In Support of Primary Schooling in Developing Countries:
A New Look at Traditional Indigenous Schools

by
Daniel A. Wagner
(Consultant)

Education and Employment Division
Population and Human Resources Department

September 1989

This publication series serves as an outlet for background products from the ongoing work program of policy research and analysis of the Education and Employment Division in the Population and Human Resources Department of the World Bank. The views expressed are those of the author(s), and should not be attributed to the World Bank.
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative schools, alternative to what?</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous forms of education</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic schooling in the contemporary world</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and instruction in indigenous schools</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy issues and options</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footnotes</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tables</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In support of primary schooling in developing countries:
A new look at traditional indigenous schools

Abstract

The present paper provides an overview of educational systems -- termed indigenous schools -- which are primarily descendants of religious schools predating European colonialism. The Islamic school, one such indigenous school system, is described in terms of its social and instructional consequences for children and society in certain parts of the developing world. Since increased access to primary schooling and the learning of basic literacy skills are important educational policy goals, it is argued that such alternative forms of schooling may be useful in support of government primary school institutions.
In support of primary schooling in developing countries:
A new look at traditional indigenous schools

Introduction

The continuing world economic crisis has led most developing countries to reassess their varied educational programs. Some specialists have focused their attention on the relationship between education and functional literacy as primary forces behind labor productivity and economic development (Blaug, 1985; Simmons, 1979), while others have sought to understand the internal efficiency of the entire educational system (Windham, 1986). Still others have argued that alternative educational programs -- beyond those of the formal public sector -- are the best way to reach those most in need of additional training and are the most cost-effective (Belloncle, 1984; Coombs, Prosser, & Ahmed, 1973). These "nonformal" educational programs have achieved a certain amount of credibility in developing countries and have been supported by international organizations such as Unesco, as well as by various development agencies.

Within the sphere of options for educational development, the present paper develops three basic themes: (1) alternative and indigenous forms of schooling are potentially important national resources in many Third World countries, but have generally been ignored by development planners; (2) literacy instruction has often been a central feature, and literacy acquisition a frequent product, of such alternative school systems; and (3) within a contemporary economic climate of budget constraints, indigenous schools constitute a potentially cost effective way of reaching more students and teaching basic skills.

Alternative schools, alternative to what?

Any discussion of "alternative schools" necessitates some reference to a central system of primary schooling. Virtually all countries of the world have government primary schools; and, these have continued to expand over the last half-century, such that enrollment of primary school-aged population now
averages more that 95% in industrialized countries and roughly 50-80% in most developing countries (World Bank, 1988). In spite of the impressive gains in access to education -- primary, secondary and tertiary -- of the twentieth century, many countries have encountered major difficulties in trying to universalize primary schooling, retain children in school, and provide basic skills such as literacy and numeracy. Access to primary schooling and the provision of basic skills have often been held to be the dual goals of educational policy planners in developing countries (World Bank, 1987), but the achievement of these goals has proved to be more elusive than originally thought. While considerable attention has been focused on how to improve government-operated primary schools through studies of efficiency (Lockheed & Hanushek, 1987; Windham, 1986), relatively little attention has been given to alternative forms of schooling as potential contributors to educational policy.

How might we conceptualize such alternative forms of schooling? In New paths to learning (1973), Coombs and his colleagues outlined an agenda for "nonformal education," suggesting that such schooling can fulfill three educational roles: (1) prepare children for primary schooling through preschools; (2) complement formal schooling through extracurricular learning experiences; and (3) provide "continuing" education for youths and adults who received little or no schooling in the past (Coombs, et al., 1973, p. 25). Coombs and others have devoted most of their efforts to creating programs that build on the latter two roles, through the creation of nonformal programs built upon networks outside of the formal school system, but often taking advantage of its infrastructure (e.g., teachers, classrooms, and so forth). Relatively little attention has been devoted toward issues of preschooling as a way to enhance school preparation (though see, Halpern & Myers, 1985). Furthermore, the large majority of nonformal educational programs have dealt with older adolescents and adults, with little attempt to provide alternatives to primary schooling. Yet there exist alternative forms of schooling which have been maintained outside of standard government primary school institutions, and it is to these that we now turn.
Indigenous forms of education

In the history of Third World education, the introduction of government primary schools by colonial powers has sometimes occurred in an educational vacuum. In other cases, however, newly established government schools competed with, displaced or even destroyed the pre-colonial systems of schooling. For the present paper, we will term use the term "indigenous" to refer to these pre-colonial systems of education. Indigenous education may be defined as any formalized (that is, culturally codified, recognized, and/or authorized) system of instruction that is not a direct descendant of modern European public schooling. During the colonial period of the seventeenth to twentieth centuries, European education was exported to many Third World nations, where it came into contact and occasional conflict with pre-existing indigenous educational systems. These surviving indigenous systems generally have been overlooked in the rush to modernize and Westernize education in the developing world.

Pre-Renaissance European schooling generally took the form of religious instruction which made extensive use of traditional pedagogical methods. In Christian as well as Jewish schools, the focus was on memorizing sacred texts during lengthy periods of study with a single teacher. The early years of study emphasized rote learning, while later years included in-depth understanding of texts through the student's apprenticeship to a given master. Students were not age-graded as in modern primary school classrooms but, rather, learned a set of required texts through a tutorial process in which the teacher provided tasks as a function of each student's abilities and accomplishments (Wagner, 1985; Wagner & Lotfi, 1980). Such traditional methods are remarkably similar to those discussed in recent research efforts in the study of children's learning through cross-age tutoring (Greenfield & Lave, 1982; Vygotsky, 1978; Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1974). In addition, traditional schooling provided "cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1973; Eickelman, 1978) or "credentialling" in terms of a body of knowledge important for the child's successful functioning in the society as well as for future social status. In this latter respect, traditional and modern forms of schooling share much in common.
While European traditional education has declined dramatically over the centuries, indigenous education and traditional pedagogy can still be found in many parts of the Third World. Buddhist traditional pedagogy has been maintained in numerous Asian countries (see Gurugé, 1985 on Sri Lanka; Tambiah, 1968, on Thailand; or Yoo, 1958, on Korea). African bush schools, such as those described by Gay (1973) in Liberia, involved the memorization of oral rather than written texts and resulted in similar acquisition of cultural capital; the skills of literacy and numeracy taught in indigenous religious schools were not, however, a part of the bush school tradition.

As noted above, there are numerous types of religious indigenous schools, and considerable similarities amongst them. Indeed, it is probably not by chance that the great religious traditions also made use of literacy as a way of maintaining continuity across generations, and in order to go beyond the limits of human memory. With its geographical and cultural diversity, the most widespread contemporary example of indigenous education and traditional pedagogy in the world is almost certainly that of Islamic education.

Islamic schooling in the contemporary world

Islamic, or Quranic, schools are among the least-studied educational institutions in today's world, even though millions of children in dozens of countries attend such schools for either part or all of their formal education. In a comparative study of Islamic schooling in Indonesia, North Yemen, Senegal, Morocco, and Egypt, substantial diversity was found in these schools, both across and within societies (Wagner & Lotfi, 1982, 1983); Table 1 provides a schematic overview of Islamic schooling in each of the five countries compared. In spite of an emphasis on the study of Quranic texts, which provides a similar focus for Islamic schooling across the world, Quranic schools have adapted to a variety of cultural constraints within each society, leading to important differences in Quranic schooling in different countries. For example, Islamic schooling in Indonesia (which, with over 100 million Muslims, is the world's most populous Islamic society, and sends over 20 million children to Islamic schools each year) was superceded an earlier Buddhist system, yet still maintains some of its features, including a long-term apprenticeship and the attribution of mystical powers to the religious teacher (Jones, 1983). By
contrast, most children in North Yemen go through only three to five years of Quranic schooling, and the Quranic teacher, beyond instructing children, often serves as a legal arbiter in his village because he is the single literate person who can read documents to adjudicate legal disputes (Messick, 1983).

Also important is the fact that Quranic schools can vary dramatically within societies, primarily as a function of the last several decades of modernization. In Morocco, where almost 80 percent of all children now attend Quranic schools for some period of time, the traditional schools for older children are disappearing, while the "modernized" Quranic preschools, which sometimes employ teachers with public high school diplomas, are attracting more young children than ever before. One important reason for this increase in attendance is the participation of girls, who were once excluded from such schools. In Senegal, where girls have often attended Quranic schools (in contrast to Yemen), modernization has led to significant changes in pedagogy and curriculum. Rather than emphasizing rote learning of Arabic texts, which are not understood by children who speak only Senegalese languages, many Quranic school teachers are now trying to teach spoken and written Arabic as a second language. Changes such as those found in Morocco and Senegal are taking place in many parts of the Islamic world, as people adapt to changing societal pressures. These changes have also placed Quranic schooling in more direct competition with the government secular school systems in some Muslim societies (e.g., Senegal and Indonesia), since the modernized Quranic schools now provide a culturally and religiously valued alternative to modern schooling (For a sampling of studies of Quranic schooling, see Brown & Hiskett, 1975; Eisemon, 1987; Erny, 1972; Genest & Santerre, 1974; Kuku-Gimbil, 1983; Lecourtois, 1978; Wagner, 1985).

Contemporary Islamic education provides perhaps the most important example of indigenous education in today's world. The Islamic school system, which remained relatively static over many centuries, has now begun to undergo significant changes, which vary from society to society. The point to be emphasized here is that Islamic schools, like other indigenous schools, continue to attract very large numbers of children, many of whom never attend governmental secular schools. Such indigenous schools may be seen as an important educational resource. This is so, at least in part, because the
"reach" of indigenous schooling penetrates more effectively than many government systems into the poorest, most traditional, and least accessible regions of the countries concerned. Indeed, it is precisely due to the difficulty of gaining access to these same populations which has protected the indigenous schools from serious competition by the state.

However, access to indigenous schooling would not be considered to be of much utility if one could assume that such schools provided little relevant instruction of skills thought to be important for national development. As it happens, many indigenous schools provide, as a by-product of religious training, language, cognitive, and social skills very similar to those which are taught in the contemporary secular school system.

Learning and instruction in indigenous schools

The achievement of literacy has been one area of curricular agreement among contemporary educational systems. Often defined simply as the individual's possession of and control of the skills of reading and writing, literacy nevertheless has been studied by specialists who consider its acquisition to be both an individual and social phenomenon. More recently, literacy has been increasingly studied in its historical and social contexts (Clanchy, 1979; Goody, 1968; Oxenham, 1980). In addition, literacy has been suggested as a factor crucial to promoting economic development (Anderson & Bowman, 1966; Harman, 1974; Lerner, 1958). As a consequence, national and international organizations (in particular Unesco) typically calculate the percentage of "literate persons" in each country from the number of adults (15 years and older) who have attended at least four (or more, depending on national census materials) years of elementary school (see Wagner, in press, for a review of literacy surveys in developing countries). In some cases, this figure is a clear overestimation of national literacy levels, since schooling may be poor, attendance low, or skill retention minimal (see Noesjirwan, 1974; Simmons, 1976). In other cases, literacy may be underestimated, since those who calculate national literacy rates often fail to consider that literacy is acquired in indigenous schools. For example, the actual adult literacy rate in Senegal would be considerably higher if Arabic as well as French literacy were included in census data on literacy (Wagner & Lotfi, 1983).
The first major collection of work on literacy acquisition in indigenous schools was Goody's (1968) *Literacy in traditional societies*, which included a significant section on Islamic school literacy. Literacy instruction has been shown to be an important product of Quranic schooling, but literacy and other aspects of instruction are known to vary substantially across teachers, schools, and societies (Ferguson, 1971; Jurmo, 1980; O'Halloran, 1979; Scribner & Cole, 1981; Spratt & Wagner, 1986; Wagner & Lotfi, 1982). Disregarding, for the moment, the recent changes noted in the previous discussion, instruction in traditional Quranic schooling has typically included a number of common features of literacy instruction: oral memorization of the Quran; emphasis on correct (that is, accurate and aesthetic) oral recitation; training in the Arabic script; and strict authoritarian instruction. In contrast to the primers used in virtually all modern secular schools, literacy instruction with the Quran as text provided no opportunity for age-graded vocabulary or grammatical structures. In addition, the illustrations that most primers use to facilitate reading are strictly prohibited for religious reasons in Islamic schools. Thus, it is hardly surprising that learning to read by using the Quran as a primer (as in learning with the Bible) was and is not a trivial task for many children.

Nonetheless, both the most traditional and somewhat modernized contemporary Quranic schools also share a number of common basic features with modern secular schools. In spite of numerous regional differences, Quranic schools can be said to teach children how to: learn in a structured setting; (2) respect the teacher; (3) use language and recite in unison; (4) encode and decode an alphabet; (5) be a moral person and a good citizen; and (6), more recently, do basic arithmetic. Each of these features, and there are others as well, can be found in a great many secular preschool and primary school settings in developing countries. Furthermore, the sacred quality of the text and the strong motivation of children and parents towards Quranic learning may provide an additional stimulus for learning that many secular school systems cannot match.

Although we know that literacy acquisition and other forms of learning take place in Islamic schools, reliable statistics are generally unavailable on the actual degree of cognitive achievement among children in most societies
where indigenous schools still function. One exception is a five-year longitudinal study carried out in Morocco. This project sought to explore the consequences of attendance in Quranic preschools for learning and subsequent public school achievement. One notable finding was that Quranic preschooling was a significant factor in promoting children's literacy during the early grades of public primary school (when compared with children with no preschooling); the influence was most apparent in the rural environment and for children whose native language was Berber (Ezzaki, Spratt & Wagner, 1987; Wagner & Spratt, 1987). Also of interest was the fact that the effects of Quranic preschooling were statistically equivalent to those of modern European preschools in the same Moroccan communities, a fact not entirely surprising since the "modern" preschools shared a number of common features with the Quranic preschools (e.g., chanting, memorization, recitation and so forth).

This single example of the positive cognitive effects of Quranic schooling does not, of course, provide general support for the notion that Quranic schooling for older children and/or for children in different language and cultural contexts will have similar effects. Yet there are a number of compelling reasons why such indigenous schooling might have positive effects elsewhere, if proper studies were carried out, and, especially, if Quranic schools were provided with the kind of financial support that would enable them to optimize what they are partially capable of doing already. As noted above, there is every reason to believe that the instruction already provided -- and that which could be provided under conditions of increased support -- can transfer to the secular classroom. Evidence from educational psychology supports strongly the notion that background information, basic learning and language skills, and social skills in the classroom are the building blocks upon which much of subsequent school learning is based. If these skills are obtained prior to or along with secular school learning, there should be substantial transfer even if some of the content (e.g., the nature of the text studied, the Quran) is different from the classroom texts. It is important to bear in mind the proper context for comparison. If, for geographical or cultural reasons, children only have access to Quranic schools, we must look carefully at whether this experience can have beneficial consequences for modern public schooling.
Of course, another important question is the relationship between levels of literacy and other skills learned, and the uses to which the skills are or may be put. This argument was promulgated by UNESCO's Experimental World Literacy Program (1976), in which the term functional literacy was suggested as a way of defining national and international goals of literacy promotion. The term was never adequately defined, however (for a critique, see Anzalone, 1981; Venezky, Wagner & Ciliberti, in press), and the culturally and historically valued functions and uses of literacy are only now being adequately explored (Heath, 1980; Reder & Green, 1983). In many Third World nations, a relatively small percentage of the population plays an active role in the modern industrial sector of society. In the modern sector, literacy is primarily defined by the standard uses of reading for information acquisition and of writing for information transmission. In traditional settings, by contrast, literacy may not only be defined, as anthropologists have described, through its utility for social and religious powerbrokers, traditional medicine and amulets, and simple commercial accounting, but also by considering its transferability to modern sector activities.

In this respect, two key questions must be asked. First, can "religious literacy" -- that literacy learned in religious institutions on one or more religious texts (e.g., the Quran) -- be transferred in a meaningful way to secular societal tasks? There is some evidence that it can be in the Christian (Reder & Green, 1983), Jewish (Roskies, 1978), and Islamic (Jones, 1983; Messick, 1983; Wagner et al., 1986) traditions, although more evidence surely needs to be gathered. In perhaps the best documented study of its kind, Islamic literates in pre-revolutionary Iran were found to be at a considerable advantage in newly developing trade between rural and urban communities in Iran. As the only literates in the community, these religiously trained tradesman (tajer-s) became a select and wealthy group of merchants able to mediate transactions between the traditional rural communities and the modern urban sector (Street, 1984).

With respect to Islamic schooling in particular, a second relevant question concerns the use of Arabic literacy in Muslim societies where Arabic is not widely spoken or considered to be a national language. Literacy acquisition in Arabic is certainly more difficult for non-native speakers (for
a review, see Dutcher, 1982; for a contrasting case study in Morocco, see Wagner, Spratt & Ezzaki, 1989), and yet there remains considerable skepticism about the possibility of teaching literacy skills in each child's vernacular tongue on a large-scale basis (Heyneman, 1980). In contrast to the typical case of imposing a European language on a multilingual traditional society, Arabic literacy has the advantage of being already firmly embedded in the cultural fabric of societies with significant Muslim populations, such as in the cases of West African countries. For a summary of the relationship between language and literacy use in countries with significant numbers of Quranic schools, see Table 2.

Of course, the choice of the national language of literacy and of public school instruction remains a political one, and one that often embodies considerable cultural and individual sensitivities. It is beyond the scope of this paper to consider issues of language policies and planning, though this topic is clearly one which is related to that of indigenous education and indigenous literacy. This is so precisely because indigenous schools are, with few exceptions (such as North Yemen), at odds with, or at least in friendly competition with, public educational institutions. In the case of Senegal, for example, the accepted national languages for schooling are French and African languages (e.g., Wolof). Arabic, the written language of many Senegalese who learned to read and write in Islamic schools, has not been politically acceptable to present and prior governments and, therefore, has not been accepted in schools or by the government as a language or literacy resource. While there appears to be some increased appreciation of Islamic schooling within the current Senegalese government, to render Arabic literacy an effective resource in Senegalese society would require a political decision of considerable importance.

While such questions cause difficulties in policy planning for literacy, it must be reiterated that, for a large number of children in numerous countries, literacy skills are acquired in indigenous schools before, simultaneously with, or in lieu of instruction in government-run schools. In addition, in many societies the functions of literacy cannot be uniquely defined by development planners, since many indigenous literacies have histories that go back several centuries and are likely to continue well into the future.
Rather than viewing indigenous education and indigenous literacies as impediments to development policies, national planners would do well to consider such literacies as resources. The reality is that, for a real and substantial portion of the world's children, literacy skills are acquired in indigenous schools. And, if literacy is thought to be a central development goal, then the question ought not be "Should indigenous literacy count?," but rather, "How can we reinforce useful learning contexts already in place, and build them into a long-term plan for human resource development?" While sensitive political questions often arise with respect to indigenous and religious schooling, it is important not to ignore the potential benefits for learning that might accrue to a policy of comprehensive educational inclusion.

Policy issues and options

What may we conclude in the way of policy options from this brief overview of alternative schooling systems? Let us consider several important policy questions, while at the same time acknowledging the fact that empirical results in support of the responses remain insufficient for strong and broad claims.

1. Are indigenous schools a relic of the past, unable or unwilling to be bent to the purpose of national and economic development? The available evidence suggests that Islamic schools, as the primary contemporary example of indigenous schooling, have made major changes in across various countries where they remain active, such as in the nature of instruction, style of teaching, and in the teacher corps itself (Wagner & Lotfi, 1982). In general, these changes have been made in response to social and economic demands, and thus may be thought of as supporting the overall process of development, though at the same time supporting the needs of the various Islamic communities where the schools are situated. For example, in Morocco the Islamic schools no longer compete with government primary schooling, but actually assist in the preparation for such public schooling through an adapted preschool program. In Indonesia, the Islamic school system has developed along the same lines as the Catholic schools in the United States or France -- as a viable alternative to government schooling, providing services at low government cost to a large number of students within the Islamic community from preschool through university. In these and other
cases, Islamic schools may be seen as "progressive" elements for change, rather than the traditional image with which indigenous schools are sometimes regarded in policy circles.  

2. To what extent can indigenous schooling serve, in its current form, as a viable alternative to or support for improving primary school access, achievement and retention? In terms of children's learning, the limited evidence available suggests that where such schools take the form of preschooling or after-school (parallel) classes, there is every reason to believe that this additional education will be of substantial value to children who do not or cannot attend secular government primary schools, and would also be of value to children who may already attend some form of government primary schooling. Conversely, there is no empirical evidence to suggest that indigenous school learning has a negative effect on secular school learning.

3. Is such schooling cost-effective? The fiscal base of indigenous schooling varies as a function of the type of school and local cultural context. With respect to Islamic schools, as noted earlier, teachers and classrooms are often supported by a combination of donations from individual parents and from the Muslim community. Since most Quranic school teachers are expected to contribute their time and energies, they typically live what can only be called a "survival" living wage in most countries, and often have to supplement their income with work in other occupations (such as tailoring). While exact figures are unavailable, there can be little question that indigenous schools cost a small fraction of what a government school would cost for an equivalent number of hours of teaching on a per pupil basis.

4. What kinds of future investments would be likely to influence the utility of indigenous schools in support of primary education? Although the utility of indigenous schools in their present form can be debated, few would doubt that substantial improvements could be made in these schools if an appropriate and sensitive investment strategy was established. In the few cases where modest interventions have occurred, there have been major improvements in both quality of instruction and learning. In Morocco, Unicef established a very modest training program and a set of manuals for Quranic school teachers. Even though teachers only attended a few days of training each year, observers found that there was a significant increase in the teaching of secular pre-primary
school topics in the Quranic schools of participating teachers. In Egypt, IDRC helped to support a program of one-classroom multi-grade schools based on the earlier network of Quranic schools. While not ostensibly a Quranic school program, this intervention took advantage of the indigenous school system to organize a network of additional rural schools. Finally, in Pakistan, Quranic schools for girls and young women have been substantially improved with apparent positive consequences (Teachers' Resource Centre, 1989).

These efforts represent a very small initiative in the support of indigenous schooling. In a country like Morocco, a great deal more could be done which could enhance the effectiveness of primary schooling through support of the Quranic schools. Since the majority of Moroccan children attend such traditional schools, improving access to government primary schools could be facilitated directly by coordinating the enrollments of both school systems. Furthermore, no effort is now made to coordinate what is learned in the Quranic preschools with what must be learned in the early years of primary school. Also, since Quranic school teachers are paid so little, many of the better ones are now drifting into other occupations; if this trend continues, the quality of Quranic schools will be reduced substantially, even though enrollment is likely to continue to rise.

Senegal would make another interesting example. Many Quranic schools are "after-school" programs for primary school children. Again, there is little or no coordination with the primary schools or their teachers as to what is taught in each type of school. Without some coordination from the outside, such dual systems are more likely to be competitive than cooperative. Modest investments in the Quranic schools with some additional incentives for the government school teachers to facilitate coordination could have a major impact on school efficiency in certain regions of Senegal.

Conclusion

The above examples are possible avenues for investment, but they represent only beginning brushstrokes on a tableau that is almost as vast as the Third World itself. Indigenous schooling and indigenous forms of learning are the norm rather than the exception in many of the poorest nations of the
world. On a question that has received so little attention, it should not be surprising that little reliable information on indigenous schools is available. When we consider the practical ways to support primary schooling in developing countries, we would be remiss if we failed to consider the network of indigenous schools which provide the only other formal system of instruction in most developing countries. These schools already offer a great deal to children when seen in local cultural terms, and even in such development terms as literacy and language learning. When seen additionally in terms of their potential to support primary schooling, it would seem that the time has come to consider avenues to build upon these indigenous institutions which have stood the test of centuries of time.

Finally, within any discussion of possible interventions in traditional culture, it is incumbent upon us to be better informed about existing cultural contexts and cultural sensitivities. Cultural and, in particular, religious traditions have a long history of resisting attempts at cooptation and abuse by outsiders. Implementation of any of the ideas presented here would require a significant effort to establish rapport and mutual respect between planners and those individuals responsible for the integrity and maintenance of traditional practices.
Footnotes

1. Other "informal" types of education would include apprenticeships of all kinds, as well as forms of socialization which necessarily involve the transmission of culturally valued information. See Greenfield and Lave (1982) for a discussion of informal learning of this kind.

2. Of course, there are probably numerous contemporary cases where indigenous schools, such as Islamic schools, are perceived as being far from "progressive." However, one must use such terms with care, since one's own perspective obviously colors what is or is not considered "progressive." My own research has led me to believe that the Islamic schools and their teachers are, in general, open to new ideas, as long as the fundamental commitments to religious tradition are not called into question.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>Senegal</th>
<th>Morocco</th>
<th>Egypt</th>
<th>N. Yemen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Population</td>
<td>140 milLion</td>
<td>6 million</td>
<td>20 million</td>
<td>45 million</td>
<td>6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Muslims as % of pop.</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Govt. type</td>
<td>secular</td>
<td>secular</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Languages:</td>
<td>Bahasa Indo, Javanese, Wolof, etc.</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Colon. history</td>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>French/ Spanish</td>
<td>British/ Ottoman</td>
<td>Ottoman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Earliest Islamic schools</td>
<td>c.16th century</td>
<td>c.15th century</td>
<td>c.10th century</td>
<td>c.8th century</td>
<td>c.8th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Names for Islamic schools</td>
<td>pesantran, madrasah</td>
<td>jangu, dara mak, ma'had</td>
<td>msid, kuttab, zawia, ma'had Azhari</td>
<td>kuttab, ma'had, shif id al-Quran</td>
<td>ni'ima, madrasat, tahf id al-Quran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Financial support</td>
<td>private</td>
<td>private</td>
<td>private</td>
<td>community</td>
<td>private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Enrollment by gender (boys/girls)</td>
<td>50/50</td>
<td>60/40</td>
<td>75/25</td>
<td>50/50</td>
<td>75/25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Age of students</td>
<td>6-30 yrs</td>
<td>6-20 yrs</td>
<td>5-8 yrs</td>
<td>5-8 yrs</td>
<td>6-15 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Enrollment estimate</td>
<td>5 million</td>
<td>0.25 million</td>
<td>1 million</td>
<td>0.10 million</td>
<td>0.50 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Diploma equivalent</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Tuition payment</td>
<td>fee</td>
<td>labor</td>
<td>gift</td>
<td>gift(?)</td>
<td>gift(?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Teacher training</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(footnotes on following page)
Footnotes to Table 1:

a. The Turkish-Ottoman colonial rule, as a Muslim force, seems to have had relatively minor influence on Islamic education when compared with European colonialism in the other four countries described above.

b. The exact dates of period in which Islamic schools began to impact on each society is very difficult to determine. The dates give here are approximations intended to represent the period in which large numbers of people began receiving Islamic education in each country.

c. Estimates based on lower level schools. With the exception of Indonesia, very few girls go on to higher levels of Islamic schooling. In Indonesia, girls may go on to private Islamic universities (the IAIN), but few go on to upper level traditional pesantrant education.

d. The age of students who are enrolled in Islamic schools can vary quite widely, beginning as early as age 3 or 4 years, and up through the middle of adulthood (Wagner & Lotfi, 1982). In the countries in Table 1, the modal age range for substantial numbers of children is listed. For example, even though some adolescent and young adults still attend traditional madrasas in Morocco, the vast majority of Quranic school attendees are in the preschool range. By contrast, in Indonesia, there are substantial enrollments from preschool up through university. Current figures on North Yemen, Senegal and Egypt are thought to be highly unreliable.

e. As noted in the text, enrollment figures are estimations based on the modal age of the population that attends these schools.

f. Most countries with Islamic schools make little effort at coordination with the secular public school system. Thus, few countries give "credit" or a diploma for work accomplished in the Islamic schools which can be utilized for transfer to the secular school system. One major exception is in Indonesia, where diplomas are issued at various levels of school achievement which can be used by students to attend the school system of their choice, Islamic or secular. Both school systems have equal status before the law, and are administered by responsible officials at the ministerial level. Morocco used to have a traditional "college" diploma which would give a diploma equivalent to the standard college for entrance into high school. It is believed that changes in the curricula are such that the traditional college curriculum is no longer very different from the standard curriculum, thus obviating the real need for diploma transfer.

g. Tuition payment, as noted in the text, often takes the form of an individual gift from parents who can afford it as well as some contribution from the Islamic community. In some countries, such as Senegal, students have traditionally provided manual labor for the farms where Islamic schools are situated; in addition, students may be expected to seek alms in support of the Islamic school. Systematic information on the true cost per pupil is unavailable for any country.

h. In traditional terms, all Islamic schools were thought to be centers of teacher training, since all serious long-term students were expected to become teachers in addition to other religious roles they might serve. Thus, instruction resembled more the apprenticeship system similar to, say, the university tutorial system in Great Britain. However, with the exception of the well-organized Islamic schools of Indonesia (and possibly Malaysia), there appears to be little in the way of systematic teacher training which would be comparable to the government provided training institutes for secular teachers.
Table 2
Language and Literacy Use in Selected Countries with Islamic Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Official written language(s)</th>
<th>Other written languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>Arabic/French</td>
<td>French used among educated elite, and for some official purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>Arabic/French</td>
<td>French used among educated elite, and for some official purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Yemen (YAR)</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>English and French widely used among educated classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>English also widely used among educated classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Arabic used in Islamic areas as first written language, or for transcription of other languages; W. African languages and scripts also used for certain purposes (including primary school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>W. African languages and scripts also used for certain purposes (including primary school); Arabic used in Islamic areas as first written language, or for transcription of other languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Bihasa Indonesia</td>
<td>Arabic used for religious purposes only, but widely disseminated through large network of Islamic schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>African languages used for some primary schooling; Arabic widely used on Eastern Coast within Muslim community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Urdu/English</td>
<td>Arabic used largely within context of Islamic schools; extent of use outside of schools is unknown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


Kuku-Gimbil, K. (1983). L'école coranique au Soudan: Une etude de son evolution dans les provinces de Kartoum et du Dar For Nora. These de 3eme cycle, Université de Lyon II.


