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Wise characteristics in religious thought in comparison to psychology theories of wisdom: a comparative study

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Abstract

Wisdom is one of the factors related to cognition and thought, and has a long history in religious and philosophical texts. However, since 1970, it has entered into empirical researches and debates in different fields of psychology, and various patterns have evolved in this area. Wisdom is taken into consideration as one of the most important factors in mental health, life management, and preservation of cultural values of each country. Our culture, due to its rich written sources on wisdom, has a lot to say. Therefore, this study aims to comparatively investigate the characteristics of wise individuals in religious sources (books such as Nahj al-Balagha, Misbah al-Shariah, Makarem Akhalagh, Kimiaye Saadat, Usul al-Kafi, Bihar al-Anwar, Motahari, Eynol Alhyah, Meraj al- Sa'adah and Gharalhkm) using the knowledge arised from empirical research on wisdom related fields. The reseach methodology was content analysis. The results of the present study shows that in studied sources, 10 features were reported for the wise individuals to have higher frequencies that include sincerity, humility, meekness and patience, hard work, courage, generosity, good behaviourm and curtailment of the world. The comparative study shows that except reticence and contentment features, there is a relationship between other features and patterns in the field of wisdom.

Keywords: Wisdom, Theories of Wisdom, Characteristics of the Wise individuals

Introduction:

In our previous studies in the field of wisdom concept in Iran (Noghabi and Delfan Biranvand, in press), it was found that one of the main components of wisdom in Iranian people's is religiosity. So in this study, we investigate the concept of wisdom in religious sources. The concept of wise and wisdom has been concerned since human life, and have been considered a scholarism during history. Almost, since the third century BC (eg civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt) from the remnants of that era, is the

effort to achieve wise, interest and concerns have been raised (Staudinger and Gluck, 2011). Since 1970, five main areas were established for the wisdom (Staudinger and Gluck, 2011): (1) non-technical definition of the wisdom concept, (2) measuring of wisdom, (3) understanding of wisdom (4), wisdom formability and (5) use of psychological knowledge about the wisdom in life. In this context, different research about the wisdom has been done and this is why there is no unique definition for wisdom and theorists give definitions according to their philosophical orientation.

However, Ardelt (2011) believes that in spite of the difficulty in defining wisdom, among researchers and experts in this field there is a general agreement that the wisdom is including of cognitive knowledge, understanding and insight, incorporation of the people viewpoints and interests of the person engaging the interests and welfare of others. For example, in equilibrium theory, Sternberg (2008, 2001) introduced the wisdom using of intelligence, creativity and knowledge in order to achieve the plural benefits, which affects from person individual values. Sternberg believes that the person is to achieve a balance between compliance with existing environments and new environments should choose between the interests of interpersonal and individual interests and establish balance in the short and long term.

Also Sternberg (2008), Richardson and Paspaty (2005) and Staudinger (1994) were investigated the wisdom as a related factor to cognition wisdom and thought. Ardelt (2003) defines the wisdom as combination of personality traits with three component; cognitive, reflective and emotional, three cognitive dimension (indicating a desire to know the truth and achieve a deeper understanding of life, including the acceptance of funds contradictory nature of man and the limitation of life), reflection (self-assessment reflects, self-awareness, the ability to view from different angles) and emotion (to love empathetic and compassionate to others). Accordingly, each of these component must be exist in a person to be considered a wise person.
According to Berlin wisdom paradigm, wisdom is a professional knowledge-based system based on cognitive view and information processing. Baltz knows the wisdom as highly evolved set of knowledge and judgment which is concerned with the life basic practical considerations, such as: deep insight, good judgment about human nature, planning methods, management, and understanding a good life. Accordingly, wisdom is a peak of performance which can be similar to the Maslow's self- efflorescence (Baltz and Astandyngr, 1993).

Due to the wisdom paradigm of Berlin, five components for wisdom can be considered as follows: (1) rich real knowledge (the nature of man, nature, evolution of life, interpersonal relationships and social norms). (2) Procedural knowledge (strategies and initiatives to deal with the meaning and direction of life, such as advising and helping others and give solutions to solve life conflict). (3) Living style (considering the difficulties of life in the field of education, family, work, friends, leisure, interpersonal relations, etc.). (4). Relativity of values and life priorities (accept and tolerate differences interpersonal values, tend to maintain a balance between the individual and the common benefits). (5) Recognition and ambiguity management (humans cannot do anything now to determine the best decision, to accurately predict the future and make sure to know the reasons for past events).

Levinson (2005) defined the wisdom as the self-Superiority. Carto (1999) has identified four main characteristics of wisdom: self-scrutiny (knowledge of what a person feels from itself in living, roles, relationships and beliefs), isolation (to be aware of the exteriors features transitory of a person's sense), alliance (in the sense of overcoming the separation between the different inner self acceptance and self-integration component), Self-Transcendence. Levinson et al (2005) considered these wisdom characteristics as the growing steps of wisdom. Jason et al (2001) identified four components of wisdom which is known as Jason fundamental worthiness: harmony (having meaning and purpose in life, good judgment); cordiality (humor and in being kind); communing with nature (respect for nature, having childlike wonder), intelligence (intelligence, problem solving ability).
But given that the human tendency to the religion is something innate and there is tendency to be wisdom, it can be stated that the religious are the most important orientation resource of community and demonstrates people fundamental world view (Naghizadeh and Doroudyan, 1999). Thus, religion is the most basic and most important institutions of human society has ever been seen, which man have not live outside of this phenomenon. No culture can be found in the past that religion has not have rule in it (Navabakhsh Vpvr Yousefi, 2006).

Since man is thoughtful and philosopher and has intellection feature, in all religions the concept of wisdom has been concerned based on the emphasis on the reasoning and thinking, and especially Islam has attached great importance to wise and wisdom (Mollashahi Zare et al., 2005). The rational training in Islamic education has special importance. Accordingly, different interpretations of this human feature have been in Quran. For example, the Quran with the words "The wise" is praised in cases of very intelligent. The concept of "intellect" has been mentioned two times in Nahjolbagheh. Once meant "understanding" and once means wise (bracelets and servants, 2011). So, in the Islamic training thinking has high position and theology, morals and actions are Islam base in beliefs and ethics.

According to Islam, the only way to development and construction in this world and the hereafter and achieve the ideal society and humanity ultimate destination is to think in correct manner. The idea that is valuable and important from Quran is the use of wisdom and intellect, not just wisdom (Nouri, 2013). For example, the wisdom characteristics of Zeinab Kobra (SA) as a Muslim characters are including: (1) knowledge "Imam Kazim (AS) said: the knowledge increases the wisdom of wise (Majlesi, 1983)." (2) Modesty "modesty is considered as a symbol of rationality and wisdom. Emam Ali said: The most intellect man is the modesty people (Ghrralhkm, 2010)." (3). Patience and persistence "Emam Ali said: patience is the key component of wisdom (Ghrralhkm, 2010)." (4) Time and position management, "one of the principles of wisdom, insight and knowledge to the position in time and space that helps decision making. Therefore, the Imams know the wisdom to provide a means to worship God and to know death journey (Chiellini, 1993). So that the wisest people is the God-fearing benefactor (Amadi, 2001).
So given that the ancient Persians in their worldview, have concerned the wisdom and paid more attention in their social norms, cultural and religious and they have defined wisdom based on the knowledge; it can be stated that wisdom leads to knowledge and subsequently will lead to religiosity and enlightenment in mental life (Mohammadi, 2006). On the other hand, it can be said that religiosity is an important aspect of wisdom, helps people throughout their life.

So, the aim of this study was to determine the characteristics of the wise men and comparative analysis of them with the knowledge derived from empirical research studies on the wise component.

Research methodology

This study is a qualitative research, in which the content analysis and comparative methods are used. In this study, Nahj al-Balagha, Misbah al-Shariah, Makarem Akhalagh, Kimiaye Saadat, Usul al-Kafi, Bihar al-Anwar, Motahari, Eynol Alhyah, Meraj al- Sa'adah and Gharalhkm books are studied and 10 features of wise men using content analysis features were extracted and by two independent coders were re-encoded. The selected features include: sincerity, humility, profit from the world, patience, hard work, courage, contentment, generosity and kindness, reticence. Then the properties of the wise men were investigated using adaptive methods based on the wisdom component using following theories: Ardelt three-dimensional wisdom model, Levinson self-transcendence model, Berlin wisdom paradigm, Jason fundamental values and balance theory of wisdom.

Research Findings

The obtained results of content analysis of wise men features in faith resource (Nahj al-Balagha, Misbah al-Sharia, Akhlaaq, etc.) showed that the wisdom characteristics were mentioned more than other features and can be divided them into 10 categories: sincerity, humility, profit from the world, patience, hard work, courage, contentment, generosity, kindness and reticence , which is as follows:

Sincerity

The obtained results of content analysis revealed that one of the important characteristics that helps people to be wise, or one of the characteristics of wise men, is sincerity. Sincerity means that the main motivation in doing things, obedience and love of God. To achieve sincerity, men must remove obstacles: hypocrisy, interest to the world and the devil temptation and attempt to strength faith, thinking about the importance of honesty and losses of sincerity, thinking about disadvantage of un-servants and repeated requests from God to acquire some degree of sincerity. "Thus, the lowest result of sincerity is that people preserved from of all sins in the world and survived from the torment of the fire in the hereafter and will benefit from heaven.

Thus it can be mentioned to some Quranic verses and hadiths mentioned in this context "Call the God based on sincerity and in every worship remember him (Quran / Araf, 29) ". Accordingly, the ultimate and supreme intent is the one to be for God and not for the financial issue (Mostafavi, 2004). In this context, Ayatollah Baha al-Din mentioned that the sincerity is the truth of slavery, and if everything and all the work is done for God, this sincerity is servitude (Lak Ali Abadi, 2013). Imam Ali (peace be upon him): Allah made fasting obligatory to examine the sincerity of men (Nahj al-Balagha, 252).

Humility

Humility is introduced as one of the characteristics of wise people. The signs of humility is that the man should be happy and affable with others, and in socializing with them, are faced with the open heart, not out of indifference that leads to hatred and opacity. Accordingly, it can be pointed out the verses and narrations in this context:
Servants of God are those who walk on the earth in peace and without arrogance and when the ignorant address them to the deals and words, they greet to them (Qur'an / Al-Furqan 63). Thus, humility means that to be submissive and obedient to God, even if the other person is a child. So, no worship, obedience is not acceptable unless it would done with humility (Mostafavi, 2004).

Interruption from the world

The results of this study showed that the disruption of the world is one of the characteristics of wise people. Accordingly, the sense of detachment, complete and full attention to God. The complete interruption from this world to reach the God has various steps which depends on men cognition from God. Thus, some verses and hadiths mentioned in this context:
"The whole people will experience death, and indeed in the Day of Resurrection you'll absolutely come to see your acts, so everyone could away from the fires of hell will enter the heaven. The life of this world is mortal and destroyed early" (Qur'an / Al-Imran 185). Thus, the origin of ignorance of God's is the love to the world. Based on the verses of the Quran, loving the world cannot be together with the loving of God. Thus, whoever loves the world, lost the hereafter (al-Tusi, 1975).

Patience

Based on the results of this study, one of the characteristics of the wise men, meekness, and patience. So there are many traditions about patience. Some traditions indicated that after the science, the best attribute of believers, is patience. In this regard Imam Sadiq said: men must be patience, since the patience is the base of science (Bihar al-Anwar, vol. 10, p. 218; ML Saduq, p. 611). There are also some verses on patience (ie, wait). For example, "the full reward is only for the patient without an account" (Quran / Az-Zumar 10). Accordingly, the patience and the humility are against of the wrath. Imam Ali: Patience covers your faults. Indeed, the patience is half the wisdom (Tamimi Amadi, 1987).
Patience is done in five modes: when the person have dignity, in expressing the right made contemptible, he has been accused of lying, in a request to the right but the people insulted him, and he requests the right but the others disagree with him.

Generosity

The obtained results of content analysis indicates that, the generosity is one of the properties of wise. Hence, the word generosity means there is forgiveness and "generous" (Ibn Manzur, 1993). The "generosity" is against of the avarice. For example, it can be pointed to verses and hadiths about generosity:
" Giving their food to the destitute, orphan and the captive: We feed you because of God and do not want any reward or thanks from you" (Quran / Dahr: 8 and 9). Accordingly, the generosity has several levels, such as charity, education, science, dictated and moral education, and any giveaway that be done without

bias (Mostafavi, 2003). Imam Sadiq: Young generous sinful, is more popular for God than the godly old curmudgeon (Allameh, 1661). Prophet: generous to God, is near to heaven (Tagh Islam Koleini, 1980). Commentators and scholars declare that one day Imam Ali (AS) is praying in Mosque and beggar asked for help and the Imam gave his ring to beggar in praying mode.

Contentment

The results of this study showed that contentment is one of the characteristics of wise men, and literally means limited to less than what is required by humans. There are a lot of meaning: satisfied as needed, not to spend too much money and also means saving.
For example, Imam Ali (AS) said about the simple life of Prophet of Islam: "The Prophet sat on the floor eating like servants and patched his own clothes "(Nahj / sermon 160).

Enthusiasm at work
The results of this study showed that one of the required characteristics for the wise men is enthusiasm at work. Accordingly, effort and perseverance in work led people to be wise. For example, there are some verses and hadiths: "He who created you from the earth and wanted you to try in it (the Quran / Hood: Hence, Imam Hasan (AS) said: someone who has no effort, has no generosity (Allameh, 1661). Imam Ali stated that good work is permanent reserve (Tamim Amadi, 1987).
The Prophet in several traditions emphasize the importance of working in the lives. For example, the famous commentator, Tabasi stated in Majmao Al-Bayan (1962; quoted Khomeini, in 1990) the apostles walked with Jesus on trips and whenever they got thirsty or hungry, food and water were ready from the God, they took this a great honor for themselves and asked if anyone exists better than us? Jesus replied: Yes, who works hard is better than you. Following this, they were busy washing clothes and getting paid for it.

Amiability

The results of this study show that amiability as one of the characteristics of wise men which lead to love and friendship between the people. Therefore, we bring some verses and sayings about amiability: "thanks to God help you got soften in front of them and if you were harsh and implacable have dispersed them around yourself, so forgive them and ask forgiveness for them and consult with them; Allah loves those who trust (Qur'an / Al-Imran: 159). Hence, the completion of religion is done with edification and this means that make the man perfect and beauty (Mostafavi, 1963). Imam Sadiq (AS) said: The amiability is good in the world and in the hereafter opened beauty and joy and this completes the religion of man and lead to closeness of man to the Lord.
For example, somebody was in desperate and another one told him to visit the rich man. When the needy person visited the rich person, he found rich man moody and left him without asking him for help ("Sa'di's Golestan").

Courage

The results of this study show that the courage is one of the properties of wise. Therefore, courage is the subjection and obedience of anger strength from the reasoning strength (Naraqi, 1969). Based on Quranic verses and sayings of the features described for courage: "of course, God loves who is faithful in the jihad (Quran / Alsf 4). Imam Ali: nobody is more courage than the wise man (Tamim Amadi, 1987) and the winner who is being honest (Mu'tazili, 2009). For example, the Prophet: Do not be afraid from telling the true to the people (martyr Motahari, 1988).

Reticence

The results indicate that reticence is the properties of wise. Those who speaks thoughtfully and avoids badinage are considered as wise man. Accordingly, it is possible to mention Quranic verses: "nobody will speak unless the same time, the angel is ready to record it" (the Quran / AH 18). Thus, the Prophet said: as you are a believer, it is better to be silent while reaching to him, that he is not empty of wisdom. As well as (al-Tusi, 1975) in his book quotes these note: "I inform you of the easiest pray which is reticence. So, speaking to much is the sign of ignorance and separation from the truth (Mostafavi, 2004). Imam Kazim: reticence is a great wisdom and it leads to lightness the sin (Majlesi, 1661). Rehabilitation.

Conclusion:

This study aimed to analyze the content of wise men properties in religious sources and to do their comparative study with wisdom components in its existing theories. In general, in a comparative investigation of existing theories in the field of wisdom, the results indicate that wisdom components in Ardelt theory (cognitive, reflective, emotional), Levinson theory (self-transcendence); Berlin wisdom paradigm (advice and wisdom); Jason fundamental value scale (openness and good judgment, humor and kind of) equilibrium theory (Khyrhmgany and considering the interests of society) are comparable with the extracted components such as, sincerity, humility, patience, hard work, courage, generosity, amiability and interruption from the world as the wise characteristics in ideological resource. But between the components obtained in the present study such as contentment and reticence, there is no matching with psychology theories, which the details are as follows:

From the results obtained from analysis of wise men characteristics, 10 reasonable indication were extracted: sincerity, humility, Interruption from the world, patience, hard work, courage, contentment, generosity, amiability and reticence.

For example, (1) sincerity feature with Levinson Self-transcendence component (2005); (2) humbly with Labvy-Whiff viewpoint (1990) which knows the wisdom from the features combination of moral, spirituality, humility and compassion; (3) Patience (adaption to any experience of that person's face) Gela (1988), with a Jason view point (2002) the wisdom (helping people to adapt to their environment) and with the concept of tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty in the model of Berlin; (4) generosity by the Staudinger (1997) about a wisdom (the increased interaction between people in a sympathetic and non-judgmental way) and with a viewpoint of Sternberg (1998), about community interest. (5) Enthusiasm in work with Jason component-having a purpose in life (2001); (6) amiability (positive behavior and compassion toward others) Ardelt theory (2003) and amiability component in 5-component Webster model (2003), as well as the harmony (good judgment) and amiability (kindness) Jason (2001); (7)

courage features (dealing with problems and solving them) Ardelt (2003); interruption from the world is consistent and aligned with Levinson self-transcendence.

But in this study, no relationship and compatibility was observed between contentment and reticence components with wisdom features in existing theories. These findings show that these characteristics are more likely to be influenced by cultural and religious factors in each country. Because in Iran, based on cultural and Islamic viewpoint, these features are very valuable and is the symptoms of wise men and lead to self-transcendence and self-actualization. Thus, it can be said that religiosity factor with its component (cognitive, behavioral, social, spiritual and moral) in every culture, is the field for people training and to motivate people to the wisdom properties. So religiosity forms the basis of wisdom.

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