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Identification of Authorship through Religion: Role of Forensic Stylistics

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Abstract: ***The main objective of this study is to bring the importance of Forensic Stylistics in light of scientific examination in fixing authorship of the writer. Thorough study of written language present in the writings of an individual belonging to a particular religion in case of anonymous letters, ransom notes, threat letters etc. will lead to the identification of the religion. With the help of Forensic Stylistics, Forensic Document examiner will be able to determine the written language, use of common words in different religion, which in turn will facilitate in identification of the religion. Forensic stylistics help in the identification of an individual which is equally important to find out the religious background, spiritual belief and religious teachings which remain with the writer as a distinguishing features or characteristic features of the religion from which the writer belongs to. For comparison, the standards may not be available most of the times, therefore a detail and thorough study of the writing purported to be written by a particular person can establish the religious group of the write. [1-2] For the study, 150 samples of 5 different religions were collected out of which 80 samples belonging to three different religious groups, i.e Christian, Hindu, Islam are taken into consideration to ascertain the religion of the writer.***
Keywords: Forensic Stylistics, writings, religion, anonymous letters, ransom notes etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

No two people think alike, not even those born from the same womb. The mind is a very special part of all human. Thoughts are put into language after brainstorming and organizing those ideas. A writer has his own way of putting up languages and these are often observed as a distinctive character. Forensic stylistics is defines as the application of the science of linguistic stylistics in forensic contexts. The main aim of forensic stylistics is the written language and also sometimes the spoken language represented in writing for examination. [3-4] The primary arch of forensic stylistics is in the identification of the author through scientific method. Forensic stylistics can also be used for the analysis of spoken or written words of the perpetrator as it can offer deep understanding into the offender's religion as well as spiritual beliefs.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Letters in cases received by Forensic Document expert for examination in forensic science laboratories has different motives. They can be a blackmailing letters, threatening letters, letters of revenge, letters of recommendation, spiteful letters, notes left at scene of crime, indecent writings, etc. In such cases, conclusions derive from the context will aid in the identification of the religion of the writer thereby narrowing down the investigation. [5-6]

III. METHODOLOGY

For the sample collection, a format was prepared and shown to different writers belonging to a religious group and accordingly their writing sample was taken. The sample format contains a topic on which the writers were asked to write their views. The name of the writer was not taken as the name itself could identify the writer's religion. Sample of the format is shown below:

Write few lines
on
"THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION IN YOUR LIFE"

Out of 150 samples, 80 samples were taken into consideration of three religions. Every writer was given an A4 size paper and was given a pen for writing the samples.

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A. Randomizer

For the selection of samples for study, randomizer.org was used which is provides an easy way to generate random sampling and random numbers for surveys and analysis.

Research Randomizer Results:
1 Set of 62 Numbers Per Set
Range: From 1 to 80
Set 1

33,7,69,35,13,74,2,14,20,8,12,18,55,37,32,52,1,46,22,34,54,10,43,28,45,61,21,71,79,9,59,41,5,53,41,5,53,76,44, 31,4, 29,63,60,49,78 66,15,23,62,27,80,47,17,77,11,40,56,26,38,6.

IV. EXAMINATION

The samples which were selected through randomizer were examined carefully and thoroughly to identify the religion of the writer based on certain criteria's which includes use of common words, importance to the religion the writer belongs to, religious beliefs, etc. The observation was noted down in the tables mentioned below.

Observations

Christian

Sample No.	Beliefs	Faith	Religion First	Divine	Love	Salvation	Spirit	Creator
26	Yes	-	Yes	-	Yes	-	-	-
32	Yes	-	-	Yes	-	-	-	-
18	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-
55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Yes
37	Yes	-	Yes	-	-	-	-	Yes
1	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	-	-	-
46	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22	-	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	Yes
34	Yes	-	Yes	-	Yes	-	-	-
54	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
43	-	-	-	-	Yes	-	-	Yes
28	-	Yes	-	Yes	-	-	-	Yes
45		Yes	Yes	-	Yes	-	-	-
61	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	Yes	Yes	-	--	Yes	Yes	-	-
71	Yes	-	-	Yes	-	Yes	-	-
79	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-
9	-	-	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	-
27	Yes	Yes	-	-	Yes	-	Yes	-
5	Yes	-	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
4	-	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-
29	Yes	-	-	-	Yes	-	-	-

63	Yes	Yes	-	-	Yes	-	-	-
60	-	-	-	-	Yes	-	-	-
49	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
78	-	Yes-	-	-	-	-	-	-
66	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
23	-	-	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	-
62	-	Yes	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
80	-	-	-	Yes	-	-	-	-
77	-	-	-	-	Yes	-	-	-
56	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
40	-	-	-	-	Yes	-	-	-
39	-	-	-	-	Yes	-	-	-
11	-	-	-	-	Yes	-	-	-
47	-	-	-	-	Yes	-	-	-

Hindu

Sample No.	Peace	Religion First	Truth	Society
74	-	Yes	-	
59	Yes	-	Yes	Yes
44	Yes	-	-	Yes
76	Yes	-	-	-
53	-	Yes	-	-
41	-	-	Yes	-
32	-	Yes	-	-
12	Yes	-	-	Yes
8	-	Yes	-	-
20	-	Yes	-	Yes
14	-	Yes	-	-
2	-	Yes	-	-
13	Yes	-	-	Yes
38	-	-	-	Yes

Islam

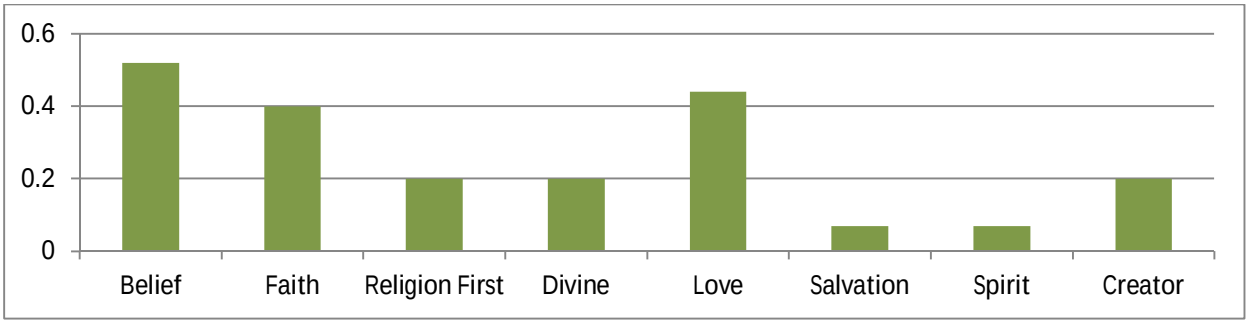
Sample No.	Religion First	Humanity
29	-	Yes
31	-	Yes
35	-	Yes
33	Yes	-
7	Yes	-
69	-	Yes
6	-	Yes

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V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. *Christian*

COMMON WORDS USED	PROBABILITY
Beliefs	20/38= 0.53
Faith	15/38= 0.4
Religion First	6/38= 0.2
Divine	6/38= 0.2
Love	17/38= 0.45
Salvation	3/38= 0.07
Spirit	3/38= 0.07
Creator	6/38= 0.2

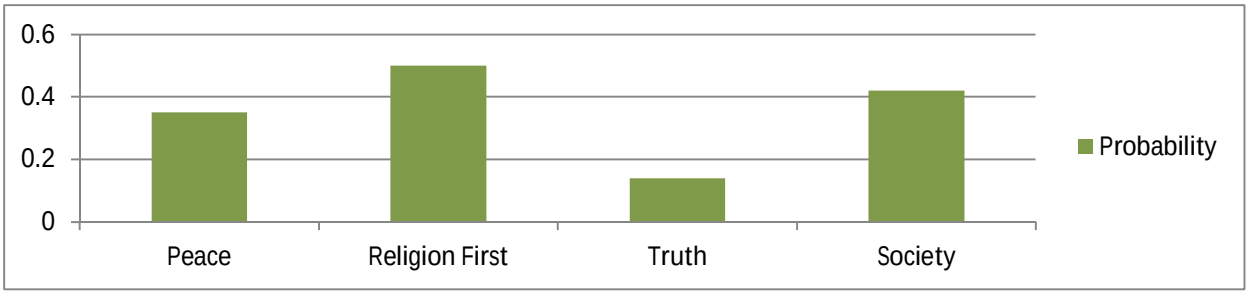


Graph of Probability vs. Common words used

- As shown in the probability graph, the chances of using the word “Beliefs” and “Love” are high and such high probability are seen in Christianity.
- The word “Faith” is also seen to show high probability.

B. *Hindu*

COMMON WORDS	PROBABILITY
Peace	5/14= 0.35
Religion First	7/14= 0.5
Truth	2/14= 0.14
Society	6/14= 0.42

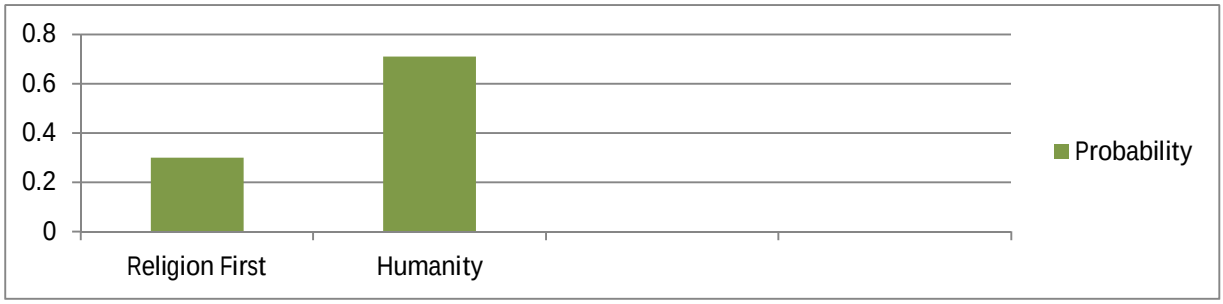


Graph of Probability vs. Common words used

- As shown in the graph above, the chances of putting religion first and use of word “Society” in particular are high and such high probability are found in Hinduism.
- The use of word “Peace” is also found to show high probability.

C. Islam

COMMON WORDS	PROBABILITY
Religion First	22/7= 0.3
Humanity	5/7= 0.71



Graph of Probability vs. Common words used

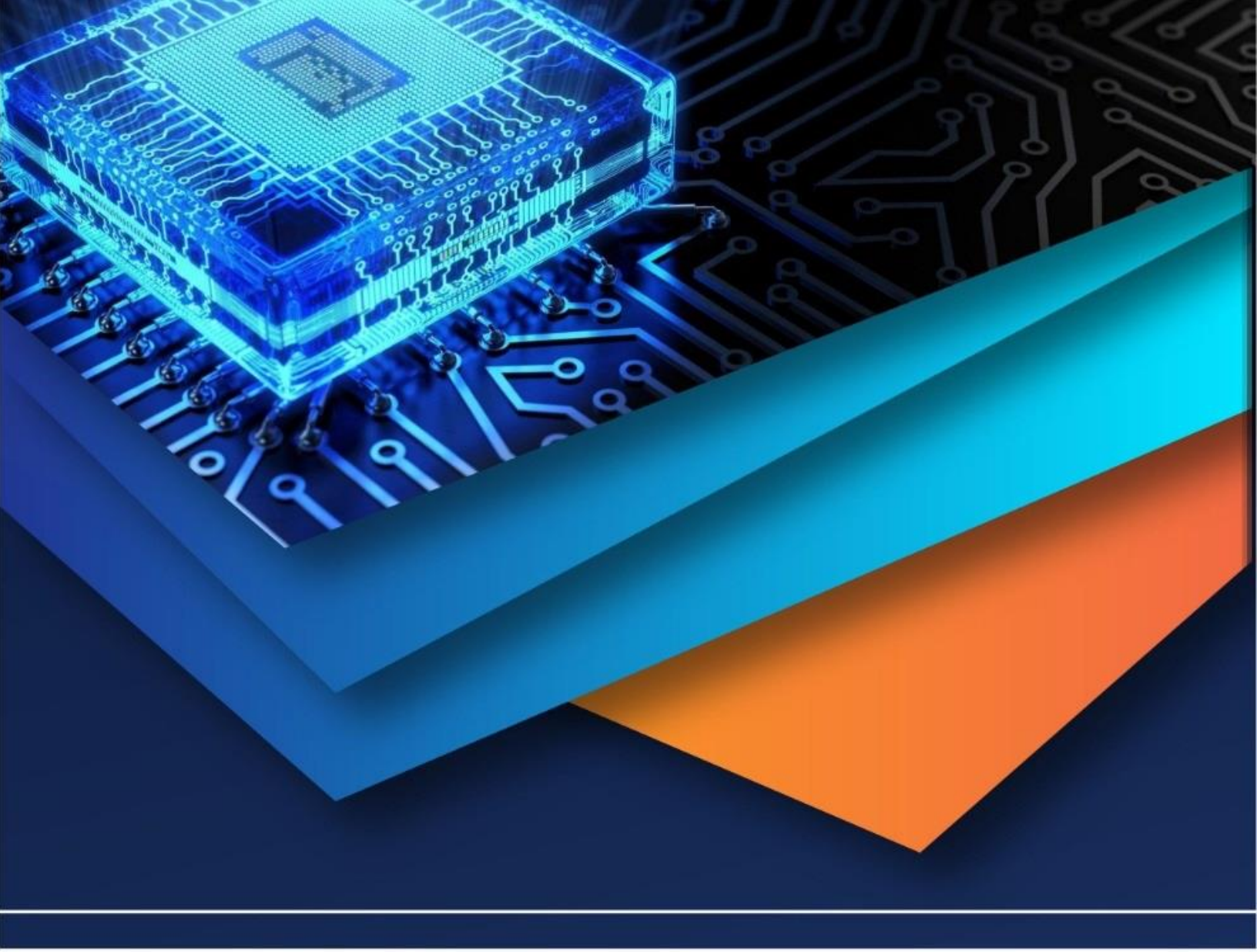
- As shown in probability graph above, the chances of using the word "Humanity" is found high and such high probability of those words are found in Islam.

VI. CONCLUSION

On the basis of the study, it can be concluded that there are remarkable difference between the religions taken under consideration for the study. The influence of spiritual teachings and spiritual practices are found in the writings of the writer and it is a subconscious character of the writer. Therefore, based on this study it can be said that there are certainly some differences in the religious background of an individual which is clearly imparted on the writings.

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