

# ***The International Survey on Children's Well-Being (ISCWeB):***

## **The Algerian contribution**

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# *This Presentation ...*

- 1- The Algerian Context
- 2- Sampling strategy
- 3- Key findings
- 4- Future

# *The Algerian Context ...*

- Algeria a North African Arab and Muslim country, the 34<sup>th</sup> most populated country on Earth with 39 million people and the largest area in Africa.
- Divided into 48 provinces (Wilayas).
- Children aged 5 to 14 years represent about 17% of the total population of Algeria.
- The Algerian economy is highly dependent on petroleum and natural gas exports. It is estimated that hydrocarbons account for roughly 60% of budget revenues, 30% of GDP and over 95% of export earnings.
- When the survey was done the economy in general was growing well with high incomes from the hydrocarbon sector. The government could continue to finance a huge housing project and employment initiatives. In September 2013 unemployment was estimated at 9.8%, far less than those of 2012

## **Family and Child Policies**

- Inherited from the Islamic religion much of its culture of education and caring for children and their well-being (starting from forbidding abortion, to encouraging the marriage institution)
- Ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 2001 and is since gradually adapting its legislation to its requirements

# the Algerian Context

- Many private and public institutions deliver this education starting from the age of three years.
- enrolment rate in compulsory education (6 to 16 year olds) is estimated to be around 94% and hardly no disparity between girls and boys (the ratio of girls to boys is 0.99)
- Many weaknesses have in the educational system: Crowded classrooms, needs to improve teacher preparation, low internal efficiency, integrating children with disabilities, enhance the right to rights to participation in school life, protection measures, ...
- Family: Predominance of conservative values, a trend away from the extended family type and towards the nuclear family model, Women represent about 20% of the active workforce; In 2010, the total fertility rate was 1.76 children born/woman. This is a drop from 2.41 in 2009 and 7.12 in the 1970s. Divorce rates are estimated at 7% of total marriages per year.

**Everyday Life:** limited number of specific playgrounds and other children facilities, weaknesses in the organisation and management of the area of leisure and cultural activities the most important occupations for children at weekends consist of doing school homework (a little over 70 percent), watching television (almost 70percent), hanging around with peers (near 60 percent) and, for nearly half of girls, helping with domestic chores

# Algerian Sample

- Designed to achieve a representative sample of the western region of Algeria of children in school years 3 (Primary School- 3PS); 5 (Primary School- 5PS) and 1<sup>st</sup> Middle School (1MS) with at least 1,000 children in each group.
- The primary sampling unit was schools.
- The final sample: **3,676 children**

# Background information of the researched Provinces

	<b>Oran</b>	<b>Tlemcen</b>	<b>El Bayadh</b>
N° of Counties ( <i>Dairas</i> )	09	20	08
N° of Municipalities	26	53	22
Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	2,121	9,061	78,870
Population	1,382,980	950,431	200,969
Geography	Large coast on the Mediterranean Sea with a typically mild weather	Extreme West, 170 kms of borders with Morocco.	Part of the Hauts-plateaux region with a semi-arid weather

**Oran** (Mid North-West): It is the second most populated area in Algeria. It is a coastal Province (2,121 sq. kms) of the Mediterranean Sea and populated with 1,382,980 inhabitants (est. 2007). Its has a Mediteranean mild weather.

**Tlemcen** (Extreme North West): It is situated on the extreme West of Algeria on the Moroccan borders with a total area of 9,061 sq. kms and a population of about 1 million inhabitants (est. 2007).

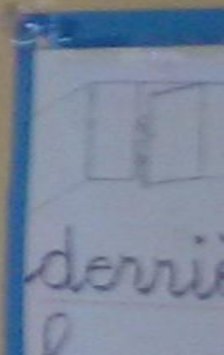
**El-Bayedh or Bayed** (South-West, *Hauts-plateaux* Sahara region): It is a much larger Province, about 37 times the area of the Province of Oran and seven times less populated compared to this latter region. It stretches down into the Great Sahara and has many of the characteristics of the Sahara region in terms of weather and population characteristics.



Je n'aime pas



J'aime



# Findings: Key points

- Most Algerian children in the 8 to 12 year old age group are relatively satisfied and happy with their lives. However, a minority of about 10% are relatively unhappy. This proportion still amounts to a substantial number of children, knowing that children aged less than 15 years old is more than 11 million people, i.e., nearly 30% of the total population.
- We know from some international research that low well-being is not just a temporary state and that many of these children will be unhappy with their lives for extended periods of time.
- The findings on children's feelings about different aspects of their lives show some important variations, which are not immediately apparent when discussing each aspect of life separately. This variability in satisfaction demonstrates the value of asking children about different aspects of their lives.
- Mean life satisfactions scores, standard deviations, and percentages below the mid-point for all questions asked about satisfaction with different aspects of life in the 10 and 12 years-old age group indicate that while most children in these age groups are relatively positive about all aspects of their life.
- There are some interesting and important variations in levels of satisfaction. As would be expected, the mean scores and percentages below the mid-point show a reasonably similar pattern. The aspects of life that children are most satisfied with tend to relate **to children's feelings about themselves: Satisfaction with self-confidence, appearance, one's body, own health and own safety**. Life as a student and things learned are also among aspects of life with the lowest proportion of children below the mid-point.



# .../... Key points

- However, there are aspects where children's responses vary considerably. For instance, about one fourth of the children score lower than the mid-point concerning the outdoor areas children can use and two children out 10 in doing things away from their homes, and nearly a similar rate in satisfaction with the area they live in. These figures reveal that a good proportion of children feel lacking leisure spaces in their neighbourhoods and lacking opportunities to do 'things' away from their homes. This is consistent with findings regarding questions on free time use. The most common use of free time is doing homework and watching TV, while taking part in organised leisure time activities, for instance, is relatively uncommon.
- Other related aspects are the relatively low satisfaction with the people they live in the area, the things children have and the amount of freedom they are allowed. These results lead to questions about the socialisation practices which are followed by Algerian families and other related institutions, such as schools. The issue of how much freedom and to what extent Algerian children feel they are actively participating in family and school life should be explored in depth in the future.
- Furthermore, about two children in 10 are not much satisfied with other children in their classes. This may also be related to the high prevalence of bullying in Algerian schools. About 30% of children had experienced being hit by other children at school and 34% had experienced being left out by other children in the class. The social climate in which children are educated in schools raises many questions. The cross-national comparative analysis of Children's Worlds data will be very important in helping us to understand how specific the Algerian case is and informing debate about children's subjective well-being in the country.

# .../... Key points

- There are many significant variations by gender and age group.
- The most substantial and significant variations by age relate to having fun together and learning together in their families in favour of the youngest ones. while these latter are less satisfied with the people they live with and all other people in their families. Also. with age the frequency of talking. having fun and meeting to study with friends increases. The 10 years-old age groups children are significantly more satisfied with all aspects related to treatments at the doctors. the outdoor areas children can use. and the area they live in in general than the older 12 years-old group. This latter group of children is less satisfied with safety. doing things away from home. what may happen to them later in life. and also marginally lower in appearance. but no difference between the 10 and the 12 groups in time use. Furthermore. bullying forms. being hit and being left out. significantly decrease with age.
- Older children were more likely to say that they knew about the convention and what rights children have. But. they were less likely to think that adults respect children.

# .../... Key points: gender differences

- The domains where the largest gender differences exist relate to family aspects and friends in favour of girls. despite that boys tended a little more frequently to talk and have fun with friends than girls.
- Interestingly that girls are more satisfied than boys with all aspects of school and in satisfaction levels with: 'The way that you look'. and marginally higher in 'Satisfaction with: Your own body' and 'How you are listened to by adults in general'. However. girls scored less in having enough places to play or to have a good time. and feelings of safety when they walk in the area they live in. Boys are much more likely to have experienced being hit by other children at school but no differences between them and girls in feeling left out. Furthermore. girls are more satisfied than boys by how they use their time in the older age groups. but these later are more likely to read for fun. help with housework. do homework and watch TV. Boys are more likely to take classes outside school. take part in organized leisure activities and do sports or exercise and use a computer. Notable also is that there are no variation by gender in the mean level of satisfaction with things they have and in the mean level of how often they worry about how much money their families have.
- We have also conducted comparisons in children's feelings and experiences according to the province of residence. Notable is that the three compared provinces have no common borders. and are quite different in urbanisation and modernisation levels. Generally. children from the less modern area of El-Bayadh have **higher material deprivation**. are more likely to worry about money. think their areas do **not have enough places to play and have fun**. are the least satisfied with **the outdoor areas**. and have the lowest satisfaction with the **areas they live in** in general. Children of Oran are more favoured in responses to questions about **their schools**. including school marks. Things they learn. school experience. and relationship with teachers. The strength of the differences varies across questions. Nevertheless. Children living in El-Bayadh were significantly **less likely to be hit and to be left out by mates** compared to both other provinces.

# What's next?

- To my knowledge this is the largest study on this topic in Algeria. A lot of will was needed to complete it.
- The results should be taken seriously by decision makers in addressing issues of equality in development and modernisation efforts.
- Apparently, regional disparities in that respect have a direct effect on children's lives and well-being.
- Also important to study is the regional cultural models and their peculiarities with regard to children's bringing up and socialisation practices.
- Also, there are indications that in Algeria boys and girls are treated differently which may have an effect on their adult life and the roles they should play in a modern and an emancipated society.

# Future

- Use some more advanced statistical techniques to analyse and share more detailed findings from this data set.
- A qualitative study is being conducted to explore meanings and understandings of the studied issues
- More than 90% of the participating children gave their names for a follow up study...

ANY ADVICE WELCOME...

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    - THANK YOU!

# Limitations

- 1-Only the schools under the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Education were sampled (excluding private schools, community (religious) schools and those related Social Action (children with special needs))
- 2-Lack of precise statistical information in the Directorates, partly because updating occurs at later dates (initially we used estimations on the basis 2010 data and information on schools posted on official websites).
- 3-Researchers did not have the possibility to cross-check the numbers. No printed lists were handed to us.
- 4- The 'ideal' distribution relative to the size of the population was not fully met, but the sample largely exceeds the expected 3,000 participants for the whole country
- 5- Had to adjust the working schedules to the needs of schools, but envisioned beforehand alternatives plans

# Sampling strategy

- **3 stages...**
- **1- Choosing 01 region** only from the whole country: West of Algeria, because: 1- the country is very wide; 2- time and resources restrictions)
- **2- Purposive sampling of Provinces**, after many consultations with colleague researchers, to ensure that the selected Provinces represent the whole Western region. The Provinces do not have any common borders (see map). The research took place in 03 different Provinces
- **3-** Randomly selecting schools from the existing list at the Directorate of Education in each province.
- **4-** In each school working with only two of the available class groups (clusters) at the time of the research, around 50 children max. per cluster (i.e., 2 class groups per school for each age)

# Results

- Your home and the people you live with
    - All but 3.3% of children said that they always (85%) or usually (11.7%) sleep in the same homes
- 95.7 % lived with their family. The remainder lived in foster care 1.9%. a children's home or in another type of home 2.4% which include living in the school internship.
- About 89% of children said they lived with their mother and father.