

MAPPING THE TERRAIN OF EDUCATION 2018-2019: A SUMMARY REPORT

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This report shares the results of the Mapping the Terrain annual study which focuses on the attitudes of youths and adults around them regarding values as they relate to growth and development. The interest in values comes from the approach that as youths grow and life conditions change, so do values, and new ones are adopted as a result of people's interactions with each other and their environments. More than 25,000 participants from 14 countries were approached through local coordinators and surveyed on four main values: empathy, forgiveness, moral reasoning, and community mindedness. The results show promise on the importance of the human development approach and universal Islamic values in education in Muslim societies.

Keywords: Human development, Universal values, Islamic contexts, Non-academic competencies

Introduction

The International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) has been both an agent for reform and a leading academic and research institution charged with renewing Islamic thought through education and integrating Islamic knowledge into the social sciences. A few years ago, IIIT made an

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intentional and needed refocus on Advancing Education in Muslim Societies (AEMS) as a framework that guides the theoretical, empirical, and organizational aspects of the institute. AEMS completes the circle of more than 35 years between the theoretical work and applied research and shares the knowledge widely. The lessons learned from AEMS will also add a voice to the discussion on reform efforts in Muslim societies and the Global South. AEMS comes as a “theoretical discourse as well as a data-driven research initiative that represents the highest levels of intellectual integrity” (Alwani & Nasser, 2019, p. 30). Mapping the Terrain, as an annual study, was designed to further the AEMS empirical research agenda.

This report summarizes the Mapping the Terrain study and its results as a core knowledge generation hub for AEMS. The study emerged to address the gaps in knowledge on values-based education as manifested in the human development trajectory. The long-term goal is to contribute to the study of human civilizations and ways they can imagine a future of prosperity, justice, and peace. To accomplish this we launched the study in the summer of 2018 to examine the state of universal (Qur’anic and others) values and ways they influence the pathways to heightened states of consciousness. The results and the data sets of the study are publicly available for the use of researchers, policy makers, education change agents, and others.¹

Rationale

The study is unique in its adoption of the human development lens to reform education and in its scope and target populations. It includes more than 25,000 participants from 14 countries and areas in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. In targeting youths in schools and universities, and stakeholders around them, this study elevates human development through education as a method to achieving peaceful living for all humanity. It also brings the voices and aspirations of youths and young adults to the forefront of the education reform discussion and takes an asset-based approach to youths and their development. This is of particular importance in many Muslim societies because the young generations are reacting to the current geopolitical conditions (with resistance and/or resilience) without an authentic assessment of their struggles. This is important to ensure their futures in a global reality

¹ For the full report, visit <https://iiit.org/en/aems-publications>. Nasser, Jehanzeb Cheema, Maryam Saroughi, and Ahmed Alwani contributed to the full report.

where employability and civic engagement are at the forefront of the reform agenda.

A thorough examination of the social science literature and the universal Qur’anic values led to the selection of constructs such as empathy, forgiveness, and moral reasoning, among others (Table 1 below provides a list of values and definitions). In the case of AEMS, the goal is to utilize the human development approach to motivate people to reach higher states of living according to universal values that are grounded in Muslim faith and shared by other groups. These values resonate with Muslims and non-Muslims alike and are central to socio-emotional growth and overall well-being. Questions remain about how youths perceive these values and how adults infuse them and reason around them when challenged by everyday adversities and economic hardships. The annual nature of this study provides a space for dialogue and intellectual debates on aspects of the human development that have practical implications for policy, leadership, assessment, and pedagogy. The wide distribution of the study results and the availability of the data sets will certainly encourage these conversations.

Table 1- Values/Constructs

Construct	Definition
Empathy	The ability and willingness to care, feel, and take the perspective of others.
Forgiveness	The ability and willingness to let go of hard feelings and the need to seek revenge on someone who has wronged me or committed a perceived injustice against me or others.
Moral Reasoning	The ability and willingness to make determinations about right and wrong and act on those.
Community Mindedness	Seeing the self as interconnected with and acting for the benefit of an inclusive whole.
Religiosity	The degree of influence one’s faith has on his/her values, behaviors, and everyday life.
Self-Efficacy	The individual’s belief in his/her ability to organize and execute certain behaviors that are necessary to complete a given task successfully.
Sense of Belonging	The feeling of being included, accepted, cared for, and supported.

Research Constructs

The Mapping the Terrain annual research aspires to collect survey data from several regions and countries on the selected constructs that would improve our understanding not only at the conceptual level, but also—and most importantly—indicate how these constructs may be integrated and infused in education spaces (academic and non-academic, and formal and informal) in Muslim societies. The study is therefore a platform for deeper investigations and recommendations for advancing and maximizing input toward reform of education. Current research confirms the viability of Islamic universal values and their derivatives in the Arab and Islamic contexts. For example, research on forgiveness in the Middle East suggests integrating it in the curriculum and in teacher training (Abu-Nimer & Nasser, 2013). Likewise, research among Muslim Indonesian students shows that Islamic beliefs lead to higher levels of moral reasoning within that population, with such tenets being positively correlated with beliefs, prayer, and understanding of justice and equality (Chang-Ho, Ibrahim, & Kim, 2009). Evidence from Bangladesh suggests that happiness among Muslims is strongly related to sense of belonging and connectedness (Devine, Hinks, & Naveed, 2019).

We divided the constructs into two groups that play different roles in the model we hypothesized. Whether a variable is a predictor or an outcome heavily depended on the review of the literature, especially meta-analyses of previous studies conducted on the constructs where possible (Andrews, 2000; Konrath, O'Brien, & Hsing, 2011). The report attempts, for the first time, to make meaning out of the way these constructs work together to motivate increases from lower to higher states of consciousness and values. Based on the review of previous literature and our own interpretation of the constructs and their relevance to Muslim societies, we hypothesize that when infused at the various states of consciousness on the human development trajectory, individual and group transformations may occur especially through educational interventions and policies.

The Human Development Model

Adopting the human development approach suggests the possibility of reversing the “damage” done in fragile conditions (Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development, 2000) and moves the conversation away from the deficit model and toward an asset-based approach to education. The approach provides a unique framework

for spiritual, values-based, and intrapersonal growth for Muslim youths and communities as part of a larger movement toward human understanding and prosperity. This study applies a comprehensive human development theory where values play an instrumental role in improving human lives.

Some of the values we include in the framework are in fact part of the Spiral Dynamics human development model (Beck & Cowan, 1996) we adopted, especially empathy and moral reasoning. They function as a mechanism to move people up the spiral of growth. Sense of belonging as well as community mindedness also constitute important parts of the model and its progression (Beck et al., 2018) as we identify it. This selection of the model was intentional in order to move away from a stage-like and linear progression of growth and to highlight the complexities of development within established human value systems. An extensive review of the literature led to the Spiral Dynamics model of intrapersonal development (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 2006) as a framework representing the developmental trajectory of human values as achievable and flexible states of consciousness.

The dynamic nature of the model and the ways it illustrates the changing developmental pathways involved in the various states of consciousness appealed to and seemed appropriate for an initiative in Muslim societies with various cultural, social, and political environments. In this model, individual growth is determined by maturation early in life and by life circumstances later. It is a complex model that is based on many years of work by several key researchers (Beck & Cowan, 1996, 2006).

The Spiral Dynamics states of consciousness are developmental and have certain characteristics. Table 2 (below) presents the states and their characteristics. The fluidity of the original model enabled us to consider revising and adding a ninth state of consciousness unique to Muslim societies as part of the developmental trajectory. *Tawhīd*, as one of the most foundational beliefs in Islam, has a space on the Spiral Dynamics model because, in the contexts we work with, it is the highest state of consciousness. For someone to reach this state of being means that he or she sees it as an inclusive state of consciousness which includes the previous states starting from the egocentric, to the ethnocentric, and worldly, ultimately moving the human existence to the state of coexistence with everything in the universe as distinct from the existence of the Almighty.

The model as we modified it guides the rationale for this study and the analysis of the empirical research findings. It will be adapted and revised as we interpret the results of the Mapping the Terrain annual

study so that we can continue to add meaning to the theoretical framework as well as to the interpretation of our research agenda around education reform. For example, we are interested in discovering and further exploring what kinds of pedagogical and policy interventions would help education systems promote growth trajectories for young people and address factors at play in Muslim societies.

Table 2: The adapted human development states of consciousness model (Beck & Cowan, 1996; Beck et al., 2018)²

Instinctive: Natural instincts and reflexes direct existence. This state is also characteristic of the early emergence of the human species where people struggled for their existence and to stay alive. It is focused on fulfillment of basic survival needs.
Animistic: Live according to traditions and rituals of group/clan. This state also describes the beginning of seeking harmony and stability with others for safety in a world that is mysterious and unpredictable.
Egocentric: Asserting self for dominance, impulsive and immediate. This state highlights the human need in certain circumstances to break free and act impulsively to express individual strength. It is the state of power focus.
Absolutistic: Obedience as higher authority and rules direct search for truth. In this state of consciousness humans look for purpose and order to ensure a future. This is the period in human history when monotheistic religions emerged as a basic code for law and order.
Multiplistic: Act pragmatically and calculate to get desired results. In this state, individuals and groups strategize to prosper. It is the state of “Strive Drive.”
Relativistic: Empathy to feel and desire to respond. This is the state of the human bond when people look inward for connections and attempt to equalize with others.
Systemic: Interconnections and layered causes. In this state, people intentionally integrate and align systems.

² Parts of this Table were retrieved from <http://cruxcatalyst.com/2013/09/26/spiral-dynamics-a-way-of-understanding-human-nature/> on Oct. 13, 2019.

Holistic/Worldly: Experiential learning, transpersonal living. In this high state people look to synergize and find common goals and systems. They are synthesis oriented.

Tawhīd: Highest consciousness of human interconnectedness with a collective being. It focuses on oneness with God as well as oneness of “being” with the surrounding environment and each other.

Methodology

A thorough selection process of the study methods, design, and conceptual framework conducted by the research team ensured that all the study’s components were conducted with sensitivity to the local conditions of each location and ensured the selection of existing instruments that are reliable and valid in international contexts. In addition, the collaborations with local teams in each location ensured input from local research voices. We based the methodology of this study on a sample of 14 countries/regions for which data collection and data entry were conducted (see Table 3). Several factors were at play during the data collection and sampling stages of the study. Some of these have to do with regional differences, budgets, host-country approvals, and location of IIIT’s affiliate offices. Overall, country-level randomized samples were restricted to a few selected regions because of the difficulties in receiving approvals and access to schools. However, an effort was made to randomize as much as possible the selection of schools and universities from each region, and the selection of students within each institution. All individuals directly involved in data collection received training about protocols required for research involving human subjects. The online training’s goal was to ensure that coordinators are informed on ethical conduct of research involving human subjects.

Participants

Five groups of participants were targeted, as mentioned earlier. Each coordinator received the same instructions regarding sampling strategies. We also trained the coordinators on sampling at our first international meeting. We were aware that randomization would not occur at the country level for various considerations, including access and cost. Nevertheless, randomization happened at the district level when possible and when not, at the school and classroom levels. For example, university students were reached at campuses where permissions and

approvals were granted, some of which were religious Islamic universities and few others were not. This largely depended on the region and the country and the makeup of the population. The same applied to students in schools, their teachers, administrators, and parents. As mentioned, about 25,000 participants took the surveys, and every group mentioned above received a slightly different variation of the survey addressing the values mentioned earlier, in addition to demographic questions. The variations were determined by the importance of each of the constructs to the target group. For example, sense of belonging was most important to university students and school students while variations of self-efficacy subscales were selected for the various groups (Table 3 has been removed from reprint due to size).

Measures

The measures used were ones with established high reliabilities in international contexts. Questions related to seven scales of interest were included in the surveys. Two of these scales, community mindedness and forgiveness, were treated as outcome variables, whereas the rest were treated as predictors. This latter group of scales included religiosity/spirituality, moral reasoning, self-efficacy, empathy, and sense of belonging. The number of items per scale, number of subscales, and item wording varied slightly from the original based on the recommendations and requests of the local research coordinators. We used confirmatory factor analysis to confirm the factor structure of each individual scale. Items flagged as problematic by factor analysis were discarded prior to a detailed reliability analysis of each scale and subscale by country and survey type.

The design of our survey questionnaire for the different groups of participants was a gradual process that took several months and multiple steps. This process involved collaboration among several members of the research team who were very familiar with the socio-cultural factors of the regions where the participants in the survey lived. The research team reviewed multiple questionnaires using different scales and formats until the final draft was composed. This selection was based on extensive literature reviews and multiple discussions among the experts in the group. The research team reviewed previous studies across different regions in international settings to identify scales that were the best fit to the constructs and matched the participants' characteristics. Finally, besides demographic questions such as age, education, gender, language, and ethnicity, different aspects and criteria were considered in the

selection of each item and scale used in the survey questionnaire for each target group.

In addition, the scale needed to be specific to the constructs of our interest and considered to have a good reliability and validity by the scale developer or by other researchers across different samples with characteristics similar to our participants'. In addition, the items needed to be culturally sensitive toward our participants. Therefore, in some cases, after identifying scales that could match our criteria, there was a need for some modification. For example, instead of using the whole scale we had to select just certain subscale/s or portion of that scale in order to avoid including items which were culturally biased and irrelevant to our study. The other considerations in selecting the subscales/items were related to the length of the survey; we wanted to prevent participants' exhaustion in order to retain their attention during the completion of the survey. Another modification was changes in the response format of some of the scales. Since we had several scales with different response formats, we aimed to make a more homogenous response format across the whole questionnaire to prevent participants' confusion. Finally, the other consideration in the design of the survey was to choose scales including items that were worded in an unbiased manner, easily understandable, and easy for all groups of participants to follow and respond to.

Results and Conclusions³

The results of this large-scale quantitative study suggest complex yet extremely important lessons, especially as they relate to universal values and to youths and adults in Muslim societies. The results also provide lessons on the research methods used and their success and challenges, including the further development of context sensitive measures. When placing forgiveness and community mindedness as outcome variables and empathy and moral reasoning as predictors of tendencies to forgive and be more community minded, we are assuming the high possibility of confirming that and especially the positive direction of the predictions in the model. This equation is further enhanced by three additional variables that are suggested to promote the outcomes: religiosity, sense of belonging, and sense of self-efficacy.

The assumptions in the prediction model confirm the model and the power of empathy (more than moral reasoning) as a predictor and enhancer of the tendencies and willingness to forgive and be more

³ For a more detailed presentation and discussion of results, see the full report.

community minded among a sample of youths and adults in Muslim societies. Demographic variables among the various target groups (students in K-12 and higher education, teachers, administrators, and parents) such as gender and education did not play significant roles in determining the results of the study (see Table 4 and Figure 1 below for gender and religion distribution of responses).

Table 4. Distribution of respondent gender by country

Country	Gender		Total
	Female	Male	
Azerbaijan	144	53	197
Bangladesh	1,604	1,845	3,449
Bosnia	1,542	1,186	2,728
India	920	1,270	2,190
Indonesia	681	487	1,168
Kenya	563	546	1,109
Kyrgyzstan	950	621	1,571
Malaysia	1,486	735	2,221
Mauritius	732	242	974
Palestine	294	473	767
Sudan	498	403	901
Tanzania	537	462	999
Tatarstan	1,120	579	1,699
Uganda	445	462	907
Total	11,516	9,364	20,880

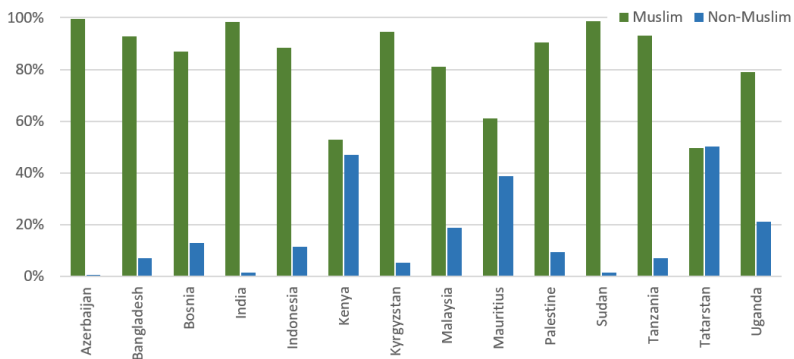


Figure 1. Distribution of religion within each country

The results of the study, with a mean sample size of 1,545 (the largest from Bangladesh and smallest from Azerbaijan), suggest that most of our participants were young. In fact, 61% of them were below the age of 24, and within that category, secondary school students who are younger than 18 years old were 38% of the sample. The youngest participants were from Bangladesh, followed by Malaysia. Ninety percent of the students attended formal education settings, including public and private K-12 schools. The rest were in extracurricular or community-based small schools.

The parents were the eldest among the adults, on average, with a mean age of 44, followed by administrators (42) and teachers (39). There were also 173 participants from all countries who were above the age of 65; most likely these were teachers and administrators. Eighty-one percent of the adults in the study were married and lived together, as expected in these social groups where divorce is gaining acceptability but generally people stay married as long as possible to keep the family together (Pew Research Center, 2013, p. 82). They mostly had an average of two children. Fifty-six percent of the adults in the sample had education levels between associate degrees and doctorates, and 51% of the teachers had bachelor's degrees. This was anticipated because the adult samples were mostly made up of teachers, administrators, and parents (although parents had lower levels of education than teachers and administrators). This aligns well with the minimal educational requirements to teach in many school systems around the globe (Mullis et al., 2008, p. 37).

The participants were balanced in gender; almost half were males and half were females across all surveyed groups except in Palestine, where there were more males included, and Malaysia, where more females were included. This balance is most likely due to our instructions to include similar numbers of males and females, especially because in many countries, few schools are co-educational. Gender differences were not significant, which indicates similar and close enough averages on the various scales. All students, regardless of country or other demographic variables, scored above 3 on most of the scales, suggesting high regard for the items selected and the subscales administered.

Overall 82% of the participants (all groups) were Muslim, and almost half of those identified as Sunni, a result that was expected because most of our samples came from schools with large Muslim populations and areas with large Muslim concentrations. We can't tell whether members of other Muslim groups chose not to identify themselves as such (1.6% of participants identified themselves as Shiite,

but there could have been more Shia within the sample) or if there weren't any other Muslim groups. The largest non-Muslim populations came from Tatarstan, Kenya, and Mauritius, areas with diverse religious and cultural populations. This also indicates that, in these countries, the researchers included schools and universities that had a mixture of Muslim and non-Muslim students, suggesting a possibility for a more randomized sampling strategy. This wasn't possible in countries with a vast majority of Muslims, such as Bangladesh and Sudan. In general, there were difficulties in some cases with randomly selecting the schools because it was easier to access Islamic schools or districts with larger populations of Muslims, as reported by field researchers at each site.

When looking at means across countries, religiosity received the highest scores among all participants, with a mean of 4.1, followed by moral reasoning (affective, 4.01), and sense of belonging (3.99). Kenya had the highest means on community mindedness, empathy, and sense of belonging and second highest on forgiveness, moral reasoning, religiosity, and self-efficacy (see Figure 2 below for a list of countries and constructs). Tatarstan (a region of Russia), on the other hand, had the lowest scores on community mindedness, empathy, forgiveness, moral reasoning and religiosity. The region also received lower means on sense of belonging and self-efficacy as compared to other sites. Hence, despite the desirability bias we see in these types of studies, differences exist between countries and the various groups. Some of the explanations we may propose have to do with the socio-political environments in the region, as the only difference we see as unique (as expressed in the analysis) for Tatarstan is that it had the highest non-Muslim population because the data were collected from public schools in the region. It may also be due to the history of the region as part of the previous Soviet Union where religious practices were banned.

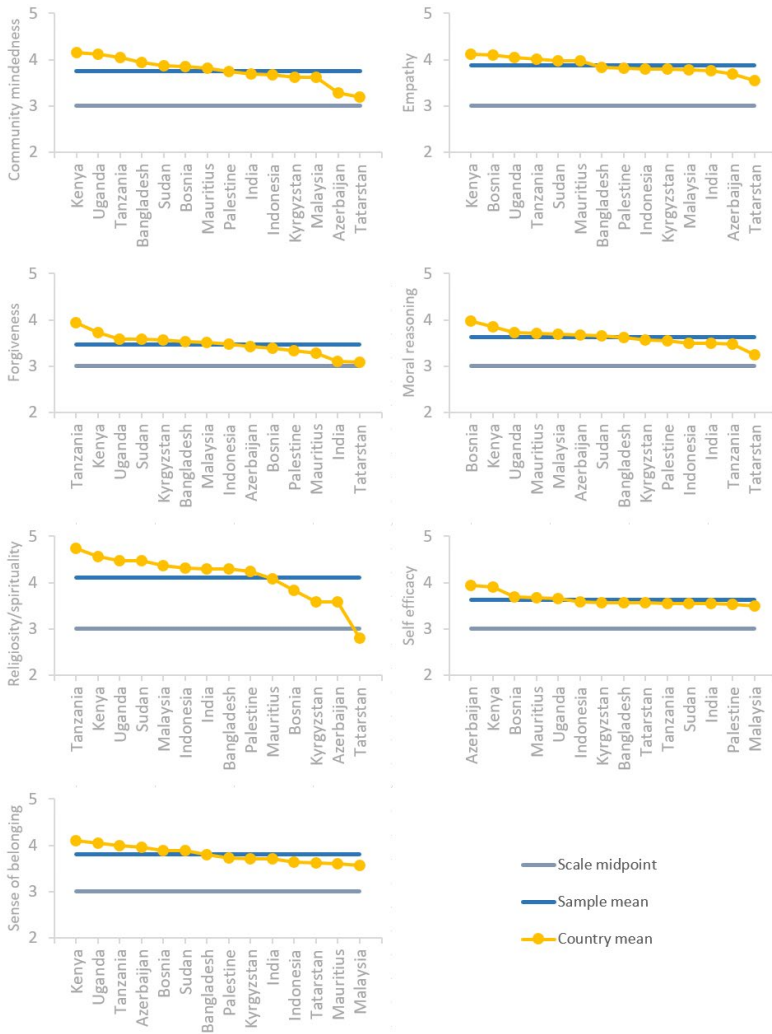


Figure 2: Scale Means by Country

As for Kenya, the country with the highest scores, this may be due to less variation in the samples from Islamic schools and universities in Kenya. Another country in the East African region (Uganda) had the second or third highest scores on all scales and subscales except for self-efficacy. In fact, on the scale levels (as analysis of subscales suggested lower reliability), the three East African countries had some of the

highest mean scores on most variables indicating high regard for these values. It is hard to tell, though, if it is purely higher regard or if other factors were at play. It seems fitting to look deeper into the data from these sites and look at the variation in types of schools as well as rural versus urban settings. This requires identifications of regions and types of schools that only local experts can address.

Out of the five target groups, school students had the lowest means on the scales administered to all groups except for religiosity, where they had scores consistent with administrators, teachers, and parents. Further, they scored higher on religiosity than university students did. This may be because university students are exposed to more disciplines and viewpoints than secondary school students are, and they were representing various areas of study. There may be other reasons, such as whether universities were mostly public or Islamic institutions, but we must investigate further by examining each university that participated in the study in each country.

The Spiral Dynamics model (Beck & Cowan, 1996) was used in the analysis to interpret the results. The various states of consciousness were grouped into three categories, with the last one including the *tawhīd* state of mind as the highest with a score of 5 on a 1-5 Likert scale. The analysis suggests that the majority of the participants were in the middle category (Absolutistic-Multiplistic-Relativistic) while the smallest number were in the first category (Intrinsic-Animistic-Egocentric). The last category (Systemic-Holistic-*Tawhīd*) had the second highest number of participants. The symmetrical distribution is, in fact, good news for the study, because despite some of the harsh realities experienced in some places such as Palestine and Sudan, most of the participants were away from the Intrinsic-Egocentric states that describe early and instinctive states of existence and consciousness. This category is more tribal and less logical and systemic (Beck & Cowan, 1996). Being in the middle states of consciousness means people could be empowered to move to higher states as long as life conditions do not worsen.

Without the intention of reading too much into this, it seems this result has promise for interventions in curriculum and pedagogy as well as in policy recommendations that utilize the human development model to reach higher states such as the holistic and the *tawhīd*. In that process, educational programs infusing the values included in the study and a values-based approach to education could make a difference for the next generation of students in Muslim societies.

At this stage of the study, and as we move through the annual waves and deepen the knowledge in the model and explore ways values play roles in the developmental trajectory even further, we will be able to

refine our methodology and analysis to make more meaning out of these results. For now, we can say that students in Muslim societies, along with teachers, parents, and administrators, are using their values such as empathy and synthesis-oriented thought (characteristics of systemic-relativistic stages) to address everyday challenges that we asked about in the surveys. It is true that we assumed this trajectory and “forced” participants into categories, but this still had meaning. Further development of this strategy is promising in interpreting the results.

Limitations

It is clear to us that despite all efforts, random sampling strategies did not occur in all sites. A convenient sampling model was at play amid attempts to randomize at each level possible; even where random schools were not guaranteed, random classrooms were selected. This was mainly because of two factors. First, it was easier for the coordinators to use existing networks in many countries to conduct the study. Second, there were difficulties associated with conducting empirical research in many of the countries in the study and gaining approval to enter government-run schools. As noted in previous studies, people are usually skeptical of researchers and are resistant to perceived agendas dictated by the West (Kamuya, et al., 2013). The research team, headquartered in the United States, had to prove their credibility and authenticity during a training workshop that was conducted in July 2018, at the launch of the study.

It is also clear that desirability bias is always there in survey studies (Kaminska & Foulsham, 2013) and is always one of the limitations of such a design. That there were significant variations in the results among the different countries testifies to the fact that individuals in different religious and cultural contexts responded differently, and some of those differences could have been because of diverse understanding of the values. For example, the results on religiosity from Tatarstan were much lower than those from other locations. This could be because the understanding of religiosity, forgiveness or other values differed from one language to another and from one socio-cultural context to another. This may have been intensified by the use of translations into different languages, where some meaning was lost in translation.

Nevertheless, in one of the later meetings of the coordinators from various sites, we had two focus groups working on defining “empathy” from their context. At the end of the two sessions, we collected the definitions from each participant and shared with them the definition that we came up with based on the review of previous studies. Participants from the 13 countries and one republic within a country came up with

almost identical definitions, with the addition of a phrase that “with the help of God and trust in Him,” suggesting religious sentiments that researchers assigned to the values. In order to prevent such misunderstandings and variation in translations, for the next round, each translated survey and the back translations were conducted by two different people, and the back translations were thoroughly examined by the research team.

Finally, several other limitations are anticipated in such a study, one of which is that we might have had too many target groups, and some might have been problematic—such as the parents group, where we had a lower return in some cases. We might have also included too many subscales, which made some of them look similar and hence affected the reliability of the subscales (in addition to the translations of reversed items). In the second round, we are reducing the target groups and the number of the subscales, especially ones that showed low reliability such as moral reasoning. As one of our objectives is to produce high-quality and authentic research, we will continue to refine the methods and the processes in place.

Further research is always needed as this study contributes to the field and provides some answers to questions that may arise based on the results in policy, pedagogy, and curriculum. For example, what policy recommendations might we suggest that will promote empathy, forgiveness, and community mindedness among others in Muslim-majority schools and universities based on the results? Are the ministries involved in the research (in the multiple sites) willing to set educational standards and guidelines to promote the above? What changes are needed in the curriculum to promote empathy and other concepts as identified in the research? In pedagogy, what would the results on the existence of high or low levels of empathy, forgiveness, and others mean to teachers, administrators, and others and ways they teach and model behaviors of empathy, forgiveness, etc.? How do schools make the connection between knowledge of these topics and having the needed set of skills? Lastly, how can people in leadership and administrative positions model behaviors that reflect a values-based approach to leadership that takes into consideration empathy, forgiveness, etc.? Which policies and strategies do these leaders engage in to promote these factors?

Numerous research questions can stem from this study, including regional interests and analysis. For example, the results in East Africa may answer more specific questions about that region, or the results from Central Asia may inform the fields of education, human development, religious education, and others regarding the unique dynamics in the

region. The public availability of the data sets this year and beyond will support scholars interested in some regions or countries as well as specific constructs.

Ilham Nasser, Ph.D., is a researcher and educator with 25 years' experience in research on human development and value-based education. Her research explores formal and non-formal education settings in contexts such as the U.S., Central Africa, and the Middle East. She completed her Ph.D. at the University of Maryland, College Park. She previously served as a faculty of teacher education for 12 years at George Mason University, VA. Her research includes publications on teachers' professional development and preparation in social and political contexts and ways these influence children's outcomes. Recently, she led the modernization of the curriculum for kindergarten in Iraq and the design and development of the first national curriculum for kindergarten in Palestine. Currently she is a senior researcher and director of a large-scale study on education values at the International Institute of Islamic Thought in Virginia.

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