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Development Trends in Islamic Societies: From Collective Wishes to Concerted Actions

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Abstract Today, approximately one-fourth of the world's population includes 1,620 million persons who are part of the expanding Islamic *Ummah*. Muslims are found in large numbers in all regions of the world but are concentrated in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and selected successor states to the former Soviet Union. Despite the obvious wealth of some Islamic nations most Muslims live under conditions of poverty, joblessness, illiteracy, ill health, social and political unrest and, in some regions, religious extremism. Using the extensively pre-tested *Weighted Index of Social Progress*, this paper reports a 40-year time series analysis of the nature, extent, and pace of social change that is taking place within 53 of the 57 member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Data are reported at four levels of analysis. Selected data also are reported for both the OIC-as-a-whole and for the world-as-a-whole. The present analysis offers a sometimes bleak, but generally optimistic, picture of the dramatic differences that characterize development patterns within Islamic countries, subregions, and regions. Particular attention is given to: (a) the legacy of colonialism that persisted for some OIC states until as recently as 1991; (b) the recurrent social unrest that continues to characterize development in many Islamic states, e.g., the "Arab Spring" (Vision of Humanity 2012); (c) the presence or absence of marketable natural and human resources; and, (d) the significant contributions being made to the development of Islamic countries by the United Nations' *Millennium Development Campaign* (United Nations 2005) and the OIC's *Ten-Year Programme of Action* (OIC 2005). However, the important social gains reported in this paper for some countries and geographic regions remain highly variable, potentially reversible, unless the collective wishes of Islamic nations are translated into concerted actions both within OIC member states and the larger world community of nations.

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1 Introduction

Though it is not common in modern times to build communities of nations on the basis of shared religious beliefs, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (hereafter "the OIC" or OIC) has made belonging to the Islamic faith a shared identity for all those who follow the teachings of the Prophet. As an organization, however, the OIC is relatively young having been created only in September, 1969 as a collective response on the part of the Islamic world to the criminal arson of the holy Mosque of Al-Aqsa in Jerusalem.[1] One of the OIC's chief aims has been '*to galvanize the Ummah*[2] *into a unified body and to actively represent the world body of Muslims by espousing those causes that are central to their identity as a people*'. Today, there are more than 1,620 million Muslims worldwide all are considered to be members of the *Ummah* whatever their country of residence or citizenship (Wikipedia 2013a).

The creation of the *Ummah* was the result of the rapid expansion of the divine message delivered by the Prophet Mohammed (570–632). Like all monotheist religions built on the prophetic teachings of Abraham (Christianity, Judaism and Islam), in its early days, Islam had to struggle against persecution by non-believers in the countries in which they resided. Even the Prophet was forced to leave his home city of Mecca in 622 to find refuge in Medina (a flight referred to as the *hegira*). Over the next 13 years the Prophet laid down the basics of a strong new nation and succeeded in uniting Arabia into a single Islamic polity. His companions completed the Prophet's mission by spreading Islam across the three continents of the then known world (Africa, Asia, and Europe) which, in turn, led to the rise of the *Golden Age of Islam* in what is referred to as the Abbasid's era, 749–1258 (Bennabi 2005; Esposito 1998; Hunke 2000; Shalabi 1996). Among the most important achievements of this period were: (1) the compilation of the Prophet's sayings into a single text (the *Hadith*); (2) the codification of the language of the Qur'an; (3) the establishment of Arabic as the unifying language for the Islamic world, at least in the Middle East and North Africa; and, (4) the translation of important intellectual works into Arabic including those of major Greek philosophers. Islam's religious schools, the *Medersas*, emerged during this period as well and succeeded in delivering high quality, religiously-based, education at the primary, secondary, and post-secondary levels.[3] The world's first universities also emerged under Islam during this period including Al-Qarawiyyin in Fes, Morocco (859) and Al-Azhar in Egypt (970–972). Relative to the slow pace of development occurring in other world regions, Islamic developments in all areas of science and the humanities were rapid and, historically, were centuries ahead of their counterparts in Europe and Asia (Arkoun 1994; Bennabi 2005; Shalabi 1996). At the height of Islamic civilization, for example, Europe was still in the midst of the medieval period which spanned the sixth to the thirteenth centuries, including its five-centuries long "Dark Ages"

[1] The Aqsa Mosque, Jerusalem (http://convertingtoislam.com/aqsa.html).

[2] *Ummah* (Arabic: أمة) is an Arabic word meaning "nation" or "community". It is distinguished from *Sha'b* (Arabic: شعب) which means a nation with common ancestry or geography. Thus, it can be said to be a supra-national community with a common history (Wikipedia 2013e).

[3] For a review, see Tiliouine (2013).

(500–1000) which was marked by frequent warfare and the virtual disappearance of urban life (Encyclopedia Britannica 2013). In contrast to the intellectual fervor that characterized the Islamic world of this period, Europe's earliest universities were not established until 1088 with the founding of the University of Bologna in Italy and that of the University of Paris in France in 1150. The European "Middle Ages" did not end until the beginning of the Italian Renaissance in the fourteenth century—a time period in which Islamic societies were flourishing.

1.1 The Decline of Muslim Societies and the Rise of Western Societies

Unfortunately, as Europe struggled through the last vestiges of the Middle Ages, the Muslim World simultaneously ceased to be creative and plunged into internal conflicts (Arkoun 1994; Bennabi 2005; Rodinson 1980). For Muslims, the emergence of these trends were far-reaching and resulted in the erosion of many of Islam's social gains built up during earlier centuries of development, e.g. Arkoun 1994; Bennabi 2005.

In time, many Islamic territories were occupied by Western colonial powers which principally sought to exploit the peoples and their resources of their new colonies (Lewis 1993; Nasr 2013). France and Britain were particularly adept at this approach to colonization but, over time, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, and Belgium adopted similar approaches to the Islamic lands they occupied, e.g., the Sykes-Picot secret agreements of 1916 (History Learning Site 2013). Such exploitation included the transfer of Islam's advances in astronomy, medicine, education, book making, and finance to the colonizing powers' home country. Many skilled Islamic scientists also migrated to these countries (Wikipedia 2013k). Over a period of centuries of occupation, Islamic nations declined across virtually all sectors of development with the result that, today, more than half are struggling with meeting the most basic needs of their populations (Sachs 2008; UNDP 2002, 2004, 2005, 2009a, b).

The subjugation of Islamic states by Western powers went on for centuries and continued until the end of the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire (1299–1922). Political independence was returned slowly to most Islamic lands during the middle of the twentieth century and, only recently, did the last five countries have their independence restored following the collapse of the former Soviet Union (1991): *Azerbaijan*, *Kazakhstan*, *Tajikistan*, *Turkmenistan*, and *Uzbekistan.* With such a long break in the unification of the Islamic world, the notion of a revival of these geographically disparate people and territories under a single Caliphate[4] has come to an end.

Today, large areas of the Islamic world remain politically unstable (Freedom House 2012). The wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the recent "Arab Spring" are only some examples of the social unrest that is experienced in many Islamic countries with dire consequences for their own development and that of the larger community of Islamic states (Wikipedia 2013b; Moore 2013). As of the writing of this paper, a tragically similar scenario is feared to be happening in the North African region with French intervention into Mali—one of the world's poorest and most socially deprived countries (Goffé 2011). Despite the fact that internal movements within countries such as Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Yemen have succeeded in overthrowing their longstanding totalitarian regimes, the picture is not yet clear in countries such as Syria what the final outcome of this country's

[4] A caliphate (from the Arabic خلافة or khilāfa, Turkish: *Hilafet*) is a Muslim spiritual community led by a supreme religious (and even political) leader known as a *caliph* (meaning literally a *successor*), i.e. a successor to the prophet Mohammad (Wikipedia 2013f).

civil war will be (Vision of Humanity 2012). The same situation characterizes the high levels of political instability that exist in Somalia and the Sudan, both predominately Muslim states. And, the now 60-year long Arab–Israeli "conflict" remains highly explosive given the increasing possibility that weapons of mass destruction may be called upon to force a "peace" between the conflicting parties (Chomsky 2012).

Other dilemmas facing the contemporary Muslim World are low-performing educational and health systems (Estes 2012a, b), difficulties in financing development programs (Arab Bank for Development in Africa 2012; Asia Development Bank 2012), inefficient modes of governance (Tiliouine and Meziane 2012), and high levels of public and commercial corruption (Amnesty International 2013; Transparency International 2012). Continued religious extremism also has proved harmful with devastating effects (such as the case of Algeria in the 1990s) and is creating internal tensions in the emerging democracies of the "Arab Spring". These dilemmas in Islamic development are further compounded by deeply rooted stereotypes that treat all Muslims as a single block (Clarion Fund 2006), e.g., that Muslims are predominately Arab when, in fact, people of Arabic extraction make up only 12 % of the Muslim population worldwide (CIA 2013; Ellingsen 2000). Further, these and other stereotypes used to characterize the Islamic world, have yet to be put under scientific scrutiny (Tiliouine and Meziane 2012; UNDP 2003, 2009a, b). As a consequence, the increasingly globalized world in which we all live may not stand much longer should such divisions continue between countries with contrasting faith traditions. The time has arrived for a judicious evaluation of the nature, extent, and pace of social change occurring in Islamic societies. Of critical importance, too, is that the data derived from these analyses should contain information of use to the world community in helping to shape a more positive future for both the Islamic Ummah and the world-as-a-whole.

1.2 The Focus of This Paper

This paper explores the extent to which member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation are succeeding in achieving their goal of accelerating the pace of social development within Islamic nations. More specifically, the paper: (1) reports the results obtained through application of a statistically weighted version of the extensively pretested *Index of Social Progress* (ISP, WISP) to an analysis of social development trends occurring in 53 of the 57 member states of the OIC[5]; (2) using the WISP, identifies current OIC countries with highest, lowest and middle performing scores on the WISP in 2011; and (3) identifies those OIC countries, regions, and subregions with the most significant changes over the most recent development decade, i.e., 2000–2011. The paper concludes with a series of modest recommendations for strengthening the development activities of the OIC, especially those that target its poorest and most socially unstable members.

2 Methodology

The present study is the 15th in a series of analyses of worldwide and regional social development trends.[6] The purpose of all 15 studies has been: (1) to identify significant

[5] Four member states of the OIC were excluded from the analysis due to missing or incomplete data.

[6] See Estes (1984, 1988, 1995, 1996a, b, 1998a, b, 2004, 2007a, b, 2010, 2012a, b, 2013a, b).

changes in the "adequacy of social provision"[7] occurring throughout the world and within specific continental and geo-political regions; and (2) to assess national and international progress in providing more adequately for the basic social and material needs of the world's growing population. These reports also are intended to provide policy analysts and development scholars with otherwise difficult to obtain data concerning a wide range of development phenomena needed to shape policy outcomes at the local, national and global levels.

2.1 Index of Social Progress (ISP)

The primary instrument used in this study is the lead author's extensively pre-tested "Index of Social Progress" (ISP). In its present form the ISP consists of 41 social indicators that have been subdivided into 10 subindexes (Table 1): *Education* (N = 4); *Health Status* (N = 7); *Women Status* (N = 5); *Defense Effort* (N = 1); *Economic* (N = 5); *Demographic* (N = 3); *Environmental* (N = 3); *Social Chaos* (N = 5); *Cultural Diversity* (N = 3); and *Welfare Effort* (N = 5).[8] All 41 of the ISP's indicators have been established to be valid indicators of social development and are used regularly by other policy-focused development scholars and researchers (Hagerty et al. 2002; UNDP 2011; World Bank 2010).

2.2 Weighted Index of Social Progress (WISP)

Owing to the volume of data gathered for this analysis only statistically weighted index (WISP) and subindex (SI) scores are reported in this paper. The study's statistical weights were derived through a two-stage principal components and varimax factor analysis in which indicator and subindex scores were analyzed separately for their relative contribution toward explaining the variance associated with changes in social progress over time. Standardized indicator scores (N = 41) were multiplied by their respective factor loadings, averaged within their subindex, and the average subindex scores (N = 10), in turn, were subjected to a second statistical weighting. The resulting values from this two-stage statistical weighting process formed the basis for computing the composite Weighted Index of Social Progress (WISP) scores as summarized in Table 2.[9] Statistically unweighted Index of Social Progress (ISP) scores are reported on the author's previously identified project website for those investigators who may wish to reanalyze the data using their own system of statistical weights.

2.3 Data Sources

The majority of the data used in the analysis were obtained from the annual reports supplied by individual countries to specialized agencies of the United Nations (UN), the

[7] "Adequacy of social provision" refers to the changing capacity of governments to provide for the basic social, material, and other needs of the people living within their borders, e.g., for food, clothing, shelter, and access to at least basic health, education, and social services (Estes 1988: 199–209).

[8] For methodological reasons, the ISP's 41 indicators are divided between positive and negative indicators of social progress. On the Education Subindex, for example, higher *adult illiteracy* rates are negatively associated with social progress whereas gains in *primary school enrollment* levels are positively associated with overall improvements in development. Thus, not only is the ISP representative of all major sectors of development, the instrument also achieves balance with respect the range of positive and negative factors that are used to assess changes in social progress over time.

[9] A fuller description of these procedures is summarized in Estes (1988, pp. 199–209).

Table 1 Indicators on the Weighted Index of Social Progress (WISP) by subindex, 2010 (41 indicators and 10 subindexes)

Subindex indicators
Education subindex (N = 4)
Public expenditure on education as percentage of GDP, 2008–2009 (+)
Primary school completion rate, 2008–2009 (+)
Secondary school net enrolment rate, 2008–2009 (+)
Adult literacy rate, 2008 (+)
Health status subindex (N = 6)
Life expectation at birth, 2008 (+)
Infant mortality rate, 2008–2009 (−)
Under-five child mortality rate, 2008 (−)
Physicians per 100,000 population, 2005–2008 (+)
Percent of population undernourished, 2006–2008 (−)
Public expenditure on health as percentage of gross domestic product, 2008–2009 (+)
Women status subindex (N = 5)
Female adult literacy as percentage of male literacy, 2009 (+)
Contraceptive prevalence use among married women, 2008 (+)
Life time risk of maternal death, 2005 (+)
Female secondary school enrollment as percentage of male enrolment, 2008 (+)
Seats in parliament held by women as percentage of total, 2010 (+)
Defense effort subindex (N = 1)
Military expenditures as percentage of GDP, 2009 (−)
Economic subindex (N = 5)
Per capita gross domestic product (as measured by PPP), 2009 (+)
Percent growth in gross domestic product (GDP), 2009 (+)
Unemployment rate, 2006–2008 (−)
Total external debt as percentage of GNI, 2009 (−)
GINI index score, most recent year 2005–2009 (−)
Demography subindex (N = 3)
Average annual rate of population growth, 2009 (−)
Percent of population aged <15 Years, 2009 (−)
Percent of population aged >64 Years, 2009 (+)
Environmental subindex (N = 3)
Percentage of nationally protected area, 2004–2008 (+)
Average annual number of disaster-related deaths, 2000–2009 (−)
Per capita metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions, 2007 (−)
Social chaos subindex (N = 6)
Strength of political rights, 2010 (−)
Strength of civil liberties, 2010 (−)
Number of internally displaced persons per 100,000 population, 2009 (−)
Number of externally displaced persons per 100,000 population, 2009 (−)
Estimated number of deaths from armed conflicts (low estimate), 2006–2007 (−)
Perceived corruption index, 2009 (+)

Table 1 continued

Subindex indicators
Cultural diversity subindex (N = 3)
Largest percentage of population sharing the same or similar racial/ethnic origins, 2009 (+)
Largest percentage of population sharing the same or similar religious beliefs, 2009 (+)
Largest share of population sharing the same mother tongue, 2009 (+)
Welfare effort subindex (N = 5)
Age first national law—old age, invalidity and death, 2010 (+)
Age first national law—sickness and maternity, 2010 (+)
Age first national law—work injury, 2010 (+)
Age first national law—unemployment, 2010 (+)
Age first national law—family allowance, 2010 (+)

Table 2 Statistical weights used in constructing the Weighted Index of Social Progress

WISP2010 = {[(Factor 1) .697)] + [(Factor 2) .163)] + [(Factor 3) .140]}
where
Factor 1 = [(Health .92) + (Education .91) + (Welfare .72) + (Woman .91) + (Social Chaos .84) + (Economic .71) + (Diversity .64) + (Demographic .93)]
Factor 2 = [(Defense Effort .93)]
Factor 3 = [(Environmental .98)]

Derived from factor analysis using Varimax rotation. For purposes of comparability across the time series, the same statistical weights were used in each of the study's five time periods: 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the U.S. Social Security Administration, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other major international data collection and reporting organizations. Data for the *Environmental* subindex were obtained from the World Resources Institute (WRI), the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, and the World Bank. Data for the *Social Chaos* subindex were obtained from Amnesty International, Freedom House, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Stockholm International Peace and Research Institute and Transparency International. Data for the *Cultural Diversity* subindex were gathered from the *CIA World Factbook*, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and from the work of independent scholars in the fields of comparative language, religion and ethnology including that of Ellingsen (2000) of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. Data sources for the individual demographic, economic, and political indicators reported in Tables 4, 5, and 6 are identified in those tables.

2.4 Country Selection

The 53 member states of the OIC included in this analysis are identified in Table 3. The table groups countries by continents and major subregions within continents and, in

Table 3 Member territories and states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) by continents, subregions, and development groupings, 2013 (N = 57)

Africa (N = 27)	Asia (N = 27)	Latin America (N = 2)	Europe (N = 1)
East Africa (N = 5)	*South Central Asia (N = 9)*	*South America (N = 2)*	*South Europe (N = 1)*
Comoros (LDC)	Afghanistan (LDC)	Guyana (DC)	Albania (CIS)
Djibouti (LDC)	Bangladesh (LDC)	Suriname (DC)	
Mozambique (LDC)	Iran (DC)		
Somalia (LDC)	Kazakhstan (CIS)		
Uganda (LDC)	Kyrgyz Republic (CIS)		
	Pakistan (DC)		
Middle Africa (N = 3)	Tajikistan (CIS)		
Cameroon (DC)	Turkmenistan (CIS)		
Chad (LDC)	Uzbekistan (CIS)		
Gabon (DC)			
	South East Asia (N = 3)		
North Africa (N = 6)	Brunei-Darusalam (DC)*		
Algeria (DC)	Indonesia (DC)		
Egypt, UAR (DC)	Malaysia (DC)		
Libya (DC)			
Morocco (DC)	*West Asia (N = 14)*		
Sudan (LDC)	Azerbaijan (CIS)		
Tunisia (DC)	Bahrain (DC)		
	Iraq (DC)		
West Africa (N = 13)	Jordan (DC)		
Benin (LDC)	Kuwait (DC)		
Burkina-Faso (LDC)	Lebanon (DC)		
Cote d'Ivoire (DC)	Oman (DC)		
Gambia (LDC)	Palestine (DC)*		

Table 3 continued

Africa (N = 27)	Asia (N = 27)	Latin America (N = 2)	Europe (N = 1)
Guinea-Bissau (LDC)	Qatar (DC)		
Guinea (LDC)	Saudi Arabia (DC)		
Mali (LDC)	Syria (DC)		
Mauritania (LDC)	Turkey (DME)		
Nigeria (DC)	United Arab Emirates (DC)*		
Niger (LDC)	Yemen (LDC)		
Senegal (LDC)			
Sierra Leone (LDC)	*South Asia (N = 1)*		
Togo (LDC)	Maldives (DC)*		

DME developed market economy (N = 1), *CIS* Commonwealth of Independent States (N = 7), *DC* developing countries (N = 28), *LDC* least developed countries (N = 21)

* Four societies identified with an asterisk were excluded from the current analysis due to missing or incomplete data

Table 4 Selected population-related indicators for OIC member states, 2011–2012 (N = 53)

OIC member states 2012	Population (millions) 2011[a]	Percent pop. Muslim 2012[c]	Population growth rate (−) 2011[b]	Age dependent population		Life expectation at birth (+) 2011[e]	Infant mortality (−) 2012[f]	Adult literacy rate (+) 2011[g]
				<15 Years (−) 2012[c]	>65 years (+) 2011[d]			
Developed market economies (DME, N = 1)								
Turkey	73.6	98.6	1.2	26	6.3	74.0	23.1	94.1
Successor states to the former Soviet Union (CIS, N = 7)								
Albania	3.2	82.1	0.3	23	10.5	76.9	14.1	98.7
Azerbaijan	9.3	98.4	0.9	22	6.4	70.7	54.6	99.8
Kazakhstan	16.2	56.4	0.4	25	7.4	67.0	23.1	99.5
Kyrgyz Republic	5.4	88.8	1.4	30	5.3	67.7	31.3	98.7
Tajikistan	7.0	99.0	1.9	37	3.4	67.5	41.0	99.7
Turkmenistan	5.1	93.3	1.1	29	4.1	65.0	45.4	98.8
Uzbekistan	27.8	96.5	0.9	29	4.7	68.3	21.2	99.3
CIS total	74.0							
Average	10.6	87.8	1.0	27.9	6.0	69.0	32.9	99.2
SD	8.7	15.1	0.6	5.1	2.4	3.9	14.6	0.5
Developing countries (DCs, N = 24)								
Algeria	36.0	98.2	1.2	28	5.2	73.1	27.7	69.9
Bahrain	1.3	81.2	2.8	20	2.6	75.1	10.2	94.6
Cameroon	20.0	18.0	2.1	43	3.3	51.6	63.3	75.9
Cote D'Ivoire	20.2	36.9	2.1	41	3.0	55.4	63.2	56.2
Egypt	82.5	94.7	2.0	32	4.5	73.2	27.3	72.0
Gabon	1.5	9.7	2.0	36	3.9	62.7	51.8	88.4
Guyana	0.8	7.2	−0.4	33	4.8	69.9	29.7	91.8
Indonesia	242.3	88.1	1.1	27	6.1	69.4	30.0	90.4
Iran	74.8	99.6	1.3	24	5.0	73.0	35.8	77.0

Table 4 continued

OIC member states 2012	Population (millions) 2011[a]	Percent pop. Muslim 2012[c]	Population growth rate (−) 2011[b]	Age dependent population		Life expectation at birth (+) 2011[e]	Infant mortality (−) 2012[f]	Adult literacy rate (+) 2011[g]
				<15 Years (−) 2012[c]	>65 years (+) 2011[d]			
Iraq	32.7	98.9	2.4	43	3.1	69.0	43.8	78.2
Jordan	6.3	98.8	0.9	37	4.8	73.4	15.8	92.6
Kuwait	2.8	86.4	2.0	27	2.0	74.6	7.9	93.3
Lebanon	4.3	59.7	0.2	25	9.0	72.6	15.3	87.4
Libya	6.4	96.6	2.1	31	4.6	74.8	19.3	89.2
Malaysia	28.9	61.4	1.6	27	5.0	74.2	14.6	88.7
Morocco	32.3	99.9	1.1	28	6.1	72.2	36.9	56.1
Nigeria	162.5	47.9	1.9	44	3.1	51.9	74.4	61.3
Oman	2.8	87.7	2.0	32	3.1	73.0	15.0	81.4
Pakistan	176.7	96.4	1.6	35	4.2	65.4	65.1	54.9
Qatar	1.9	77.5	0.8	14	1.5	78.4	6.8	96.3
Saudi Arabia	28.1	97.1	1.5	30	3.0	73.9	15.6	86.6
Suriname	0.5	15.9	1.1	29	6.3	70.6	18.8	89.6
Syria	20.8	92.8	0.9	36	3.8	75.9	15.1	79.6
Tunisia	10.6	99.8	1.0	24	7.5	74.5	22.6	74.3
DCs total	997.0							
Average	41.5	72.9	1.5	31.1	4.4	69.9	30.2	80.2
SD	63.6	32.5	0.7	7.5	1.7	7.4	20.0	12.9
Least developing countries (LDCs, N = 21)								
Afghanistan	32.4	99.8	2.4	46	2.4	48.7	121.6	28.1
Bangladesh	150.5	90.4	1.6	31	4.7	68.9	59.0	56.8
Benin	9.1	24.5	2.9	44	2.7	56.1	64.6	42.4
Burkina Faso	17.0	58.9	3.1	46	2.5	55.4	79.8	21.8

Table 4 continued

OIC member states 2012	Population (millions) 2011[a]	Percent pop. Muslim 2012[c]	Population growth rate (−) 2011[b]	Age dependent population		Life expectation at birth (+) 2011[e]	Infant mortality (−) 2012[f]	Adult literacy rate (+) 2011[g]
				<15 Years (−) 2012[c]	>65 years (+) 2011[d]			
Chad	11.5	55.7	2.0	45	2.9	49.6	93.6	34.5
Comoros	0.8	98.3	2.7	43	3.1	61.1	69.0	74.9
Djibouti	0.9	97.0	2.2	36	3.3	57.9	97.5	67.9
The Gambia	1.8	95.3	2.4	44	3.1	58.5	69.6	50.0
Guinea-Bissau	1.5	42.8	2.0	41	3.2	48.1	94.4	54.2
Guinea	10.2	84.2	2.7	43	3.5	54.1	65.2	41.0
Mali	15.8	92.4	2.6	47	3.0	51.4	109.1	31.1
Mauritania	3.5	99.2	2.4	40	3.5	58.6	63.4	58.0
Mozambique	23.9	22.8	2.4	45	3.0	50.2	76.9	56.1
Niger	16.1	98.3	3.6	52	2.3	54.7	110.0	28.7
Senegal	12.8	95.9	2.6	44	2.9	59.3	58.9	39.3
Sierra Leone	6.0	71.5	2.3	43	3.7	47.8	76.6	35.1
Somalia	9.8	98.6	1.6	45	2.5	49.6	103.7	37.8
Sudan	44.6	71.4	2.5	41	2.7	61.5	82.4	61.1
Togo	6.2	12.2	2.8	41	3.1	57.1	56.2	60.9
Uganda	34.5	12.0	3.6	48	2.1	54.1	64.8	66.8
Yemen	24.8	99.0	2.7	44	2.6	65.5	54.7	63.9
LDCs total	433.7							
LDCs average	20.7	72.4	2.5	43.3	3.0	55.6	79.6	48.1
SD	32.1	31.7	0.5	4.3	0.6	5.8	20.1	15.3
ALL OIC members (N = 53)								
OIC total	1,579.4							

Table 4 continued

OIC member states 2012	Population (millions) 2011[a]	Percent pop. Muslim 2012[c]	Population growth rate (−) 2011[b]	Age dependent population		Life expectation at birth (+) 2011[e]	Infant mortality (−) 2012[f]	Adult literacy rate (+) 2011[g]
				<15 Years (−) 2012[c]	>65 years (+) 2011[d]			
OIC average	29.8	75.2	1.8	35.4	4.1	64.2	50.0	70.3
SD	48.9	30.3	0.9	8.8	1.8	9.4	30.7	23.1
World (excluding OIC members, N = 109)								
Total	5,394.3							
Average	49.5	1.0	1.0	25.9	9.4	70.1	25.4	88.8
World (including OIC members, N = 162)								
Total	6,973.7							
Average	43.1	23.0	1.4	28.9	7.6	67.9	34.3	82.7

The (+) and (−) signs next to a variable's name indicates its function in either promoting or inhibiting social development

Data sources [a] United Nations Development Programme (2011); [b] World Population Data Sheet (2012); [c, d] CIA World Factbook (2013); [e] UNDP (2011); [f] Wikipedia (2013a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k); [g] UNDP (2011)

Table 5 Selected economic-related indicators for OIC member states, 2011–2012 (N = 53)

OIC member states 2012	PC GDP PPP (+) 2011[a]	% Growth GDP (+) 2011[b]	External debt as % GDP (−)[c]	Unemployment rate (−)[d]	Unemployment base year[d]	Poverty rate (−)[e]	GINI coefficeint (−) 2000–2011[f]
Developed market economies (DME, N = 1)							
Turkey	$14,400	8.5	50.7	9.8	2011	16.9	39.7
Successor states to the former Soviet Union (CIS, N = 7)							
Albania	$7,800	3.0	21.0	13.3	2011	12.5	34.5
Azerbaijan	$10,200	1.0	6.4	1.0	2011	11.0	33.7
Kazakhstan	$13,000	7.5	102.0	5.4	2011	8.2	30.9
Kyrgyz Republic	$2,400	5.7	68.0	8.6	2011	33.7	33.4
Tajikistan	$2,100	7.4	34.0	2.2	2009	46.7	29.4
Turkmenistan	$7,800	14.7	31.0	60.0	2004	30.0	40.8
Uzbekistan	$3,300	8.3	11.0	1.0	2011	26.0	36.7
CIS Averages	$6,657	6.8	39.1	13.1	2010	24.0	34.2
SD	$4,194	4.4	34.3	21.2	2.6	14.1	3.8
Developing countries (DCs, N = 24)							
Algeria	$7,300	2.5	2.0	10.0	2011	23.0	35.3
Bahrain	$27,700	6.3	54.0	15.0	2005	NA	32.1
Cameroon	$2,300	4.2	13.0	30.0	2000	48.0	44.6
Cote D'Ivoire	$1,600	−4.7	54.0	15.7	2008	42.0	46.1
Egypt	$6,500	1.8	15.0	12.0	2011	20.0	32.1
Gabon	$16,300	4.8	28.0	21.0	2006	NA	41.5
Guyana	$7,600	3.0	42.0	11.0	2007	35.0	43.2
Indonesia	$4,700	6.5	26.1	8.4	2008	12.5	36.8
Iran	$13,200	3.0	6.0	15.3	2011	18.7	38.3
Iraq	$4,200	9.9	76.0	15.0	2010	25.0	30.9
Jordan	$5,900	2.6	61.4	12.3	2011	14.2	37.7
Kuwait	$41,700	8.2	29.0	2.2	2004	NA	36.0

Table 5 continued

OIC member states 2012	PC GDP PPP (+) 2011[a]	% Growth GDP (+) 2011[b]	External debt as % GDP (−)[c]	Unemployment rate (−)[d]	Unemployment base year[d]	Poverty rate (−)[e]	GINI coefficeint (−) 2000–2011[f]
Lebanon	$15,500	3.0	150.7	10.0	2009	28.0	36.0
Libya	$6,000	6.3	11.0	30.0	2004	7.4	36.7
Malaysia	$16,200	5.1	51.2	3.1	2011	3.8	46.2
Morocco	$5,100	4.5	50.3	8.9	2011	15.0	40.9
Nigeria	$2,600	7.4	6.0	21.0	2011	70.0	42.9
Oman	$27,600	5.5	3.0	15.0	2004	NA	36.0
Pakistan	$2,800	3.0	31.0	5.6	2011	22.3	32.7
Qatar	$98,900	18.8	75.0	0.4	2011	NA	41.1
Saudi Arabia	$24,400	6.8	20.0	10.9	2011	NA	36.0
Suriname	$11,800	6.0	28.0	9.0	2008	70.0	52.8
Syria	$5,100	5.1	15.0	14.9	2011	11.9	35.8
Tunisia	$9,400	−1.8	40.5	19.0	2011	3.8	40.8
DC averages	$15,183	4.9	37.0	13.2	2009	26.1	38.9
SD	$20,452	4.3	32.8	7.5	3.2	20.0	5.3
Least developing countries (LDCs, N = 21)							
Afghanistan	$1,000	5.7	23.0	35.0	2008	36.0	27.8
Bangladesh	$1,900	6.7	25.0	5.0	2011	31.5	31.0
Benin	$1,600	3.1	22.0	5.5	2010	37.4	38.6
Burkina Faso	$1,300	4.2	23.0	77.0	2004	46.7	39.6
Chad	$1,900	3.1	27.0	22.6	2006	80.0	39.8
Comoros	$1,200	2.2	115.0	20.0	1996	60.0	64.3
Djibouti	$2,600	5.8	56.0	59.0	2007	42.0	39.9
The Gambia	$1,900	−4.3	170.0	6.0	2003	48.4	47.3
Guinea-Bissau	$1,100	5.3	203.0	10.1	2002	NA	35.5
Guinea	$1,100	3.9	70.0	3.1	1994	47.0	39.4

Table 5 continued

OIC member states 2012	PC GDP PPP (+) 2011[a]	% Growth GDP (+) 2011[b]	External debt as % GDP (−)[c]	Unemployment rate (−)[d]	Unemployment base year[d]	Poverty rate (−)[e]	GINI coefficeint (−) 2000–2011[f]
Mali	$1,100	2.7	84.0	30.0	2004	36.1	39.0
Mauritania	$2,000	4.8	25.9	30.0	2008	40.0	39.0
Mozambique	$1,100	7.1	42.0	21.0	1997	54.0	45.6
Niger	$800	2.3	79.0	15.9	2008	63.0	34.0
Senegal	$2,000	2.6	22.0	48.0	2007	54.0	39.2
Sierra Leone	$1,100	6.0	163.0	3.4	2004	70.2	42.5
Somalia	$600	2.6	14.7	47.4	2008	NA	42.7
Sudan	$2,700	3.1	105.1	18.7	2002	46.5	35.3
Togo	$1,000	4.9	1.6	6.8	2006	32.0	34.4
Uganda	$1,400	6.7	32.3	4.2	2010	35.0	44.3
Yemen	$2,300	−10.5	25.0	35.0	2003	45.2	37.3
LDC averages	$1,510	3.2	63.3	24.0	2005	47.6	39.8
SD	$592	4.0	57.4	20.4	4.6	13.3	7.3
ALL OIC members (N = 53)							
Average	$8,625	4.6	47.9	17.4	2007	34.7	38.6
SD	$15,121	4.3	45.2	16.3	4.2	19.5	6.1
World (N = 162)							
Average	$12,000	3.7	NA	9.1	2011	22.4	39.0

The (+) and (−) signs next to a variable's name indicates its function in either promoting or inhibiting social development

Data sources [a–c] World Bank (2013); [d] CIA World Factbook (2013); [e] CIA World Factbook (2013) and Wikipedia (2013h); [f] UNDP (2011)

Table 6 Selected political-related indicators for OIC member states, 2011–2012 (N = 53)

OIC member states 2012	Independence year[a]	Type of polity 2010[b]	Head of state 2010[b]	Level of social chaos WISP SI (+) 2011[c]	Political freedom index (−) 2012[d]	Civil Liberties Index (−) 2012[d]	Corruption Perceptions Index (+) 2012[e]	Failed State Index (−) 2012[f]	Parliamentary seats held by women (+) 2011[g]
Developed market economies (DME, N = 1)									
Turkey	1923	Republic	Ceremonial	7.6	3	3	49	76.6	9.1
Successor states to the former Soviet Union (CIS, N = 7)									
Albania	1912	Republic	Ceremonial	10.9	3	3	33	66.1	16.0
Azerbaijan	1991	Republic	Executive	6.6	6	5	27	79.8	16.0
Kazakhstan	1991	Republic	Executive	8.3	6	5	28	70.9	13.6
Kyrgyz Republic	1991	Republic	Executive	7.9	5	5	24	87.4	23.3
Tajikistan	1991	Republic	Executive	7.9	6	5	22	85.7	17.5
Turkmenistan	1991	Republic	Executive	6.3	7	7	17	77.4	16.8
Uzbekistan	1991	Republic	Executive	6.2	7	7	17	87.5	19.2
CIS Averages	1980			7.7	5.7	5.3	24.0	79.3	17.5
SD	30			1.6	1.4	1.4	5.9	8.4	3.1
Developing countries (DCs, N = 24)									
Algeria	1962	Republic	Executive	4.6	6	5	34	78.1	7.0
Bahrain	1971	Constitutional Monarchy	Executive	9.4	6	6	51	62.2	15.0
Cameroon	1960	Republic	Executive	7.4	6	6	26	93.1	13.9
Cote D'Ivoire	1960	Republic	Executive	5.8	6	6	29	103.6	8.9
Egypt	1922	Republic	Executive	8.3	6	5	32	90.4	NA
Gabon	1960	Republic	Executive	8.4	6	5	35	74.6	16.1
Guyana	1966	Republic	Executive	11.2	2	3	28	71.4	30.0
Indonesia	1945	Republic	Executive	9.1	2	3	32	80.6	18.0
Iran	1502	Republic	Executive	6.9	6	6	28	89.6	2.8

Table 6 continued

OIC member states 2012	Independence year[a]	Type of polity 2010[b]	Head of state 2010[b]	Level of social chaos WISP SI (+) 2011[c]	Political freedom index (−) 2012[d]	Civil Liberties Index (−) 2012[d]	Corruption Perceptions Index (+) 2012[e]	Failed State Index (−) 2012[f]	Parliamentary seats held by women (+) 2011[g]
Iraq	1932	Republic	Ceremonial	−10.2	5	6	18	104.3	25.2
Jordan	1946	Constitutional Monarchy	Executive	9.3	6	5	48	74.8	12.2
Kuwait	1961	Constitutional Monarchy	Executive	10.4	4	5	44	68.8	7.7
Lebanon	1943	Republic	Ceremonial	8.4	5	4	30	85.8	3.1
Libya	1951	Republic	Ceremonial	6.6	7	6	21	84.9	7.7
Malaysia	1957	Constitutional Monarchy	Ceremonial	10.6	4	4	49	68.5	14.0
Morocco	1956	Constitutional Monarchy	Executive	9.6	5	4	37	76.1	6.7
Nigeria	1960	Republic	Executive	9.0	4	4	27	101.1	7.3
Oman	1650	Absolute Monarchy	Executive	9.6	6	5	47	51.7	9.0
Pakistan	1947	Republic	Ceremonial	3.4	4	5	27	101.6	21.0
Qatar	1971	Absolute Monarchy	Executive	10.3	6	5	68	48.0	0.0
Saudi Arabia	1932	Absolute Monarchy	Executive	8.0	7	7	44	73.4	0.0
Suriname	1975	Republic	Executive	12.2	2	2	37	71.2	9.8
Syria	1946	Republic	Executive	6.4	7	7	26	94.5	12.4
Tunisia	1956	Republic	Executive	8.5	3	4	41	74.2	23.3
DC Averages	1922			7.6	5.0	4.9	35.8	80.1	11.8
SD	110			4.3	1.6	1.2	11.4	15.3	7.9
Least developing countries (LDCs, N = 21)									
Afghanistan	1919	Republic	Executive	−11.6	6	6	8	106.0	27.6
Bangladesh	1971	Republic	Ceremonial	8.8	3	4	26	92.2	18.6

Table 6 continued

OIC member states 2012	Independence year[a]	Type of polity 2010[b]	Head of state 2010[b]	Level of social chaos WISP SI (+) 2011[c]	Political freedom index (−) 2012[d]	Civil Liberties Index (−) 2012[d]	Corruption Perceptions Index (+) 2012[e]	Failed State Index (−) 2012[f]	Parliamentary seats held by women (+) 2011[g]
Benin	1960	Republic	Executive	11.8	2	2	36	78.6	8.4
Burkina Faso	1960	Republic	Executive	10.2	5	3	38	87.4	15.3
Chad	1960	Republic	Executive	4.9	7	6	19	107.6	14.3
Comoros	1975	Republic	Executive	10.0	3	4	28	83.0	3.0
Djibouti	1977	Republic	Executive	8.8	6	5	36	83.8	13.8
The Gambia	1965	Republic	Executive	8.8	6	5	34	80.6	7.5
Guinea-Bissau	1973	Republic	Executive	9.4	4	4	25	99.2	10.0
Guinea	1958	Republic	Executive	6.7	5	5	24	101.9	NA
Mali	1960	Republic	Executive	11.2	2	3	34	77.9	10.2
Mauritania	1960	Republic	Executive	8.0	6	5	31	87.6	19.2
Mozambique	1975	Republic	Executive	10.2	4	3	31	82.4	39.2
Niger	1960	Republic	Executive	9.3	3	4	33	96.9	13.1
Senegal	1960	Republic	Executive	10.6	3	3	36	79.3	29.6
Sierra Leone	1961	Republic	Executive	10.4	3	3	31	90.4	13.2
Somalia	1960	Republic	Ceremonial	−2.9	7	7	8	114.9	NA
Sudan	1956	Republic	Ceremonial	0.8	7	7	13	109.4	24.2
Togo	1960	Republic	Executive	9.2	5	4	30	87.5	11.1
Uganda	1962	Republic	Executive	7.7	5	4	29	96.5	37.2
Yemen	1990	Republic	Executive	7.4	6	6	23	104.8	0.7
LDC Averages	1963			7.1	4.7	4.4	27.3	92.8	16.6
SD	13			5.5	1.7	1.4	8.9	11.4	10.6
ALL OIC members (N = 53)									
Average	1946			7.4	4.9	4.7	31.1	84.9	14.4

Table 6 continued

OIC member states 2012	Independence year[a]	Type of polity 2010[b]	Head of state 2010[b]	Level of social chaos WISP SI (+) 2011[c]	Political freedom index (−) 2012[d]	Civil Liberties Index (−) 2012[d]	Corruption Perceptions Index (+) 2012[e]	Failed State Index (−) 2012[f]	Parliamentary seats held by women (+) 2011[g]
SD	78			4.5	1.6	1.3	11.0	14.2	8.8
World (N = 162)									
Average	NA			10.0	3.6	3.3	43.3	70.9	20.3

The (+) and (−) signs next to a variable's name indicates its function in either promoting or inhibiting social development

Data sources [a]Wikipedia (2013i); [b,c] Freedom House (2012); [d,e] Transparency International (2012); [f] UNDP (2011); [g] UNDP (2011) and Wikipedia (2013j)

[c] *Level of Social Chaos* is measured using the WISP's subdex of Social Chaos. The subindex takes into account four dimensions of societal stability: (1) strength of political and civil liberties; (2) the number of internally and externally displaced persons resulting from wars and intra-national conflicts; (3) the number of deaths resulting from armed conflicts; and (4) the level of perceived public corruption. Scores on the subindex are *directly* related to overall level of social development (Estes 2010)

[d] Scores on the *Political Freedom and Civil Liberties* indexes were constructed by Freedom House (2012). Published annually since 1972, these indexes are *inversely* related to level of social progress, i.e., 1 = most free and 7 = least free (http://www.freedomhouse.org/report-types/freedom-world)

[e] The *Corruptions Perceptions Index* was created by Transparency International and annually measures the degree of public corruption observed to exist in 176 countries worldwide. Scores on the index range from 0 to 100 and are *directly* related to patterns of social development, i.e., a score of 100 indicates the lowest possible level of public corruption and, therefore, the most contributive of overall patterns of social development (http://www.transparency.org/cpi2012/results)

[f] The12-item *Failed States Index* was developed by the Washington-based Fund for Peace. Scores obtained on the index are *inversely* related to patterns of social development, i.e., scores closest to "0" are more favorable than are higher scores (which can go as high as 120 points (http://www.fundforpeace.org/global/?q=fsi)

parenthesis, identifies the major socio-economic grouping to which each country has been assigned by the World Bank[10]

2.5 Levels of Analysis

Data are reported at four levels of analysis: (1) the *country-specific* level (N = 53); (2) the *regional* (N = 4) and (3) sub-*regional* levels (N = 9); and (4) for all member states of the OIC *considered as-a-group* (N = 1). Selected data also are provided in Tables 4, 5, and 6 as well as in several of the paper's figures that compare OIC member state development performances *over time* with those of the *world-as-a-whole* (N = 1).

2.6 Time Frame

Index and subindex findings are reported separately for each of the study's five time periods, i.e., 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010/2011. Thus, the study provides a cross-sectional analysis of the "state" of social development for the same set of countries over a 40-year time period.

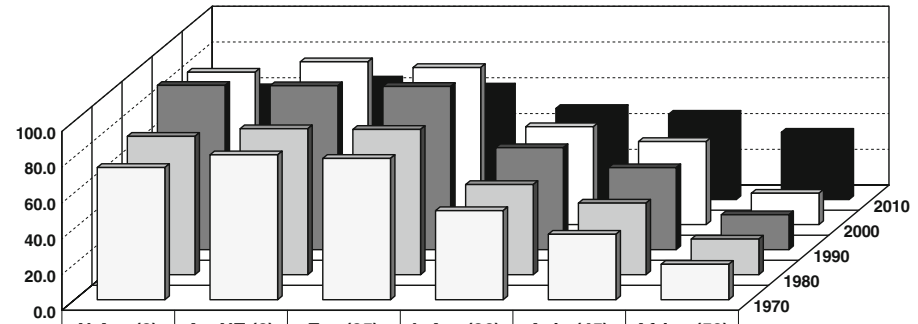
3 World Social Development Trends

Figures 1 and 2 summarize the study's major findings on the WISP for all 160 countries included in the more inclusive analysis of worldwide social development trends (Estes 2010, 2013b). These time-series data cover the period 1970–2010 and reflect comparative WISP performances for six continental groupings, i.e., North America (N = 2), Australia–New Zealand (N = 2), Europe (N = 36), Latin America N = 26), Asia (N = 45), and Africa (N = 50). The WISP scores for all countries worldwide averaged 43.6, 43.4, 48.1, 48.5, and 48.7 for 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010, respectively (Estes 2012a, b).[11]

1. The world's most socially developed regions are *the developed market economies* (DMEs) of Australia-New Zealand, Europe, and North America (Fig. 1). These geographic regions had already attained the most favorable ratings on the WISP by 1970 and added to them for the periods 1970–1980 and 1980–1990. Some social improvements continued to accrue to selected members of this grouping between 1990 and 2000 but, as a group, the 39 DMEs experienced net social losses averaging −3.7 and −28.2 % between 1990–2000 and 2000–2010, respectively (Fig. 2). The 10-year losses are associated with: (a) the near-collapse of global financial markets that originated in North America in 2007; (b) the actual collapse of one major global investment houses in the United States in 2008; (c) the bursting of the real estate

[10] This taxonomy groups countries into four clusters by overall level of socio-economic development: (1) *Developed Market Economies* (DMEs) consisting primarily of economically advanced countries (plus selected middle income countries added to the Organizations of Economic Cooperation and Development) on the basis of their current level of economic development; (2) the *Commonwealth of Independent States* (CIS) consisting entirely of successor states to the former Soviet Union; (3) *Developing Countries* (DCs) consisting primarily of low, middle and high income countries located in developing Africa, Asia, and Latin America; and (3) *Least Developed Countries* (LDCs) which, for a variety of historical and socio-political reasons, often experience net negative patterns of development from one time period to another.

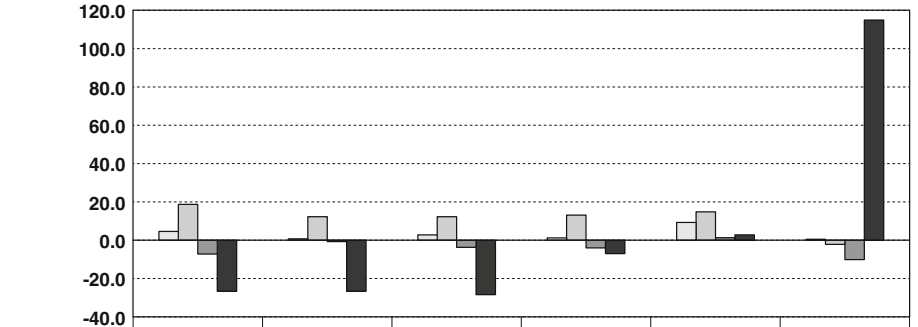
[11] The average scores for each of the WISP's ten subindexes was set at 10.0; thus, the theoretical range of WISP scores is 0.0–100.0, albeit owing to some unusual conditions operating in selected countries, some nations achieved scores that fell outside the theoretical range (Estes 2010).



	N Am (2)	Au-NZ (2)	Eur (35)	L Am (26)	Asia (45)	Africa (50)
1970	73.9	81.0	79.0	49.8	36.6	19.8
1980	77.3	81.6	81.2	50.4	40.0	19.9
1990	91.8	91.6	91.2	57.0	45.8	19.5
2000	85.2	91.0	87.8	54.7	46.4	17.5
2010	62.5	66.8	62.9	50.9	47.7	37.6

[CONT_11_bw]

Fig. 1 Average WISP scores by continent, 1970–2010 (N = 160)



	N Amer (2)	Aus-NZ (2)	Europe (35)	L Amer (26)	Asia (45)	Africa (50)
% 1970-80	4.6	0.7	2.8	1.2	9.3	0.5
% 1980-90	18.7	12.3	12.3	13.1	14.8	-2.2
% 1990-00	-7.2	-0.7	-3.7	-4.0	1.3	-10.1
% 2000-10	-26.6	-26.6	-28.4	-7.0	2.8	114.9

[%CONT_11_bw]

Fig. 2 Percent change in average WISP scores by continent, 1970–2010 (N = 160)

bubbles in North America and Europe; (d) the onset of a major economic recession in all three of the DME subgroupings; (e) substantial downward pressures on the viability of the "Euro" as the common unit of currency in selected "Euro-zone countries" as well as on the political stability of the 27-member European Union; and, (f) the imposition by conservative governments in all three subregions of regressive social policies that weakened the previously secure "social safety nets".

2. The remarkable average WISP gains reported in Figs. 1 and 2 for *Africa*'s 50 nations between 2000 and 2010 (+114.9 %) are accounted for by the continent's recent ability to exploit *to its own advantage* the abundant natural resources located in its Northern (primarily oil) and Southern regions (mostly gold, diamonds, and other

precious minerals). These significant net gains on the WISP for Africa since 2000 are associated with increasing levels of peace in the majority of African states (Wikipedia 2013c, d), expanding patterns of international trade, and the accomplishments realized on the eight *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs) articulated in the United Nations' *Millennium Development Campaign* (MDC)[12] which targeted the poorest nations of Africa for preferential development assistance (UN 2012a, b). Though still fragile, certainly reversible, the African region's recent social gains are impressive and are continuing to accumulate (UNDP 2011).[13]

3. The social development situation in *South America and the Caribbean* continues to be perplexing given the region's rich natural resources, well developed economic infrastructure, and high levels of human capital (World Bank 2010). A legacy of civil unrest, political instability, and widespread public corruption, however, continues to slow the pace of development in many of the region's countries (UN-ECLAC 2013; Transparency International 2012). Latin America's slow rate of social progress is compounded by high fertility levels and rapidly increasingly levels of economic inequality (World Bank 2013). These long-standing impediments to the region's development persist despite the significant progress that is taking place in many of the region's largest and most populous countries—Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru (UN-ECLAC 2013; Estes 1996a).
4. Considerable 40-year variations also characterize social development patterns in the Asian region. These variations are closely associated with the rapid rates of economic growth that are occurring for Asia's largest low- to moderate income nations (but especially for China). These social gains are of considerable importance to the world community in that 60 % of the world's total populations, including about 70 % of its poor, live in the region which includes three of the world's four largest population supergiant's: China (1,300 million); India (1,200 million); and, Indonesia (242.3 million), the last of which is a member state of the OIC. However, income inequality is quickly becoming a dominant feature of Asia's development (UN-ESCAP 2008, 2010, 2012).

In general, then, world social development since 1970 has been uneven and asymmetric. This pattern is especially pronounced in the African and Asian regions in which the majority of the OIC member states are located (N = 50).

4 Development Trends in Islamic States

In this section, a variety of indicators are used to dramatize development trends occurring in OIC countries. All of these indicators are components of the WISP and embrace three broad aspects of development: *Population-related* factors (Table 4), *Economic* factors (Table 5), and *Political* factors (Table 6).

[12] The MDC is organized around the attainment of eight goals (MDGs) by 2015 that are central to meeting at least the basic needs of the world's poorest nations: (1) eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; (2) achieve universal primary education; (3) promote gender equality; (4) reduce infant mortality; (5) improve maternal health; (6) combatting HIV/AIDS and other diseases; (7) ensure environmental sustainability; and, (8) promoting global partnerships (United Nations 2005, 2012a, b).

[13] A fuller discussion of positive social development changes occurring among the world's poorest nations is the subject of other recent reports prepared by Estes (2013a, b).

4.1 Population Characteristics

As summarized in Table 4, the 53 OIC countries included in this study have a combined *population* of 1.579 million inhabitants, representing about 23 % of the total world's total in 2012 (PRB 2012). These countries are highly heterogonous with respect to population size which ranges from 242 million for Indonesia and 176 million for Pakistan to as few as one million or less for Suriname, Guyana, Comoros and Djibouti.

Population growth rates in OIC countries also vary considerably from country to country and are clearly reflected in their age pyramids which reflect the dominance of children 15 years of age or younger in nearly all OIC countries. The OIC's highest growth rates exist in Niger and Uganda (+3.6 %) and its lowest are reported for Guyana (−0.4 %) and +0.3 % for Albania (Unicef 2012). These population growth trends are at considerable variance with those reported for the both the OIC on average as well as those of the world-as-a-whole (Table 4). Net population growth trends of this size impose severe social and economic constraints on the ability of OIC member to both hasten the pace of their development and to reduce the growing levels of social discontent, including among unemployed university graduates, found in countries experiencing the most rapid population growth rates (Drine 2012).

The OIC's population challenges are compounded by its high *age-dependency ratios*. i.e., a combination of high fertility rates and rapidly increasing numbers of persons 60–65 years of age and older. The OIC's rapidly increasing age dependency ratios are preventing many of its members from creating the social infrastructure needed to satisfy at least the basic material needs of their populations, (for schools, improved health care, improved housing, and employment for all persons wish to become or remain economically active). Involuntary joblessness is especially high among the OIC's large population of young people below the age of 30 years as well as for women (ILO 2012b). Both joblessness and under-employment contribute to a profound sense of *social anomie* among such persons and not infrequently, spills over into social unrest and political discontent.

Similarly, differences in average *life expectancy rates*, which is one of the most favorable outcomes of progress in social development, remain variable throughout the OIC member states, i.e., an average of 55.6 (SD = 5.8) years for the OIC's least developed countries and averages that are substantially higher for the OIC's most economically advanced countries, i.e., 78.4 years for Qatar. As-a-group, though, averages years of life expectation for OIC member states is much lower than that reported for the world-as-a-whole (Average is 67.9 years).

Infant mortality rates, which are calculated on the basis of the incidence of infant deaths per 1,000 live births, are another important indicator of social progress. Again, Islamic countries are highly variable on this aspect of development which averages 50.0 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in comparison with a group average of 34.3:1,000 for the world-as-a-whole. Within the OIC community, infant death rates in only the seven successor states to the Former Soviet Union approach approaches the world average (Average CIS = 32.9).

Adult literacy rates reflect the efforts made by individual countries in extending to the most basic literacy skills in reading and writing to their populations. Because of their importance these rates are considered robust measures of overall societal progress. Here again, OIC countries are some 12 points lower than the world's average of 82.7 %. The OIC's LDCs (N = 21) register an average of 48.1 % adult literacy levels while the OIC's most socially advanced countries have achieved an average adult literacy rate of 80.2 %.

The percentages of people who are *Muslims* also varies considerably among the OIC member states—with percentages ranging from as low as 7.2 and 9.7 % in Guyana and

Gabon to highs of 99.8 99.6 % in Tunisia and Iran, respectively. On average, approximately three quarters of the total population of OIC countries are Muslims.

Overall, the OIC performances on population indicators confirm that, with some exceptions, Islamic countries are underperforming on virtually all indicators relative to the demographic achievements reported for the world-as-a-whole.

4.2 Economic Characteristics

A close examination of the OIC's performances on selected economic indicators (Table 5) also confirms the high degree of economic heterogeneity that exists within the Ummah. While a few OIC countries are succeeding on a limited number of these indicators, the majority of the OIC's member states still have a long reach if they are achieve economic outcomes at levels realized by the world-as-a-whole.

Regarding the widely used indicator of *per capita gross domestic product* (PCGDP) as a proxy variable for quality of life, the OIC's developing countries (N = 24) earned an average of $15,183 (SD = $20,452) in 2011 while the PCGDP of its Least Developing Countries (N = 21) averaged only $1,510 (SD = $592) during the same year, i.e., approximately one-tenth of that realized by the group of 27 DCs. PCGDP levels are especially low for the poorest OIC members–Somalia ($600) and Niger ($800). Per capita incomes at this level exist in sharp contrast with those reported for the OIC's richest member states which are 160 times higher than those of it's the poorest members, i.e., Qatar ($98,900) or Kuwait ($41,700)! The wealth gap that exists within the OIC is continuing to widen, especially as their population growth rates stabilize. Stunning intra-OIC wealth differences are especially prominent among countries experiencing very significant different rates of population and *economic growth*, i.e., −10.5 % for resource poor but population rich Yemen versus +18.8 and +14.7 % for oil rich Qatar and Turkmenistan, respectively.

The picture of economic development within the OIC is further complicated when taking into consideration the very high levels of *foreign indebtedness* that exists for the majority of the OIC's poorest countries, i.e., Guinea-Bissau (203 %) and the Gambia (170 %). However, other countries, including Algeria, have made early repayments of their external debt a priority with the result that Algeria now has the 2nd lowest external debt level among OIC countries (International Monetary Fund 2012a, 2013). Even so, the heavily levels of external indebtedness that exists for the majority of the OIC membership severely limits their ability to initiate new development initiatives within their borders.

Similarly, average *unemployment* (and under-employment) levels within OIC countries is very high (17.4 %, SD = 16.3)…nearly twice that of the world-as-a-whole (9.1 %). And, as with other economic measures, huge discrepancies in joblessness within different groupings of OIC countries, i.e., an average of 24.0 % of joblessness for the LDCs and 13.2 % for the DCs and the successor states to the former Soviet Union.[14] Joblessness among young persons exceeds 25 % and is well above that for the OIC's women for whom joblessness is more the norm than the exception (ILO 2012b).

Further, poverty rates are very high within and between the member states of the OIC. The country and subgrouping unemployment rates in Table 5 confirm that large numbers of people within OIC countries live well under *nationally established poverty thresholds*. Poverty rates for the OIC members also are higher than those reported for the world-as-a-

[14] The unemployment figures reported here reflect different time periods and, therefore, may not fully reflect the full employment–unemployment picture for all countries at the same point in time (ILO 2012a, b).

whole and certainly higher than those which exist within other associations of countries, i.e., an average of 34.7 % (SD = 19.5 %) for OIC states versus an average of 22.4 % for the world-as-a-whole. Poverty levels are especially unfavorable within the OIC's least developing countries, i.e., 47.6 % (SD = 13.3 %). Paradoxically, poverty levels have increased for many nations since the "Arab Spring" of 2011 and 2012.

GINI Coefficients[15] GINI scores for OIC member states attests to increasing income inequality both within and between the OIC's membership, i.e., an average GINI score of 38.6 (SD = 6.1) for the OIC-as-a-whole compared with 39.0 for the world community. The OIC's five member states of the former Soviet Union are characterized by generally lower level of income inequality (Average = 34.2, SD = 3.8)…another aspect of their social legacy associated with the poverty alleviation efforts of the former USSR. Troublesome, too, are the increases in income inequality reported in Table 5 for Comoros (64.3), Malaysia (46.2) and Cameroun (44.6). The lowest levels of income inequality are reported for reported for Tajikistan (29.4), Iraq (30.9), and Kazakhstan (30.9).

Unless some genuine development measures are undertaken on behalf of these countries, disparities in income inequality will continue to increase with the OIC membership. Such disparities, in addition to creating poverty, also contribute to social unrest and political instability within both the most affected countries and subregions. Too many of the OIC's member states are trapped in a quagmire of economic inequality in combination with high levels of political instability (Estes 2012a, b; Sachs 2005; Sen 2009).

4.3 Political Characteristics

The member states of the OIC also are characterized by considerable variations with respect to a wide range of political indicators (Table 6). Forty-five out of the 53 countries studied enjoy *republican* forms of government in which political participation on the part of all adult residents is encouraged. In ten of these countries, however, the political position of their head of state (usually referred to as "president") is only *ceremonial* in nature versus in the majority of countries organized as republics where the head of state also presides over the country's executive branch. Eight OIC countries are ruled by, or at least heavily influenced by, *monarchies*–five of which are *constitutional monarchies* and three of which are *absolute monarchies* (Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia). Thus, levels of political participation within OIC countries varies enormously by the type of political system found in each country.

The WISP's subindex of *Social Chaos* measures four levels of social and political stability: (1) strength of *political and civil liberties*; (2) the number of internally and externally *displaced persons* resulting from wars and intra-national conflicts; (3) the number of *deaths resulting from armed conflicts*; and (4) the *level of perceived public corruption* (Estes 2010). Each of these dimensions is measured by international NGO research think tanks that have been monitoring development at the country and world level for at least 10 years (Freedom House 2012; Transparency International 2012). Only 11 OIC countries attained scores on this subindex that competed favorably with average scores reported for the world-as-a-whole (Table 6). Three countries–Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia—attained WISP scores well below those of the world-as-a-whole and are countries characterized by high levels of social and political instability. All are at war as well and, therefore, the causalities reported for these countries, as well as the number of

[15] Gini coefficients range from 0 to 100 with the highest levels of income inequality at the higher ends of the scale.

internally and externally displaced persons associated with these countries and their neighboring states, are steadily increasing. Since 2011, political instability has characterized public life in other countries of the OIC, including Syria and Mali.

In terms of scores on the *Political Freedom Index* which range from 1 (most free) to 7 (least free), 39 OIC countries attained scores lower that of the world as a whole (Average = 3.6). Rich oil countries such as Saudi Arabia attained the least favorable scores on the index along with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Chad, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Libya. The situation in Libya is changing quickly following the fall of the Guaddafi regime, while Syria is still in the midst of her revolution. The general situation of the majority of OIC countries is more or less the same on the *Civil Liberties Index* scores reported by countries and subgroups of related countries. Forty-two OIC member states, for example, scored lower on the index and all 160 countries reflected in the worldwide average of 3.3.

While a score of 100 indicates the lowest possible level of public corruption using the *Corruption Perceptions Index* (Transparency International 2012), seven OIC countries (Turkey, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Qatar and Saudi Arabia) scored just slightly higher than the world average of 43.3. The most corrupt OIC countries identified on the index are Afghanistan and Somalia

With regard to *Failed State Index*, OIC countries averaged 14 points higher (SD = 4.2) on the index than the international average (70.9). Significant social collapses are continuing to occur in many of these countries including in Somalia (114.9), Chad (107.6), Yemen (104.8), Guinea (101.9), Pakistan (101.6), Nigeria (101.1), Iraq (104.3) and Cote d'Ivoire (103.6). Only a few OIC countries at moving forward steadily on this index of political stability, i.e., Qatar (48.0), Albania (66.1), and Bahrain (66.1), albeit Bahrain's overall performance has not been as favorable during recent years than in the past. Though, the performance of this latter country is not as solid as it was because of the recent civil unrest.

Lastly, advancing *gender equality* and encouraging women's active participation in public life is an important factor in the development of nations, especially in the ability of women to participate in political decision making. Using *percentage of seats allocated to women in parliament* as a proxy variable to representing overall progress of women within OIC member states, the status of women in Islamic societies continues to lag far behind that of men, i.e., with women holding an average of only 14.4 (SD = 8.8) percent of parliamentary seats compared with those held by women in other world regions (Average = 20.3 %) and, certainly, in comparison with the percentage of seats held by men (UNDP 2005). The situation is especially problematic countries such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar which deny women any form of participation in the making and shaping of laws and public policies in these countries. The OIC's most favorable public policy participatory rates for women exist in Mozambique (39.2 %) and Uganda (37.2 %).

5 Islamic Development Trends by Geographic Region

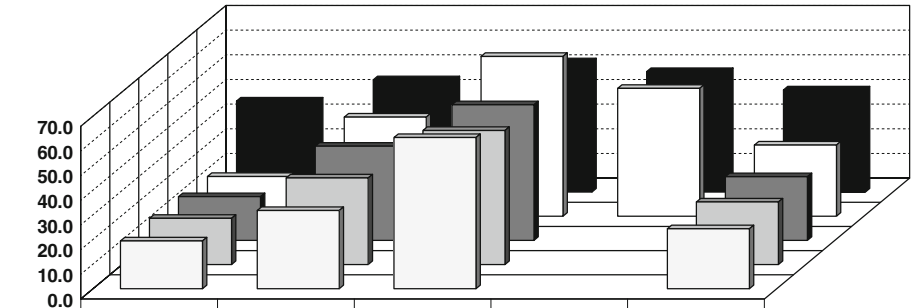
As noted in the previous section, the state of social development within and between the 53 countries included in this analysis is highly variable. The reasons for these variations are complex but, in most cases, are associated with a legacy of colonialism for many OIC members (Nasr 2013), recurrent inter-group conflicts and intransigent intra-regional wars (Wikipedia 2013c, d), limited natural resources (World Resources Institute 2013), significant gender inequalities (UNDP 2005; UN-Women 2011) and, for manioc countries, comparatively low levels of human capital (UNDP 2011). These barriers to development

exist in combination with inadequate investments on the part of central governments in critical social and economic infrastructure (World Bank 2013). Widespread patterns of public corruption (Transparency International 2012) and increasing levels of income inequality (World Bank 2013) add to the mix of development challenges that confront OIC member states. These development challenges are especially prominent among the African states (African Development Bank 2012, 2013) but also characterize the political situation in many of the OIC's Asian members (Asian Development Bank 2012, 2013), especially those located in the *South Central Asia* subregion (UNDP 2013). As a result, overall patterns of social development for the majority of the members of the OIC tend to be lower on average that those observed for other associations of nations, i.e., the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN), and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), among others.

The current development situation of the OICs middle and lowest performing states on the WISP is compounded by the reality that 21of its members (37 %) are classified by the United Nations as "Least Developed Countries" (UN-OHRLLS 2009b). The OIC's LDCs contain approximately 443.7 million people who, in turn, represent 28.1 % of the OIC population and 6.4 % of the world's total. Poverty is widespread in these countries, average life expectation is comparatively low, and most of these countries rank in the bottom 25 % on the set of demographic, economic and political indicators reported in Tables 4, 5, and 6.As a result, the need for international development assistance for these nations is great and is increasing as their populations continue to grow (UNDP 2011).

Figure 3 reports average WISP scores over a 40-year time period for all 53 member states of the OIC included in the analysis; Fig. 4 reports the percent changes that occurred in the average WISP scores of the same group of countries for the periods 1970–1980, 1980–1990, 1990–2000, and 2000–2011. The data summarized in both figures are organized by major continental groupings and for the OIC-as-a-whole (N = 4).

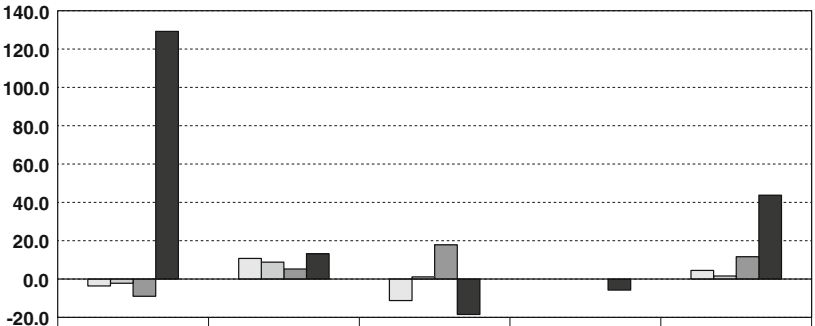
The data summarized in Fig. 3 identifies the *European* (WISP2011 Average = 52.8), *Latin American* (WISP2011 Average = 48.8), and *Asian* (WISP2011 Average = 45.5) members of the OIC as having achieved the highest average WISP scores across the full 40-year period covered by the analysis. These WISP performances are impressive and



	Africa (27)	Asia (23)	Eur (1)	L Am (2)	ALL (53)
1970	19.4	31.7	61.3	NA	24.3
1980	18.7	35.1	54.4	NA	25.4
1990	17.7	38.2	55.0	NA	25.8
2000	16.1	40.2	64.8	51.8	28.8
2011	36.9	45.5	52.8	48.8	41.4

[CONT_OIC_11]

Fig. 3 Average WISP scores for member states of the OIC by continental groupings, 1970–2010 (N = 53)



	Africa (27)	Asia (23)	Europe (1)	Lat Amer (2)	ALL (53)
% 1970-1980	-3.6	10.7	-11.3	NA	4.5
% 1980-1990	-2.2	8.8	1.1	NA	1.6
% 1990-2000	-9.0	5.2	17.8	NA	11.6
% 2000-2011	129.2	13.2	-18.5	-5.8	43.8

[%CONT_OIC_11]

Fig. 4 Percent change in average WISP scores of member states of the OIC by continental groupings, 1970–2010 (N = 53)

compare favorably with the average regional WISP scores reported for the world-as-a-whole in Figs. 1 and 2 (WISP2010 Average = 48.7). At the same time, the comparatively recent social improvements that have taken place in these geographic regions since 2000 are fragile and likely cannot be sustained over the long term without continued financial and technical assistance support from the international community.

5.1 Subregional Development Trends

The membership of the OIC consists of countries located in nine of the world's 19 major geographic subregions. The subregions represented by the OIC are identified in Fig. 5 which both: (1) rank orders each subregion in terms of its average performance on the WISP in 2011; and, (2) identifies the average number of changes in WISP rank positions for each subregion between 2000 and 2011. These data offer important insights into identifying those OIC subregions that have experienced the most and least favorable WISP scores and changes in WISP rank positions during the most recent developmental decade. They also focus the reader's attention on the subregions that are in need of increasing levels of development assistance by the OIC and wider community of nations.

The six OIC subregions that achieved the most favorable average WISP scores for 2011 were: *Southern Europe* (WISP2011 Average = 52.8), *South America* (WISP2011 Average = 48.8), *South East Asia* (WISP2011 Average = 46.8), *North Africa* (WISP2011 Average = 46.6), *West Asia* (WISP2011 Average = 46.2) and, somewhat surprisingly, *South Central Asia* (WISP2011 Average = 44.3). The average WISP scores achieved by these six subregions compare favorably with the average WISP levels reported for: (1)other OIC subregions; (2) the world's 10 subregions in which there is no OIC member state; and, (3) those composite scores reported for the world-as-a-whole (WISP2011 Average = 48.7). Further, the recent WISP achievements of these subregions are impressive given their appreciably lower average WISP scores reported for earlier development decades (Estes 2010).

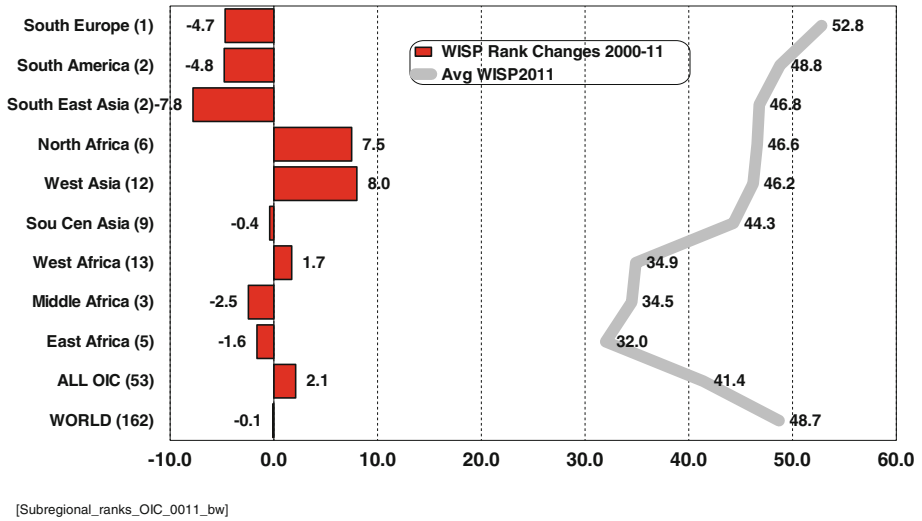
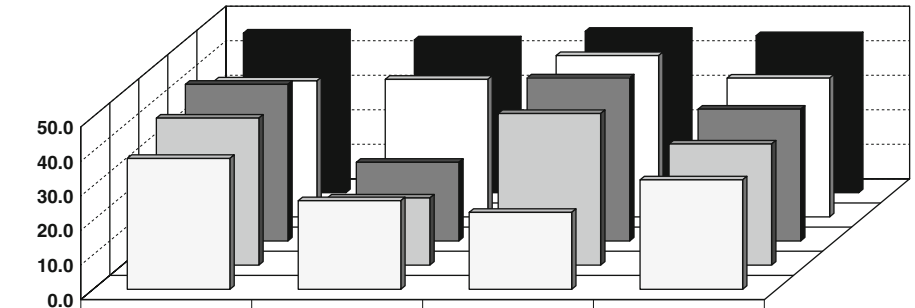


Fig. 5 Rank ordered average subregional WISP scores for OIC members and percent change in WISP, 1970–2011 (N = 9 regions)

Data reported in the figure for subregional changes in WISP rank positions between 2000 and 2011, however, present a different picture than that which emerges when examining only the average subregional WISP scores for 2011. For example, the 10-year changes in WISP rank positions indicate that the three top performing OIC subregions also experienced the highest number of net social losses in WISP rank positions between 2000 and 2011, i.e., *Southern Europe* (−4.7 rank positions), *South America* (−4.8 rank positions), and *South East Asia* (−7.8 rank positions). However, these losses in rank positions are not significant when compared to average 2000–2011 net losses in rank positions experienced by other world subregions (Estes 2013b) but they do, nonetheless, reduce the significance of recent increases in WISP levels reported for these subregions.

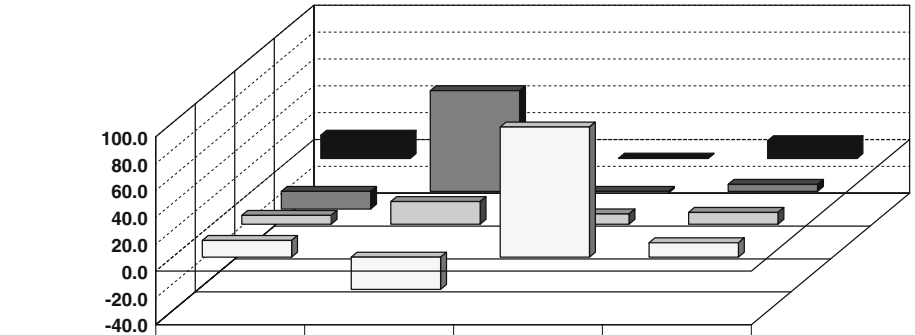
Of the OIC's six subregions with the most favorable average WISP scores only the *North African* (+7.5) and *West Asian*(+8.0) subregions experienced net gains in *both* their WISP scores and 10-year WISP rank positions during over the most recent development decade. The negative change in WISP rank position reported for the *South Central Asian* region (−0.4) is too small to be statistically meaningful, especially given the 10-year WISP gain of +11.0 % reported for *South Central Asia*, i.e., from a WISP subregional average of 39.9 in 2000 to a subregion average of 44.3 in 2011(Figs. 6, 7). Also, the nine nations of the *South Central Asia* subregions includes five countries that only recently achieved independence only since the collapse of the former Soviet Union in December, 1991–*Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan,* and *Uzbekistan*. These countries are predominately rural, highly traditional, have only limited histories of interacting with the larger world community and, as of now, continue to retain many of the authoritarian political patterns developed during their seven decades of dominance by the Soviet Union (Table 6; CIA 2013). Though comparatively low-moderate in overall levels of human capital, several of these countries are rich in natural resources (World Resource Institute 2013), the presence of which has attracted considerable external investment into the subregion (International Monetary Fund 2012b).



	West (12)	South Central (9)	South East (2)	ALL (23)
1970	37.9	25.7	22.3	31.7
1980	42.6	19.5	43.9	35.1
1990	45.4	22.8	47.3	38.2
2000	39.4	39.9	46.7	40.2
2011	46.2	44.3	46.8	45.5

[CONT_OIC_Asian_11]

Fig. 6 Average WISP scores for Asian members of the OIC by subregion, 1970–2011 (N = 23)

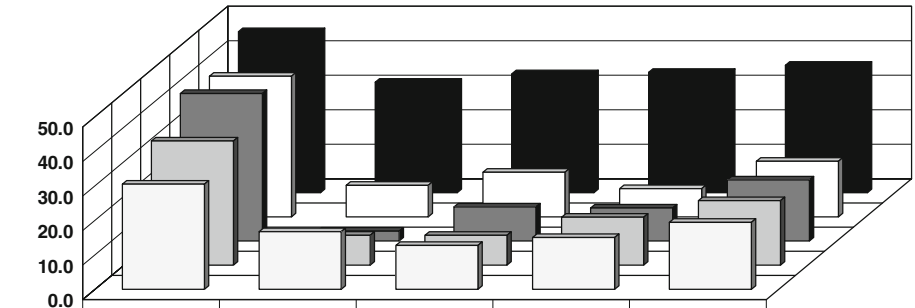


	West (12)	Sou Cen (9)	Sou East (2)	ALL (23)
& 1970-80	12.4	-24.1	96.9	10.7
% 1980-90	6.6	16.9	7.7	8.8
% 1990-2000	-13.2	75.0	-1.3	5.2
% 2000-11	17.3	11.0	0.2	13.2

[Percent CONT_OIC_Asian_11_bw]

Fig. 7 Percent change in average WISP scores for Asian members of the OIC by subregion, 1970–2011 (N = 33)

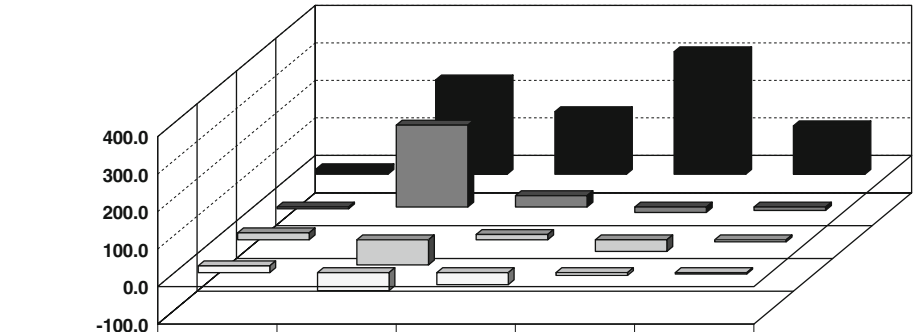
However, the *South Central Asian* subregion also includes *Afghanistan*, *Bangladesh*, and *Iran*—two of which are countries that either are at war (Afghanistan) or are experiencing high levels of political instability (Iran). Developments in *Bangladesh* have been impeded by the country's high poverty level that engulfs nearly a third of the country's total population (CIA 2013). Also, at least 13 %, likely more, of the working age populations of the *Caucasus* and *Central Asia* subregions are unemployed, including many who are in possession of university degrees that are not competitive in a global economic system (International Monetary Fund 2012b). Most of the unemployment in these subregions is long-term in nature and, as result, growing numbers of young people are leaving these countries in search of better economic opportunities elsewhere (International Organization of Migration 2010).



	North (6)	East (5)	Middle (3)	West (13)	ALL (27)
1970	30.5	16.7	12.7	15.0	19.4
1980	36.0	8.7	8.6	13.9	18.7
1990	42.7	2.9	9.9	9.6	17.7
2000	40.7	9.1	12.9	8.2	16.1
2011	46.7	32.0	34.5	34.9	36.9

[CONT_OIC_Africa_11]

Fig. 8 Average WISP scores for African members of the OIC by subregion, 1970–2011 (N = 27)



	North (6)	East (5)	Middle (3)	West (13)	ALL (27)
% 1970-80	18.1	-48.1	-32.2	-7.4	-3.6
% 1980-90	18.7	-66.9	14.2	-30.9	-5.3
% 1990-2000	-4.7	218.5	30.3	-14.5	-9.0
% 2000-11	14.7	251.6	166.9	326.7	129.2

[Percent CONT_OIC_Africa_11_bw]

Fig. 9 Percent change in average WISP scores for African members of the OIC by subregion, 1970–2011 (N = 27)

The OIC subregions with the lowest average WISP scores were *East Africa* (WISP2011 Average = 32.0), *Middle Africa* (WISP2011 Average = 34.5), and *West Africa* (WISP2011 Average = 34.9). The average WISP scores and percentage change in these scores between 2000 and 2011, of these subregions reported in Figs. 8 and 9 are well below those reported for most other world subregions. Further, over the study's most recent 10-year period, net positive changes in WISP rank positions were recorded only for the *West African* subregion (+1.7) while the *Middle African* and *East African* subregions experienced 10-year losses in WISP rank positions averaging −2.5 and −1.6, respectively. Thus, Africa's *Eastern* (N = 5 countries), *Middle* (N = 3 countries) and *Western* (N = 13 countries) subregions, as in the past (Estes 1995; African Development Bank 2013),

continue to be the least developed within the OIC, albeit very important improvements occurred in the average WISP scores occurred of all three subregions between 2000 and 2011, i.e., +252, +167, and +327 %, respectively (Fig. 9).

Many African members of the OIC, especially those located in the continent's Middle and Central subregions, are moving steadily forward in advancing their development profiles. In doing so, they are benefitting directly from the preferential aid and technical assistance that is being provided to them by the United Nations system since the launching of the MDC in 2005. The containment of long-standing internal civil wars and intra-regional conflicts in these same subregions also added measurably to the region's recent development successes (Wikipedia 2013c, d), especially to increasing levels of political stability (CIA 2013), greater transparency in international trade (Transparency International 2012), and the beginning emergence of at least basic social safety nets (UN 2012b; UNDP 2011).

However, the average WISP scores of Africa's three lowest developed subregions continue to remain the lowest in the world despite their preferential aid status within the MDC (Estes 2010). Many of these countries continue to struggle with the legacy of aid-related dependency (Glennie 2008; Leonard and Straus 2003; Moyo 2009) as well as with a broad range of social, political, and economic problems that have their origins in deeply rooted national and international forces (African Development Bank 2012, 2013).

Africa's recent development trends provide solid evidence that the continent's nations, on average, are moving forward and are doing so at a comparatively rapid rate. Whether or not these patterns of development can be sustained once the MDC ends in 2015, however, remains uncertain.

6 The Pace of Social Development in Islamic Countries

In this section, the member states of the OIC are regrouped into three development classifications: (1) countries with the *highest WISP scores and highest WISP rank positions* in 2011 (N = 15); (2) countries with the *lowest WISP scores and lowest WISP rank positions* in 2011 (N = 15); and (3) 23 countries that are characterized as *middle performing countries* with respect to both their 2011 WISP scores and WISP rank positions (Table 7). In other reports of worldwide social development trends, Estes (2010, 2013b) has referred to the first group of nations as world *Social Leaders* (SLs), the second group as *Socially Least Developing Countries* (SLDCs), and the third group as *Middle Performing Countries* (MPCs). This taxonomy, however, cannot be applied to the member states of the OIC inasmuch as the highest WISP score attained by any member of the OIC was only 53 (Qatar), a score that is just four points higher than the average score of 49 reported for all 160 countries included in the world study in which WISP2010 scores range from a high of 98 (Sweden and Denmark) to a low of −14 (Afghanistan). Hence, in this section of the analysis we will refer to the three clusters of OIC member states as the countries with the "highest", "lowest" and "middle level" performances on the WISP2011. However, the WISP rank positions reported in the Table 7 for 1990, 2000, and 2011 (columns 6, 7 and 8) rank OIC member states relative to all 160 countries included in the worldwide study of social development, i.e., Qatar's WISP2011 rank of 51 (column 8) means that Qatar ranks first in overall level of social development among member states of the OIC but 51st worldwide.

Also, Table 7 reports WISP scores and WISP rank positions for 1990, 2000, and 2011 for each nation individually as well as group medians, averages, and standard deviations

Table 7 OIC member states rank ordered by 2011 WISP scores (N = 53)

WISP 1990 (Base = 124)	WISP 2000 (Base = 163)	WISP 2011 (Base = 162)	% Change in WISP scores 2000–2011	OIC member states (N = 53)	WISP 1990 rank (Base = 124)	WISP 2000 rank (Base = 163)	WISP 2011 rank (Base = 162)	OIC WISP rank (Base = 53)	Number rank changes 2000–2011
OIC member states with the highest WISP scores and ranks in 2011 (N = 15)									
NA	36	53	47.4	Qatar	NA	106	51	1	55
NA	50	53	5.8	Kuwait	NA	82	52	2	30
57	57	53	−7.7	Tunisia	51	67	53	3	14
55	65	53	−18.5	Albania	54	49	54	4	−5
NA	61	53	−13.7	Kyrgyz Republic	NA	56	56	5	0
NA	60	52	−12.0	Azerbaijan	NA	58	59	6	−1
45	52	52	−0.1	Lebanon	68	78	61	7	17
NA	52	52	−1.0	Uzbekistan	NA	78	62	8	16
NA	55	51	−7.4	Guyana	NA	70	66	9	4
NA	54	50	−8.2	Turkmenistan	NA	71	75	10	−4
NA	59	49	−16.1	Kazakhstan	NA	61	76	11	−15
45	38	49	28.1	Morocco	67	103	79	12	24
47	48	49	1.1	Egypt	65	88	80	13	8
50	42	49	16.1	Algeria	59	98	82	14	16
NA	44	48	8.5	Bahrain	NA	93	85	15	8
48.8	52.1	51.6	−1.0	Median	62.0	78.3	62.0	8.0	8.4
49.9	51.6	51.0	1.5	Average	60.7	77.5	66.1	8.0	11.4
5.2	8.5	1.9	17.9	SD	7.1	17.7	12.2	4.5	17.0
Middle performing OIC member states on the WISP by WISP scores and ranks in 2011 (N = 23)									
19	32	48	47.5	Bangladesh+	94	114	87	16	27
45	46	47	2.7	Iran	69	90	89	17	1
55	48	47	−1.4	Turkey	53	88	90	18	−2
50	40	47	16.7	Jordan	60	99	92	19	7

Table 7 continued

WISP 1990 (Base = 124)	WISP 2000 (Base = 163)	WISP 2011 (Base = 162)	% Change in WISP scores 2000–2011	OIC member states (N = 53)	WISP 1990 rank (Base = 124)	WISP 2000 rank (Base = 163)	WISP 2011 rank (Base = 162)	OIC WISP rank (Base = 53)	Number rank changes 2000–2011
52	49	47	−3.1	Malaysia	57	84	93	20	−9
48	38	47	24.8	Saudi Arabia	63	103	95	21	8
NA	29	47	59.7	Oman	NA	NA	97	22	NA
NA	49	47	−3.8	Suriname	NA	84	98	23	−14
42	45	46	3.5	Indonesia	73	92	99	24	−7
44	46	46	−1.4	Libya	70	90	103	25	−13
39	39	45	15.4	Syria	74	102	106	26	−4
NA	50	44	−12.4	Tajikistan	NA	82	107	27	−25
NA	28	41	47.6	Gabon	NA	116	118	28	−2
8	3	40	1,183.9	Burkina Faso+	113	150	125	29	25
24	23	39	69.8	Pakistan	88	121	127	30	−6
8	19	39	101.6	Benin+	112	129	128	31	1
NA	22	39	76.6	Comoros+	NA	123	129	32	−6
4	13	39	206.1	Mali+	115	137	130	33	7
24	19	39	108.7	Senegal+	89	129	132	34	−3
13	12	38	209.3	Mauritania+	106	141	133	35	8
12	7	37	442.9	Uganda+	107	147	135	36	12
11	14	37	156.8	Nigeria	110	134	137	37	−3
21	15	36	142.7	Cameroon	92	133	138	38	−5
24.1	29.3	44.2	47.6	Median	88.5	115.2	107.0	27.0	−2.2
28.9	29.8	42.7	125.8	Average	85.8	113.3	112.5	27.0	0.1

Table 7 continued

WISP 1990 (Base = 124)	WISP 2000 (Base = 163)	WISP 2011 (Base = 162)	% Change in WISP scores 2000–2011	OIC member states (N = 53)	WISP 1990 rank (Base = 124)	WISP 2000 rank (Base = 163)	WISP 2011 rank (Base = 162)	OIC WISP rank (Base = 53)	Number rank changes 2000–2011
17.7	15.3	4.2	252.9	SD	21.4	22.5	18.3	6.8	11.9
OIC member states with the lowest WISP scores and ranks in 2011 (N = 15)									
NA	8	35	330.2	Yemen$^{+, *}$	NA	146	141	39	5
13	13	35	179.4	Sudan$^{+, *}$	105	137	142	40	−5
3	−4	35	1,005.1	Niger$^{+, \#}$	117	155	143	41	12
16	12	35	197.7	Cote D'Ivoire*	99	141	145	42	−4
NA	13	34	174.7	The Gambia+	NA	137	146	43	−9
17	14	34	141.9	Togo+	96	134	147	44	−13
NA	12	33	184.9	Djibouti+	NA	141	148	45	−7
−4	4	33	754.9	Mozambique+	123	149	149	46	0
−1	5	32	512.1	Guinea+	120	148	151	47	−3
35	28	28	−1.9	Iraq*	80	116	154	48	−38
NA	−4	27	802.8	Guinea−Bissau$^{+, \#}$	NA	155	155	49	0
−2	−4	26	804.6	Chad$^{+, \#}$	121	155	156	50	−1
2	−10	25	351.3	Sierra Leone$^{+, \#}$	118	159	159	51	0
1	1	17	1,366.8	Somalia$^{+, *}$	119	153	161	52	−8
3	−19	17	188.1	Afghanistan$^{+, *}$	116	163	162	53	1
3.0	5.2	33.0	330.2	Median	117.0	148.0	149.0	46.0	−3.0
7.6	4.6	29.8	466.2	Average	110.4	146.2	150.6	46.0	−4.4
11.8	11.6	6.2	393.4	SD	13.6	11.9	6.9	4.5	11.0
All OIC member states (N = 53)									
21.4	29.3	44.2	47.5	Median	92.0	115.2	107.0	27.0	−0.3
25.8	28.8	41.4	187.0	Average	89.2	112.5	110.2	27.0	2.1
20.4	21.8	9.2	320.7	SD	24.2	32.1	35.1	15.4	14.5

Table 7 continued

WISP 1990 (Base = 124)	WISP 2000 (Base = 163)	WISP 2011 (Base = 162)	% Change in WISP scores 2000–2011	OIC member states (N = 53)	WISP 1990 rank (Base = 124)	WISP 2000 rank (Base = 163)	WISP 2011 rank (Base = 162)	OIC WISP rank (Base = 53)	Number rank changes 2000–2011
World (N = 162)									
48.1	48.5	48.7	0.4	Averages	63.3	81.6	81.5	NA	−0.1

Source Estes (2013b)

NA refers to either "missing" or to data that are "not available" or "not applicable"

$^{+}$ Indicates OIC member states identified by the United Nations as "Least Developing Countries" (UN-OHRLLS 2009b)

* Indicates OIC member states identified by the Fund For Peace (2011) as either "failed" (*) or 'failing" states (Fund for Peace 2011)

for each of the three clusters of nations as well as those of the OIC-as-a-group. Average WISP scores and ranks for the world-as-a-whole also are reported in the table for comparison purposes. The table, then, provides a comprehensive summary of the state of social development for all member states of the OIC since 1990 as well as that of OIC-as-a-whole in comparison with worldwide trends.

6.1 OIC Members with the Highest WISP Scores

The 15 OIC countries with the highest WISP scores in 2011 are identified in the top category of Table 7. The table reports country WISP scores and WISP rank positions for 1990, 2000, and 2011 and also summarize the percentage change that occurred in WISP scores and WISP rank positions between 2000 and 2011 (columns 4 and 9).

The OIC's top performing countries on the WISP in 2011 include: *Qatar, Kuwait, Tunisia, Albania, the Kyrgyz Republic, Azerbaijan, Lebanon, Uzbekistan, Guyana, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Egypt, Algeria,* and *Bahrain*. The majority of these countries already had attained the OIC's highest WISP scores during the developmental decades that preceded 2000–2011 and, as a result, were able to continue to build on their earlier social accomplishments. The presence of large reserves of high quality petroleum (Kuwait and Qatar), comparative ease of access to international financial markets (Bahrain, Kuwait, and Qatar), a favorable geographic location along the Mediterranean Sea (Morocco, Egypt, Algeria), and geographic proximity to the more socially developed countries of Western Europe (Albania) all combined to accelerate the pace of social development that is occurring within this group of OIC member states. Comparatively small populations and the existence of established land and water transportation networks also figure prominently in the rapid development changes observed for these countries.

Of some importance, too, is that five of the 15 top performing OIC countries were, until 1991, satellites of the former Soviet Union: *Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan,* and *Uzbekistan*. An additional country, *Albania*, also was influenced directly by the former Soviet Union as a member of the Warsaw Pact.[16] Though the majority of these societies existed along only the social margins of the former Soviet Union they did, nonetheless, benefit directly from the USSR's effort to establish a broad range of social programs designed to meet at least the basic needs of all the people that lived within her sphere of influence, e.g., for food, housing, health care, education (including higher education), energy, transportation, and communications infrastructure, and so on (Nove 1979). These six countries also participated in the establishment of social safety nets designed to protect their most vulnerable population groups (e.g., children and the aged, the poor, persons with disabilities) from the ravages of extreme poverty with the result that, today, many of these societies, including Albania, developed some of the earliest systems of universal social security found in either Europe or Asia (USSSA 2013).

The majority of the highest performing countries in 2011, as evidenced by their WISP scores, benefitted directly from their already comparatively more advanced levels of development prior to 2011. The development patterns were broad-based in nature and were reflected on the majority of the 10 subindexes that comprise the WISP (Estes 1998a, 2012b). The development challenges that confronted the nations of South Central Asia

[16] Referred to as the *Warsaw Treaty Organization of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance,* the eight member states of this organization were: Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Soviet Union. The Warsaw Pact ceased to exist following the collapse of the Soviet Union in December, 1991.

following their forced shift to more open political and economic systems in 1991proved daunting but, on average, these countries have been able to continue their forward progress…but not always at the same level as that experienced by other groups of socially developed nations worldwide (Estes 2013a, b).

The remaining nine highest performing OICs on the WISP between 2000 and 2011 are located primarily in North Africa (e.g., Algeria, Egypt, and Morocco) and West Asia (e.g., Bahrain, Lebanon). The only country among the top performing 15 that is located outside these regions is Guyana (South America) whose WISP scores were higher than those reported for the world-as-a-whole for both 2000 and 2011, i.e., 55 and 51, respectively.

6.2 OIC Members with the Lowest WISP Scores

Table 7 also identifies the 15 OIC states that performed the most poorly on the WISP: *Afghanistan**, *Somalia**, *Sierra Leone#*, *Chad**, *Guinea-Bissau#*, *Iraq**, *Guinea*, *Mozambique*, *Djibouti*, *Togo*, *the Gambia*, *and Cote d'Ivoire**, *Niger#*, *Sudan**, and *Yemen**. The average WISP scores for these countries in 2011 was only 29.8 (SD = 6.2)—a level of WISP attainment well below that reported for the OIC-as-a-whole (WISP2011 Average = 41.4, SD = 9.2) and for the world-as-a-whole (WISP2011 Average = 48.7). Twelve of the lowest performing countries on the WISP in 2011 are located in Africa and three in Asia. Ten of the lowest performing OIC states on the WISP were identified as either "failed" (*) or "failing" (#) states by the Fund for Peace in 2011 (Fund for Peace 2011; Estes 2012a) and 13 of these 15 nations—all but Cote d'Ivoire and Iraq—have been classified as "least developed" countries (LDCs) by the United Nations (UN-OHRLLS 2009a, b, c, d).[17]

The majority of LDCs worldwide, including the OIC nations with the lowest WISP scores included in this study, lack the essential social, political, and economic capital required to advance their state of social development (ADB 2012; UNDP 2013). They also are heavily in debt to the World Bank, the IMF, regional development banks, as well as to individual countries that provided them financial assistance on a concessionary basis (IMF 2012a).

In the most extreme situations, the OIC's lowest performing countries on the WISP, like many other low performing countries worldwide, are in danger of imploding upon themselves; thus, their classification by the Fund for Peace as "failed" or "failing" nations. In an effort to counterbalance this possibility, the *Millennium Development Campaign* has targeted the OIC's lowest performing countries for preferential aid and development technical assistance in helping them achieve the MDCs eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The realization of these goals is understood to be prerequisites for these countries to turn their downward development trajectory toward a more positive outcome. As a result, many of the most significant social gains reported in Table 7 for this subset of the OIC's are the direct result of their successful implementation of the MDC (UN 2005, 2012a, b).

Further, the favorable development trends that are beginning to occur within this group of 15 OIC member states are occurring at a rapid pace, especially for those countries located in the African subregions whose WISP scores increased by a group average of 466 % between 2000 and 2011 (column 4)! Changes in WISP scores of this magnitude and

[17] LDCs and SLDCs consist of the world's poorest and slowest developing countries. The majority of these countries have been identified by the United Nations as "least developing" (LDCs) but they also include other low-income and politically unstable societies that are at risk of social, economic or political collapse (CIA 2013; Estes 2010; Wikipedia 2013a, b).

unparalleled and are not a statistical artifact stemming from their very low scores at the outset of study. Rather, these group average changes in development status very real advances that are being to be made in the basic social, political, and economic infrastructure of many of these countries especially in reducing the exceptionally high rates of infant, child (MDG #4) and maternal mortality (MDG #5) that pre-existed implementation of the MDGs (UNDP 2011; World Bank 2010). School enrolments levels of girls and young women (MDG #2 and #3) also have increased appreciably within these countries as have immunizations (MDG #6) against the most common infectious and communicable diseases that exist in their communities (UN 2012a, b). Of significance, too, is the emergence of new regional and international partnerships (MDG #8) between the OIC's lowest performing countries and other private actors in the international development assistance community, including those with individual benefactors (e.g., George Soros in Central Asia and William and Melinda Gates in Africa).

Thus, a substantial share of the recent 10-year gains in development achieved by the OIC's lowest performing countries are directly associated with the successful implementation of the UN's MDC. Other gains reflect the comparatively new, long overdue, non-exploitative partnerships that are emerging between these countries beyond the OIC that have joined with the United Nations in helping to advance the MDC with OIC countries, e.g., the African Development Bank (2012, 2013), the Asia Development Bank (2012, 2013), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2012); the European Union (2013); among others.

Though still fragile, the WISP trends reported for the OIC's 15 lowest performing members are important from both a national and international perspective (Collier 2007). In time, hope exists for believing that the gains in WISP rank positions will reflect the substantial changes in the WISP scores of individual countries. Development gains at this level may prove more difficult to achieve given the nature of the development changes occurring in other world regions (Estes 2013a, b).

6.3 OIC Members with Middle Level Scores on the WISP

Table 7 identifies twenty-three OIC member states as "middle performing" countries (MPCs). The MPCs divided more or less equally between Asian and African members though, on average, Asian countries occupy the top half of the list (with the notable exceptions of Afghanistan and Iraq).

Scores on the WISP for the MPCs in 2011 averaged 42.7 (SD = 4.2) representing a net average increase of 126 % in their WISP scores between 2000 and 2011. Their average WISP rank position in 2011 relative to that of all 160 countries included in the worldwide study 112.5 (SD = 18.3), however, continues to place the OIC's middle performing countries well below the world average WISP rank position of 81.5 (out of 160). Virtually no appreciable changes occurred in the average 10-year WISP rankings of the OIC's MPCs though a number of these countries experienced considerable rank losses between 2000 and 2011, i.e., *Tajikistan* (−25), *Suriname* (−14), *Libya* (−13), *Malaysia* (−9), *Indonesia* (−7), and *Comoros* (−6). At the same time, substantial gains in WISP rank positions were recorded for other MPCs, i.e., *Bangladesh* (+27), *Burkina Faso* (+25), *Uganda* (+12), *Mauritania* (+8), and *Saudi Arabia* (+8).

These data reflect the dynamic nature of the social changes that are occurring in the OIC's middle performing countries, albeit their change trajectory is anything but that of a straight line. Further, the development picture of these countries is clouded by the reality that some of the OIC's most prosperous and poorest members are included in the list of

MPCs…including eight countries classified by the United Nations as "least developing", i.e., *Bangladesh*, *Burkina Faso*, *Benin*, *Comoros*, *Mali*, *Senegal*, *Mauritania*, and *Uganda*. This pattern lends credence to that reported in other regional studies of social development, i.e., that higher levels of *Gross Domestic Product* (GDP) or *Per Capita Gross National Income* (GNI) do not necessarily predict either individual or collective well-being of people or countries over time. Although economic resources play an important role in helping to facilitate the realization of non-economic outcomes, an over-dependency on the part of development scholars in using economic indicators as proxy variables for assessing the state of collective well-being for countries simply is not adequate (Hagerty et al. 2002). Though essential to attaining a basic sense of well-being, higher levels of income *alone* do not necessarily predict higher levels of individual or collective "life satisfaction", "well-being", or "happiness" (Easterlin 2010; Gallup 2013).

7 Discussion

The data summarized in this paper represent a comprehensive overview of trends in social development for 53 member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). The study spans a 40-year time period (1970–2011) and embraces more than 1,580 million people or approximately 23 % of the world's population 2012. An additional population of about 9.8 million Muslims lives in four OIC member countries that are not included in this analysis. Still others reside in countries with large populations of Muslims that are not members of the OIC. Also excluded from the analysis is the very large number of countries with substantial Muslim minority populations.

Forty-year social development trend data were presented for the OIC-as-a-whole (Figs. 3, 4), for OIC member states organized by major geographic regions and subregions (Figs. 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9) and for individual OIC member states for the 20-year time period 1990–2011 (Table 7). Particular emphasis in the analysis has been given to the sometimes dramatic improvements on the WISP that occurred for selected subgroups of the OIC during the 20-year time period 1990–2011(Table 7). The major instrument used to assess changes in social development *over time* was the *Weighted Index of Social Progress* (WISP) which, since 1970, has been used extensively to analyze development trends occurring within other world regions, sub-regions, and individual nations.

The data reported in this paper confirm that the OIC member states are highly diverse with respect to their demographic, economic, and political profiles. The also differ dramatically with respect to the stores of natural and human capital resources available to them as well as in the quality of their relationships with other countries both within and outside the OIC. Some have achieved political independence only recently—since the ending of WWII or following the collapse of the former Soviet Union—while others have been fully autonomous nations since as early as 1502 (Iran) and 1650 (Oman). The vast majority of the members of the OIC, however, achieved independence from European occupying powers only during the last half of the twentieth century (Table 6). Therefore, as nations, the vast majority of member states of the OIC are comparatively young and still are searching for the most appropriate system(s) by which to govern themselves…ala the "Arab Spring" which continues to unfold in many nations of the Middle East and the recurrent internal conflicts that characterize political life in many of the newly independent nations of Middle and Central Africa.

Because of their geographic diversity and large population size, the member states of the OIC, on average, are characterized by extreme income inequality both within their own

borders and between other member states of the OIC. The Gini coefficient for all 53 countries, for example, averages 38.6 (SD = 6.1) with approximately 34.7 % (SD = 19.5) of the population of the OIC living under nationally established poverty thresholds (Table 5). The highest concentrations of poverty exist within the 27 African members of the OIC, but poverty also is a prominent feature of the organization's 23 Asian members. Gender inequality, as in the past, remains a defining characteristic of OIC member states with the result that, today, women and children are disproportionately represented among the OIC's poor. The situation remains bleak over the near-term for not only the OIC's women and children but also for other historically disadvantaged populations, e.g., persons with disabilities, the aged, religious and sexual minorities, among others. Added to this reality is the fact that women in OIC countries occupy only 14 % of the seats (SD = 8.8) of their national parliaments compared with an average of 20 % of women in such positions worldwide.

Though the situation with respect to income inequality is beginning to improve in a few OIC member states, social and economic progress for the OIC-as-a-whole continues to lag behind that observed for other organizations of nations, e.g., Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

Fifty-two of the 53 countries included in this analysis are classified by the United Nations as either "developing" (DCs, N = 31) or "least developing" (LDCs, N = 21) countries; only Turkey, with its large population of 73.6 million people of which 98 % are Muslim, is classified with the group of more economically advanced "developed market economies" (DME). As a result, many of the OICs member countries, but especially its 21 LDCs, are receiving preferential aid development technical assistance from the United Nations through its 10-year *Millennium Development Campaign* (2005–2015). The need for the MDC to succeed is even greater for the 10 deeply impoverished OIC members that have been identified by the Fund for Peace (2011) as either "failed" (e.g., Yemen, Sudan, Cote d'Ivoire, Iraq, Somalia, and Afghanistan) or "failing" (e.g., Niger, Guinea-Bissau, Chad, and Sierra Leone) states.[18] In response to the severe social crises that confront these and other member countries, the OIC launched its own *10-Year Programme of Action* in 2005. Significant social advances already are associated with the implementation of the UN's *MDC* but, as of now, the authors lack clarity concerning the outcomes that can be attributed to the OIC's *10-Year Action Plan*.

Of some significance, too, is the very rapid rate of social change that occurred within the OIC's 15 lowest performing countries on the WISP between 2000 and 2011, i.e., a net average group increase of +466.2 % (SD = 393.4) over the 10-year period. Changes of this magnitude on the WISP are unparalleled, especially for historically low performing countries. Even discounting for some distortions that may have crept into the data during earlier observation time periods, the WISP gains summarized in Table 7 for these 15 nations are real and they are substantial. They also are very much the result of active partnerships between these countries and the United Nations' *MDC* with its laser-like focus on achieving eight *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs) that address the most basic needs of people everywhere in the world. Independent evidence exists that substantial progress has occurred within the OIC's poorest countries on each of these goals (Estes 2010, 2013b; UN 2012a, b; World Bank 2010). The extent to which these gains can be sustained after the MDC ends is 2015, however, remains an open question.

[18] The 10 OIC member states identified as either "failed" or "failing" states are identified in column 5 of Table 4.

8 Recommendations

Islam embraces one out of every four people on the planet; and its prominence among world's population and religions is increasing. But Islam is more than a religion; it is a *way of life* for all its followers, the *Ummah*, and, as such, seeks to promote the satisfaction of all aspects of social, political, economic, and spiritual well-being.

As this still young century continues to unfold, Islamic nations find themselves confronted with widespread poverty, illiteracy, ill health and, in some regions, religious extremism. All are the products of occupation of Islamic countries by foreign powers which, over centuries, exploited the natural and human resources of Islamic lands. But now, nearly all Islamic countries have achieved independence and are in search of new approaches to the attainment of individual and collective well-being.

Building on the principles outlined in the OIC's *Ten-Year Programme of Action* (2005), the authors of this paper suggest that consideration be given by the OIC and its members to the following action steps directed at accelerating the pace of development for its poorest and least developed countries:

1. Significantly strengthening South–South partnerships between OIC member states. Such actions would include developing: (a) an intra-OIC preferential trading system; and, (b) assigning special trading status to the OIC's poorest countries.
2. The launching a new OIC-initiated 10-year development campaign that specifies:
    a. measurable goals and objectives that can be achieved over the near-term;
    b. time lines within which these goals and objectives are to be realized;
    c. demonstrated best practice methods for pursing these goals and objectives;
    d. financial and other resources both within and outside the OIC than can be used to fully implement the campaign.
3. Priority in the new development initiative must be assigned to the OIC's poorest and least developed countries.
4. Among other actions, as an organization, the OIC should aggressively pursue more aggressive approaches to debt forgiveness for its poorest members. The payments that would have been made to offset external indebtedness should, instead, be used by the organization's poorest countries to:
    a. reduce their current high levels of unemployment and under-employment;
    b. promote increased levels of intra-regional and international trade;
    c. build new economic and social infrastructure, especially those that contribute to increased gender equality between men and women; and,
    d. strengthen their generally weak social safety nets, especially for impoverished children, the aged, persons with severe disabilities, chronically unemployed persons, and others that function only on the social margins of most OIC nation states.

Further, this study has identified a large cluster of OIC member states characterized by medium to high level performances in social progress. These gains must be consolidated and stabilized especially if they are to be carried forward into the future. Hence, OIC member countries need to:

1. increase their investments in *human capital development and formation*;
2. foster the return of the large numbers of highly skilled workers that make up the Islamic diaspora;

3. strengthen the role of civil society organizations in working as partners with government in advancing positive patterns of social development;
4. improve the quality of social, political, and economic rights within all OIC countries, but especially in those that only recently have emerged from authoritarian forms of governance; and,
5. Enhance popular participation in the making and shaping of the laws and policies by which the populations of these countries are to be governed;
6. Reduce the rapidly increasing wealth gap between the OICs richest and poorest nations, especially with the development of more effective and equitable approaches to taxation;
7. Reduce the high levels of defense and military expenditures which occur in many of the OIC's members.

The OIC should also take a leading role in promoting a dialogue between Islamic and non-Islamic nations with the goal of achieving greater understanding of one another and more enrich patterns of mutual cooperation. Such a dialogue will work to the benefit of the OIC's member states and to the world-as-a-whole.

Considerable investments also must be made by social scientists in working with governments and civil society in *promoting more inclusive patterns of quality of life* throughout the Islamic world. The activities of social scientists can contribute to significant reductions in poverty levels while promoting greater self-confidence and life satisfaction between and among member states of the OIC (e.g., Tiliouine and Meziane 2012; Tiliouine et al. 2006; UNDP 2011: 176–179).

Finally, a fuller expression of Islam's humane values and rich intellectual legacy could contribute even more to the efforts of the *Ummah* in promoting a brighter future for all member states of the OIC, especially those values that emphasize respect for the religious beliefs and cultures of others, the promotion of tolerance between and among people, observance of universally recognized human rights, enhanced gender equality, and the rejection of fanaticism and extremists. All of these elements must become central features of Islamic development now and in the future.

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