CAUGHT BETWEEN WESTERN DEMANDS AND LOCAL NEEDS: THE ATTITUDES OF YEMENI EDUCATORS TOWARD WESTERN EDUCATION REFORM INITIATIVES

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You instilled in me love for people and patience without limits. Your patience was always coupled with hope; your kindness with strength, your selfless love with reasonable pride. I know you left this world with an empty eye that needed to be filled with my image before you closed it for good. I know that I promised to come home in time for you to see me, but never did. I know that my studies prevented me from fulfilling your last desire. But I also know that you wished to see my success more than anything else in the world. And I know you will forgive me. I cannot but very humbly dedicate my work to your pure loving soul. I miss you so much and pray to Allah to accept me in heaven so I get to see you again and fulfill my promise to you. Amen!

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

Many recent reports have shown concern with the conditions of education in the Middle East and have urged Middle Eastern countries to start serious reforms. For example, the World Bank MENA development report entitled *The road not travelled: Education reform in the Middle East and North Africa* (2007) urged Middle Eastern countries to initiate education reforms to make their curricula up to date and to prepare people for the challenges of the future. The report called for local, regional, and international initiatives to focus on producing education systems that have better returns for their investment in the region. Similarly, articles, studies, and reports in the United States have been describing education in the Middle East as in dire need of reform. For example, the United States Congress issued a resolution demanding that the White House pressure Saudi Arabia to reform their educational systems (U.S. Congress House. Res. 275, 2005). People in the Middle East have also long recognized the need for education reform, although not enough efforts have been made to initiate effective reforms (Ben-Meir, 2006; Ridha, 2006).

Interest in Middle Eastern education greatly intensified in the wake of the attacks of September 11, 2001 as fingers started pointing at education in the Middle East as being part of the ideological preparation of the attackers (Rabasha *et al., 2004; Looney, 2005;*

Kaplan, 2005, Ridha, 2006; El-Amine, 2005). This growing interest is evidenced in the number of newspaper and journal articles criticizing education in the Middle East and mostly indicating its role in promoting extremism (e.g. Friedman, 2001; Friedman, 2002; Rugh, 2002; Raphaeli, 2005; Ben-Meir, 2006).

On a more official level, these concerns have been reflected in initiatives the United States and the Group 8 countries have launched to create reforms in the Middle East. The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) launched by the United States Department of State in December, 2002, and the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) initiative launched by the Group 8 countries in 2004 both included education as a main component. The countries targeted for reform under the MEPI initiative included: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, the West Bank and Gaza (Palestine), and Yemen. (Government Accountability Office [GAO], 2005). MEPI's goal was to promote development in four key areas. According to the MEPI's website www.mepi.state.gov the initiative focused on four areas needing reform calling each area a "pillar." These pillars included political, educational, economic, and women's issues. On the education pillar MEPI has three goal areas; access, quality, and skill development. The main goal in education is to help people in the Middle East get better opportunities in life through getting access to education, through improving the quality of education to meet the demands of the current age, and through preparing the people for potential jobs by giving them the necessary training in skills needed in job markets.

Like MEPI, BMENA emphasized the need for education reform in the Middle East, urged Middle Eastern countries to start serious reforms, and promised to support

any reform efforts. The goals of the educational part of this initiative included improving the quality and relevance of education through the following measures: encouraging independent and critical thinking, providing cost-effective education that is able to adapt to the local needs and circumstances in each country, and involving the community in planning and evaluating the outcomes of education. In the area of literacy, the goal was to enhance the resources especially for women and to encourage involving non-governmental organizations in literacy efforts (Schools Interoperability Framework Association [SIFI], 2006). The United States helps with funding projects through BMENA as well.

Many politicians in the United States believe that education reform will support the war on terrorism. In the hearing called by the Senate Foreign Affairs committee on April 15, 2005, Elizabeth Cheney, then Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern affairs and director of the MEPI, referred to MEPI and BMENA initiatives as instrumental tools in the war against terrorism and made special reference to the role of education in combating terrorism (Cheney, E. April, 2006).

While the different initiatives, programs and recommendations from reports were discussed and agreed on with Middle Eastern leadership, the U.S. Congress in 2005 tried to apply more pressure on the White House to take stronger measures towards Middle Eastern countries, especially Saudi Arabia, to change their curriculum. In a resolution from the subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, it was demanded that Saudi Arabia change its curriculum by focusing on tolerance and reducing the influence of the fundamentalist *Wahhabi* sect of Islam on the curriculum (U.S. Congress, 2005). The resolution described the Saudi curriculum as one promoting and fostering extremism,

ignorance and anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism. Although the measure to consider these "violations" when assessing the US relations with Saudi Arabia was not passed by the Senates, it shows a "hostile congressional attitude towards Saudi Arabia" (Dumke, 2006, p.89).

Reactions to reform initiatives in the Middle East have been mixed, with a majority of the public being skeptical about Western-led initiatives (Looney, 2005; Ben-meire, 2006; Alsoudi, 2006; Ridha, 2006; Modhesh, 2008). Alsoudi (2006) explains the difference between the target countries' leadership and the public in terms of response to the initiatives. While the leadership of the target countries welcomed the initiative, a majority of the people remained skeptical. Some voices in the Middle East have called the initiative too little to create real reforms in the region and have argued that it was a mere "instrument for furthering US foreign policy goals" (p. 16).

Problem Statement

With the increasing western interest in education and demands for education reform in the Middle East, there is a parallel resistance to any Western initiative among Middle Easterners. At the same time, there is a lack of research soliciting the views and opinions of stakeholders in the Middle East on the need for education reform (El-Amine, 2005; Ridha, 2006). Besides, while the voices of some stakeholders such as religious leaders and government officials are clearly and visibly represented in public forums, Friday religious sermons, and television shows (e.g. Al-Jazeera's interviews with Dr. Tareq Swidan, 2001, and Dr. Qaradawy, 2003), the voices of educators are hardly represented. The problem of education and the issues of education reform have been

captured by religious figures and journalists. Educators' views on education reform and their attitudes toward reform initiatives have not been heard.

Even though some books and articles in American journals have attempted to analyze the Middle Eastern public's resistance to reform initiatives, they based their analyses mainly or solely on the opinions of newspaper journalists and the views of religious leaders (e.g. Friedman, 2001, 2002, 2005; Ottaway, 2003; Ben-Meir, 2006). Middle Eastern educators, university professors, school teachers, and inspectors, are the ones who are directly involved with education at the grassroots level and so their voices need to be heard. This study is designed to do that.

Since each country in the Middle East is unique in terms of economy, politics, history, culture, experiences with the West, etc. (Akkari, 2004), studies need to focus on countries individually and to avoid overgeneralization and homogenization (Gerges, 2006; Moussalli, 2008). In terms of economic and demographic indicators, some countries in the Middle East such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait are rich, while others, such as Yemen and Sudan are rather underdeveloped and poor. Some are overpopulated, such as Egypt, while others are scarcely populated such as Oman and Libya (Abdallah, 2001). But most important here is the difference among Middle Eastern countries in their experiences with the West and in their cultural and religious conditions. In these regards, countries such as Saudi Arabia and Yemen cannot be compared to countries like Lebanon and Egypt. Cultural experiences, social beliefs and expectations, traditions, religiosity, tribal laws, education and even past experiences with the West are different.

The Middle East region has been referred to as a heterogeneous region by researchers and strategic writers since the 1960s. For example Hurewitz (1969) wrote that the differences in experiences with the West and the different ideologies in the Middle East make it imperative that Westerners approaching the region not use their understanding of one country as the basis for judging or predicting what other countries might do. For example, Hurewitz argues that the way the former U.S.S.R. was viewed in different countries in the Middle East was unexpected by some Americans who thought that because Communist ideologies clashed with monotheism, Middle Easterners would reject Communism (p.10). The fact that some Middle Eastern countries embraced Communism while others rejected it shows the heterogeneity of the cultural experiences in the region. The wave of pan-Arabism, a secular socialist movement pioneered by the nationalist pan-Arab leader Gamal Abdul-Nasir-Nasser, was welcomed as an anti-colonial, anti-Zionist ideology in many of the Arab countries such as Iraq, Syria, and Egypt, but it was strongly rejected by other countries such as Saudi Arabia and Jordan (Black, 2007).

In terms of social expectations, traditions, and the role of women in the society, there are major differences among countries in the Middle East. While, for example, women in Saudi Arabia have to cover the entire body and their faces must be veiled, in Lebanon women participate in fashion shows and dress in Western style (Hammond, 2005). The same is true about women's role in public life. In the ultra-conservative Saudi Arabia, women are not allowed to vote, drive or travel alone (Nazir & Tomppert, 2005). Compared to Saudi Arabia, other countries in the region have varying levels of women's participation and respect for women's rights. Tunisia and Morocco are at the top of the

list in terms of respect for women's rights and the involvement of women in public life. Countries such as Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan scored significantly higher than Persian Gulf countries in Nazir & Tomppert's measures of women's rights (2005). In the Persian Gulf and Arabian Peninsula region, the poorest country, Yemen, had the highest level of women's participation mainly due to women's active involvement in running Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and their involvement in political parties.

Differences between Middle Eastern countries also include economic, educational, political, and past experience differences. Therefore, a careful study should either focus on one country at a time or study the whole region with an awareness of the differences, so as not to over-generalize for the entire region. It is for this reason that this study focuses on Yemen. Although findings from the study can be interpreted in light of the events and general tone in the Middle East, it should be noted that it is only within a Yemeni context that the data was collected and thus interpretations of the findings should be confined to that context. Comparative case studies could be conducted as further research to build a better understanding of the region. It should also be noted that the education reform referred to in this study indicates only education reform in public schools from Kindergarten to the 12th grade (K-12). In Yemen as well as in many other Middle Eastern countries, the curriculum for K-12 schools is a national curriculum mandated, outlined, written, and planned by central committees in the Ministries of Education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is twofold. It aims at discovering the views of Yemeni educators about the need for education reform in the Middle East, and 2) their attitudes

toward curriculum reform demands coming from Western countries. The study will also examine the impact of variables that influence educators' views on the current curriculum and attitudes toward education reform initiatives, such as their age, their highest academic degree, their previous contact with people from other countries or cultures, and their religiosity.

Research Questions

The study will attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the views of Yemeni educators on the current curriculum in their country?
2. How do Yemeni educators view Western initiatives and demands that involve/encourage educational reform?
3. What variables correlate with the views on the need for education reform and the attitudes toward reform initiatives? More specifically:

a) How do age, gender, and income relate to the attitudes of educators toward reform initiatives?
b) How does religiosity (personal piety, support for political Islam) relate to the attitudes of educators toward reform initiatives?
c) How does the number of years spent abroad relate to the attitudes of educators toward reform initiatives?
d) How does the highest degree obtained relate to the attitudes of educators toward reform initiatives?
e) How does the view about the need for curriculum reform relate to the attitudes of educators toward reform initiatives?

Significance of the Study

With the increased attention to the Middle East, Americans and Europeans are relying on different sources for information about the region. Of particular interest to the average Western person is the question expressed by many scholars, politicians and ordinary men and women; “why do they hate us?” The need to get closer to the mentality of Middle Eastern people and to understand their attitudes towards the West - and most importantly, the sources of these attitudes-have haunted people in the West. Since the tragic attacks of 9/11 drew more attention to education in Muslim Middle Eastern countries as one of the culprits in bringing up youth with Anti-western attitudes, looking at the educational system and educators’ attitudes will inform interested people about education as a potential source of ideological mobilization of Muslims.

Research on the attitudes of Middle Eastern people needs to take into account the fact that each country is different. Therefore, input taken from one country need not be generalized to other countries or used to depict what Ahmed Moussalli (2008) describes in his book *U.S. foreign policy and Islamist politics* as the idea of a “global … enemy” (p. 167). Doing so, Moussalli argues, reduces the likelihood of understanding the way religion works in the Middle Eastern societies. Therefore, this study focuses on one country, Yemen, and attempts to understand the views and attitudes of educators in this country toward a specific educational issue.

Theoretical Framework

This study is situated within a body of research that study the cultural politics of education (Pennycook, 1990) and the inevitability of the influence of globalization as a post-colonial political force on education in third world countries (Tikly, 2004). Given

the post-9/11 focus on religion in relation to education and international conflict, and since this study seeks to find out what factors are related to Yemeni educators' views and attitudes toward post-9/11 Western reform initiatives, it also relies on a theoretical base provided by political science professor Mark Tessler (2002) according to which two types of religiosity influence Middle Easterners' views on and attitudes toward Western ideals and ideas: personal and political religiosity. Personal religiosity refers to the personal commitment to the acts and rituals of worship, while political religiosity refers to the support for a political role for religion in governing public's life (Benson & Williams, 1982; Tessler, 2002). According to Tessler, Performing the obligatory prayers five times a day, reading the Quran regularly, and basing important life decisions on religious teachings are all indicators of personal religiosity. Indicators of political religiosity include supporting more political involvement for the religious institutions and figures, believing that religious figures should influence people's political orientations and choices, and favoring religious laws over democratic laws.

While some American writers such as Thomas Friedman (2005) and others argue that Islam as a religion in its totality, and the Quran in particular, is responsible for Middle Easterners' views on and attitudes toward the West, Tessler (2002) found that only political religiosity was relevant to the attitudes toward democracy. Personal religiosity, including reading the Quran, did not influence Middle Easterners' views on or attitudes toward democracy. This study utilized Tessler's distinction between personal and political religiosity in attempting to understand the relationship between various factors, including religiosity, and the attitudes of Yemeni educators toward Western educational reform initiatives.

Limitations of the study

Due to the distance between the researcher and the research site, direct contact with participants was not available and so the researcher was not able to answer questions from participants. However, the information sheet (see Appendix A) distributed with each survey included the researcher's contact information and encouraged participants to send any questions by e-mail. Another limitation to this study is in the nature of the data collection method, i.e. the use of anonymous survey questionnaires with Likert scale questions. Likert scale questions limit the respondents' ability to go beyond a standard set of responses (Babbie, 1995). In order to counter the potential limiting effect of the Likert scale type of questions, the researcher provided participants with an opportunity to add their remarks or any additional thoughts below each of the key items in the questionnaire. The anonymity of responses made it impossible for the researcher to make any follow-up with the participants. Given the usual low return rates in survey research in social studies (Johnson & Owens, n.d), follow-up calls increase the possibility of convincing questionnaire recipients to participate and inform the study by analyzing the reasons that prevented non-respondents from responding (Groves, Dillman, Eltinge, & Little, 2002).

Definition of Terms

Some of the terms used in this study are either culture-specific or descriptions of jobs that exist in the educational or administrative systems in Yemen. Following are some of the terms used in the study:

- Imam: a term meaning a religious leader, it has been used to refer to the political dynasty of the king in Yemen during the *Zaydi* reign from the 9th century to 1962.

- Imamate (Arabic *Imamah*): leadership of the nation of believers; a doctrine the Shiite Muslims believe to be the right of certain people who serve as guides for the nation and are associated with the household of the Prophet.
- Inspector/education supervisor: almost equivalent to a master teacher in the American schools, except that education supervisors in Yemen are assigned to school districts and among their job duties are serving as subject-matter experts, supervising and evaluating teachers, and providing training as needed.
- *Mujahideen* (variation *Mujahidin*): Plural of *Mujahid*, linguistically the word means strugglers, but it has been used heavily to refer to the Muslim fighters in Afghanistan during the war with the former U.S.S.R. It is erroneously translated as "worriers of God," while, "technically the term does not have a necessary connection with war" (Esposito, 2003, p. 213).
- *Shari'a law*: religious doctrines mandating rules and regulations based on the Quran and traditions of the Prophet of Islam.
- *Wahhabi(sm)*: a Saudi-based strict sect of Islam following the teachings of Sheikh Mohammed Ibn Abdulwahab (1703-1792), an 18th century reformist and reviver of the teachings of Islam. Followers of *Wahhabism* are called *Wahhabi* and are known for emphasizing the role of knowledge in confronting nonbelievers. Sometimes they are associated with violent opposition of medieval practices associated with some cults in the region, such as glorifying shrines and tombs. For *Wahhabis*, the Shiite pilgrims to the Holy shrines in Karbala and Najaf in Iraq are acts of apostasy (Esposito, 2003).

- *Zaydi*: a moderate Shiite group established in northern Iran in 863 and lasted until the 12th century, but remained in power in North Yemen from 893 to 1962. The *Zaydi* Shiite are the closest to Sunni and they differ from other sects of Shiite mainly in their acceptance of the first, second, and third Caliph (Abu Bakr, Omar, and Othman) all after the death of Prophet Muhammed (Peace Be Upon Him) (Esposito, 2003, p. 346).

Summary

Chapter 1 provided a background of the problem, detailed the problem being researched, and outlined the research questions to be answered in subsequent chapters. Chapter 2 presented a synthesis of relevant prior studies and scholarly writings pertinent to the relationship between global forces and education in Third World countries. Chapter 3 discussed the method used to answer each research question. Chapter 4 presented the results of the questionnaire and the findings from the study. Chapter 5 provided analyses, interpretations, and discussions of the findings from the study followed by recommendations for policy makers as well as for further studies.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study focused on the views of educators in the Middle East - Yemen in particular on the need for education reform and their attitudes toward Western initiatives and demands to reform education. This chapter provides a spectrum of the research and writings on education reform as relates to the topic of this study, moving from a general review of research on education reform within the context of globalization and then zooming in to the more specific area of education reform in the Middle East as a part of the efforts to create general reforms in the region. Attitudes of Middle Easterners toward reform initiatives in general, and educational reform initiatives in particular are also presented in this chapter. The literature review is thus organized as follows: 1) education reform in a globalized world, 2) education reform in the Middle East, 3) reform initiatives in the Middle East, 4) reactions of Middle Easterners to reform initiatives, 5) religiosity and attitudes toward the West, 6) the Arab Barometer, 7) the uniqueness of Yemen, 8) the significance of Yemen, and 9) conclusion.

Education Reform in a Globalized World

Education reform as defined by Tyack & Cuban (1995) refers to any "planned efforts to change schools in order to correct perceived social and educational problems" (p.4).

Reform usually comes as a response to changing societal demands and needs (Altenbaugh, 2003; Horn, 2002; Kaestle, 1990; Ravitch, 2000; Schlechty, 1990). In this sense, education reform is a political process that is tied to the interests of different forces with different perceptions of social problems. In order to succeed, education reform needs public support and thus needs to respond to the public's voice. Among the public, the voice of teachers is particularly important. Therefore, Tyack and Cuban (1995) suggest that reforms initiated by teachers are guaranteed to succeed. Carolyn Woempner (2008) argues that the cyclic nature of education reform is "a reflection of cycles of public and institutional [including political] values and priorities" (p.23).

In formerly colonized countries, the need for education reform was perceived as a form of resisting Western hegemony (Hopkin, 1982; Guthrie, 1986; Tikly, 2001). Writing about the ways in which formerly colonized countries reform their education systems, Guthrie (1986) asserts that such countries conduct education reform in order to become free from the chains of colonization and to emphasize their national identities. Among the goals of education reform in such countries also is the need to address their national priorities and change the focus of their education from what serves the interests of colonizers to what serves the interests of the country. But while trying to reform education for these purposes, Guthrie (1986) argues that developing countries usually resort to the recent "innovative reactions in the former colonizers' own countries (p. 81)." Former colonizers also actively seek to maintain a status of power over the ideas and thought formation of youth in their former colonies by continuing to influence their education systems (Altbach, 1989; Nguyen, et al, 2009).

Fazal Rizvi (2004) examined how September 11 and its aftermath affected the discussion about globalization. He asserts that globalization has always been represented by a unidirectional cultural flow "from the West to the Rest" (p. 159) but in covert ways that usually would consider forms of mutual cultural understandings and learning. The idea that globalization was simply a transformation of time and space, argues Rizvi (2004), concealed a "hegemonic project" (p.160) of capitalism. Until the end of the 1990s the discussion of globalization had been confined to the realms of economy and politics. But in the aftermath of September 11 the debate about globalization entered the field of academics and education. Security came to the forefront of international relations and the notion of nation-state, that had been assumed to start losing power with globalization regained strength because of the new concerns about the security of 'citizens.' The major change in the discourse of globalization has been the relationship between the West and Islam, which became more of a hostile one, thus impeding the promotion of global ideals that transcend time and space.

Many recent studies have noticed that international agencies and Western countries have been promoting education reforms in developing countries by tying financial support and loans to reforms that represent Western views on education (e.g. Kamat, 2004; Tikly, 2004; Sayed, 2005; Resnik, 2006; Nguyen, Elliott, Terlouw, & Pilot, 2009). Focusing on the introduction of collaborative learning into Asian schools, Nguyen et al. (2009) sought to find out how globalizing forces, in attempts to globalize education, rather force educational systems into homogeneity with Western ideals and cultural norms. The collaborative learning approach was found not to be in line with the local cultural beliefs and practices of Asian students and so encouraging or imposing it on

them ignores their unique cultural backgrounds. Nevertheless, when grants and loans are available only for such programs and ideas, developing countries feel pressured to accept them even though they do not necessarily prove productive or culturally appropriate.

One of the key writers on issues of globalization and education in the postcolonial era is Leon Tikly. His conceptual framework, developed in a paper published in the Comparative Education Journal in 2001, provided the basis on which many later works on the issue built their arguments. Tikly (2001) sought to solidify the grounds on which studies on globalization and education are based. He refers to education in the postcolonial era as a form of building national identity for the formerly colonized countries. However, colonial education has three merits that Tikly acknowledges. The first is that it provided a base for structured education systems in the colonized countries on which education reforms were possible. The second is that colonial education started the economic, political, and cultural global flows and networks which contributed to the creation of the current education systems in these countries. The third point is that this form of flow of ideas helped in the efforts to be liberated from Western colonization. Western revolutionary ideologies were embraced in some colonized countries and served as the ideological underpinnings for liberation and self-reliance afterwards. Tanzania was the example of this use of Western ideologies to become free from Western hegemony. The Tanzanian president's philosophy of self-reliance was translated into educational campaigns that helped the public ameliorate the conditions of illiteracy and poverty in the country.

Colonial education consistently fell short of providing secondary and higher education that could have made a difference in the lives of colonized people (Tikly,

2001). Hegemony and the imposition of ideas and programs continued, in different forms, after the liberation of colonized countries despite the resistance of newly liberated nations. Resistance took the forms of establishing countries' own educational systems, rejecting the hegemony of the English language (Pennycook, 1990; Phillipson, 1992), and the reviving of national and tribal loyalties. In this way, the indigenous people are asserting their diversity and equity, which Tikly (2001) describes as essential tenets of democracy that are endangered by the attempts to globalize education.

Postcolonial global forces sought to influence education in five ways, namely harmonization, dissemination, standardization, installing interdependence, and imposition (Dale, 1999). As a result of globalization, education policy in individual countries has been forced to become alike despite differences in cultural experiences. This harmonization mechanism has been demonstrated strongly in the European Union, in particular. The second mechanism of dissemination refers to the efforts of international agencies and umbrella organizations to set and communicate agendas to their beneficiaries or member states. Standardization is the mechanism through which the global forces set the principles and guidelines for member states to follow. The fourth mechanism is evident in the establishment of nongovernmental organizations that are tied to global organizations and seek to make the world a connected network of causes. Imposition is the final mechanism, and the one that does not require persuasion or cooperation with the recipient countries which have to follow guidelines dictated by donors in order to keep receiving benefits and not be punished. The last mechanism is the one the public usually associate with globalization (Dale, 1999).

Kamat (2004) presents a different picture of local versus global education showing that trends like new nationalism are not in contradiction with globalization, but rather in conjunction with it. Studying education reform in India, she theorizes that the new Hindu nationalism is tied to globalization not a dissociated with it. She compares the anti-colonial nationalists' goals with those of the new Hindu nationalists.' Anti-colonial nationalists came right after India's liberation and were led by Ghandi's ideals that rejected colonialism, but acknowledged the need to reform the Indian society. Hindu nationalism represented in the education reform initiative in 2000 did not recognize the need to reform, but instead blamed modernization for the "collapse of a harmonious social order" (p. 274). Kamat also differentiates between territorial nationalism and cultural nationalism. Territorial nationalism includes people from different cultural and religious backgrounds and, in the case of India, was progressive in nature, whereas cultural nationalism seeks to unite people from the same ethnic, religious, or sectarian backgrounds across territories. In this way, cultural nationalism goes against the principles of pluralistic societies. Reflecting on the goals of Hindu nationalism to render the world a Hindu nation, Kamat (2004) declares that this form of nationalism is not anti-colonial but rather imperialistic itself, the only difference being that Hindu nationalists do not aspire to global power through territorial expansion and military and economic power, but rather through a cultural hegemony.

Tabulawa (2009) studied Botswana's education reform as a response to globalization. Acknowledging what Tikly (2001) termed as 'policy borrowing,' Tabulawa asserts that the relationship between the global and the local in educational policy making is a dialectical one. The final shape of educational policy influenced by

globalization is usually determined by local conditions and concerns. In the case of Botswana the Revised National Policy on Education (RNPE), established in 1994, aimed at producing the learner equivalent of the self-programmable worker, a concept that originated in the post-Fordist economic model. The self programmable learner is a learner who is innovative, creative, flexible, and an independent thinker. Tabulawa analyzed the new policy and found that the influence of the local preference of behaviorist modes of education did not help in producing the desired type of learner. The components of the policy itself were clearly influenced by local conditions and concerns and produced a contradictory set of programs that did not seem to achieve the goals of the policy.

In the Middle East, even though only a few studies about education and globalization are reported, some studies have been made public in regional and local conferences that discussed globalization in one way or another. The conference 'Globalization and Educational Priorities,' organized by King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in April 2004, provided some literature that represented the Arab voice on the issue of globalization and education. Views on the matter ranged from the view that education was being improved by global efforts and interactions that injected quality enhancers into the educational systems of third world countries in general and the Middle East in particular (Hossani, 2004), to views that saw the effect of globalization on education as a new form of colonization and Western – particularly American domination (Al-Torayry, 2004).

Hossani (2004) acknowledged the impact of globalization on education and considered it a potentially positive one. Contact and mutual respect with the others are

inevitable with the new technologies and shared global interests. National educational systems in the Arab world cannot afford to be isolated from the rest of the world. And so, Hossani (p. 23) suggests that Arab countries lead "major reform efforts to review all the aspects of their education," including purposes, goals, approaches, and content of the curriculum in a way that makes these systems compatible with the developments in the world. Without these reforms, the educational systems in the Arab world will remain backward and out of touch with the world. But at the same time, these systems should seek to fortify themselves by updating their cultural and value sources, i.e. revisiting and revising the Arabic and Islamic cultural bases of education. The end result of these efforts should be an educational system that copes with the changes in the globalized world but maintains its unique features that are based on the history and culture of the region.

Al-Torayry (2004) on the other hand, presented the findings from a survey study he conducted with the students in King Saud University in Saudi Arabia. Students were asked to respond to survey questions by rating different descriptive statements of globalization. The highest rated concepts of globalization were "Islam could be an alternative for Western globalization if conditions permit," "globalization is a new form of colonization," "globalization is a vague concept," "globalization has Western origin, philosophies, and mechanisms," and "globalization is an equivalent of domination" (p. 15). Thus, Al-Torayry concludes that the common concept in the Middle East is that globalization is a Western tool to dominate the rest of the world. People reject globalization because it ignores their rich backgrounds. He recommends that educational systems should fortify youth by challenging the global forces and bringing the best in the

Islamic culture and traditions to the attention of students at all times, so they are aware of the strengths in their heritage.

In conclusion, the forces of globalization impact local education policies in the post-colonial, developing countries. This influence is usually uni-directional, with the West exporting ideas and practices to the rest of the world. Not all the stakeholders in the 'borrowing'/recipient countries view the Western impact on their education positively. Some educators and consumers of education even see globalization and the international interest in local education systems as an extension of colonialism (Al-Torayry, 2004; Mansour, 2007). However, when funding through grants and loans is tied to certain educational practices or reforms, these countries do follow Western models of education. In some cases, the results are not exactly what the developing countries aspire to (e.g. Tabulawa, 2009), and in other cases the consequences could even be reactionary policies that dominate education reform efforts (e.g. Kamat, 2004).

Education in the Middle East

Historical background

Byron Massialas and Samir Jarrar (1991) provided a full historical and analytical review of Arab education from the seventh century to the 1980s. According to Massialas and Jarrar, the history of education in the Middle East dates back to the seventh century with the beginning of the message of Islam. Mosques were built and used as learning centers where adults would get together and study the Quran. Later on, Muslim youth were also taught how to read and write the Quran in mosques, thus giving Muslim youth the first type of institutionalized education, called "*Kuttab*." *Kuttab* means a mosque

where children are taught how to read and write (Massialas & Jarrar, p. 10). Interest in education among the early Muslims was evidenced in the Quran and the sayings of the prophet Muhammed. The first verse believed to be revealed in the Holy Quran reads "Read in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher who created […] who taught the use of the pen" (p. 8). Sayings of the prophet Muhammed as quoted in Massialas & Jarrar include "seek education from cradle to grave" (p. 8), and "seek knowledge, even if it be in China, for the pursuit of knowledge is obligatory for every Moslem, man or woman" (p. 9). Prisoners of war during the early days of Islam would be released if they taught ten Muslims how to read and write. During the next centuries of the Muslim civilization, from the eighth to the thirteenth centuries, non-formal education in the Muslim world flourished and was further institutionalized in the form of *Kuttab*s and early forms of schools. It was not until the eleventh century that the first formal educational system was established and sponsored by the state. The first school was Al-*Madrasa* Al-Nizammiya in Baghdad. This *madrasa* (meaning school) taught humanities, philosophy, arts, mathematics, and physical sciences. Soon afterwards, Damascus followed with the establishment of 21 *madrasa*s, followed by Cairo and then other cities in the Muslim world (p. 15). The main advantage of this early form of education was that it encouraged the pursuit of knowledge and the exchange of culture and ideas. Instructors and translators were brought from anywhere in the world and were well-paid.

In the fourteenth century the Ottoman Empire took over the Arab Muslim Empire and the whole educational system changed. *Madrasa*s were moved from the city centers of Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo, etc. to new places with Istanbul, the capital city of the Ottoman Empire, hosting the major *madrasa*s (Massialas & Jarrar, 1991, p. 17). The

content of the curriculum was also changed and cultural exchange with other philosophies was strictly prohibited. It was not until the 19th century that the first scholarly contact with the West was made in the form of scholarships for students in Egypt to study abroad. With the establishment of colleges of medicine and science, students were sent abroad to study. At the same time some missionary schools had been functioning in Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Egypt.

With the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the invasion of the Muslim Arab world by European colonization, new forms of education were established. The new schools were mainly geared towards serving the administrative needs of the colonizers (Massialas & Jarrar, 1991). The curriculum lacked relevance to the students' countries' needs or their personal interests (Akkari, 2004). Massialas & Jarrar (1991) and Akkari assert that during this period access to education in the Arab colonies was very limited, with quotas given to each area and a very selective process that excluded the majority of the locals. The curriculum was an adaption of the European curriculum with the addition of some Islamic religious teaching and Arabic lessons. Massialas & Jarrar commented that students would learn about "the history and geography of France [more] than … their own country" (p. 20). The trend to make the youth in colonized countries learn about the colonizer's strengths is among the mechanisms used to indoctrinate them to achieve imperialist goals (Carnoy, 1974). Imperialism entails efforts to "influence and control other countries' economies for the economic and political gain of the dominant power (p. 26)" and education is used by the colonizers to achieve this goal. Awareness of imperialism among the people led to the emergence of social resentment and political movements that struggled for national independence.

Prior to 1943, France controlled Syria and other regions of the former Ottoman Empire while Great Britain colonized the Empire comprised of what is currently Iraq, Palestine and TransJordan. The Arab states began gaining independence in the years during and after World War II, with Syria being the first to gain independence from the French mandate in 1943. Other Arab countries were still under colonization. Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia were under the French colonization, while Libya was under Italian colonization until 1947, and then was under both the French and British colonization until 1951. Saudi Arabia and North Yemen were not directly colonized by Europeans. However, South Yemen remained under the British colonization for 138 years, gaining its independence in 1963 and a full sovereignty in 1967 (Lewis, 2003; Dresch, 2000).

Political independence was accompanied by independence in the educational systems. The new governments focused on quantitative measures of education reform to accommodate the population explosions, thus building scores of schools and learning centers. Up until the 1980s, the focus of education efforts was to increase the number of schools to provide access to as many of the Arab youth as possible and to establish a structure for the educational systems in these countries. As a result education in the Middle East has made significant progress over the past 50 years (World Bank, 2007, Benard, 2006). The World Bank's 2007 report entitled *the road not traveled: Education reform in the Middle East* describes the progress of education systems in the Middle East in terms of the numbers of schools, enrollment rates, literacy rates, and spending on education in the Middle Eastern countries. However, the report highlights major challenges and areas that require serious efforts for reform. The need for reform, as identified by the World Bank, comes from the need of Arab Middle Eastern countries to

improve their return of investments on education, and to make sure education is preparing their youth for future challenges. According to the report, the educational achievement of the Middle East and North African (MENA) countries is significantly lower than that of countries with the same level of economic development. Although the percentage of per capita expenditure on education in the Middle East is higher than in other regions, the development outcomes of education are significantly lower than in other regions. Education attainment did not reduce poverty indicators. The report contends that it is not the economy or spending on education that affects the outcomes, but rather some characteristics of the educational system in question.

Available recent research examined the current condition and predicted the future challenges of education in the Middle East(e.g. Akkari, 2004; Benard, 2006). Akkari (2004) began his study by stressing the fact that the educational past and present conditions are different in each county and tried to concentrate on the educational issues that are common in all the Middle Eastern countries. In general, indicators of expenditure on education as a percentage of the GNP in the Middle Eastern countries are among the highest in the world. However, in terms of quality and international compatibility, Middle Eastern education ranks rather low. High unemployment rates soaring up to 14% and higher, attest to the disconnect between the education system and the labor market needs (Akkari, 2004; Benard, 2006). The highest unemployment rate, as observed by Akkari was among the secondary vocational degree holders and the university graduates with women suffering the most from unemployment. Gender inequality in educational opportunities is more common in the poor countries of the region. For example, in Egypt, Morocco, and Yemen, female enrollment rates are significantly lower than those for

males. In Yemen, the gap in elementary school enrollment is four girls to ten boys. The gap is three girls to ten boys in secondary schools. On the other hand, in rich countries such as Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, and Qatar female enrollment is a bit higher than male enrollment in schools (World Bank, 2007). The differences among countries in the Middle East exist both in quantitative and qualitative terms. Enrollment rates in poorer countries are less than those in richer countries, gender disparity, and adult illiteracy rates are higher in poorer countries. Yemen, Morocco, and Egypt are always at the bottom of the list when it comes to the three measures of gender disparity, enrollment rates, and adult illiteracy (Akkari, 2004).

Like Akkari, the director of RAND Initiative for Middle Eastern youth, Cheryl Benard, argues that investment in education has not yielded the anticipated and hoped for outcomes in social, economic, and political development in the Middle East (2006). The "impressive expansion in education" did not improve its quality nor did it contribute to the creation of a prosperous society (p. 31). Return on investment in education has been low and the skilled worker has not been produced. Benard's conclusions about the need for educational reform in the Middle East include not only working on the quality of education but also considering the disconnect between education and the economy. She recommends that classrooms teach skills that prepare students to succeed in life, but at the same time she insists that somehow there must be job opportunities that graduates find their skills have prepared them for.

Education reform in the Middle East

Given all the discontent with the status of education in the Middle East as shown above, it is important to present the debate about the needed education reform. In fact, the

issue of reforms in the region is a complex one and involves many fronts - political, economic, educational, and even social. Middle Easterners have been calling for and attempting reforms for a long time, but at the same time stronger voices have been cautioning that the United States and the West in general are only pushing for their own interests that do not necessarily address the needs and aspirations of the region (Sayed, 2005; El-Amine, 2005; Alsoudi, 2006; Benard, 2006). Following is a review of the literature that has discussed education reform in the Middle East.

Benard (2006) reports on the early voices calling for reforms in the Middle East, such as the famous reformists Sheikh Muhammad Abduh, Alafghani, and Tarzi, all in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. They called for a disengagement from the traditionalism in education that produced students who lacked critical and analytical thinking skills. They classified pedagogy as a normal product of the backwardness in the society itself. Tarzi's writings, according to Benard (2006), critiqued the society's lack of freedom and respect for women. Since then, local reformists have been critiquing the status quo and usually faced resistance from the public. More recently, some governments have started taking the initiative to establish political, educational, and economic reforms that resonate with the early calls for reform. These efforts must be supported, argues Benard (2006), instead of focusing efforts on areas that show resistance more than a "willingness to change" (p. 43). Robert Looney (2005) agrees with this argument and calls for the United States and Group eight (G-8) countries to work with local governments and local reformers to put the interests of those countries first so that people in the Middle East will be less suspicious of the intentions of the calls for reform.

Despite such calls for reform which have been reported for over a century, not many studies in the Arab World have discussed the needs for reform or the mechanisms to do so in detail (Ayoub, 2005). Among the voices calling for education reform in public schools or discussing it, argues Ayoub, only a few have offered objective analyses of the current conditions and suggested reasonable reforms for the future. Among these voices were a collection of studies published in a book by Adnan El-Amine (2005). In the preface to the book, El-Amine wrote that the pressures on Arab countries to reform their education have caused a state of tension and confusion in these countries. These pressures have caused ongoing debates among their politicians, religious leaders, educators, and the public in Arab countries about the need for education reform and the agenda for reforming education. These debates, argue El-Amine, become rather heated and out of bounds, which causes objective perspectives to be absent from the scene. Fortunately, a few researchers who looked objectively at the issue of education reform in the Arab countries have not been totally absent. El-Amine argues that the book he edited contains examples of objective perspectives on education reform from the Middle Eastern point of view.

In the first chapter of El-Amine's book, Fatimah Sayed (2005), from Egypt, describes the impact of foreign aid on reforming basic education in Egypt during the 1990s. She acknowledges the positive impact of such aid on expanding basic education, but warns of the negative impact of what she describes as 'conditioned aid' whereby the educational policies are directed according to the priorities of the donors. She concludes by recommending the full participation of the public in the Arab world in any reform efforts if they are to be successful. The absence of public participation, argues Sayed,

alienates reform efforts and turns the public against them, accusing those who try to promote reforms of succumbing to the Western views about life and education and seeking to represent these views in the curriculum. The public's negative attitudes toward reform efforts lead to resistance and rejection of these efforts. Sayed argues that both Western countries and their enthusiastic allies in the Arab countries can easily avoid this resistance and rejection by listening to the local demands for reform in the first place.

Education reform in some other Arab countries like Tunisia, Kuwait, Morocco, and Qatar was discussed in other chapters (El-Amine, 2005). While the chapters about Kuwait, Qatar, and Tunisia provided descriptive accounts of the reforms in these countries, the chapter about Morocco analyzed education reform in the country and attributed the success of the reform efforts to the fact that a socialist and former leftist opposition leader was selected to lead the government between 1998 and 2000. This government focused on improving access to education among the low income rural communities by providing food to students and focused on improving the quality of education by providing activities that were not typically part of the curriculum, such as arts, sports, and the internet. Education reform in Morocco was handled by a special committee that was authorized to manage reforms. Saaf (2005) said that there was evident resistance to the work of this reform committee from the ministry of education officials who felt their traditional authoritative roles were diminishing.

The writings of Mohammed Jawad Ridha are of special interest for the purposes of this study (e.g. Ridha, 2005 and Ridha, 2006). Ridha (2005) argues that education reform is needed to keep students in the Arab world current about changes in the world and to train them to deal critically with other cultures, civilizations, and philosophies.

Education needs to prepare students to understand and deal with the changes in identity of civilizations and nations from one age to another. In order to achieve this goal, education must focus on training students to critically examine what they have been taking for granted, including the religious text. Ridha (2005) calls for a reform of religious texts and of the approaches to teaching religion. He argues that the current approach that prevents critical thinking and discourages creative ways of dealing with the texts diminishes students' ability to use their logical thinking skills.

Like Ridha, Bader Al-Saif (2003) presented a study criticizing the current religious K-12 school textbooks, especially in Saudi Arabia. Al-Saif studied Saudi textbooks and showed that the ideological underpinnings of the strict sect of *Wahhabism* in Saudi Arabia are being taught to children in ways that train them to "develop enmity and hate everything non-Muslim" (p. 17). Lessons in "the monotheism" textbook, *Tawhid,* consistently urged students not to have any form of allegiance to the non-Muslims, not to like them, and not to imitate them. Not only do textbooks target non-Muslims, but they also urge students not to involve themselves with any un-*Wahhabi* activities or beliefs even if they be Muslim. He concludes that a rigorous reform agenda is needed. *Tawhid* books need to be reconsidered in their entirety and only introduced to secondary students due to the complex nature of the theological concepts. Al-Saif further recommends that the authors of the religious textbooks, as well as the religious clerics responsible for such views, should be confronted before it is too late.

Reactions to reform initiatives and demands

Western, and especially American, reform initiatives in the Middle East sprang from an effort to use financial incentives to improve the likelihood of democratization in

the region (Alsoudi, 2006).The United States, in the wake of September 11, 2001, tried to take strong measures against extremism in the Middle East but at the same time tried to work in collaboration with forces in the region to create reforms that would reduce anti-Americanism. The latter approach has been termed “soft power” (Rugh, 2006) and has resulted in more aid targeting different development sectors in the region through reform initiatives, direct aid, training, grants, and loans.

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) was one of the initiatives launched by the United States Department of State that aim at supporting democratization efforts in the Middle East. Under the pillar of education, MEPI aimed at improving the quality of education and access to it. It does so by providing grants and financial support for projects that achieve these goals whether to a government agency or to a nongovernmental organization. Since the initiative’s goals include involving people at the grass roots level, the initiative prefers the involvement of nongovernmental organizations in the democratization process (Alsoudi, 2006). This initiative and the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) initiative sponsored by the G-8 countries were received with enthusiasm by Arab leaders and officials, but with suspicion and distrust by the public (Ottaway, 2003; Benard, 2006).

Reactions to reform initiatives and demands in general have been mixed in the Middle East, and in the Arab World in particular. In his study on the impact of U.S. aid policy on democracy and political reforms in the Arab World, Alsoudi (2006) presented three perspectives on reforms representative of the Arab world. The first perspective is that of the Arab regimes that welcome gradual reforms in the social life of their people, but without changing power structures or impacting their regimes. The second

perspective is that of the Islamists who welcome quick reforms that allow for free elections with the hope that they win and establish "Islamic political systems governed by *Shari'a* law, not Western-style democracies ruled by secular laws" (p. 15). The third perspective is the one adopted by the liberal forces and groups which welcome reforms that create democratic institutions and allow for peaceful exchange of power. Alsoudi studied the Arab's reaction to the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) in particular and found that the initiative received different reactions in different countries. On an official level, the initiative was welcomed in Jordan, Morocco, Bahrain, Qatar and Yemen. Other countries like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and United Arab Emirates have been less enthusiastic about it. On the public level, journalists have been reported to express dissension of the initiatives for various reasons. Among the reasons Alsoudi (2006) reported were the lack of credibility of the United States in the region due to its war on Iraq and support for Israel, the American support of authoritarian regimes in the region, the small amount of funding in the first year of the initiative compared to the scope of desired reforms, and the fact that some "hawks in the Department of Defense … are skeptical about the wisdom of democratizing the Arab World" (p. 16). Alsoudi (2006) and Ottaway (2005) argue that this attitude within the American administration exacerbated the negative attitudes toward any reform initiative in the Middle East.

Among the Arab and Middle Eastern countries, Saudi Arabia had the major blame for not reforming their education and received the most explicit pressures from the U.S. (Raphaeli, 2005). In 2005 the Saudi government responded to pressures for reform by holding dialogues on extremism. A five-day dialogue event focused on the need for reforms and concluded with recommendations encouraging political, economic, and

education reforms. One recommendation was that education be reformed in a way that "encourages a spirit of tolerance" (Raphaeli, 2005, p. 529). Addressing the pressures and reform initiatives and this recommendation, a group of 150 religious scholars signed a petition to the King asking him not to succumb to Western demands to change the curriculum (Modhesh, 2008). The document sent to the King of Saudi Arabia cautioned that the suggested reforms were dangerous to the identity of the youth in the nation and could result in demoralized generations.

Thus, three groups in the Middle East have expressed their attitudes toward reform initiatives publicly: 1) government officials, 2) religious leaders and scholars, and 3) the general public through journalists. Government officials have been welcoming of the reform initiatives (Alsoudi, 2006; Carpenter, 2004). Scott Carpenter, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs said in remarks at the Middle Eastern Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Summit for Peace and Prosperity that was held in Washington, DC on October 27, 2004 that the BMENA initiative's meetings, with the presence of 26 ministers from different countries, were successful. He also talked positively about the involvement of government officials in general. The attitudes of religious leaders have also been shown in the form of petitions in Saudi Arabia and Friday sermons and televised interviews elsewhere.

Among the representative voices of religious leaders in the Middle East were Sheikh Dr. Yusuf Qaradawi and Sheikh Dr. Salaman Alawdah. Both sheikhs expressed concerns about the reform initiatives and demands and called for reforms that have local priorities in mind, not Western agendas (Qaradawi in an interview with Aljazeera, 2002). Qaradawi acknowledged the need for reforms, but insisted that religious scholars should

lead the reforms so they can be done gradually and without harming the "fixed principles" of the nation. Sheikh Dr. Salaman Alawdah (2004) also expressed concerns about the calls and demands for education reform and stressed that any reforms need to be done away from the American plans and priorities. In an online article that he titled "the battle of education reform," he argued that the American and Western calls to reform educational curriculum in Muslim countries is not a post 9/11 one, citing the example of the 1979 UNESCO committee "Islam and the West." In the same article he argued that those demands were actually among plans that aim at undermining any possibility for solidarity among Muslims, which, he argues, the United States perceives as a threat to Israel.

Religiosity and attitudes toward the West

Contrary to the expectations of the impact of modernization on the world, religious movements have been gaining more support all over the world since the 1970s and 1980s (Nachtwey & Tessler, 2002). Fundamentalism has been gaining ground all over the world rather than losing fervor all over the world, although with special political implications in the Middle East due to the fundamentalists' demand for laws that are based on the doctrines of Islam (referred to as *Shari'a* law) rather than on the needs of the people (Moussalli, 2008). Therefore, recent studies have focused on the role of religiosity in shaping the attitudes of different people towards new and current themes. While in the West it has been noticed that religiosity is linked to conservative political thinking (Tessler, 2002), in the Middle East the picture is even more complex.

Mark Tessler conducted several studies that involve religious orientations and their relationship to attitudes in the Middle East (e.g. Tessler, 2002; Tessler & Nchtwey,

2002; Tessler, 2003; Tessler & Robins, 2006; Tessler & Jamal, 2007). He distinguishes between two types of religiosity: personal religiosity-or personal piety-and political religiosity-or support for political Islam (Tessler, 2002). Personal religiosity refers to the individual's relationship with God (Benson & Williams, 1982), which for Muslims can be determined by the devotion to the acts of worship, such as prayers and reading the Quran, and consulting with one's faith before making important personal decisions (Tessler, 2002). Political religiosity, on the other hand, refers to the belief that religion has a social role in organizing the public's life (Benson & Williams, 1982) and is embraced in the form of societal activism rather than in the form of passive rituals. In the case of Muslims, political religiosity refers to the tendency to believe in a stronger role for Islam in shaping the political attitudes of the public and in the preference of *Shari'a* laws over laws based on the interests and wishes of the people (Tessler, 2002).

Studies conducted by Tessler and others have shown that the relationship between personal religiosity and attitudes toward democracy and peaceful conflict resolution have been fluctuating over time. While the data from the 1980s showed significant associations between the two, more recent data show a lack of association (Tessler, 2002; Tessler, 2003). Studying the attitudes of Middle Eastern people toward democracy, Tessler (2002) used survey research in four countries- Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, and Palestine (West Bank and Gaza)- and found that personal religiosity was not a significant predictor of positive or negative attitudes toward democracy. The same was true in his study on the attitudes toward conflict resolution (Tessler, 2003). He argues that religion is less associated with variance in political attitudes in the Muslim world than it is in the West. Tessler (2002) interprets the lack of significant association between

religion and political inclinations in the Middle East as an indication that personal piety is higher among Middle Easterners in general and that religion has been historically entrenched in the politics of the region to the point that makes "religious orientations less useful in distinguishing among individuals with dissimilar political inclinations" (p. 17).

The Arab Barometer

Based on the work of Mark Tessler and modeling global democracy barometers, Tessler and Jamal (2006) created the Arab Barometer as a project aimed at exploring Arab's attitudes toward democracy. They designed the Barometer as a public opinion survey in 2005 and administered it in 2006 in five Arab countries- Algeria, Morocco, Jordan, Palestine (West Bank & Gaza Strip), and Kuwait. The goal of the Barometer was to generate scientifically reliable measures of Arab public opinion on democratic issues, more specifically on the attitudes toward democracy, public participation, political violence and terrorism, religiosity, etc (Tessler & Jamal, 2006). The Barometer consisted of seven sections: economic questions, political attitudes, identity and nationalism, politics and religion, religiosity, international affairs, and demographics (www.arabbarometer.org). The current study utilized the religiosity section in the Arab Barometer for measures of personal and political religiosity.

The Uniqueness of Yemen

The Middle East is a vast region with multiple ethnicities, religious backgrounds, ideologies, and historical experiences (Benard, 2006; Akkari, 2004; Rugh, 2002). Yemen is a relatively small country in the south-western corner of the Arabian Peninsula with a population of 23 million people (World Factbook, 2009). Until 1990, it used to be two countries: South Yemen, a socialist country, and North Yemen, a republic with semi-

democratic but largely tribal regime (Dresch, 2000). North Yemen or at least parts of it, century almost until the revolution in 1962, was ruled by a religious *Zaydi* Shiite group that was founded in the 9th century (Burrowes, 1995). The political regime was called the Imamate with the head of State as an Imam or a religious leader of the nation.

The Imamate rule in North Yemen was marked by strict insulation from the world and the claim of Imams to be God's chosen leaders (Ingrams, 1964). The *Zaydi* Imams, in attempts to protect their citizens from foreign ideologies that might corrupt their religion, kept the country strictly secluded from the rest of the world, a fact that Ahroni (2003) contends had "adverse effect on [the] Yemeni[s'] … cultural and educational life" (p. 248). Parts of North Yemen fell to the Ottoman empire and in 1918, the *Zaydi* Imams restored power over the whole country, which is made up of two main religious sects- *Zaydi*s, a form of Shiite, constituting about 45% of the population, and Shafis, constituting a silent majority (Burrowes, 1987).

The Imamate rule was marked by oppression of the people, a class system that made the *Zaydi* tribes higher in social status than the peasants. Education was primitive and the purpose of any education was to teach people how to read the Quran. When the Iraqi government invited Imam Yahya to send Yemeni pupils to study in Iraq, only children of workmen and peasants who were not likely to have ambitions for power were sent. The Imam himself had to approve every student sent abroad. Unfortunately for the Imam, among the students he sent in 1934 was Abdullah Al-Sallal, a son of a blacksmith, who later became the first president after the 1962 revolution (Burrowes, 1995).

The 1962 revolution broke out supported by the Egyptian nationalist leader Gamal Abdul-Nasir - known as Nasser, and the Arab Republic of Yemen was officially

declared in North Yemen (Ingrams, 1962; Burrowes, 1987; Dresch, 2000). The new republic relied mainly on Egyptian experts to run the government, establish the educational systems, train the army, and even defend the revolution against the return of Imams supported by Saudi Arabia. Formal accessible education was not established until the revolution in 1962, for prior to the revolution education was very limited in quality and access (Al-Khader, 1985). In 1967, a major war and the 70-day Siege of Sana'a marked the end to the conflict and the establishment of the republic as a form of government (Schmidt, 1968; Burrowes, 1987).

In South Yemen, the British control started fading and Yemeni revolutionaries became more empowered by the nationalist heat promoted by Abdul-Nasir in Egypt (Lewis, 2003). In 1963, British rule was brought to an end and British soldiers started leaving Aden. They completed withdrawal from Aden in 1967 and South Yemen soon became the first socialist state in the Arab region. After a period of turmoil and struggle for power, leftist leaders established the Democratic Republic of Yemen based on "scientific socialism" and run by officials mostly from proletarian origin (Stookey, 1982).

Education in South Yemen had started earlier during the British colonization era in the form of technical schools aimed at producing lower-level professionals and technicians to help with the expanding colony's government. But besides this type of schools, British philanthropists had started "small schools to which Arab students were admitted" (Stookey, 1982, p. 43). Other than these two types of schools, Yemenis did not have access to British schools in South Yemen. After independence in 1967, an educational system was created, boarding schools were established for the Bedouins, and a comprehensive adult education and illiteracy campaign following a Cuban model was

in full swing. The results of this focus on education was an increased education attainment and increased enrollment rates in South Yemen.

North and South Yemen were united in 1990 and the capital city of the North became the capital city of the unified country. However, in 1994 the leadership of the South retreated to Aden following a series of tensions and assassinations of Southern leaders. They soon declared secession. A short war took place in the summer of 1994 and the secessionists were defeated. Yemen became unified again, but this time by force. Forceful reunification created an atmosphere of distrust between the Southerners and Northern authorities. Political movements with demands ranging from full rights of citizenship to independence from the North flourished and gained popularity in the Southern provinces of the unified Yemen, thus creating a zone of unrest (Hiro, 2003).

Significance of Yemen

Political unrest in Yemen has also been intensified by another war in the northern province of Saada between the government and Shiite militia loyal to a Shiite cleric called Al-Hawthi. The Saada war, along with a host of other challenges including kidnapping of tourists, tribal violence, and "largely unpoliced countryside that allegedly provides a safe haven for militant groups, all combine to place Yemen near the top of the Failed States Index" (Corstange, 2008, p. 12-13). The security conditions in Yemen are not limited to the country but are of interest in the international arena. The attack on the United States carrier Cole in 2000 near Aden's shore in Yemen was one of the first acts of terror in the region and became a propaganda tool for Al-Qaida in recruiting young men from Yemen and Saudi Arabia (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, 2004).

International interest in and concern about Yemen also stems from its strategic location overseeing the Strait of Bab Almandab between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, one of the busiest trade routes in the world (Cordesman, 2004). An article at the *Guardian* newspaper describes the location as important in terms of security, as well. Besides controlling the daily passage of 3.3 million barrels of oil through the Bab Almandab Straits, Yemen serves as a buffer zone between Somalia, which has been a war zone for over a decade, and Saudi Arabia, which has been struggling with terrorism as well (Hill, 2009). The importance of the location and the risk of failure of the state has led the Yemeni minister of planning and international cooperation, H.E. Abdulkarim Al-Arhabi to warn the world that Yemen could become another Somalia if it is allowed to "slip into failure" (Hill, 2009).

Conclusion

Education in third world countries has been under the influence of the West for a long time. Colonialism left a heritage of mistrust between the formerly colonized and their colonizers. At the same time, stakeholders in third world countries realize the need to resort to the former colonizers for contemporary educational ideas, theories, and practices. It is within this atmosphere of mistrust, yet technical need, that the debates about educational reform in the Middle East take place.

The roots of resistance to education reform initiatives and demands can be traced back to the history of conflict between the colonizers and colonized. But new factors have emerged that also require extensive study. In the case of the Middle East, colonization triggered national, ethnic, and religious zeal that was used to protect the identity of the colonized countries. Massialas & Jarrar (1991) argue that it was the religio

us zeal that drove the North African Arab countries (referred to as Al-Maghrib Al-Araby, meaning the Western Arabia) to resist colonization. Religion was used to mobilize the public against the colonizers. Political figures, argue Massialas and Jarrar (1991), resorted to the religious zeal of the people to recruit more resistant forces or *Mujahideen.* It was only after the independence of these countries that political leaders decided to build pragmatic relationships with the former colonizers and thus, the flux of Islamization of politics started weakening.

The current revival of fundamentalism and Islamization of politics have been atttibuted to different forces and sources, including the strength of some Muslim associations and organizations such as the Muslim Brotherhood organization in Egypt and its influx into the Middle Eastern countries (Massialas & Jarrar, 1991). Taleb (2006) disagrees with this view and believes that the revival was a direct result of the mobilization of *Mujahideen* against the former Soviet Union. He argues that with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of communism, the *Mujahideen* and the preachers who used to convince them and the public of the cause of fighting the 'infidel' communists became natural enemies of any foreign ideological force. They used suspicion of the other's interest and intentions to recruit fighters and gain public support of the public during communism; after communism suspicion of the other remained and was later directed toward the West. Thus, the attitudes toward the West in general and toward Western initiatives in particular are arguably impacted to some degree by the perceived role of religion in the politics of the region. When communism was perceived as the enemy of Islam, religion was used to influence the public's attitudes toward it.

Now the same groups of people who rejected communism are rejecting the Western influence on public life.

Reforms suggested or demanded by the West have been welcomed, suspected, or rejected in the Middle East, depending on what group is asked. Some groups, out of fear of losing their interests, would oppose reforms even if they were needed in the society (Noland & Pack, 2007, p. 201). But other groups that are not likely to have specific interests in the status quo have different reasons for rejecting or accepting reforms. Among the reasons for rejecting reform initiatives that are heavily present in the public discourse in the Middle East are the following:

- Reforms need to emerge from within not come from outside. Religious scholars such as Qaradawi (2002) and Alawdah (2004), as well as educators such as Al-Farhan (2004) have stressed this theme in their public opinions about the reform initiatives.
- Reforms are intended to ease normalization with Israel. This view has been expressed by religious scholars (e.g. Qaradawi, 2002; Alawdah, 2004), educators (e.g. Al-Farhan, 2004; Mansour, 2007), researchers (e.g. Alsoudi, 2006), and numerous journalists as reported in Alsoudi's (2006) study and the study by Ottaway (2003).
- Reforms encourage the secularization of education. Secularism in the Middle East is not seen as a positive force, as it is in the West. It is rather viewed with suspicion, mostly taken to mean 'godlessness,' and is perceived to bring about immoralities to the youth and political instability to the nations (Tamimi & Esposito, 2000). Religious clerics and scholars have consistently rejected reform

initiatives arguing that the main purpose of these initiatives is the secularization of education.

Research studies exploring the views and attitudes of Yemeni and other Middle Eastern educators have been missing. Studies that have been conducted to solicit the public's attitudes were mainly based on reviews of journalists' writings or literature representing the attitudes and stances of officials on policy matters (e.g. Alsoudi's, 2006; Ottaway, 2005). Other studies such as Al-Torayry's (2004) survey that was distributed to the students in King Saud University in Saudi Arabia included only negative descriptive statements of globalization, which the students were asked to rate. No studies have been conducted to solicit the views of educators or their attitudes toward Western reform initiatives. Given the importance of the views of educators - as the most relevant stakeholders in education reform (Tyack & Cuban, 1995)- and the need for public participation (Sayed, 2005), this study acknowledges the need for involving educators and seeks to fill this gap in the literature.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is twofold: to find out about Yemeni educators' views about the need for education reform in the Middle East, and to discover their attitudes toward curriculum reform demands coming from Western countries. In order to achieve this purpose a questionnaire was constructed and administered in Yemen which solicited educators' beliefs about curriculum reform and attitudes toward reform initiatives.

Research Design

Survey research was utilized for this exploratory, descriptive study (Rubin & Babbie, 2004). Frequency distributions, Chi-Square, and correlations were used to describe the participants' responses to questions about the need for education reform and attitudes toward Western reform initiatives as well as the influence of different variables on these attitudes. Daniel Muijs (2004) recommends the use of such descriptive statistics for studies that do not seek to test hypotheses but rather explore views or attitudes of a group of people (p. 36). The current study falls within the category described by Muijs as it seeks to describe rather than make inferences and generalizations. Thus, the researcher used descriptive statistics to analyze the data.

Data collection for this study used a survey questionnaire with Likert scale questions and open-ended questions. Likert scale questions use specific categories of

responses, like “strongly agree,” “agree,” “disagree,” “strongly disagree” and “are appropriate in the construction of either indexes or scales” (Babbie, 1995, p.184). They are easy to use and fill out for participants and easy to analyze for researchers. The open ended questions were analyzed using content analysis (Bordens & Abbott, 2005, 2008; Krippendorf, 2004). Content analysis is used in quantitative social science research to add more in-depth data to existing measures of the topic of study. It is useful in getting the in-depth information and then reducing it into smaller meaningful unites that can be analyzed quantitatively (Smith, 2000). The units of analysis can be words, phrases, statements, or even paragraphs. After establishing the unit of analysis, messages are coded numerically and numerical codes are used for analysis.

In content analysis messages can be analyzed for manifest or latent content. Manifest content refers to the occurrence of words, phrases, or expressions without much consideration of their context or the overall meaning, while latent content refers to the overall meaning as the researcher understands it (Babbie, 1995). The researcher has “a choice between depth and specificity” (Babbie, p.311). Focusing on manifest content will increase the specificity of the analysis but with shallow results with strong reliability but risky validity, while focusing on latent content will give the researcher more in-depth knowledge but at the same time increasing the chances of involving the researcher’s subjectivity in the analysis, thus decreasing the reliability. Babbie argues that a skillful researcher either combines both contents in his/her analysis or uses content analysis as a supplement to existing data sources. In the case of this study, the researcher used content analysis in addition to already existing quantitative measures. As the units of analyses were words and phrases, manifest content was chosen as the data source with a special

attention paid to latent content in the form of idioms and messages included in culturally coded phrases or expressions. For example, a written response such as “the West are only interested in pushing their own agendas even if they pretend to be helping us” is interpreted as having suspicions about the intents of the Western initiatives, and thus is given a code that corresponds to the one already established for suspicion (see Appendix I for a sample of the coding system.)

Instrumentation

In order to achieve the goals of this study, a survey instrument (see Appendix B) was constructed to address the study’s three research questions. The survey instrument was a questionnaire that utilized a Likert-type scale for each question. Questions using Likert scale are appropriate to collect data about people’s attitudes as they give respondents the opportunity to express a degree of agreement ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree (Bordens & Abbott, 2005). They are also easy to answer and they give the researcher the opportunity to compare responses more easily (Babbie, 2004). Criticism to such questions includes that the responses are already framed for participants and so there is not sufficient room for them to express their opinions beyond what has been decided for them. In this study the researcher gave respondents an opportunity to go beyond the choices offered in each question by inviting them to add their comments as responses to open ended questions 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, and 3.2. Responses to the questions were then analyzed using content analysis.

The questionnaire items were modeled after the Arab Barometer, a questionnaire that Mark Tessler and Amaney Jamal (2006) constructed to measure Arab’s attitudes toward democracy and the influence of different factors on their attitudes. One section of

the Arab Barometer was incorporated into the questionnaire used for this study, i.e. the section that measures religiosity. This section constituted Part III of the questionnaire 'religion and the society.' Approval to use the instrument was obtained by e-mail from the first author, Mark Tessler, in July 2007 (see Appendix C). The second author, Amaney Jamal, was also contacted by e-mail and later phoned to discuss the use of some parts of her instrument for this study (see Appendix D). She later gave detailed feedback on the questionnaire used for this study and her recommendations were incorporated in the final draft that was distributed. The rest of the questionnaire, Part I 'the current curriculum,' II 'attitudes toward reform initiatives,' and IV 'information about yourself' was constructed by the researcher following the model in the Arab Barometer. The last three items in Part IV, however, were also adapted from Tesller & Jamal's (2006) Arab Barometer because they were used to measure personal religiosity.

To answer the first research question "What are the views of Yemeni educators on the current curriculum in their country?," Part I of the survey included two sections. The first section (1.1) consisted of nine statements about the current curriculum to which participants were asked to respond by selecting one of four responses: 'strongly disagree,' 'disagree,' 'agree,' or 'strongly agree.' The second section (1.2) asked a direct question about the need for curriculum reform and in case the respondents agreed that reform was needed, they had to choose from six aspects of curriculum that needed to be reformed. Open-ended questions, below question 1.1 and 1.2, asked for more information or comments.

To answer the second question, "How do Yemeni educators view Western initiatives and demands that involve/encourage educational reform?" Part II of the survey

included two sections. The first section (2.1) asked a direct question about whether the participants agreed with the Western demands for education reform. It provided participants with a space in front of each choice where they could add more comments or explain why they either agreed or disagreed with the initiatives. The second section (2.2) included 11 statements about the perceived goals of the reform demands to which the participants would respond by selecting a number that corresponded to whether they agreed, strongly agreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with each one of the perceived goals. An open-ended question asking for comments was also asked at the end of this question.

To answer the third question "What variables correlate with the views on the need for education reform and the attitudes toward reform initiatives?," Part III and Part IV sought to find out about the respondents' religiousness, views on the role of religion in politics, and other demographic information. Besides the religiosity questions in Part IV, demographic questions about each respondent's age, gender, income, academic degree, etc. were asked. The researcher decided to ask about the demographics at the end of the survey following the dissertation committee's recommendation and the recommendation of Muijs (2004, p. 50) who cautioned that questions about characteristics of the participants tend to make them uncomfortable and thus risk reducing the response rates.

Pilot Study

A pilot study in social science research helps the researcher get an estimation of how well the instrument will measure what it is meant to measure, whether the items are clear enough, and whether the length and difficulty level of the language used is appropriate (Baker, 1994; Black, 1999). Based on feedback from participants in the pilot

study, the researcher should construct the final copy of the questionnaire. Peat, Mellis, Williams, & Xuan (2002) recommend that a researcher ask the participants in the pilot study to record the time it took them to fill out the questionnaire, comment on each item by indicating whether or not there is any ambiguity, and respond to each item (p. 123). The researcher should then reword items that have been indicated as ambiguous, discard items that have been rejected by participants, add items that have been suggested if deemed reasonable, decide on whether there is a range of responses that satisfy the purpose of the study, and modify the whole instrument if the time taken to respond to it is beyond what the researcher plans. To solidify items in the questionnaire, the researcher could also take the opinion of other experts in the field before the instrument is passed on to the sample for piloting (Baker, 1994). Opinions of experts will inform the researcher about the appropriateness of the instrument for the intended purpose, as well as the validity of each item.

In this study, the pilot questionnaire was sent first to a panel of experts consisting of two university professors, a university lecturer, and two inspectors in Yemen, and the coauthor of the Arab Barometer, a professor at Princeton University in the United States. The members in the panel were selected because of their direct involvement in one aspect of the study or another. The two professors in Yemen were both teaching at colleges of education and had taught research courses for higher education students. One of the professors had taught research courses to the researcher in Yemen in 1996. The university lecturer had a master's degree from the United States and had conducted research at an American university. He was familiar with research methods and survey questionnaires. The two inspectors were both from the same governorate where the actual questionnaire

would be distributed. They both had been supervising teachers for over 20 years and had been involved in research as well. All the members in Yemen were experts in education in the country and had some background in research methodology. The Princeton University professor was the co-author of the Arab Barometer, the instrument that the researcher modeled his questionnaire after. She was selected because of her direct involvement with the Barometer and her understanding of quantitative methodology.

All the members of the panel of experts approved the instrument, and five of them recommended some changes. Based on their suggestions, two items were added in the first part of the questionnaire 'the current curriculum in my country,' and an introductory paragraph was added to Part II to clarify what one of the experts thought was ambiguity resulting from potential unfamiliarity with the reform initiatives in question. A description was added to specify what reform initiatives were referred to in that part of the questionnaire.

Since the target population of the study was educators, faculty members in higher education institutions, school teachers, and inspectors, a homogenous sample of 21 individuals from the Middle East involved in education was selected to participate in a pilot study. According to Meredith Gall, Walter Borg, and Joyce Gall (1996, p. 298) a sample of 20 participants from a homogenous group is sufficient to pilot a survey. Of the 21 participants selected for the pilot study, five were contacted by e-mail because they lived in Yemen, and the rest (16) were chosen from among graduate students and professors from Middle Eastern countries who were teaching or studying at a Mid-western American university at the time of the pilot study (May – June, 2008). All the participants in the pilot study were acquaintances of the researcher and were involved in

education or working on their degrees in fields related to education. They were all familiar with the educational reform initiatives and efforts and with educational research as well. Based on the reviewers' comments and suggestions, questionnaire items were added, reworded, or modified. In total, four items were added to the questionnaire, the wording of five items changed, and the format of Part IV was changed to look more consistent with the rest of the survey.

Participants

The population from where the study drew its participants consisted of educators in Yemen who were involved in education at the grassroots level: school teachers, education inspectors, and higher education faculty members. Therefore, a purposive stratified sample was selected from each category. "Stratified sampling recognizes distinct subpopulations [strata] within a population" (Krippendorf, 2004, p.115). In this case, the four types of educators represented the strata from which samples were drawn. Four assistants, who hold degrees in education, assisted in the selection of the sample and distribution and collection of the survey. The assistants were acquaintances with the researcher who were present at each research site in Yemen and all were competent researchers themselves. At Sana'a University, the assistant was a professor of English who had conducted research with human subjects himself. The assistant at Aden University was a former Fulbright scholar who had conducted research during his master's study in the United States. The assistant at Taiz University was a professor of education. And the assistant at Taiz bureau of education was an education inspector and supervisor who had conducted evaluation research of teacher preparation programs for

over 10 years. So, all the assistants were competent educators with research experience. They helped select the sample and distribute and collect the questionnaires.

The sample consisted of 500 educators as follows: 300 faculty members from the major three universities in Yemen, 100 school teachers from a school district in the Mid-South, and 100 education inspectors from a Mid-Southern governorate. The reason faculty members were chosen is that they teach at Colleges of Education which prepare pre-service teachers for teaching. They are involved in the preparation of teachers in methodology and subject area as well.

Procedure

After receiving the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to conduct the study (see Appendix E) in the summer of 2008, the four Yemeni assistants were contacted by phone and e-mail. Letters to obtain approvals to distribute the survey were sent through the assistants and approvals were granted from the deans of the Colleges of Education at three universities: Sana'a University, Aden University, and Taiz University. Approval was granted from the head of the department of education in the school district in Taiz governorate (Appendix F). The final draft of the questionnaire was then sent via e-mail to the four assistants along with a letter to each, a script of instructions, and an information sheet for each participant. The researcher had phone conversations with each one of the assistants to stress the importance of following the instructions and reading the script to each participant. These Follow-up phone calls were made during the data collection period (June 21 – July 11, 2008).

The assistants then printed the surveys and the information sheets (Appendix A), the instructions to them with a script to read for participants (Appendix G), and the

invitation letters to be distributed to potential participants (Appendix H). Then, according to the written instructions, the assistants put the questionnaires and the information sheets in large brown envelopes before distributing them to participants. In the three universities, the surveys were distributed during the final exam period of the 2007-2008 academic year (June 21 -July 11, 2008). The reason for this timing was that faculty members are required to participate in proctoring exams and so are available to take the questionnaire. Besides, while proctoring they had time to respond to the survey. All the survey questionnaires were distributed during the same time frame. The school teachers and education inspectors received their surveys at an annual meeting in the Taiz governorate's bureau of education. The assistant, an inspector, distributed the surveys randomly to 100 inspectors and 100 school teachers after two meetings, one for teachers and one for supervisors in June, 2008.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the findings of the study falls into three sections following the three research questions.

1. What are the views of Yemeni educators on the current curriculum in their country?

2. How do Yemeni educators view Western initiatives and demands that involve/encourage educational reform?

3. What variables explain variances in the views on the need for education reform and the attitudes toward reform initiatives?

The first research question was answered by descriptive statistics and content analysis of participant responses to Part I of the questionnaire. Responses to items about

the current curriculum were tabulated and the percentage of people agreeing or disagreeing with each statement was reported. Chi-Square values were computed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to find if the differences between the two groups were significant. Content analysis was conducted on the answers to the open-ended question 1.2. In order to find what other views that the respondents might have about the curriculum.

The second research question was also answered using descriptive statistics and content analysis of question 2.1 in the questionnaire, which asked whether participants agreed or disagreed with the reform initiatives. Responses were counted and reported as percentages. Further comments were analyzed using content analysis to report the themes that emerged from the additional comments respondents added. Responses to items about the perceived goals of the reform initiatives (question 2.2) were reported in the form of percentages as well.

The third research question was split into two parts: one with views about the need for education reform as a dependent variable while independent variables included all the demographic information and the religiosity measure, and the second with attitudes toward reform initiatives as the dependent variable. Correlation analyses were conducted to test the strength of relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable in each part of the question (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996).

All statistical data analyses were conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Answers to open-ended questions were analyzed using content analysis following Krippendorf's (2004) model, which includes six key processes: unitizing, sampling, recording/coding, reducing, inferring, and narrating (p.83). Unitizing

involves selecting the unit of analysis. In this case, words and phrases were determined to be the units of analysis. Sampling relies on selecting a sample of the text to be analyzed. In this study, since not all of the respondents answered the open-ended questions after each question in the survey, all the answers were used as the sample. The units were then put into an Excel sheet where they were organized and coded in order to render them easy to be reduced to statistical frequencies. Occurrences of each code were tallied and a representation of the data was presented. Steps five and six in the content analysis model, i.e. inferring and narrating, were done in chapter five where contextual knowledge was used to interpret the findings and conclusions were made.

Summary

In this study, quantitative research data were collected to find out about Yemeni educators' views on the current curriculum in their country and attitudes toward Western education reform initiatives. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the responses to the Likert scale questions. Open-ended questions were also asked in order to give the participants more freedom to add comments that might not have been included in the Likert scale questions. Responses to the open-ended questions were analyzed using content analysis.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS and ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to find out about the views of Yemeni educators on the need for education reform in the Middle East and their attitudes toward reform initiatives that come from Western countries. A survey questionnaire was designed and administered to three groups of educators in Yemen; university faculty members, school teachers, and education inspectors. Responses to the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics. This chapter presents a description of the participants in the study and the results of the statistical analyses as well as the content analysis of some open-ended responses that address the following research questions:

1. What are the views of Yemeni educators on the current curriculum in their country?
2. How do Yemeni educators view Western initiatives and demands that involve/encourage educational reform?
3. What variables correlate with the Yemeni educators' views on the need for education reform and the attitudes toward reform initiatives?

Response rate and participants' demographics

A total number of 500 questionnaires were distributed in five different locations

in Yemen, three major universities and two different meetings at the education department in Taiz, Yemen. With 198 returned surveys, the study has a return rate of 40%, which falls within the acceptable range of 20-50% according to Dillman (2007). Although the response rate falls within the acceptable range, it should be noted that the researcher's assistants faced an initial resistance to take the survey. In order for the researcher to overcome the initial resistance, the assistants were contacted by phone to ask about the types of complaints participants had. Reasons for resistance included the political nature of the topic, fear of the consequences of participation, and suspicion in the intentions of the researcher. The researcher requested that the assistants make sure they have told potential participants about the nature of the study and that it was for a doctoral student in education instead of relying on the participants to read the Information Sheet. These actions increased the participation rate slightly. Following is a description of the demographics of participants.

The majority of the participants in this study were in the age group of 31-40 (59%). Table 2 shows a breakdown of participants by age group. Another relevant variable was the highest academic degree obtained. See Table 1 for a breakdown of participants by degree. Majority of the participants received their degrees from Yemen (70%) and only 38% had lived abroad. Of the 187 participants who answered the question about gender, 85.6% were male and 14.4% were female. The majority of the participants were from Yemen. Only five were from other Arab countries teaching in Yemen. It should be noted that in Yemen the adult literacy rates, the school enrolment rates, and the employment rates for women are much lower than those for men (World Factbook, 2009).

Table 1 *Respondents by the highest degree obtained*

Highest degree	n	%
Secondary Education	3	1.6
Diploma	26	14.0
Bachelors	82 (35 faculty & 47 teachers/supervisors)	44.1
Masters	27	14.5
Ph.D.	48	25.8

Table 2 *Respondents by age*

Age group	n	%
20-30	30	17.3%
31-40	102	59%
41-50	31	17.9%
51-62	10	5.8%

Following are the study's findings:

Research Question # 1: What are the views of Yemeni educators on the current curriculum in their country?

In order to answer this question, Part I of the questionnaire required participants to rate statements that described the content and purpose of the current curriculum. Statements in this question were derived from the current discourse about curriculum in the Middle East. Statements 1 "the current curriculum is too religious" and 2 "the current

curriculum is too secular" in this part of the questionnaire are contradictory and represent the two sides of the argument about the place of religion in education. Similarly, items 6 "the current curriculum has elements that foster extremism" and 7 "the current curriculum highlights the bright sides of Islam" represent the two sides of the argument about whether curriculum in Middle Eastern schools fosters extremism. The rest of the items were intended to find out what respondents think of the need for more focus on democratic values, scientific knowledge, critical thinking, etc. in the curriculum. Table 3 presents a summary of the findings from Part I of the questionnaire.

Table 3 *Participants' responses to statements about the current curriculum*

Statement	Disagree or Strongly Disagree	Agree or Strongly Agree	Chi-Square
I believe that the current curriculum in my country:			
1. Is too religious	68.3 %	31.7%	24.5***
2. Is too secular	89.6%	10.4%	112.9***
3. Needs reform	5.3%	94.7%	151.1***
4. Is not scientific and data driven enough	21.4%	78.6%	60.2***
5. Needs more democracy intake	26.8%	73.2%	39.5***
6. Has elements that foster extremism	87.5%	12.5%	103.5***
7. Highlights the bright sides of Islam	29.3%	70.7%	31.1***
8. Encourages creative and free thinking	71.7%	28.3%	35.1***
9. Encourages rote memorization	17.6%	82.4%	79.2***

*P<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 3 shows the following views:

Religion and curriculum:

Items 1 and 2 show that a statistically significant majority of the respondents did not think the curriculum was either too religious (68.3%) or too secular (89.6%). Besides,

item 6 shows that a significant majority did not agree that the current curriculum fostered extremism. Item 7 shows that a significant majority (70.7%) believe that the curriculum highlights the positive aspects of Islam.

Need for reform

Item 3 in the above table shows that a significant majority (94.7%) of the respondents agreed that the current curriculum needed reform. In addition to this item, question number 1.2 in the questionnaire was a follow-up question that asked the participants to identify the area of curriculum that needed reform and add any comments. Findings from the responses to question 1.2 showed that the priorities of reform, as identified by the respondents, were as detailed in the following table:

Table 4: priorities of curriculum reform as identified by the Yemeni educators

Total number of respondents to question 1.2 = 178	
Reform for more democracy	27.5% (n = 49)
Reform for more scientific based knowledge	78.65% (n = 140)
Reform to add more religion	12.36% (n = 22)
Reform to reduce emphasis on religion	7.87% (n= 14)
Reform to emphasize the value of tolerance	18.54% (n = 33)
Other (creative thinking, practical skills)	7.32% (n = 13)

Democracy

Responses to item 5 in Table 3 showed that a statistically significant majority (73.2%) agreed with the need for more focus on democratic values in the curriculum. In the

second question 1.2 as well, democracy was rated second after the need for more scientific intake in the curriculum (see Table 4).

Educational aspects

As the responses to item 8 in Table 3 show, a majority of the respondents (71.7%) did not agree that the current curriculum encouraged creative and free thinking. Responses to item 9 in Table 3 show that a majority (82.5%) thought the current curriculum encouraged rote memorization.

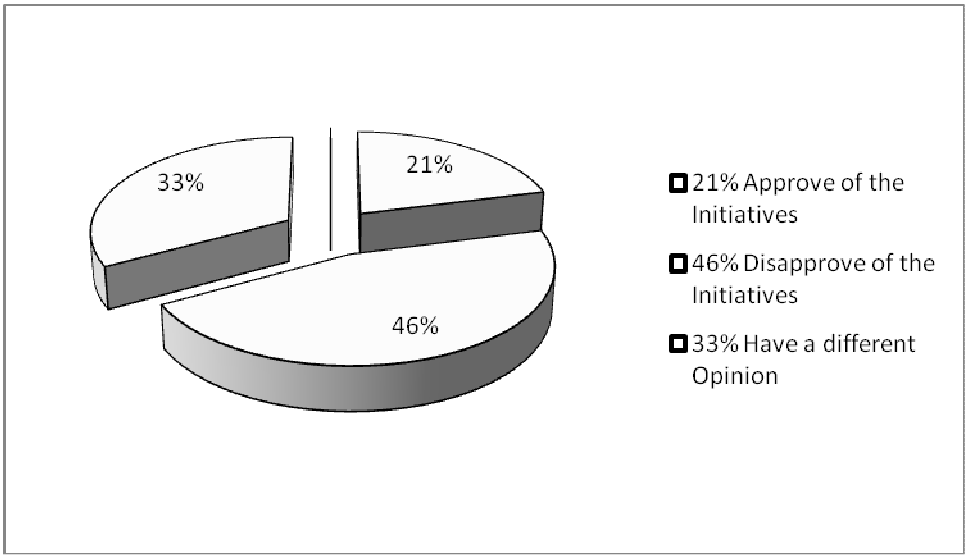
Research Question # 2: How do Yemeni educators view Western initiatives and demands that involve/encourage educational reform?

Part II of the questionnaire was designed to answer this question. It included two questions, the first asked a direct question about whether participants agreed with the Western demands to reform education in the Middle East, while the second question included 11 statements about the goals of the Western demands and initiatives to reform education in the Middle East to which participants were asked to respond by either agreeing or disagreeing. Following is a representation of the findings on this question:

2.1) Attitudes toward Western reform initiatives:

Respondents to question 2.1 "do you agree or disagree with the demands of Western initiatives to reform the curriculum in Middle Eastern countries?" (n = 164) differed in their answers. While 46% (n = 75) said they did not agree with the demands, 21% (n=35) said they agreed, and 33% (n=54) said they had different opinions. The variation among the three groups was found to be statistically significance using a chi-square analysis (Chi-Square = 14.65, $p < .001$). See Figure 1 for a graphic representation of this data:

Figure 1: *Approval of the Western initiatives for education reform among Yemeni educators*



Narrative comments added as reasons for agreeing, disagreeing, or having a different opinion were analyzed using content analysis (Krippendorf, 2004; Bordens & Abbott, 2008). First, a content analysis of the additional comments of the respondents who agreed with the initiatives was conducted. While 35 participants agreed with the initiatives, only 28 added comments. The comments of the 28 respondents were all used as sources for the data units, which were determined to be phrases that explained why the respondents agreed with the reform initiatives. Key phrases such as "the West care only about Israel," or "the West are more advanced" were added into an Excel sheet and organized into themes, either in favor of or against. For example, a participant added a comment saying "no one should tell us what to do." This was taken to mean that reforms should not be imposed from outside but rather should come from inside the region, which indicated a negative attitude. It was given a code of 1 which corresponds to the view that reforms should come from within. Similar statements were given similar codes. Recurrent themes were then tallied to get a frequency of occurrence of each theme. Percentages were

reported. The following table shows the themes that emerged from the content analysis of the comments of the first category of respondents, i.e. the respondents who agreed with the reform initiatives. (For a representative example of the coding process, please see Appendix I.)

Table 5: *Additional comments by respondents who agreed with the initiatives*

Emergent Themes (n = 28)	Frequency	Percentage
- Scientific and technological advancement	16	57%
- Trust in the West (Westerners know what they are doing	11	40%
- Unsatisfied with local administration	5	17%

As the table shows, the additional comments of those who agreed with the reform initiatives expressed less suspicion towards the initiatives and more interest in the educational aspects of them.

Among the 75 participants who did not agree with the demands and initiatives (46% of the total respondents to question 2.1), content analysis showed the themes represented in Table 6. It should be noted that not all the 75 respondents added comments. The table below is based on the comments of 45 participants who added comments:

Table 6*: Additional comments by respondents who disagreed with the initiatives*

Emergent Themes (n = 45)	Frequency	Percentage
- Suspicion about the intentions of the initiatives	32	71%
- Not compatible with Arab/Islamic culture	18	40%
- Reform should come from within	9	20%
- Colonial Purposes	5	11%
- Other (September 11 retaliation, not well studied, etc.)	2	4%

Table 6 shows that from among the 75 participants (46%) who did not agree with the demands and initiatives, 45 added comments. The following reasons for disagreeing with the reform initiatives were cited:

- *Suspicion about the intentions of the reform initiatives*: Out of the 75 participants who opposed the initiative, only 45 responded to the open-ended questions. Out of the 45 participants, the majority (71%) expressed their distrust in the intentions of the Western reform initiatives citing different reasons for their suspicion (16% cited the war on Iraq, 23% cited Western support for Israel, 8% cited the negative attitude of the West towards Muslims).
- *Demands and initiatives were not compatible with the Arab and Muslim culture a*nd civilization. The need for any educational reform initiative to be based on the culture of the region was mentioned by at least 40% of those who opposed the initiatives.

- *Reforms were coming from outside the region*. About 20% of those who opposed the initiatives added that the reason for their position was that they thought reforms need to come from inside not from outside the region.
- *Colonial purposes*: At least five of the participants who opposed the initiatives commented that they thought the initiatives and demands had colonial purposes. They added that these were attempts to continue the atmosphere of colonialism and guardianship of the third world's ways of thinking and child upbringing.
- *September 11 retaliation*: Two of the respondents who opposed the initiatives mentioned that the initiatives were only reactions to the September 11 attacks and so were not well studied to tackle educational problems in the Middle East.

Of the 54 participants who said they had different opinions on the demands and initiatives, 48 added comments. A summary of the comments was as follows:

Table 7: *Additional comments by respondents who said they had a different opinion.*

Emergent Themes (n = 48)	Frequency	Percentage
- Reform is needed but should come from within	19	40%
- Agree with the initiatives if they respect Muslim/Arab culture	24	50%
- We can work with them on science only	8	16%

Of the total respondents who chose "I have a different opinion" for question 2.1 (n=54), 48 also added comments. Of the 48 who commented, 40% added that they thought there was a need for education reform in the Middle East, but they thought reforms should "come from within," not from outside. About 50% added that they would agree with and support the initiatives if the initiatives and reform agendas comply with

the Muslim and Arab principles. And about 16% commented that since the West was advanced in sciences, they can help Middle Eastern countries only with science.

2.2) Perceived goals of Western demands and initiatives:

The perceived goals of Western demands and reform initiatives are presented in Table 8 as percentages of participants agreeing or disagreeing with each statement. Since the four possible responses to each item fell in two categories, i.e. either agree or disagree, they were regrouped as such in order to create a bivariate data set. Chi-square values were computed to report whether the variance in the response to each item was statistically significant.

Table 8: *the perceived goals of Western demands and reform initiatives*

Perceived goal of the reform demands	Agree	Disagree	Chi-Square
1. Secularization of education	81.6%	18.4%	49.3***
2. Paving the road to normalization with Israel	81.4%	18.6%	50.95***
3. Improving the quality of education	53.4%	46.6%	0.69
4. Spreading democratic values	56.0%	44.0%	2.55
5. Eradicating the roots of terrorism	47.7%	52.3%	0.21
6. Undermining Islamic teachings	72.2%	27.8%	34.27***
7. Bringing civic values to the Middle East	46.9%	53.1%	0.84
8. Weakening extremism	54.6%	43.4%	3.61
9. Bringing immoralities to the Muslim youth	63.1%	36.8%	12.02**
10. Spreading a culture of tolerance	46.6%	53.3%	0.97
11. Modernizing education to cope with development	57.0%	43.0%	3.27

*p-value <0.05 , **p-value <0.01 , ***p-value <0.001

As Table 8 shows, significantly more respondents agreed with items 1, 2, 6, and 9, which means that they thought the real goals of the Western reform initiatives and demands were to make the educational system more secular (item 1), to pave the way to normalization with Israel (item 2), to undermine Islamic teachings (item 6), and to bring immoralities to Muslim youth (item 9). The participants in this survey disagreed with statements 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, and 11, which represent more positive attitudes toward the reform initiatives. But still more than 50% of the participants agreed with statements such as 5, "the goals is eradicating the roots of extremism" and 10, "spreading a culture of tolerance."

Research Question # 3: What variables correlate with the views on the need for education reform and the attitudes toward reform initiatives?

In order to answer this research question, the following steps were followed. First, statistical descriptive indicators of the two types of religiosity - personal piety and support for political Islam (Tessler, 2002), were computed using participants' responses to the questions in Part III of the questionnaire as well as the last three questions in Part IV about personal religious practices. Indicators of personal religiosity and support for political Islam were then correlated with the participants' views on the need for education reform and perceptions of the goals of Western reform demands. Other demographic variables such as age, gender, highest degree obtained, and number of years the respondent lived abroad were also correlated with the views on the need for curriculum reform and the perceptions of the goals for reform initiatives. Following are the findings from these analyses:

Indicators of the types of religiosity

Personal religiosity. Indicators of personal religiosity included reading the Quran, performing the daily prayers, reporting self as religious, and basing personal decisions on the teachings of Islam. Respondents varied on how often they read the Quran, with 59.9% saying they read the Quran either daily or a few times a week, and 43.3% saying they either sometimes or rarely read the Quran. The difference between the two groups did not reach statistical significance (Chi-Square = 3.59, p = 0.058). Performing the daily prayers, on the other hand, was reported by the majority of the respondents (87.8%), compared to 12% who either prayed but not regularly or did not pray at all. The difference between the two groups was statically different (Chi-Square = 1.07, p=.000). When asked whether they described themselves as religious, somewhat religious, or not religious, less than 5% thought they were not religious. The rest (95.8%) said they were either religious or somewhat religious.

Table 9: Description of the personal religiosity indicators across the participants

How often do you read the Quran?	
- Daily or a few times a week	59.9%
- Sometimes or rarely	43.3%
Do you pray five times a day?	
- Yes always.	87.8%
- Yes but not regularly/ no.	12.3%

The second indicator of personal religiosity was basing personal decisions on the teachings of Islam. This aspect of religiosity was analyzed using responses to question

3.2 in the questionnaire “when you consider what a suitable spouse is for your son, daughter, brother, or sister would you say that each of the following is very important, somewhat important, or not important?” The following table shows how the participants responded to this question:

Table 10 *The importance of religion in deciding about marriage:*

When considering a spouse for a son/daughter/sister/brother	Very important	Somewhat Important	A little Important	Not Important
Not performing daily prayers	57.1% (n=101)	24.9% (n=44)	10.7% (n=19)	7.3% (n=13)
Not fasting in Ramadan	58.8% (n=104)	24.3% (n= 43)	11.3% (n= 20)	5.6% (n= 10)

For strict Muslims decisions about personal or social life situations are based on the teachings of Islam. A tradition by the prophet (Peace Be upon Him) states that if a man whose religious practice and moral character are acceptable approaches one for marriage, he should be accepted. This question shows that 82% of the participants who responded to this question (n = 145) said that if a person does not pray, he/she could be rejected if he/she proposes to marry a sibling of theirs. Fasting was similarly regarded as an important condition in deciding to marry someone, with 83.1% (n = 147) saying not fasting would constitute a real or quite an obstacle to their approval of a proposer.

The above tables (9and 10) represent the personal religiosity indicators among all participants. In order to compute a personal religiosity index score for each participant, the researcher followed the the model used by Tessler (2002) by forming an additive

index of personal religiosity based on the sum of scores of the four indicators: a) reading the Quran, b) praying five times a day, c) reporting self as religious, and d) basing personal decisions on religion as follows:

Personal religiosity measure = score on reading the Quran + score on performing the daily prayers + score on reporting self as religious + score on basing personal decisions on religion. This score was then added as a variable for each individual participant and used later for further analyses. (See Appendix J for a personal religiosity index guide)

Political Islam

The second type of religiosity is the support for political Islam, which Tessler (2002) describes as the belief of individuals in active social and political role for the religion in organizing public's life and running the government. The questionnaire included 6 Likert scale items that measured participants' approval of political Islam. Responses to these statements represent how much a participant supports an active role for Islam in the organizing and running the politics of the country. The following table (11) displays the percentages of respondents agreeing or disagreeing to each statement that measures political religiosity.

Table 11 *Responses to statements that measure support for political Islam*

Support for political Islam	Percentage of respondents			
Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Men of religion should not influence how people vote in elections	*12.6% (n=24)*	*26.3% (n=50)*	*27.4% (n=52)*	*26.8% (n=51)*
2. It would be better for my country if more people with strong religious beliefs held public office	*13.2% (n=25)*	*31.1% (n=59)*	*35.8% (n=68)*	*14.7% (n=28)*
3. Men of religion should have no influence over the decisions of government	*21.6% (n=41)*	*36.8% (n=70)*	*22.6% (n=43)*	*12.6% (n=24)*
4. Religious practice is a private matter and should be separated from socio-political life	*35.8% (n=68)*	*35.3% (n=67)*	*15.8% (n=30)*	*7.4% (n=14)*
5. The government and parliament should make laws according to the wishes of the people	*32.6% (n=62)*	*36.8% (n=70)*	*14.7% (n=28)*	*8.4% (n=16)*
6. The government should implement only the laws of the *Shari'a*	*2.1% (n=4)*	*7.9% (n=15)*	*30.5% (n=58)*	*52.6% (n=100)*

Table 11 represents how the group of respondents as a whole responded to each item relating to their political religiosity. To calculate a political religiosity measure for each individual participant, an index was created following Tessler's (2002) model. Responses to the items in the table above were marked by numbers ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 4 "strongly agree." The scores for items 1, 3, 4, and 5 were

reversed because disagreeing with these items actually showed a stronger support for political Islam. Then the scores on each item were added to get a measure of each individual's political religiosity according to how they responded to these items (see Appendix K for a political religiosity index guide). Political religiosity score as well as personal religiosity score were added as new variables and used for further analyses.

Correlations

The following variables were correlated to the views on current curriculum and the perceived goals of reform initiatives: a) personal religiosity, b) political religiosity, c) age, d) gender, e) highest degree, and f) number of years lived abroad.

Type of religiosity and the views on the need for curriculum reform:

Table 12 *correlations between types of religiosity and the views on the need for curriculum reform:*

I believe that the current curriculum in my country	Personal Religiosity	Political Religiosity
1. Is too religious	-.089	-.260***
2. Is too secular	.053	.055
3. Needs reform	.000	-.118
4. Is not scientific and data driven enough	.003	.001
5. Needs more democracy intake	-.004	-.132
6. Has elements that foster extremism	-.113	-.358***
7. Highlights the bright sides of Islam	.041	.158*
8. Encourages creative and free thinking	-.011	.115
9. Encourages rote memorization	-.025	-.089

*significant at p<.05, **significant at p<.01, ***significant at p<.001

As Table 12 above shows, personal religiosity had no significant correlation with any of the views on the current curriculum. Variation in personal religiosity did not correlate with variance in their views on curriculum. On the other hand, support for political Islam had three significant correlations; a negative correlation with the view that the curriculum was too religious, a negative correlation with the view that the curriculum has elements that foster extremism, and a positive correlation with the view that the curriculum highlights the positive sides of Islam. What these correlations mean is the following: personal religiosity did not matter in the views of participants on curriculum. While, on the other hand, whether the respondents believed in a political role for Islam or not was significantly associated with their views on the amount of religion in the curriculum and on the way the curriculum is presenting religion. Respondents with lower political religiosity score tended to believe that the curriculum had too much focus on religion and that it fostered extremism. Respondents who believed in a stronger role for Islam in politics tended to believe that the curriculum shows the bright sides of Islam.

Type of religiosity and the perceived goals of reform initiatives

Correlating the scores on the political religiosity scale with the response to item 2.1 in Part II of the questionnaire shows that political religiosity correlates significantly with accepting reform initiatives. Item 2.1 asked whether participants agreed with the reform initiatives and they had three possible answers, a) I agree, b) I disagree, or c) I have a different opinion. Responses to this question were correlated with the types of religiosity, but after eliminating the third option temporarily to avoid correlating with an vague response. SPSS was used to select cases so only participants who answer with “I agree” or “I disagree” to question 2.1 are selected for the correlation analysis. After selecting the

cases, a bi-serial correlation with the political religiosity scale was conducted. A correlation coefficient of .244 (significant at p<.05) was reported. Correlations between political religiosity and the perceived goals of the reform initiatives were also computed producing the following table.

Table 13 *Correlation between the type of religiosity and the Perceived Goals of Reform Initiatives*

	Perceived goal of the reform demands	Personal Religiosity	Political Religiosity
1	Secularization of education	0.81	.062
2	Paving the road to normalization with Israel	.146	.104
3	Improving the quality of education	-.070	-.230**
4	Spreading democratic values	-.022	-.089
5	Eradicating the roots of terrorism	-.049	-.132
6	Undermining Islamic teachings	.128	.291***
7	Bringing civic values to the Middle East	-.100	-.161*
8	Weakening extremism	.041	-.146
9	Bringing immoralities to the Muslim youth	.157*	.278***
10	Spreading a culture of tolerance	-.024	-.241***
11	Modernizing education so it copes with the current development	-.101	-.196**

*significant at p<.05, **significant at p<.01, ***significant at p<.001

Table 13 shows that personal religiosity correlated only with one of the items representing the perceived goals of the reform initiatives, i.e. (item 9) “bringing

immoralities to the Muslim youth." Except for this perceived goal, variance in the amount of personal religiosity as measured by prayers, reading the Quran, basing personal decisions on the principles of Islam did not result in variance in how the respondents perceived the goals of the initiatives. On the other hand, support for political Islam correlated positively with the perception that the goals of reform initiatives are to undermine Islamic teachings (item 6) and to bring immoralities to the Muslim youth (item 9). It correlated negatively with the perceptions that the goals were to improve the quality of education, to bring civilized values to the Middle East, to spread a culture of tolerance, or to modernize education (3, 7, 10, and 11). In other words, respondents who supported a strong role for Islam in the public life and in the government tended to suspect that the goals of the initiatives were to undermine Islam and demoralize Muslim youth. They did not think that the goals were to improve the quality of education or to modernize it, nor did they agree that the goals were to bring civil values or a culture of tolerance to the region.

Correlations between demographic variables and the educators' views on the current curriculum

Table 14 below shows the strength and significance –if any- of association between the four demographic variables and how educators viewed the current curriculum:

Table 14 *Correlations between demographics and the views on the curriculum*

I believe that the current curriculum in my country	Correlating Variable			
	Age	Gender	Highest Degree	Years Lived Abroad
1. Is too religious	.193***	-.056	.178**	.021
2. Is too secular	-.045	-.087	-.051	.038
3. Needs reform	.068	.022	.056	.067
4. Is not scientific and data driven enough	.100	.043	-.027	.073
5. Needs more democracy intake	.204**	-.157*	.026	.050
6. Has elements that foster extremism	.197*	-.009	.135	.044
7. Highlights the bright sides of Islam	.014	.157*	.048	-.048
8. Encourages creative and free thinking	-.192*	-.042	-.174*	-.127
9. Encourages rote memorization	.168*	-.062	.074	.067

*significant at p <.05, **significant at p<.01, **significant at p<.001

Table 14 above shows how demographic data correlated with the views on the current curriculum. Following is a detailed description of these correlations:

Religion and the curriculum: Age positively correlated with the view that the curriculum was too religious and that it fostered extremism. Older respondents tended to believe that the curriculum was too religious and that it fostered extremism. Gender (male = 1, female = 2) positively correlated with the view that the curriculum highlights the positive sides of Islam. Significantly more female respondents than male thought the curriculum

highlights the positive sides of Islam. Degree positively correlated with the view that the curriculum was too religious. The higher the degree of the respondent the more they tended to think there was too much emphasis on religion in the current curriculum. The number of years lived abroad did not have any significant correlation with any of the views.

Need for reform: None of the demographic variables correlated with any of the views on current curriculum. In other words, regardless of age, gender, degree, and the number of years lived abroad, the respondents to the study almost held the same views on the need for reform.

Democracy: Item 5 in Table 14 asks about the participants' view on the need for more focus on democratic values such as more participation in decision making in the curriculum. The two variables that had statistically significant correlations with this item were age and gender, with age positively correlating with the need for more democracy intake and gender negatively so. The older the respondent the more they thought there was a need for more democracy intake in the curriculum. More male respondents than female thought there was a need for more democracy intake.

Educational aspects: None of the demographic variables correlated with the view that the curriculum was not scientific and data driven enough. Regardless of the age, gender, degree, or the number of years the respondent had lived abroad, they almost agreed on the view that curriculum needed more scientific and data driven content. Age and degree were negatively correlated to the view that the current curriculum encourages creative and free thinking. Older participants and participants who held higher degrees tended to think that the current curriculum did not encourage creative or free thinking. Age alone

correlated with the view that the curriculum encourages rote memorization. Older respondents tended to think that the curriculum encouraged memorization more than did younger participants.

Correlations between demographic variables and the perceived goals of reform initiatives

Demographic variables such as age, gender, highest degree, and number of years the participant had lived abroad were also correlated to the 11 items representing the perceived goals of reform initiatives. Strength and significance of correlations if any are reported in table 15 below.

Table 15 *Correlation between demographic variables and the perceived goals of reform initiatives:*

Perceived goal of the reform demands	Correlating Variable			
	Age	Gender	Highest Degree	Years Lived Abroad
1. Secularization of education	.055	-.012	.100	-.035
2. Paving the road to normalization with Israel	.017	-.044	.069	-.009
3. Improving the quality of education	.083	.051	.054	.086
4. Spreading democratic values	-.090	.011	-.098	-.039
5. Eradicating the roots of terrorism	.006	-.066	-.060	-.106
6. Undermining Islamic teachings	-.240**	.033	-.150*	-.202**
7. Bringing civic values to the Middle East	.052	.108	.031	-.101
8. Weakening extremism	-.106	-.039	-.226**	-.221**
9. Bringing immoralities to the Muslim youth	-.213**	-.093	-.147	-.068
10. Spreading a culture of tolerance	.022	-.051	.032	-.056
11. Modernizing education so it copes with the current development	.166*	.0007	.015	-.003

*significant at p <.05, **significant at p<.01, **significant at p<.001

Table 15 above shows the following significant correlations:

Undermining Islamic teachings: age, degree and the number of years participants have lived abroad negatively correlated with the view that the goal of reform initiatives was to undermine Islamic teachings. Younger participants, participants holding lower degrees and those who have spent fewer years abroad or have not travelled abroad tended to agree that the goal of reform initiatives was to undermine the teachings of Islam more than did older counterparts with higher degrees and who have lived abroad.

Weakening extremism: participants' degree and the number of years they lived abroad correlated negatively with the view that the goal of the reform initiatives was to weaken extremism.

Bringing immoralities to the Muslim youth: This item has been a recurrent theme in religious clerics' rhetoric by which they mainly refer to the different values that allow drinking alcohol and having sexual relationships without marriage. Only age correlated with this view negatively. Younger respondents tended to agree that the goal of reform initiatives was to bring immoralities to the Muslim youth.

Modernizing education: age correlated positively with the view that the goal of reform initiatives was to modernize education in the Middle East. Older respondents tended to think the goal of the initiatives was to modernize education.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This study examined the views of educators in Yemen on the need for educational reform and their attitudes toward reform initiatives coming from the West. It also looked at variables that influenced educators' views and attitudes. The need for education reform in Middle Eastern countries has been acknowledged by educators and writers in the Middle East as well as in the West although with different purposes and goals. In the Middle East the calls for reform have been mainly to tackle development and economy issues, while in the West interest in education reform in the Middle East stemmed from security reasons. Western sponsored initiatives and demands for reform in the Middle East have been subject to suspicion, scrutiny, or total rejection. The current study examined the views of educators in Yemen on the need for education reform and their attitudes toward Western reform initiatives.

The majority of respondents to the questionnaire expressed their dissatisfaction with the current curriculum in Yemen but did not agree with the Western demands to reform education. About 95% of the respondents thought the curriculum needed reform but in the details of what type of reforms were needed, there were some variations.

Unlike Western researchers, commentators, and politicians (e.g. Ottaway, 2003; Friedman, 2001, 2002, 2005; Carpenter, 2005), the majority of the Yemeni educators surveyed in this study did not think the curriculum fostered extremism or was too religious. The amount of religion in the curriculum sounded just right for about 69% of the respondents. The majority of the respondents thought it was rather the scientific and academic quality of the content that needed reform.

Yemeni educators surveyed for this study did not have the same feeling about the Western demands and initiatives to reform education in the Middle East. While almost half of the respondents to the item about the Western initiatives rejected the Western demands (46%), less than a quarter (21%) agreed with them and a third had different opinions (33%). Although these numbers show a majority rejecting the Western initiatives to reform education, the also show that there is no complete uniformity among educators on either accepting or rejecting the initiatives. It all depended on what exactly is in those initiatives or how the educators perceived their goals. In this regard, majority of the respondents were suspicious of the real goals of the initiatives. Themes that emerged from the literature review were all confirmed by the respondents as the perceived goals of Western initiatives. It is important that educators understand the real purpose of reform efforts, initiatives, and demands for them to truly embrace the reform efforts.

Conclusions

Research Question # 1: What are the views of Yemeni educators on the current curriculum in their country?

Based on the respondents' answers to the first part of the questionnaire (Appendix B) 'the current curriculum,' Yemeni educators perceived a need for reforming education but did not all agree on the types of reforms needed. The majority of the respondents agreed on the educational aspects of the curriculum and agreed that their curriculum was not adequate in this regard. For example, more than 78% thought the curriculum was not scientific based and lacked research based data. Regarding the mode of education, more than 71% thought creative thinking was not encouraged and more than 78% thought the current curriculum only encouraged rote memorization.

Criticism for education in the Middle East include claims that it fosters extremism and that it focuses too much on religion thus creating a raft in the minds of the youth between Muslim and Non-Muslim world (Friedman, 2001, 2002, 2005; Rabasa, 2004, Looney, 2005). The majority of the respondents to the questionnaire did not agree with these claims. To the contrary, they thought the curriculum highlighted the bright and positive aspects of Islam. Unlike the criticisms directed to education and the curriculum in the Middle East by individual scholars and politicians, the official reform initiatives, such as MEPI and the Broader Middle East and North Africa initiative (BMENA) do not explicitly mention religion or extremism. However, they mention democracy and the need for education in the Middle East to increase the democracy intake in the curriculum. They also encourage creative and free thinking and the scientific and data driven content. These three areas were highly agreed on by respondents to the questionnaire.

Research Question # 2: How do Yemeni educators view Western initiatives and demands that involve/encourage educational reform?

Responses to Part II of the questionnaire showed that educators in Yemen were not all supportive of the Western initiatives and demands to reform education in the Middle East. Although the majority of the respondents agreed that there was a need for education reform, only 21% (n = 35) supported the Western initiatives that included education reform, such as the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI). On the other hand, 46% (n = 75) of the respondents expressed their disapproval of the reform initiatives and 33% (n=54) were neither with nor against the reform initiatives.

Although only 21% supported the initiatives, this number is quite positive given all the suspicion and unwelcoming attitudes in the Middle East toward Western agendas. The majority of those who supported the initiatives wrote that their reasons for supporting such initiatives were that education needed to be reformed, that education needed more scientific and advanced content, and that the West were more advanced and had only good experiences to share with the rest of the world. Discontent with the political regimes' control of education was also one of the motives for supporting Western initiatives although only a small minority of respondents mentioned it. The researcher concluded that even though only 21% supported the initiatives, this number shows flexibility among some educators to work with Western partners toward reforming education in light of the local needs.

The comments added by the group who answered this question with "I have a different opinion" (n = 48 since not all of them commented) add more depth to the understanding of educators' attitudes toward reform initiatives. The majority of the responses in this group expressed interest in what the Western initiatives can offer for education in the Middle East even with the concern that these initiatives might as well

have different agendas. Respondents in this group acknowledged the need to reform education and the potential these initiatives have for reforming education. The researcher concluded that if this group is assured of the professional and practical intentions of the initiatives, they could become a driving force for reform since they constitute the influential majority. If this group of educators is convinced that the reform initiatives and reform efforts are not going to negatively impact their culture, religion, and political causes, they will be more likely to join the efforts. And if this group of skeptical supporters of reform joins the reformists, the majority of educators will be on the side of reform initiatives, granting them success and public support. Without public support (Sayed, 2005; Woempner, 2008) and the support of educators in particular (Tyack & Cuban, 1995), reform initiatives will not succeed.

The politics of globalization and the rhetoric of postcolonialism were almost absent from the comments of those who supported Western initiatives. The only mention of the different cultures and politics was from the few who said that they agreed with the reform initiatives because they encouraged more freedom, cultural contacts and tolerance of others. This indicates that those who supported the reform initiatives were either supportive of cultural contacts with the West in general, or were more interested in educational matters than politics.

The group that opposed Western reform initiatives (46% of the respondents) mainly disagreed with the perceived intentions of the initiatives, not with the need for reform. The air of suspicion of the former colonizer persisted here and those who rejected the initiatives added comments that described their rejection of foreign interference in local affairs. Comments like “change can only come from inside” and “the West is only

pushing their own agendas" show a lack of trust in the intentions of the reform efforts or the credibility of the Western partners in reform.

It is worth mentioning here that the high percentage of educators agreeing on the need for education reform, as reported from the responses to Part I of the questionnaire, did not guarantee acceptance of the reform initiatives. The fact that educators acknowledge the need for reform does not mean they will be ready to accept initiatives coming from the West. This finding is in agreement with the literature on education reform in the postcolonial era (e.g. Kamat, 2004; Dale, 1999; Tikly, 2001), where the formerly colonized people usually reject or at least suspect any initiative by the former colonizers. In the case of the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) initiative, the most prominent proponent of reforms is the United States of America, which has not been an actual colonizer in the region. However, the perceptions of educators are still framed within the colonizer-colonized relationship. In fact, even in the studies and papers presented by some Arab authors and researchers on the issue of reform initiatives, reference to the United States is usually made in conjunction with "the colonial powers" (e.g. Al-Torayry, 2004; Ammar, 2004; Mansour, 2007). Mostafa Mansour (2007) particularly referred to MEPI as a tool that is being used to distort the Muslim character and "raise a generation that is stripped of any national or moral identity" (p. 606). Quoting heavily from a book by Professor Hamed Ammar, an Egyptian educator well-known in the Arab world, Mansour describes MEPI as an imperialist tool that seeks to destroy the Arab youth. He calls for defying the reform initiatives by initiating reforms with national agendas to confront any attempts to

force any ideals that do not comply with the historical and cultural backgrounds of the Arab societies.

Given all the suspicion and resistance among educators and authors alike, the responses to question 2.2. in Part II of the questionnaire were not unexpected. The goals of the reform initiatives were perceived more as political and having hidden agendas than as simply launching reforms for the improvement of education. Among the 11 perceived goals in the questionnaire, the two goals that received the highest agreement rates were: "[the goal of these reform initiatives is:] secularization of education" and "paving the road to normalize with Israel," with over 81% of the respondents agreeing with each statement. Ammar (2004) argues that reducing the amount of religion in the lives of Arab youth is one of the consequences of September 11. Other consequences include serving the interests of Israel through pushing Arab countries to normalize with Israel (Mansour, 2007, p. 610). It is of special interest here, however, to note that only 18% disagree with the two statements as the actual goals of reform initiatives. This means that among the 21% (n = 35) who said they agreed with the reform initiatives in question 2.1, some expressed their approval of Western initiatives even though they thought the actual goals were to secularize education and to normalize with Israel. The researcher concluded that despite the suspicion of the intentions of the reformists and the reform initiatives, some Yemeni educators are ready to embrace reform initiatives even when they are in contradiction with the common beliefs in the region.

Research Question # 3: What variables correlate with the views on the need for education reform and the attitudes toward reform initiatives?

Responses to Parts III and IV of the questionnaire provided the answers to this research question. Measures of the two religiosity orientations were computed using the responses to question 3.1 and 3.2 from Part III, and responses to the last three items in Part IV. Demographic questions in Part IV provided the demographic information that was used for the correlations. Correlation between the demographic variables and religiosity orientations on one side and the views on current curriculum and the attitudes toward reform initiatives on the other side provided a description of the qualities of likely partners in the reform efforts, as well as an understanding of some of the variables across which educators in the Middle East differ in their views to Western initiatives and demands. Such an understanding could be useful when deciding about public policies relevant to education reform or initiatives patronized by global partners in development or democratic reform to better address the concerns of likely rejecters.

Religiosity

Religiosity was measured using two different scales, one for personal religiosity and one for political religiosity. Like Tessler's studies (2002) and Tessler & Jamal(2006), this study found that religious orientations correlated differently with attitudes toward Western initiatives. While personal religiosity did not have significant correlations with the views on the current curriculum or the attitudes toward Western reform initiatives, support for political Islam did. Praying, reading the Quran, and basing personal decisions on religion were not important predictors of the views on the curriculum or attitudes toward reform initiatives. On the other hand, respondents who had different scores on the

political religiosity measure were found to have different opinions regarding the current curriculum and the reform initiatives.

Personal religiosity and the current curriculum

The assumptions in many American writings on issues in the Middle East suggest that religion is part of the problem in the region, and that the tendency to make religion the center of people's lives creates an atmosphere of orthodoxy where new ideas and tendencies are rejected (Friedman, 2005). This assumption, however, is not supported by this study's findings that show an increase in personal religiosity not correlating with an increase in suspicion of the Western initiatives or with rejection of them. From the correlation between personal piety index and the responses to the items in Part I about the current curriculum, it is clear that praying five times a day, reading the Quran, and basing decisions on the teachings of Islam did not necessarily associate with a rejection of democracy in the curriculum. At the same time, personal religiosity was not associated with any other responses in the same part of the questionnaire, which means that variation in personal religiosity did not necessarily mean variation in one's views on the current curriculum. While this could be taken to mean that views on the current curriculum are almost similar among people with different degrees of religious commitment, it could also be interpreted in light of what Tessler (2002) describes as a higher level of personal religiosity in the Arab region in general, thus making religiosity orientation an unlikely predictor of variation in political views.

Personal religiosity and the attitudes toward reform initiatives

Literature on the attitudes toward reform initiatives shows a consistent message among Muslim religious scholars and leaders arguing that the real goal of Western

initiatives to reform education is the secularization of education (e.g. Qaradhawy, 2002; Alawdah, 2004). The findings in this study show that educators were not any different from the religious scholars in this attitude, regardless of how much they are committed to religious practice. Correlation analysis showed no significant correlation between personal piety and the views that the goal of these initiatives was to secularize education. When we consider this finding along with the large percentage of educators (81%) agreeing that the goal was to secularize education, it becomes clear that regardless of the personal religiosity measure of respondents, they almost all thought the purpose was secularization of education. Whether or not respondents were supportive of secularization of education was not clear from the response to this item.

To gain insights about the respondents' views on the secularization of education the researcher looked at their responses to the open-ended question 1.2 in Part I that asked them to identify the area of education needing reform. Out of the 178 who added comments on the need for reform in education, only 13 said that the curriculum needed less religion. Also a correlation between responses to item 2.1 ("do you agree with the reform initiatives?") and the response to the item in 2.2 ("the goal is secularization of education") showed a significant value (.444, $p<.001$), suggesting that those who rejected the initiatives tended to believe that the goals of Western initiatives were to secularize education more than did participants who agreed with the initiatives. It is clear that the educators who opposed the initiatives were more likely to think their goals were to secularize education. But not all of those who thought the goal was secularization of education were opposed to the initiatives. This shows that some educators - though not statistically significant number - were actually in favor of a secular education.

Political religiosity

Support for a political role for Islam was found to be significant in the sample of this study. Variance in political religiosity was also found to be significant. Age, academic degree, and the number of years the participant has lived abroad were negatively correlated with support for political Islam. The older the respondents, the less they supported political Islam and believed in a separation between Islam and politics. The same is true about the highest academic degree obtained. Respondents with higher degrees tended to believe in a separation between Islam and politics. Respondents who lived abroad for a long time also tended to believe in a less political role for Islam. These findings draw a portrait of those who support political Islam as younger people who have not lived abroad and who are less educated, a profile that matches with the description of school teachers rather than professors. Most of the university professors must have lived abroad, since the Yemeni universities have just recently started granting higher degrees.

Political religiosity and views on the current curriculum

Unlike personal religiosity, variance in political religiosity was associated with variance in the views on curriculum in terms of its religious content. Political religiosity was negatively associated with the view that the curriculum was too religious (-.260**, $p<.001$) and that it fostered extremism (-.358**, $p<.001$). Educators who thought religion should be separated from politics were more likely to think the curriculum needed reform because of its heavy emphasis on religion, and vice versa. This group of educators was also more likely to think that the curriculum fostered extremism. It is important to remember here that age and academic degree correlated negatively with political religiosity, which means that the older and more educated educators tended to believe

that curriculum needed reform in order to decrease the religious content and to make it less likely to foster extremism. Educators with higher political religiosity scores tended to believe that the current curriculum highlights the positive side of Islam more than educators with lower political religiosity scores.

Political religiosity and the attitudes toward reform initiatives

Again, educators were divided by their views on the political role of Islam, and this division was associated with variance in their perceptions of the goals of the Western reform initiatives. Political religiosity was significantly associated with negative perceptions about the goals of the reform initiatives in terms of the educational value they intend to bring. Educators with lower scores on the political religiosity index were more likely than their colleagues with higher political religiosity scores to believe that the goals of the reform initiatives were to improve the quality of education and to modernize education. They were also more likely to think that the goal was to encourage the value of tolerance and to bring civilized values to the Middle East. On the other hand, educators with higher scores on the political religiosity scale tended to believe that the goals were to undermine Islamic teachings and bring immorality to the Muslim youth. One of the participants added in the comment section that “they hate us because of our values.”

Demographics

Findings of the study showed a significant association between age and political religiosity and between age and the views on the current curriculum and the perceived goals of reform initiatives. Educators with a higher political religiosity scores tended to be older, with higher degrees, and having lived abroad more than those with lower scores on political religiosity. This finding is important in two ways. First, it shows that

education and contact with others are reflected in less fundamentalism in the beliefs about the role of religion in politics. But the other important part of this finding is that the younger educators, who constitute the future of education in Yemen, are in favor of a stronger role for religion in politics. This would not be a problem, except that political religiosity is also associated with negative attitudes toward reform initiatives and with support for aspects that have been demonstrated to need reform in the current educational system. Therefore, it is important to address the concerns of young teachers when initiating any reform efforts.

Demographics and the views on the current curriculum

Age was associated with critical views on the current curriculum. The older the participants were, the more likely they were to be critical of the content of the curriculum, believing that it was too religious ($r=.193$, $p<.05$) and included elements that fostered extremism ($r = .197$, $p<.05$). Age also correlated positively with the view that the curriculum did not have sufficient focus on democratic values and that the curriculum encouraged learning through rote memorization. Older participants were more likely to show concern for the lack of democratic intake and to think the curriculum encouraged rote memorization rather than free and critical thinking. One might assume that since the two variables of age and degree were highly inter-correlated ($r=.0527$, $p<.001$), the same correlations would be observed between 'degree' and the views on curriculum and that these correlations would be inflated as a result of the multicollinearity (Washington, Karlaftis, & Mannering, 2003). However, since inferential statistics were not used, the effect of this multicollinearity will not skew the findings of the study, especially given

that the correlations with other factors are not always the same among the two intercorrelated variables of ‘age’ and ‘academic degree.’

Like ‘age,’ ‘degree’ was positively correlated with the view that the curriculum was too religious, and negatively with the view that the curriculum encouraged free and creative thinking. But it did not correlate with the other views on curriculum, which means that regardless of the academic degree held by the participants, they tended to hold almost the same views on curriculum. The only differences were that educators with higher degrees tended to be critical of the emphasis of education on religion and its lack of encouragement for creative and free thinking. Surprisingly, except for the view that the curriculum was too religious, the number of years participants have lived abroad was not associated with other views on the current curriculum.

Demographics and the perceived goals of the reform initiatives

Findings from the correlations between the demographic variables and the perceived goals of the reform initiatives show that educators who were older, held higher degrees, and had lived abroad for longer periods of time were less suspicious of the intentions of the reform initiatives. Suspicions that the real goals of the Western reform initiatives are to undermine Islamic teachings or to bring immoralities to the Muslim youth were not supported by the older participants, compared to younger ones who tended to agree. Age also positively correlated with the view that the goal of the initiatives was to modernize education in the Middle East. This shows that the younger participants had less trust in the initiatives than older ones.

The other demographic information - the highest academic degree and the number of years lived abroad - correlated negatively with the view that the real purposes of the

reform initiatives were to undermine Islam or to weaken extremism. Educators with higher education attainment tended to reject the suspicion that the initiatives targeted Islamic values, as is usually claimed by Middle Easterners. Given the strong inter-correlation between the variable of number of years lived abroad and the variable of academic degree ($r=.730$, $p<.001$), looking at how the other variable correlates with the perceived goals should not reveal significant values. The reason for this high intercorrelation is probably because higher education studies are new to Yemeni universities and the only way that was previously available for people to get a higher education was to travel abroad. It was not until the late 1990s that some universities in Yemen started offering higher education studies in a few humanistic specializations.

Summary and Implications

When education reform is considered, it is very important to include the public voice as much as possible (Cuban, 1995; Sayed, 2005; Ottaway, 2003; Alsoudi, 2006; Benard, 2006). Educators' voices, in particular, are critical since they are the ones who will be involved with the any reformed policies or priorities. It is true that in the Middle East, teachers do not have a say in educational policy-making or in the way education is planned, the curriculum is organized, or the priorities for teaching and learning are made. But resistance among teachers and educators to any policies or ideas will cripple any policy or reform efforts. It is thus important to understand the sources of resistance and suspicion and address them when deciding about reforms. It is also important to know who the likely partners in reforms are so that time and efforts are not wasted trying to "flog a dead horse" (Benard, p. 43).

Three important findings in this study can be very helpful to policy makers and reform patrons. The first is the overarching belief in the need for education reform to improve the quality of education, to allow for more democracy intake in the curriculum, and to promote tolerance of others. These beliefs show a potential for having local reformists who lead reform initiatives. This hopeful belief is, however, faced with the second important finding, which is the high level of suspicion among educators toward Western reform partners and the lack of credibility the West has accumulated in the region. Although the lack of credibility has been a recurrent theme in the relationship between "the West and the Rest" of the world, especially framed in a context of the relationship between former colonizers and formerly colonized (Rizvi, 2004), this lack of credibility and high sense of suspicion in the Middle East is stronger due to different historical events and political conflicts. It is important to understand the sources of these attitudes to be able to address them.

Lack of credibility of the West has been reinforced and emphasized more by the feelings that the West had certain cultural and political causes it is interested in advancing regardless of the needs of the Middle East region. In terms of politics, the major obstacle to building credibility has been the Western pro-Israeli stance on the conflict between the Arabs and Israel. Arabs' reaction to such a stance has been an intensified suspicion of the intent of any Western initiative (Ottaway, 2003; Alsoudi, 2006). The war in Iraq has been another reason for the increased lack of credibility, as cited by many participants in the study. The type of religious rhetoric adopted by influential religious leaders and preachers has also been fueling these suspicions. Religious leaders and preachers have been cautioning the public against any foreign interference with the culture or the

education of the youth. The term “cultural invasion” spread widely in the 1970s and 1980s as religious leaders were fortifying the public against communism. Dr. Abdulaziz Altwaijri (1998), the director general of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), described the newly coined term “cultural invasion” as a result of “overstated warnings and dangers” (p.33).

The third important finding in this study is the portrait of the likely rejecters and the likely partners of reform initiatives. Unfortunately, the rejecters of reform are the majority in the region and unfortunately, too, they are the younger cohort, which means that the future could be more challenging. Younger educators were also more likely to believe in a stronger role for Islam in running the governments, which shows that fundamentalism is indeed in the rise in the Middle East. This finding is not in contradiction with the trend in the whole world, however, as it is argued that fundamentalism is gaining ground and is replacing the cold-war political and ideological bases for conflict (Lawrence, 1989; Ruthven, 2004).

Reformists in the region have to work with the younger educators who have lower academic degrees toward joining efforts with international partners to improve the quality of education in the region. International agencies and Western entities interested in or concerned about education reform in the Middle East have to work with already willing partners. According to this study, older educators with higher degrees and ones who have lived abroad for substantial periods of time are the more likely willing partners. The researcher doesn’t recommend ignoring the likely rejecters of reform initiatives, but rather working towards winning their support especially given their understanding of the need for reform.

One of the concerns raised in this study, besides the trend among the younger respondents to support political Islam and to reject reform initiatives, is the discrepancy between Yemeni educators' understanding of the need for reform and their attitude toward reform initiatives. One would assume that when initiatives aiming at "fixing what is wrong with education," as the director of the RAND initiative for Middle Eastern youth (Benard, 2006), argues would gain the support of those who are not satisfied with their educational systems in the region. This study shows that this is not the case. This indifference to Western initiatives can be understood in the light of the history of tensions in the region, the legacy of colonization, and the post-9/11 atmosphere of mutual distrust. If in India the reaction to globalization has been a revival of Hindu fundamentalism (Kamat, 2004), in the Middle East there is a tendency among the youth and even among cohorts that are not necessarily religious to oppose the West. Personal piety is widespread, but regardless of the amount of personal religiosity, there is a tendency among the youth to reject Western initiatives.

From his own experience in the United States and from watching televised debates and reading editorials, the researcher is clear that Americans are puzzled by the resistance to reform initiatives or proposed regime changes even though the people of the Middle East complain of their conditions and cry for change. What needs to be understood here is that dissatisfaction with local conditions does not mean that the locals are going to welcome outside influence. In fact, some people in the Muslim Middle East tend to believe that tyranny might be acceptable when their nation is faced with external dangers (Tessler & Jamal, 2006; Al-Wazir, nd.) The Yemeni historian, thinker and editor, Zaid Al-Wazir, wrote that historically some Muslim Arab figures were tyrants, but their

warfare against invaders made the masses forgive them their tyranny and embrace them as national and religious heroes. For example, Al-Wazir cited Saladin, an army commander who defeated the Crusaders to defend the Muslim land, and Saifuddin Qutuz who defeated the Tatars. These two figures have been celebrated by Muslim nations until today even though, according to Al-Wazir, they were not necessarily fair to their own people. This shows that when the public senses a danger to the identity of the nation (Al-Farhan, 2004), they are more likely to put up with local imperfections than they are to accept what they perceive as an external threat. In the case of this study, respondents who believed that there was a hidden agenda behind Western demands for curriculum reform and those who believed the real purpose of these demands was to benefit Israel, were more likely to reject the reform demands even though a majority of them have agreed that education in the Middle East needs reform. It is the rivalry and perceived threat that makes accepting a local imperfection a better option than accepting the threat.

Another potential interpretation can be found in the cultural differences in context requirements (Hall, 1989; Hecht, Anderson, & Ribeau, 1989). Hecht *et al.* (1989) explain that cultures are different in the way they rely on communication processes. Some cultures rely on high context communication, which means that messages need to be understood not in and by their mere content, but by the context surrounding them and the relationship between the receiver and the deliverer of the message. Other cultures rely more on the mere content of the message for communication. The latter are called low context cultures. High context cultures tend to trust more the 'in-groups' and infer meanings from the culture rather than the message, while low context cultures tend to focus on the message itself and treat in-groups and out-groups similarly. It is argued that

the cultures in Western Europe and the United States are low context, while Eastern and Latin American cultures are high context. In this sense it can be argued that people in the Middle East are suspicious of the intent of the out-group reform initiatives even though the content of the message of reform is similar to the one they believe in. This cultural difference can also explain the resistance to participate in the survey (Johnson, O'Rourke, Burris & Owens, 2002), as the participants tend to read in the questions more than is written and suspect the intentions of the researcher.

In conclusion, it is important for policy makers and international reform initiative patrons to understand the sources of resistance in the Middle East so they can better address them and maximize the use of resources. It is highly advisable that reform efforts involve local partners and try to start with the local reformists' agendas rather than bring new agendas and plans to the region. It is also advisable to be aware of the political sensitivities in the region and to make sure they are being respected. For the West in general and the United States in particular, the relentless pro-Israeli support remains a hurdle in building credibility in the Middle East. Striking a more balanced foreign policy in the Middle East, especially in regards to the Arab-Israeli conflict, would create a better environment for mutual respect and partnership. Without that, the journey for winning hearts is not going to be easy.

Discussion

This study has been the first, to the best of my knowledge, to explore the beliefs and views of educators in any Middle Eastern country about the need for reform and the Western reform initiatives. The study crossed the boundaries of what could be done in the Middle East in terms of research, as it asked questions about religion, religion in the

curriculum, and included items about Israel and thus was faced with resistance from the very beginning. However, three respondents (all with Ph.D. degrees) wrote thank you notes at the end of the questionnaire, one of them reading “thank you for these brave and very appropriate questions.” But these “brave and appropriate questions” made it very difficult to get approvals to conduct the survey and the researcher had to make follow ups and ask friends for help. Given the sensitivity of the topic and the type of questions asked, some respondents expressed concerns that the findings of the study would “benefit the Zionists and imperialists,” as one of the respondents commented in bold red. Some expressed concerns that the actual purpose of the study was not academic, but rather gathering information for intelligence agencies (the researcher was told this by phone and is not sure if it was a serious comment).

As with any other research, there are limitations that need to be taken into consideration when reading the findings. The first limitation for this study was the non-probability sample. Rather than a probable sample that would give everyone in the Yemeni society an equal opportunity to be in the sample, this study was limited to a stratified purposive sample of three types of educators. However, the large sample size (500 with 198 returned questionnaires) and the fact that the sample represents a homogenous group of a highly relevant population to the research questions ameliorate this limitation. Educators were chosen because of their role in interacting with any reform initiative and for their first hand experience with the curriculum.

As an exploratory descriptive study, the goal was not to generalize on the basis of the findings of this study, but to be able to describe the views and attitudes of the sample studied in relation to demographic and religiosity factors. Therefore, only descriptive

statistics were used to describe but not infer from the sample to the population. However, given the large sample it is fair to assume that the descriptive statistics in this study provide a portrait of the population of educators in Yemen. The relatively low response rate (40%) could have been improved had the researcher been available in the research sites to make direct follow ups with the participants and to answer their questions. But the researcher's conclusions are based on the well established tradition in survey research that this percentage is within the acceptable range (Dillman, 2007; de Leeuw, & de Heer, 2002).

Although the survey return rate was within the acceptable range, a higher rate could have been possible had the researcher had direct access to the participants. But since the contact between the researcher, who lived in the United States, and the participants in Yemen was facilitated by assistants in Yemen, this contact was not established and hence there was no direct follow-up with the participants. The assistants in Yemen reported that in a few cases the participants asked some questions about items in the questionnaire to which the assistants did not have answers, such as the question "if lottery was available in your country, would you participate?" After receiving an e-mail from one of the assistants about this item, the researcher e-mailed and phoned the other assistants to tell them how to clarify this question if asked. This was done to guarantee that all participants received the same information.

Recommendations for Further Studies

The original plan for this study was to conduct it in five representative countries in the Middle East, but due to the limitations of time and resources as well as the nature of the questions and lack of direct access to participants, it was then limited to Yemen.

Further studies can replicate this study in other countries, even with changes in the design or survey questions. Possible changes that would enhance the findings of possible replica studies include adding a qualitative component where a sample of participants is interviewed for more in-depth insights. Another possible change is using online surveys instead of pencil and paper. Online surveys will be easier to distribute in different countries. The reason this study did not use online survey was that in Yemen the majority of the schools and university professors do not have computers or access to the internet. Finally, since this study has identified significant factors that are associated with important views on education and attitudes toward reform initiatives, and utilized descriptive statistics, further studies could use inferential statistics to be able to better generalize the findings.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INFORMATION SHEET

حول الدراسة

عنوان الدراسة: اراء التربويين في مناهج التعليم في اليمن واتجاهاتهم نحو المبادرات الغربية المتعلقة بإصلاحها.

الباحث: عبدالله عبدالرحمن سفيان مدهش

الغرض من الدراسة:
تهدف هذه الدراسة البحثية لمعرفة اراء التربويين في الوضع الحالي للمناهج التعليمية في اليمن وفي المبادرات الغربية الداعية لإصلاح مناهج التعليم. لتحقيق هذا الغرض يقوم الباحث باستقصاء اراء عينة من ثلاث فئات من التربويين اليمنيين (أعضاء هيئة التدريس في كليات التربية, الموجهين في مكاتب التربية والتعليم, ومدرسي المدارس). لهذا وجهت لكم الدعوة للمشاركة عن طريق الإجابة على فقرات الاستبيان المرفق وهي من نوعين: النوع الأول عبارة عن أسئلة مباشرة تتم الإجابة عليها بالموافقة أو الاعتراض باختيار رقم من 1 – 4 حسب درجة الاتفاق أو الاعتراض على كل فقرة, والنوع الثاني عبارة عن أسئلة مفتوحة تسعى للحصول على رأي أكثر تفصيلاً. كما يمكنكم التعليق أو الإضافة عقب كل فقرة في الفراغ المخصص لذلك, ولو لزم الأمر فيمكن الكتابة خلف الورقة.

الإجراءات:
المشاركة في هذه الدراسة تكون عبر الإجابة على أسئلة الاستبيان المرفق بعنوان "اراء التربويين اليمنيين في مناهج التعليم واتجاهاتهم نحو المطالب الغربية بإصلاحها". هذا الاستبيان مقسم إلى خمسة أقسام في كل قسم أقل من 10 فقرات. الوقت الذي يتوقع استغراقه في أخذ الاستبان هو 20 – 30 دقيقة.

مخاطر المشاركة: المشاركة بهذا الاستبيان لن تعرضك لأي مخاطر أكثر من تلك التي يمكن أن تقابلها في حياتك اليومية.

فوائد المشاركة: مشاركتك في هذا الاستبيان هي طوعية وليس هناك أي مكافأة شخصية على المشاركة.

حفظ الخصوصية:
لا يوجد في فقرات الاستبيان أي سؤال عن الإسم أو عن معلومات شخصية يمكن أن تقود الباحث للتعرف على شخصية المشارك. كما أن الاستبيانات ستحفظ في درج مغلق في مكتب الباحث بجامعة ولاية أوكلاهوما ولن يتمكن أحد غيره من الاطلاع عليها. وسيتم اتلاف كل الأوراق بما فيها هذه الوثيقة بعد انتهاء الدراسة بعد سنة على الأكثر. ولمزيد من الخصوصية يرجى وضع الاستبيان بعد الإجابة على فقراته في الظرف المرفق وإحكام غلقه قبل تسليمه للشخص الذي سلمكم إياه والذي سيقوم بإرسال كل الظروف دون الاطلاع على محتواها عبر خدمة الشحن الجوي (دي اتش ال أو فيديكس أو يو بي إس) إلى الباحث. كل المعلومات ستستخدم بغرض البحث فقط و سيتم الاحتفاظ بالاستبيانات في مكان خاص. عند الإشارة لنتائج الدراسة سيتم ذلك بشكل جماعي وبدون أي معلومات يمكن أن تدل على شخص أي من المشاركين. وحده المكتب المسئول عن حماية حقوق وسلامة المشاركين في الأبحاث من يمكنه الإطلاع على هذه الاجراءات.

للتواصل: Abdullah Modhesh
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في حال وجود أي أسئلة لديكم حول حقوقكم كمشاركين في البحث, الرجاء التواصل مع د. سوو سي. جاكوبس, مدير الاي ار بي, على **العنوان التالي:**

Dr. Shelia Kennison, IRB Chair, 219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-1676 or irb@okstate.edu

حقوق المشاركين:
المشاركة في هذا الاستبيان طوعية ويمكنكم التوقف في أي وقت حسب رغبتكم .

INFORMATION SHEET

Project Title: Opinions of Yemeni educators about the current educational curriculum and attitudes toward Western initiatives demanding curriculum reform.

Investigator:

Abdullah Modhesh

Purpose:

This is a research study that will investigate the opinions of Middle Eastern educators (university professors of education) from two countries; Saudi Arabia and Yemen, on educational reform in the Middle East as well as their attitudes toward Western initiatives demanding curriculum reform. Information you will provide will include your opinions about the curriculum in place in your country, your opinion about reform initiatives, and your opinion about the role of religion in the society, besides some demographic information. Any information obtained through this survey will be used for research purposes only.

Procedures:

You will respond to a survey entitled "Yemeni educators' opinions on the educational curriculum and their attitudes toward the Western demands to reform curriculum." The survey is divided into five parts, with a maximum of 10 questions in each part. The survey should take about 20 – 30 minutes.

Risks of Participation:

There are no known risks associated with this project which are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Benefits:

There are no personal benefits to participants in this study.

Confidentiality:

The survey will be filled out with no names or any identifying codes, so your identity will not be revealed to anyone. Besides this, only the researcher will have access to the data, which will be stored in a locked cabinet in his office until he finishes his studies and then will be destroyed within a maximum of one year. When you receive the survey, you will receive with it an envelope to put the completed survey in and seal before you turn it back in to my assistant in your country. My assistant will collect all sealed envelopes and send them via Courier Mail (DHL – UPS – or FedEx).

The records of this study will be kept private. Any written results will discuss group findings and will not include information that will identify you. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers and individuals responsible

for research oversight will have access to the records. It is possible that the consent process and data collection will be observed by research oversight staff responsible for safeguarding the rights and wellbeing of people who participate in research.

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If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact Dr. Shelia Kennison, IRB Chair, 219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-1676 or irb@okstate.edu.

Participant Rights:

Participation in this survey is voluntarily and you might decide to discontinue taking it at any time.

APPENDIX B

THE SURVEY INSTRUMETN
(English then Arabic)

Survey of educators' attitudes toward curriculum reform in the Middle East

Part 1: The current situation of curriculum:

1.1) Please read the statement then circle the number that corresponds to your opinion about it.

I believe that the current curriculum in my country:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Is too religious	1	2	3	4
2. Is too secular	1	2	3	4
3. Needs reform	1	2	3	4
4. Is not scientific and data driven enough	1	2	3	4
5. Needs more democracy intake	1	2	3	4
6. Has elements that foster extremism	1	2	3	4
7. Highlights the bright sides of Islam	1	2	3	4
8. Encourages creative and free thinking	1	2	3	4
9. Encourages rote memorization	1	2	3	4

Please comments about the current curriculum in your country:

.....

.....

1-2. In your opinion, does the current curriculum need reform?

a) Yes, it needs reform (please select one of the reasons below or add yours)

i. To become more scientific
ii. To emphasize democratic values
iii. To become more religious
iv. To reduce emphasis on religion
v. To pay more attention to the value of tolerance
vi. For other purposes (please mention them):
……

b. No, it does not need reform.

Comments:

……
……
……
……

Part 2: Western demands for curriculum reform in the Middle East:

2-1. In Western initiatives such as the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and the Greater Middle East, education was brought up as one of the major areas needing reform. The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) includes a section about the need to reform education in the Middle East. The education 'pillar' in the initiative emphasizes the need for increasing access to and the quality of education. Reactions to the initiative have varied. This item in the survey asks for your opinion about the educational parts of this initiative and others.

Do you agree or disagree with the demands of Western initiatives to reform the curriculum in Middle Eastern countries? Please add your comments to your choice.

a) I agree for the following reasons:

……
……

b) I don't agree for the following reasons:

……
……

c) I have a different opinion:

……
……

2-2) Please circle the number that best represents your opinion on the purpose of curriculum reform demands:

I think the goal of curriculum reform demands is:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Secularization of education	1	2	3	4
2. Normalizing with Israel	1	2	3	4
3. More scientific and data driven curriculum	1	2	3	4
4. Spreading democratic values	1	2	3	4
5. Eradicating roots of terrorism	1	2	3	4
6. Undermining Islamic teachings	1	2	3	4
7. Bringing civilized values to the Middle East	1	2	3	4
8. Reducing extremism	1	2	3	4
9. To bring immoralities to the Muslim youth	1	2	3	4
10. To foster tolerance	1	2	3	4
11. Modernizing education	1	2	3	4

Please add your comments about the western demands for curriculum reform in the Middle East:

.....

.....

Part 3: Religion and the Society

3-1 Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Men of religion should not influence how people vote in elections	1	2	3	4
2. It would be better for my country if more people with strong religious beliefs held public office	1	2	3	4
3. Men of religion should have no influence over the decisions of government	1	2	3	4
4. Religious practice is a private matter and should be separated from socio-political life	1	2	3	4
5. The government and parliament should make laws according to the wishes of the people	1	2	3	4
6. The government should implement only the laws of the *Sharia*	1	2	3	4
7. The government and parliament should make laws according to the wishes of the people in some areas and implement *Sharia* in others	1	2	3	4
8. If a lottery was available in my country and I had the opportunity to participate, I would buy a ticket	1	2	3	4

3-2) When you consider what a suitable spouse is for your son, daughter, brother, or sister would you say that each of the following is very important, somewhat important, or not important?

Characteristics	Not important	A little Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
1. S/he doesn't pray				
2. S/he doesn't fast				
3. Social status of family				
4. Poverty				
5. Lack of education				
6. Unemployed				
7. Other (please specify) _____				

Which of these is the most important characteristic s/he must have?:

Finally: Information about yourself

Age: Gender: male female

Country of Origin:

Academic Degree:

Specialization:

Degree obtained from (country):

Languages Spoken:

Average Annual Income:

Have you ever lived in another country? * Yes * No	
Country	# of Years

How often do you read the Quran?	1. Everyday or almost everyday 2. Several times a week 3. Sometimes 4. Rarely 5. Never or almost never

Do you pray the five prayers?	1. Yes, always 2. Sometimes 3. No

In general, would you describe yourself as:	1. Religious 2. Somewhat religious 3. Not religious

Thank you very much for your participation

1

إستبيان حول اراء التربويين في إصلاح التعليم في الشرق الأوسط

أولاً : الوضع الحالي للمناهج التعليمية

1-1) الرجاء قراءة السؤال ثم الإشارة على الإجابة التي تناسب رأيك بوضع دائرة على الرقم المناسب:

1. ما رأيك بمناهج التعليم الحالية في بلدك؟				
في اعتقادي إن مناهج التعليم في بلدي:	**أوافق بشدة**	**أوافق**	**لا أوافق**	**لا أوافق بشدة**
تركز على المحتوى الديني أكثر مما ينبغي	4	3	2	1
علمانية أكثر مما ينبغي	4	3	2	1
تحتاج لإصلاح	4	3	2	1
تفتقر للمحتوى العلمي والحقائق المبنية على أبحاث	4	3	2	1
تحتاج المزيد من التركيز على القيم الديمقراطية	4	3	2	1
تحتوي على بذرات دعم التطرف	4	3	2	1
تبرز الجوانب المشرقة للدين الإسلامي	4	3	2	1
تشجع على التفكير الحر والإبداعي	4	3	2	1
تعود الطالب على الحفظ	4	3	2	1

الرجاء إضافة تعليق على الوضع الحالي لمناهج التعليم هنا:

.....

.....

2-1) هل تعتقد بأن هناك حاجة لإصلاح وتغيير المناهج التعليمية الحالية؟	**أ).. نعم, هناك حاجة** (لماذا؟ *الرجاء اختيار أحد الأسباب التالية أو إضافة أسباب أخرى*) - لتصبح علمية بشكل أكبر - لتؤكد على القيم الديمقراطية - لتصبح دينية أكثر - للتخفيف من التركيز على الدين - للتركيز على قيم التسامح - لأسباب أخرى (اذكرها): .... **ب).. لا, ليس هناك حاجة**

التعليق: .....

.....

ثانياً: المطالب الغربية بإصلاح التعليم في الشرق الأوسط:

2-1) في مبادرات غربية مثل المبادرة الامريكية "الشراكة الشرق أوسطية" (MEPI) والمبادرة التي أطلقتها مجموعة الدول الثمان "مشروع الشرق الأوسط الكبير" برزت مناهج التعليم كأحد أهم الجوانب التي تحتاج لإصلاح في الشرق الأوسط. وسخرت هذه المبادرات وغيرها دعماً مادياً لبرامج تحقق رؤية الإصلاح التربوي المنشود. هذه المبادرات وغيرها من المطالب بإصلاح التعليم في دول الشرق الأوسط قوبلت بردات فعل مختلفة ما بين مؤيد ومعارض, **فهل تتفق مع رؤية هذه المبادرات والمطالب للحاجة لإصلاح التعليم؟** ***(ارجو الكتابة خلف الورقة إن لزم الأمر)***

أ) نعم - للأسباب التالية: .....
.....

ب) لا - للأسباب التالية: .....
.....

ت) لي رأي مختلف: .....
.....

2-2) في اعتقادي الغرض من المبادرات ولمطالب الغربية لإصلاح المناهج هو:	أوافق بشدة	أوافق	لا أوافق	لا أوافق بشدة
جعل التعليم أكثر علمانية	4	3	2	1
تسهيل التطبيع مع إسرائيل	4	3	2	1
جعل المناهج أكثر علمية	4	3	2	1
نشر القيم الديمقراطية	4	3	2	1
استئصال جذور الإرهاب	4	3	2	1
تقويض التعاليم الإسلامية	4	3	2	1
جلب القيم الحضارية إلى الشرق الأوسط	4	3	2	1
التقليل من التطرف	4	3	2	1
جلب الإنحلال الأخلاقي للشباب المسلم	4	3	2	1
نشر ثقافة المرونة والتسامح	4	3	2	1
تطوير التعليم بحيث يواكب العصر	4	3	2	1

الرجاء إضافة تعليق هنا على المطالب الغربية لإصلاح التعليم في الشرق الأوسط:

.....

.....

ثالثاً: الدين والمجتمع

3- إلى أي مدى توافق على أو تعارض كل من العبارات التالية				
العبارة	أوافق بشدة	أوافق	لا أوافق	لا أوافق بشدة
يجب على رجال الدين (المشائخ والعلماء) عدم التأثير في كيفية تصويت الناخبين	4	3	2	1
من المهم أن يكون من يتولى المناصب العامة في الدولة من المتدينين	4	3	2	1
يجب ألا يكون لرجال الدين (المشائخ والعلماء) أي تأثير على قرارات الحكومة	4	3	2	1
الممارسات الدينية هي ممارسات خاصة يجب أن تبقى بعيدة عن الحياة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية	4	3	2	1
يجب على الحكومة والبرلمان سن القوانين حسب رغبات الناس	4	3	2	1
يجب على الحكومة والبرلمان سن القوانين حسب الشريعة الإسلامية	4	3	2	1
على الحكومة والبرلمان سن القوانين حسب رغبات المواطنين في بعض المواضيع وأن تطبق الشريعة في بعض المواضيع الأخرى	4	3	2	1
لو توفر الينصيب في بلدي فإني يمكن أن أشارك	4	3	2	1

4- إلى أي درجة تشكل كل من العوامل التالية عائقاً أمام موافقتك على زواج ابنك-بنتك-أختك- أخوك				
العوامل	تشكل عائقا إلى درجة كبيرة	تشكل عائقا الى درجة متوسطة	لا تشكل عائقا كبيراً	لا تشكل عائقا على الإطلاق
عدم الصلاة				
عدم الصوم				
المركز الإجتماعي للعائلة				
الفقر				
عدم التعليم				
عدم العمل				
أخرى (حدد): - -				
أي من العوامل أعلاه هو الأكثر أهمية؟				

4

ختاماً: معلومات عامة

العمر:

الجنس: ذكر أنثى

بلد الإقامة حالياً:

الجنسية الأصلية:

الدرجة الأكاديمية (ثانوية – دبلوم - بكالوريوس – ماجستير – دكتوراه):

التخصص:

البلد التي حصلت فيها على الدرجة الأكاديمية:

كم دخلك الشهري تقريباً:

اللغات التي تجيدها	
اللغة	مستوى الإجادة (ممتاز – جيد – متوسط – متدني)
العربية	

هل سبق لك العيش في بلد اخر؟	* نعم * لا
البلد	عدد السنين

هل تقوم بقراءة القران؟	1. نعم كل يوم تقريباً 2. بضع أيام في الأسبوع 3. أحياناً 4. نادراً 5. لا أقرأ القران
هل تصلي الفروض الخمسة؟	1. نعم 2. نعم لكن ليس دائماً 3. لا
بشكل عام هل تصف نفسك بأنك:	1. متدين 2. متدين قليلاً 3. غير متدين

شكراً جزيلاً على مشاركتك

APPENDIX C

APPROVAL TO USE AND MODIFY ITEMS FROM THE ARAB BAROMETER

YAHOO! MAIL Classic

RE: Religiosity questionnaire Thursday, July 26, 2007 4:06 PM
From: "Tessler, Mark" <tessler@umich.edu>
To: "Abdullah Sufian" <sufiani_a@yahoo.com>
Arab Barometer Survey (English).doc (579KB), joradnN.doc (678KB)

Hi. I am attaching copies of the survey instrument in English and Arabic. I think these are the final versions, but if not they are very close. You are welcome to use any items that you think would be relevant for your work. The items toward the end deal with Islam. This interview schedule was developed by our team, which includes members from five Arab countries. Good luck in your work.

Mark Tessler
Samuel J. Eldersveld Collegiate Professor
Department of Political Science
Director, International Institute
Vice Provost for International Affairs
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1106

From: Abdullah Sufian [mailto:sufiani_a@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wed 7/25/2007 11:31 PM
To: Tessler, Mark
Subject: Religiosity questionnaire

Dear Dr. Tessler,

I am a doctoral student in Education at Oklahoma State University and a former Fulbright scholar at the same University. I am starting my dissertation this Fall, which will be about the attitudes of Middle Eastern educators toward educational reform initiatives in the Middle East and the role of religiosity (personal piety vs. political islam) in their attitudes. Participants in the study will be university professors from four countries: Yemen, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Jordan. Participation will be through an online survey that I hope I can build and send by the end of the Fall.

I have read some of your studies that provided me with a scope of how to investigate the relationship between religiosity and attitudes toward educational reform. I understand that in at least two articles you used variations of questionnaires that matched with each country. But I was wondering **if you have a religiosity instrument (questionnaire) that I can use for this particular study.** If I can get such instrument and am given permission to use it, then I can add questions that measure their attitudes toward educational reform in general and reform initiatives launched by the US and Europe in particular.

I will appreciate your help and any feedback very much,

Abdullah Modhesh
Ph.D. Candidate
College of Education
Oklahoma State University
Tel: (405)744-8488

APPENDIX D

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE SECOND AUTHOUR OF THE ARAB BAROMETER

YAHOO! MAIL Classic

RE: May I call you to get advise? Wednesday, August 8, 2007 4:52 AM
From: "Amaney A Jamal" <ajamal@Princeton.EDU>
To: "Abdullah Sufian" <sufiani_a@yahoo.com>

Dear Abdullah,

Thanks for your message! I would be more than happy to talk. Can I call you Friday afternoon at around 5:00 pm my time (Et)?
Please let me know!
Amaney

Amaney Jamal
Assistant Professor
Dept of Politics
Princeton University
Princeton, NJ 08544
(609) 258-7340

From: Abdullah Sufian [mailto:sufiani_a@yahoo.com]
Sent: Mon 8/6/2007 4:21 PM
To: ajamal@Princeton.EDU
Subject: May I call you to get advise?

Dear Dr. Amaney Jamal,

My name is Abdullah Modhesh, a Yemeni student doing Ph.D. in education at Oklahoma State University. I am working on my proposal for dissertation in which I hope to study the attitudes of Middle Eastern educators (univ. professors) toward educational reform in the Middle East. The focus will be on the attitudes toward education reform initiatives launched by the US or Western countries and international organizations, linking their attitudes to some measures of religiosity and other factors. And here is where I think I need your help.

I have found the "Arab Barometer Survey" and think I might be able to use some parts of it to measure religiosity. But the picture is not clear in my mind and I don't see how I can use the survey. I was wondering if I can contact you to know how to select items to measure religiosity types and for any recommendations you have. I know how busy you must be, but if I can get about 10 minutes of your time during this week, that will be very helpful. **So, will it be ok for me to call you during this week?**

Thank you very much

Abdullah Modhesh
Ph.D. Candidate
College of Education
Oklahoma State University
Tel: (405)-744-8488

YAHOO! MAIL Classic

RE: Your Opinion on my Survey

From: "Amaney A. Jamal" <ajamal@Princeton.EDU> Sunday, June 8, 2008 6:41 PM

To: "Abdullah Sufian" <sufiani_a@yahoo.com>

Dear Abdullah,

Looks like a great survey!

Am curious to see the results--I just have four suggestions:
1) You need a question on income/or class standing.
2) You should ask them whether they think their education curriculum allows for independent/analytical thinking vs. rote learning/memorization (this comes up a lot).
3) Further, when dealing with the West (you might want to say improve the curriculum so that it is more modern. Give some responses that are not about political agendas and religion).
4) Finally, you want to also ask them of their evaluation of existing curricula, public vs.. private education, quality of teachers, etc etc? I would start out with the general questions first and then move down to the rest.
Hope this helps!
Amaney

Amaney Jamal
Dept of Politics
241 Corwin Hall
Princeton University
Princeton, NJ 08544
ajamal@princeton.edu
www.princeton.edu/~ajamal
(609) 258-7340 (office) 609-258-1110 (fax)

From: Abdullah Sufian [mailto:sufiani_a@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, June 04, 2008 12:29 AM
To: Amaney A Jamal
Subject: Your Opinion on my Survey

Dear Dr. Amaney Jamal,

I had called you last fall about my dissertation study entitled "the attitudes of Middle Eastern educators toward curriculum reform demands". I have designed a survey based on the literature and the religiosity part of your (& Tessler's) instrument "the Arab Barometer" to be used in Yemen.

The survey is at the piloting stage. It is in Arabic and I am assuming that you know Arabic. If so, I would really appreciate it if you have the time to look at it (attached) and give me your opinion on it as an instrument.

Thank you very much and looking forward to hearing from you,

Abdullah Sufian Modhesh
Ph.D. Candidate
College of Education

Appendix E

IRB approval

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date:	Thursday, June 19, 2008
IRB Application No	ED08104
Proposal Title:	Yemeni Educators' Perceptions of the Need for Educational Reform
Reviewed and Processed as:	Exempt

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved **Protocol Expires: 6/18/2009**

Principal Investigator(s):

Abdullah Modhesh
259 Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078

David Yellin
245 Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

☒ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Sheila Kennison, Chair
Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX F

APPROVALS TO DISTRIBUTE THE SURVEY

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Republic of Yemen
University of Aden
Faculty of Education - Saber

الجمهورية اليمنية
جامعة عدن
كلية التربية صبر

Ref. المرجع ١٢٤ / ١٢ / ١١

Date / / التاريخ ٢١ / ٦ / ٢٠٠٨م

إلى:عبدالله سفيان مدهش
259 ويلارد
ستلووتر, أوكلاهوما, 74078
جامعة ولاية أوكلاهوما
الولايات المتحدة الامريكية

الموضوع: بخصوص طلب الموافقة على توزيع الاستبيان

بالإشارة لطلبك المتعلق بتوزيع الاستبيان الموسوم "استبيان حول اراء التربويين في إصلاح التعليم في الشرق الأوسط" على أعضاء هيئة التدريس في كلية التربية, فإنه يسرني الموافقة على هذا الطلب. متمنياً لك التوفيق في بحثك.

أ.د/ صالح مفضل كليمد
نائب العميد للشؤون الأكاديمية

كلية التربية صبر – جامعة عدن – ص.ب. 7039 تلفون : 511584 - 511613
Faculty of Education - University of Aden - P. O. Box: 7039 Tel: 511584 - 511613

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Republic of Yemen
University of Aden
Faculty of Education - Saber

الجمهورية اليمنية
جامعة عدن
كلية التربية صبر

Ref. 134/131 | المرجع ١٣٤/١٣١

Date 6/21/08 التاريخ ٢١ / ٦ / ٢٠٠٨

To
Abdullah Modhesh
259 Willard
Stillwater, OK, 74078
Oklahoma State University

Subject: Approval to distribute survey

In reference to your letter seeking approval to distribute your survey to professors of education, I, the Vice Dean of the College of Education, hereby grant you approval.

Wishing you success with your study,

Vice Dean for Academic Affairs
College of Education
Aden University

كلية التربية / صبر

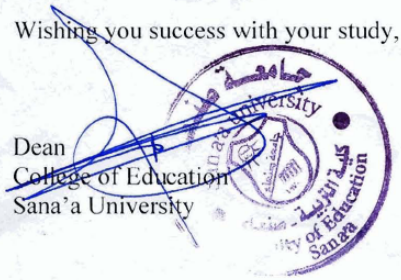
كلية التربية صبر - جامعة عدن - ص.ب. 7039 تلفون : 511584 - 511613
Faculty of Education - University of Aden - P. O. Box: 7039 Tel: 511584 - 511613

To
Abdullah A. Modhesh
259 Willard
Stillwater, OK, 74078
Oklahoma State University

RE: Your request for approval to collect data

In reference to your request to distribute your survey entitled "Survey of Educators' Attitudes toward Curriculum Reform in the Middle East" to professors of education, I, the Dean of the College of Education, hereby grant you approval.

Wishing you success with your study,



Dean
College of Education
Sana'a University

APPENDIX G

LETTERS TO THE ASSISTANTS

Dear .....

Thank you very much for agreeing to assist me in distributing and collecting the attached surveys in the College of Education at your university. Along with the surveys you are getting a pack of sealable envelopes. Please ask each participant to put the completed survey in an envelope and seal it before turning it back to you. Please confirm to the participant that you are not going to open the sealed envelope and it will be opened only by the researcher at Oklahoma State University.

Thanking you very much for your help

Abdullah Sufian Modhesh

Please read this to the participant:

Assalamu Alaikum,
Thank you for agreeing to participate in the survey study entitled "Attitudes of Middle Eastern Educators toward Educational Reform". The study is a part of a doctoral dissertation conducted by Abdullah Sufian Modhesh at Oklahoma State University in the United States of America. All information you will provide here will be used strictly for research purposes only. No identifiable information will be asked and all information you provide will be kept with the researcher until he finishes his degree, then will be destroyed.
Please put your completed survey in the sealable envelope and seal it. Once sealed, the envelope will only be opened by the researcher.

Thank you very much

الأخ:

شكراً جزيلاً لمساعدتكم في توزيع وجمع الاستبيان المرفق حول اراء التربويين في إصلاح مناهج التعليم في الشرق الأوسط. ستجدون برفقة الاستبيان مجموعة مظاريف قابلة للغلق. أرجو أن تطلبوا من المشاركين في الاستبيان وضعه بعد أخذه في الظرف وإغلاقه قبل إعادته إليكم. كما أرجو التأكيد للمشاركين على أن المظاريف المغلقة لن تفتح إلا من قبل الباحث في جامعة ولاية أوكلاهوما.

وتفضلوا بقبول خالص شكري وامتناني

عبدالله سفيان مدهش

أرجو قراءة هذه الفقرة للمشاركين:

السلام عليكم

شكراً لقبولكم بالمشاركة في هذا الاستبيان الموسوم "اتجاهات التربويين نحو إصلاح التعليم في الشرق الأوسط". هذه الدراسة هي جزء من رسالة دكتوراه للأخ "عبدالله سفيان مدهش" طالب الدكتوراه في جامعة ولاية أوكلاهوما بالولايات المتحدة الامريكية.

كل المعلومات التي توردونها في الاستبيان ستستخدم فقط لغرض البحث. ولن يطلب منكم أي بيانات شخصية. كما أن كل الاستبيانات سيتم الاحتفاظ بها في درج مغلق في مكتب الباحث حتى إنهاء رسالته وبعدها سيتم اتلافها تماماً.

الرجاء وضع الاستبيان بعد إكمال فقرات في الظرف المرفق وإغلاقه. هذا الظرف لن يفتحه أحد ما عدا الباحث.

شكراً لكم مرة ثانية

APPENDIX H

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Hello,

Mr. Abdullah A. Modhesh, a doctoral student at Oklahoma State University in the United States, is conducting a study for his dissertation research. The study looks at Yemeni educators' perceptions of the need for curriculum reform and their attitudes toward relevant Western initiatives.

Would you like to participate in this study? All you need to do is to fill out a short survey that will take approximately 20 – 30 minutes.

If you would like to participate, please take the survey along with an information sheet and a sealable envelope. Please read the information sheet before you start taking the survey. And please once you have completed the survey, put it back in the envelope and seal it.

Thank you very much

دعوة للمشاركة في دراسة

السلام عليكم,

الباحث عبدالله مدهش, طالب الدكتوراه في جامعة ولاية أوكلاهوما في الولايات المتحدة الامريكية, يجري بحثاً كجزء من رسالة الدكتوراة له في التربية. موضوع بحثه عن اراء التربويين اليمنيين في الحاجة لإصلاح مناهج التعليم واتجاهاتهم نحو المبادرات الغربية ذات الصلة.

هل ترغب/ ترغبين في المشاركة في الدراسة؟ للمشاركة ستقوم/ستقومين بالإجابة على أسئلة استبيان يستغرق حوالي 20 – 30 دقيقة. الرجاء أخذ الاستبيان ومعه ظرف قابل للغلق وكذا ورقة تحوي معلومات حول الدراسة. عند الانتهاء من الاستبيان الرجاء وضعه في الظرف وإحكام إغلاقه قبل إعادته. كما يرجى قراءة المعلومات حول الدراسة في البداية والاحتفاظ بها.

شكراً جزيلاً

APPENDIX I

A SAMPLE OF THE CODING FOR CONTENT ANALYSIS

Note: The Arabic is a typed form of the exact words as written by participants. The translation is done by the researcher.

2.1 هل تتفق مع المطالب والمبادرات الغربية لإصلاح التعليم في الشرق الأوسط؟
2.1 Do you agree with the reform demands and initiatives?

Sample 1: Agree with the reform initiatives:

أ) نعم للأسباب التالية:
ما دامت مناهجنا سلبية فليس عيباً أن نأخذ من المبدعين فالغرب أقوى وأفضل منا في هذا الجانب, وليس أدل على ذلك من هذا غير الواقع المعاش, ولأنه واقعاً لا يوجد بديل اخر ولو كان موجوداً لما كان حالنا هكذا.
الغرب أسمى مما ينسب إليه من أهداف ومرامي والحقيقة التي تبرزها المطالب الغربية هي حبهم للخير ونشره بحيث نواكب روح العصر وهذه مطالب انسانية لتجعلنا منافسين أقوياء في السباق المعرفي بعيداً عن التعصب الديني ويبقى الدين حرية شخصية لا اختلاف حوله وإنما الاختلاف حول العلم. والرسول (ص) أوضح صراحة بأن الدين يسمح بأفضلية ذوي الخبرة والعلم.

Translation:
Since our education is bad (word for word = our curriculum is negative), it is not a bad idea to borrow from the Western creativity because they are stronger and better than us in this domain. Nothing is more evident of this than the situation we are living. Because it is the reality, we have no other option. Had we had another option, we would not have been like this.
The West are better than what they (suspicious people) say. The truth that the Western demands reveals is that they love doing good and spreading it so we can cope with the contemporary advances in science and technology and become strong competitors without resorting to religious extremism. Religion remains a matter of personal freedom undisputed, the dispute is about science. The Prophet (PBUH) made it clear that religion does not prevent giving credit to those who are better in expertise and knowledge.

Phrases to be coded:
- Education need reform
- Trust in the West (The West is better)

Sample 2: Agree with the reform initiatives:

أ) نعم للأسباب التالية:
لأننا جزء من هذا العالم وقيمه الدينية والحضارية. علينا فهم قصد هذا المشروع دون الأخذ بالرأي المسبق بأن هذا المشروف يستهدف الأمة العربية والإسلامية أو التامر على الاسلام او التطبيع مع اسرائيل.
Yes: because we are part of this world and its religious and civilized values. We have to understand the intentions of these projects without falling to the preconceived notions that they are targeting the Arab and Muslim nations or conspiring against Islam or pushing to normalize with Israel.
Phrases to be coded:
- Trusting the West

Sample 3: Against the Initiatives

ب) لا للأسباب التالية:

لأن جميع هذه المبادرات تريد إعداد جيل خاضع وعميل لامريكا, يقبل بطروحاتها المتحيزة وجبروتها السافر

No because: All these initiatives want to prepare a generation of traitors to America or submissive, a generation that accepts American biased positions and tyrant hegemony.

Phrases to be coded:

- Suspicion about the intentions of the initiatives

Sample 4: Against the Initiatives

ب) لا للأسباب التالية:

لأن الأهداف ليست نقية كما تعلن

No because: the intentions are not as pure as they are announced.

Phrases to be coded:

- Suspicion of the intentions

Sample 5: Against the Initiatives

ب) لا للأسباب التالية:

لأن المبادرة للإصلاح يجب أن تأتي من الدخلي وتلبي حاجات وأهداف وطموحات المجتمع العربي وليست بالضرورة اهداف الدول الغربية. كل ما يتم هو بهدف ادخال دولنا ومجتمعاتنا دوامة العولمة وتغيير هويتنا الحضارية ونشر القيم الغربية الرأسمالية وليس بالضرورة اصلاح وتنمية مجتمعاتنا. وفي كل الأحوال فإن المطالب الغربية لإصلاح التعليم لدينا هي كلمة حق يراد بها باطل, مع أنني أقر أن كل (وليس التعليم وحده) جوانب الحياة لدينا تحتاج إلى إصلاح.

No because: initiatives for reform must come from inside and be responsive to the needs, goals and aspirations of the Arab societies not to those of the Western countries. All that is happening now aims at getting our countries to the maze of globalization, changing our cultural identity, spreading the Western capitalist values, not necessarily reforming or developing our societies. In any case, the Western demands for reforming our education is a “good word for bad cause” (Arabic Idiom), although I confirm that not only education, but all aspects of our life needs reform.

Phrases to be coded:

- Suspicion of the intentions of the West
- Reform must come from within
- Colonial purposes (hegemony)
- Western programs not compatible with our culture

Sample 6: Have a different Opinion

ت) لي رأي مختلف:

أن نجرب مناهجهم المتعلقة بحقيقة العلم (المواد العلمية) وتهيئة الأطفال (رياض الأطفال) ونبرز في الإسلام الجوانب المشرقة ونترك من المناهج أي إساءة لأية ديانة وكل ما كان فيه عنف وتوجد مدارس للعلم. ولا مانع من وجود مدارس دينية متخصصة بعيداً عن السياق العلمي.

I have a different Opinion: We can try their curriculum that is relevant to the scientific subjects and early childhood education, and we promote the positive aspects of Islam and

leave out from the curriculum any items that offend any other religion, any violence, and dedicate schools only for education. There could be religious schools but away from the mainstream educational system.
Phrases to be coded:

- We need to reform our education
- The West has strong systems.
- Only scientific and academic influence from the West

Sample 7: Have a different Opinion

ب) لي رأي مختلف:

أرى وجوب الإصلاح ولكن ليس من وجهة النظر الغربية وإنما استجابة لمصالح شعوب المنطقة في الحاضر والمستقبل. دعوة الغرب لإصلاح التعليم ليست شر مطلق ولا خير مطلق, ويمكننا الاستفادة من الجوانب الإيجابية ورفض السلبية منها.

I have a different opinion: I think reform is a must but not from a Western point of view. It needs to respond to the interests of the people in the region, current and future interests. The Western calls for education reform are not utterly evil or utterly good. We can benefit from the positive aspects and reject the negative ones.
Phrases to be coded:

- Reform is needed but according to our needs not Western agenda
- We can use reform initiatives.

Sample 8: Have a different Opinion

ب) لي رأي مختلف:

أرى أن يقوم أصحاب المبادرات الغربية بالاستفادة من المختصين الغربيين الذين يفهمون الخلفيات الحضارية للعرب والمسلمين وفتح حوار مع علماء الشرق الأوسط للوصول إلى مبادرات تطويرية يجمع عليها الجميع وهذا يسهل تنفيذها.

I have a different opinion: I think those who launch the Western initiatives need to benefit from the Western specialists who understand the cultural background of Arabs and Muslims and open dialogues with the Middle Eastern scholars and Clerics in order to formulate developmental initiatives that are receive consensus in the region and will be easy to implement.
Phrases to be coded:

- Cultural sensitivity
- We can work together

Sample 9: Have a different Opinion

ب) لي رأي مختلف:

إن كان التطوير يتم في مجالات المقررات العلمية فلا بأس في ذلك أما إذا كان الغرض منه تعديل هويتنا الثقافية والدينية بما يتناسب مع مصالحهم واتجاهاتهم فلا وألف لا. الأهداف هي احتلال المنطقة وتخريب العقيدة وتهميش الشخصية العربية والإسلامية.

I have a different opinion: If the reforms are to be in the scientific domains, it will be ok. But if their purposes are to change our cultural and religious identities in order to fit them with their interests and ideologies, then no and a thousand no (*phrase used for emphasis*). The goals are to colonize the region, to spoil the faith, and to marginalize the Arab and Muslim character.
Phrases to be coded:

- Suspicion of the intentions
- We can work together on science
- Colonization
- Targeting the religion

APPENDIX J

PERSONAL RELIGIOSITY INDEX GUIDE

Following is a list of the items used to compute a religious index score for each participant.

A) From Part III in the survey

Basing important life decisions on religious teachings (From Part III of the survey).

3-2) When you consider what a suitable spouse is for your son, daughter, brother, or sister would you say that each of the following is very important, somewhat important, or not important?

Characteristics	Not important	Very Important	Somewhat Important	A little Important
1. S/he doesn't pray	1	2	3	4
2. S/he doesn't fast	1	2	3	4

B) From Part IV in the survey:

Item in the survey	Response	Score on personal religiosity index
2. Reading the Quran:		
How often do you read the Quran?	6. Everyday or almost everyday 7. Several times a week 8. Sometimes 9. Rarely 10. Never or almost never	5 4 3 2 1
3. Performing the daily prayers:		
Do you pray the five prayers?	4. Yes, always 5. Sometimes 6. No	3 2 1
4. Considering self as religious:		
In general, would you describe yourself as:	4. Religious 5. Somewhat religious 6. Not religious	3 2 1

Score of personal religiosity = the sum of scores on each of the five items.

APPENDIX K

POLITICAL RELIGIOSITY (SUPPORT FOR POLITICAL ISLAM) INDEX GUIDE

Support for political Islam was measured by a composite score from the following statements in Part III in the survey:

Support for political Islam				
Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Men of religion should not influence how people vote in elections	4	3	2	1
2. It would be better for my country if more people with strong religious beliefs held public office	1	2	3	4
3. Men of religion should have no influence over the decisions of government	4	3	2	1
4. Religious practice is a private matter and should be separated from socio-political life	4	3	2	1
5. The government and parliament should make laws according to the wishes of the people	4	3	2	1
6. The government should implement only the laws of the *Shari'a*	1	2	3	4

The original scores in items 1, 3, 4, 5 were reversed using SPSS because the higher scores had to reflect stronger support for political religiosity. The table above shows the actual scores used for computing the index (after reversing).

Political Religiosity score = the sum of scores on each of the items above

VITA

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Doctor of Philosophy of Education

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Scope and Method of Study: This descriptive exploratory study utilized survey research for collecting data pertinent to the views of Yemeni educators about the need for curriculum reform and their attitudes toward Western reform initiatives. Relationship between these views and attitudes and demographic and religiosity orientation factors were explored using correlation and manifest and latent content analyses.

Findings and Conclusions: The study showed that a vast majority of the Yemeni educators (95%) acknowledged the need for educational reform for one reason or another. They perceived a need for promoting democratic values in the curriculum and teaching about tolerance. However, suspicion of the intentions of the West prevented educators from embracing the Western reform initiatives. Age, academic degree, and the number of years correlated negatively with rejecting the Western reform initiatives. Suspicion of the West was higher among younger educators with lower degrees and among the ones who have not lived abroad. Personal religiosity (praying, fasting, reading the Quran) was not a significant factor in understanding who accepts or rejects Western reform initiatives, but support for political religiosity was. The main reasons for suspecting the Western initiatives' intentions were: the Western support for Israel, the history of colonialism, and fear of losing culture and values. It is recommended that reform partners support existing local efforts and understand the sources of suspicion and address them. A more balanced US policy in the region would help. It is also recommended to involve local likely partners in the reform efforts and to encourage further education abroad.

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