theories. Data analysis based on cumulative content analysis method shows several categorization systems that help to discover the principled meanings in the studied texts (Table 1).

Table 1: Categorization system based on family structure in Abrahamic religions

| Category/ Religion         | Judaism            | Islam              | Christianity       |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Family status              | Holy               | Holy               | Holy               |
| Marriage status            | Excellent          | Excellent          | Medium             |
| Causes of marriage         | Religious mission  | Religious mission  | Religious duty     |
| Urgent action for marriage | High               | Medium             | Low                |
| Degree of blood dependence | Low                | Medium             | High               |
| Degree of kinship          | Fourth generation  | Fifth generation   | Seventh generation |
| Common intellectual fields | High               | High               | High               |
| Common models              | High               | High               | High               |
| Type of punishment         | Hard and intense   | Hard and intense   | Hard and intense   |
| Theory of natural hatred   | Full approval      | Full approval      | Full approval      |
| Freud's theory             | Relative approval  | Relative approval  | Relative approval  |
| Family strength theory     | Full approval      | Full approval      | Full approval      |
| Foucault theory            | Complete rejection | Complete rejection | Complete rejection |

The first common denominator in primary and secondary sources related to the subject of research is sacred place of family in all three religions. This commonality is understandable because all three religions are of Abrahamic origin. Thus, there is ample evidence in the Torah, the Bible, and the Qur'an that the family is one of the holiest social organizations. However, the sanctity of the family does not necessarily mean the equal status of marriage between the three religions. In Judaism, it is recommended that people get married before the age of 20. In Islam, it is emphasized that after marriage, the human religion will be perfected, but in Christianity, marriage is a duty that

is not a problem even if it is delayed. Therefore, while the similarities between Judaism and Islam are great in the sanctity of marriage, Christianity prefers celibacy to marriage.

Other category refers to the causes of marriage. The teachings of religious leaders in Judaism and Islam show that marriage and family formation are not merely a personal duty. Both Judaism and Islam emphasize increasing the status and power of religion by increasing childbearing. Islam sees the increase in the Muslim population as helping to form an "*Islamic Ummah*," while Christianity does not insist on forming a family for marriage. The other two categories that constitute the main purpose of the present study are the degree of blood dependence and degree of kinship of those with whom one can marry. In Judaism, the degree of blood dependence is low and therefore people can more easily choose one of the women in their living environment. This issue is more limited in Islam and the degree of blood dependence is moderate. In contrast to these two religions, the degree of dependence or radius of dependence in Christianity is wider and therefore it is more difficult to find a woman among those around. This means that while a Jewish can marry some of his second or third degree blood relatives, there are more restrictions in Islam for men. In Christianity, it is sometimes impossible to marry relatives with a seventh degree of dependence. Therefore, it can be said that there are similarities between all three religions in terms of the prohibition of incestuous marriage, but the concept of incest is very small in Judaism, average in Islam and very broad in Christianity.

The other three topics of interest are common ground of thought, common examples, and common punishments for incestuous marriage. There is a common belief in all three religions that incest is an ugly and hateful practice. There is also a common ground that the prohibition of incestuous marriage prevents sexual promiscuity. Accordingly, all three religions have common examples of the prohibition of incestuous marriage. The common stories of the Qur'an, the Bible, and the Torah show what permissible marriages were in the history of these three religions. Thus, we can see the same punishments in all three religions that have been set to prevent incestuous marriage. For example, killing offenders who have sex with an incestuous partner is one of the common punishments.

An analysis of categories related to the four psychological theories also indicates that religious leaders in Judaism, Islam, and Christianity accept and emphasize the theory of natural hatred of incest. Also, part of Freud's theory that refers to the Oedipus complex has not been considered in religious teachings at all, but religious stories can be found that represent a variety of marriages

and support part of Freud's theory. Also, all three religions fully endorse the theory of family strength and believe that the prohibition of incestuous marriage strengthens this social institution. Michel Foucault's view of incestuous marriage does not, in principle, fit into the traditional interpretations of religions of marriage and needs further investigation. According to these points, Table 2 shows the similarities and differences of the three religions in terms of different categories.

Table 2: Similarities and differences of three religions according to categorization system

| Category/ Religion         | Judaism | Islam | Christianity |
|----------------------------|---------|-------|--------------|
| Family status              | *       | *     | *            |
| Marriage status            | *       | *     | –            |
| Causes of marriage         | *       | *     | –            |
| Urgent action for marriage | –       | –     | –            |
| Degree of blood dependence | –       | –     | –            |
| Degree of kinship          | –       | –     | –            |
| Common intellectual fields | *       | *     | *            |
| Common models              | *       | *     | *            |
| Type of punishment         | *       | *     | *            |
| Theory of natural hatred   | *       | *     | *            |
| Freud's theory             | *       | *     | *            |
| Family strength theory     | *       | *     | *            |
| Foucault theory            | *       | *     | *            |

Based on the data in the table, out of 13 categories, there is a difference between three religions in only three categories. Also, the similarity of Judaism with Islam is so great that there are similarities between them in 10 categories. In contrast, Christianity is similar to Judaism and Islam in only eight categories.

#### 4. Conclusion

As the dream of a global village comes true every day, interfaith marriage has become commonplace. At the same time, religion has played a more prominent role in people's lives in recent decades, and religious differences in individual and collective relationships are being addressed. The coexistence of globalization and religious renaissance has influenced matters such as marriage, relationship between men and women, circle of marriage, and the extent of incestuous marriage. The present study showed that the extent of the incest circle from the perspective of religions is closely related to the circle of marriage. Christianity has the largest incestuous circle and Judaism the smallest, while Islam is in the middle. In Islam, several relatives (uncles and aunts) are added to incest, and in Christianity more relatives (children of uncles and aunts) are incestuous.

Therefore, marriage is easier in Judaism with relatives and more difficult in Christianity. This finding is confirmed by researchers such as Gilman (1998), Schultz (2016), Wolfson, (2005). Another finding of the study is that all three Abrahamic religions emphasize the avoidance of incestuous marriage and the reasons for this prohibition are natural hatred of marriage with relatives, the birth of weak children, prevention of sexual chaos and helping to strengthen the family institution. This finding is in line with findings of Akrami, (2006); Gholami & Bustan, (2017); Malinowski, (2008); Mowaffaq, (2009) and Paul & Spencer 2008. Another finding is that there is a similarity between all three religions in supporting the theory of natural hatred of incestuous marriage. This finding reveals that hate - as an emotional reaction - focus more on role of individual than role of society. This means that the Abrahamic religions pay more attention to individual feelings than to the social consequences of incestuous marriage. The findings also highlight that there are similarities between Islam and Judaism in many aspects of incest. Therefore, people who have Jewish or Muslim parents can marry much more easily than people who have Christian parents. Recent research shows that explaining the prohibition of incestuous marriage through the new theories of scientists - such as Malinowski, Levi Strauss and Foucault - and adapting their views to religious beliefs is still difficult. However, it seems that contemporary psychological theories can better help the children of multi-religious families in determining the circle of incest.

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