

# [Compare and contrast: hinduism and islam](https://assignbuster.com/compare-and-contrast-hinduism-and-islam/)

[Religion](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/religion/)

Hinduism and Islam: Compare and Contrast It is universally known that religious faiths creates diversity incultureand give new identity and outlook to matters signifying a new way life. In most cases, religious faith is accountable for people’s behavior in conducting daily activities including business, work, socialization, and cultural functions within a specified community. The immensely large majority of the human species has always looked to a higher power for acceptance, love, enlightenment, guidance, and even sometimes discipline.

There are many different religions with many different practices and beliefs, however, in this paper I will be comparing and contrasting the belief on who is worshiped as the “ higher power” as well as the diet practices and rituals of the two common religions known as Hinduism and Islam. Hinduism and Islam have been preexisting for a very long time. Hinduism main roots dating back in India and Islam from the Arab world, the two have quite a vast number of differences and similarities as well.

Hinduism and Islam, other than Christianity, are two out of three major religions followed in the world. It is difficult to spot any similarities between the two religious groups since they are known globally to cause war and chaos wherever they come together. However, the two religions show vast differences beginning from their origins and development. Islam believes that their faith is founded on the faith outline by a prophet of God called Mohammed.

Mohammed is the core founder of the Islamic religion since the time he received revelations from Allah. On the other hand, Hinduism began as integration of numerous religious groups in the subcontinent of India where, at the time, there many wonderers, exiled communities, and prophetic individuals. The groups came together to form the contemporary Hindu religion (Anon. , 2013). Most principally, the two religions have a different concept concerning the Supreme Being, God. The Muslim believes in the existence of one almighty God referred to as Allah.

Allah is given numerous positive attributes by Muslims relating him to greatness, however; Allah is also termed as merciful, the creator of all, the sustainer of all human life, and the incomparable one. This concept that Allah is incomparable has allowed all Muslims around the world, though with diverse cultures and languages, to refer to God as Allah. Moreover, the name Allah is a discrete name from the language Aramaic which is a language historically known to have been the native language of Jesus. This kind of belief and complete trust in the existence of one God are essentially known as monotheism (Naik, 2007).

On the other hand, the Hindu believes about the existence of one Supreme Being is contrary to that of Muslims. Hindus practice polytheism which is basically the belief in multiple Gods. The word Hindu has a geographic importance relating to a certain community referred to as Sindhu who lived beyond the river Indus in ancient India. It is noteworthy to indicate that the Hindu believes that everything is God starting from the physical elements such as trees, mountains, and rivers to living things such as humans. This in religiouseducationis referred to as Pantheism.

While Muslims believe that everything is God’s, the Hindu on the contrary perceives everything as God. In a global perspective, the Hindu has a quite diversified perception of God since every community may have more than a hundred Gods, whereas others believe to a minimum of three Gods. Hindus have come up with an argument that they should adopt and refer to only one God as divine and sacred. This may bring some internal conflicts among the Hindus since the scholars might be compromising with their ancient beliefs and customs (Brodd, 2003, p. 108).

However, the two religions agree that man is a manifestation of Gods wonderful creation. This means that all the two agree on is that God or Gods created man and other physical and spiritual creations. Muslims believe that man was created the same in that all men are equal in the eyes and perception of God. In this case, Muslims are against anydiscriminationon the basis of social status, race, or tribe. Also, Muslims fail to agree that God favors individuals on the basis of wealth and other material properties but favor from Allah is given to anyone on the basis of virtues and piety.

On the other hand, Hindus believe that men were created in caste systems, which articulates mankind is not equal. Instead, human beings are categorized into four facets. The firsts group is referred to as Brahmans who represents the highest people in society on the basis of priesthood, wealth and social status, and intellectual abilities. This group is certainly the most respected and adored since everything is God according to Hinduism. The subsequent group, Kshatriya is slightly lower in terms of social class, wealth, and intellectual capabilities since it represent the ruling class including warriors and heroes in the society.

The third category is referred to as Vaisya a group mainly composed of agriculturalist and artisans in the community. The last group, Sudras includes the lowest ranked individuals in the community probably on the basis ofpovertyand lack of intellectual abilities. Muslims and Hindus acknowledge that there is life after death since they all believe in the existence of the soul. Also, they both believe that there is judgment after the physical death. In addition, the judgment is based on the deeds and the way a person has lived have or her life.

The positive virtues such as humbleness, respect, merciful, and faithful among others are believed to influence positive results from the judgment. However, the concept with which they both perceive life after death is what differs among the two religions. Hindus do not believe in the existence of an awful place formally known as hell, or the existence of heaven. Instead, Hindus believe in the power of reincarnation. This means that they believe that a person is born afresh in another life once he or she dies.

The reincarnated person will then acquire a new status based on his virtues and attributes of the previous life. This contradicts with Muslims beliefs of the body and soul. Muslims believe that ahuman beinghas two destinations either heaven or hell. Heaven is for people who have upheld their belief and trust in Allah with the refection of their deeds. On the contrary is a place of anguish and torture for those who refuse to follow Allah outlined commandments. However, the decision to go to either place depends on the ruling made on the Day of Judgment.

Similarly, both religions have a certain animal they are restricted to eat. In Islam, they have all the luxury to eat all kind of meats from cows, lambs, goats, and poultry except pigs due to some beliefs about the unsacred nature of the pig meat. Hindu believes that becausefoodis a gift from God, it should be treated with great respect (V, 2000). Hindus do not enjoy the luxury of eating cow meat since they perceive the animal as sacred due to their pantheism nature. Devout Hindus believe that all of God’s creatures re worthy of respect and compassion, regardless of whether they are humans or animals (Elgindy 2005). Therefore, a cow is viewed as divine and sacred hence it cannot be eaten. Hinduism encourages being vegetarian and avoiding the eating of any animal meat or flesh (Elgindy 2005). However, not all Hindus choose to practice vegetarianism, and they may adhere to the religion’s dietary codes in varying degrees of strictness (Elgindy 2005). Also, the two religious groups do pray except that they pray differently.

Hindus mostly pray in temples, whereas Muslims usually pray mosques. Hindus temples are usually decorated with various pictures that manifest the being or the nature of their Gods. However, Muslims are not allowed to have any pictures in their mosques since God is incomparable to anything not even the physical representation through pictures. The Islamic religion is founded on the basis of activism which calls for all Muslims to go out to the entire world teaching people to adopt and believe in the faith outline by the Quran, the Muslim Holy Scripture.

Therefore, most Muslims are dedicated to teaching their traditions and practices concerning their faith to other tribes and humanity that do not necessarily espouse Muslim beliefs and faith. On the contrary, Hinduism is based on personal principles of tolerance which include patient listening even to non believers. Hindus basically believe it is a matter of time before people reawaken and embrace Hindu principles and their faith. Therefore, Hindus believe that, at the end, all religion in the world will conform to their belief in pantheism.

Muslims are very specific to their ritual and religious practices since they observe strict fasting periods to even over five days in special periods such as namaz and roza. Fasting is considered an opportunity to earn the approval of Allah, to wipe out previous sins, and to understand the suffering of the poor (Katme 2009). Fasting is also partly to be in control of appetite and to avoid food addiction (Katme 2009). It is the fourth ritual observance in the Five Pillars of Islam. Also, Muslims wake up very early in the morning, on a daily basis, to pray to their God, Allah.

On the contrary, Hindu does not put much effort in religious rituals instead they engage in selfless activities so as to increase their probability of being reincarnated to a higher being. In addition, Hindus belief that God is everything, simply outlines that God can take any form to reveal his existence. Hindus also outline that their view of God shows that God has unconditional love for love humanity and creatures. Therefore, God is not necessarily a male according to Hindus, instead; God can reveal himself inform of a female figure or an animal.

Islam religion believes in the existence of God’s angels who are given the duty to fulfill God’s tasks. In Muslim, God cannot reveal himself in any human or physical form, however; rather than revealing his nature in a divine form he sends angles to protect human beings. Moreover, angles are invisible to the naked eye, and they also do not need human comfort since they are heavenly created hence do not posses human qualities. The two religions are similar in that they are built on the theory of commitment to God. This theory requires all the believers in both religions to trust and obey God without question or doubt.

Also, the theory is based on purity and peace supported by unquestionable submission to God. Although, the two religions strictly foster people to trust and obey God, they acknowledge the importance of own will in a personal decision. This means that Hindu and Islam do not force any individual to become one of their own or restrict someone from going into other religions. Instead, followers are given the will to decide whether to stay, or shift to other religious belief, but once an individual decides to stay him or she must follow the religious principle held by the either of the group.

Beside, followers are allowed to choose on their own with the consent that their decision and their way of living will be judged or will affect their reincarnation in the next life (Horton & Plunkett, 2002, p. 36). Also, there are other slight but significant differences among the two religions. The Muslim religion is based on a politically built system emulating Mohammed way of living which was essentially based on military power, missionary zeal, and political control. On the other hand, Hindu believes in many Gods is meant to provide spiritual freedom to the followers devoid of political influences.

Also, Hindu religion is presented as a more feminine religion rather since the symbol of the cow signifies motherhood and fertility. Also, many Hindu deities are females and their temples consist of arts full of female figures. Muslim, on the other hand, worship a masculine Allah since most of the women are not allowed to enter mosques, and also women are veiled while in public. There are also different ways to realize the truth in Hindu, whereas Islam’s believes in only one true way (Brass, 2005, p. 119).

The two religions outline one another as arrogant and disapprove their faith, on the basis of varied grounds. For many years, there have been various wars and grievances containing the two religions with Muslims killing numerous Hindus in India for destroying their places of worships, Mosques. As seen in the above contest, there are more differences in the nature of the tow religions rather similarities. Hindus and Islam’s disagree on the bases of existence of one God, life after death, existence of angles, and others key areas relevant to religion.

However, both religions are built on positive attributes, the theory of devotion to God and acknowledge the importance of human free will. Therefore, there is no place that both religion advocates for war or hatred that have preexisted among the two religions. Since both of the Gods allow positive attributes of love and tolerance, these attributes should be used as a basis for uniting the two religions. Works Cited Anon. , 2013. Diffrence Between net. Retrieved from: http://www. differencebetween. net/miscellaneous/difference-between-islam-and-hinduism/ Brass, P. R. , (2005).

Language, Religion And Politics in North India. 2 ed. New Delhi: iUniverse. Brodd, J. , (2003). World Religions 2003: A Voyage of Discovery. 2 ed. Winona: Saint Mary's Press. Horton, P. & Plunkett, R. , (2002). Delhi. 3 ed. Footscray: Lonely Planet Online Shop. Katme, Majid A. , (2009). Faith and Food: Retrieved from http://www. faithandfood. com/Islam Naik, Z. , (2007). Basic Beliefs of Hindus and Muslims: Retrieved from http://www. islam101. com/religions/hinduism/hindu\_muslim. html V, Jayaram. (2000). The Hindu way of life Part 1 & 2. Retrieved from http://www. hinduwebsite. com/