

A Multilingual App for Studying Children's Developing Values: Developing a New Arabic Translation of the Picture-based Values Survey and Comparison of Palestinian and Jewish Children in Israel

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Abstract : Over 250 million people globally speak Arabic, one of the most widespread languages in the world, as their first language. Yet only a minuscule fraction of developmental research studies Middle East children. As values are a core component of culture, understanding how values develop is key to understanding development across cultures. Indeed, with the advent of research on value development, significantly since the introduction of the Picture-Based Value Survey for Children, interest in cross-cultural differences in children's values is increasing. As no measure exists for Arab children, PBVS-C in Arabic developed. The online application version of the PBVS-C that can be administered on a computer, tablet, or even a smartphone to measure the 10 values whose presence has been repeatedly demonstrated across the world. The application has been developed simultaneously in Hebrew and Arabic and can easily be adapted to include additional languages. In this research, the development of the multilingual PBVS-C application version adapted for five-year-olds. The translation process discussed (including important decisions such as which dialect of Arabic, a diglossic language, is most suitable), adaptations to subgroups (e.g., Muslim, Druze and Christian Arab children), and using recorded instructions and value item captions, as well as touchscreens to enhance applicability with young children. Four hundred Palestinian and Israeli 5-12 year old children reported their values using the app (50% in Arabic, 50% in Hebrew). Confirmatory Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) analyses revealed structural patterns that closely correspond to Schwartz's theoretical structure in both languages (e.g., universalism values correlated positively with benevolence and negatively with power, whereas tradition correlated negatively with hedonism and positively with conformity). Replicating past findings, power values showed lower importance than benevolence values in both cultural groups, and there were gender differences in which girls were higher in self-transcendence values and lower in self-enhancement values than boys. Cultural value importance differences were explored and revealed that Palestinian children are significantly higher in tradition and achievement values compared to Israeli children, whereas Israeli children are significantly higher in benevolence, hedonism, self-direction, and stimulation values. Age differences in value coherence across the two groups were also studied. Exploring the cultural differences opens a window to understanding the basic motivations driving populations that were hardly studied before. This study will contribute to the developmental value research since it considers the role of critical variables such as culture and religion and tests value coherence across middle childhood. Findings will be discussed, and the potential and limitations of the computerized PBVS-C concerning future values research.

Keywords : Arab-children, culture, multilingual-application, value-development

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