| RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Multidisciplinary Framework for Values Education in Morocco: Key Recommendations for Researchers

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| ABSTRACT

This theoretical paper explores the theoretical frameworks that researchers should consider when studying values and values education in the Moroccan educational context. It calls for a multidisciplinary approach that integrates philosophical, psychological, and sociological perspectives to achieve greater depth and comprehensiveness in tackling topics related to values. Suggested philosophical inquiry includes a number of ethical theories, the theory of moral foundations, and contributions from three Moroccan thinkers. Psychological perspectives, the paper suggests, could focus on moral development and the foundations of moral reasoning, while sociological lenses such as symbolic interactionism and structural functionalism could be cited to help analyze the social dimensions of value transmission in schools as socialization spaces. The paper also reminds researchers of the importance of grounding research in national education policy documents, including the National Charter for Education and Training, the White Paper, and reports by the Higher Council for Education and Training. This approach mainly aims to support more contextualized and meaningful research on values in Morocco, and to offer recommendations to policymakers in light of the current educational reforms.

| KEYWORDS

Behavioral norms - Educational research - Ethics - Morality – Socialization – Values education.

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1. Introduction

A thorough understanding of values education, its origins and its applications in research necessarily requires evoking the broader fields wherein this academic area is grounded. Ethics, values education, moral education, and character education are all labels for fields of inquiry which have overarching interests or are even, in many academic studies, used interchangeably to denote preoccupations with human behaviors, codes of conducts, shared norms, and the justified distinction between right and wrong. It is within this broader context that the concept of values will first be explored, thereby offering a clear roadmap for Moroccan researchers interested in pursuing studies in this academic area.

Interestingly, the fields referred to are grounded in different disciplines. Hence, an interdisciplinary lens is relevant in approaching values and values education. In section one of this paper, insights from philosophy are highlighted in an eclectic manner due to the huge body of philosophical literature pertaining to the area of values in general. Section two revolves around leading psychological theories which framed a lot of prior research on morality, ethics, and values. Again, being exhaustive in this regard is beyond the scope and goal of this work. A third section attempts to situate the discussion of values within the sociological context both in its micro and macro paradigms. Section four, then, gradually shifts from general background to the specific research context via sketching out the pillars of the philosophy of education advocated in the Moroccan official discourse. Of course, the discussion is strictly confined to the place of values within our educational system via a careful and reflective scrutiny of many official texts. The overarching aim of this article, hence, is to offer researchers a concise yet substantial theoretical foundation that might be needed during any discussion of values and values education in the Moroccan context.

2. Values, Ethics, and Morality: Philosophical Perspectives

2.1 Ethical Theories: Foundational Knowledge for Researchers

Ethical theories consider ethics as a decision-making process that results in the distinction between right and wrong at a first phase and in courses of action at a second one. These theories provide theoretical frameworks for researchers investigating ethical issues or phenomena.

Relativism Theory, to begin with, starts from the premise that norms, values, and codes of conduct are context and culture specific. This results in many implications according to Al-Aidaros et al., (2013). First, different communities may have different ethical codes, and therefore, what is generally considered as right may eventually be right only in that community. Second, there can be no agreed upon standards to evaluate diverse ethical codes as these are often too distinct if not contradictory. Third, there is no universally accepted truths pertaining to ethics and ethical codes. Relativism theory is mainly criticized on the basis that human societies do in fact share a lot of norms and values. The theory fails to acknowledge the universality of such ethical codes as abstaining from crime, violence, stealing, and cheating, among others (AL-Aidaros et al.).

Devine Command Theory, as a second example, uses religious teachings as basic sources of morality and as a framework for evaluating moral acts. Religious provisions comprise both forbidden and recommended actions in many social contexts and in many situations. More than that, as McCartney and Parent (2015) note, the Divine Command Theory "provides an explanation of why ethics and morality are so important. In religions, good acts are rewarded in the afterlife, while bad acts condemn the perpetrator to an everlasting punishment" (p. 26). This, for many people, increases the validity and credibility of norms listed in religious texts as these have a sense of authority, holiness, and absolute truth. However, and due to the number of religions currently embraced in modern world, conflicts may arise when it comes to ethical dilemmas. This is because different religions often have different prescriptions for ethics. This is made worse by the fact that religious scripts are often characterized by ambiguity, which leads to the emergence of many plausible interpretations of what religions recommend in certain situations. Finally, because in this theory "God is presented as a lawgiver who has created us" (AL-Aidaros et al., 2013, p. 3), non- believers naturally find it meaningless as they do not believe in the existence of God in the first place.

Consequences theories, which include Utilitarian Theory and Egoism Theory, use another lens to look at the question of ethics. The morality or immorality of an act here is determined on the basis of the consequences that act leads to at the personal and social levels. Utilitarian Theory, on the one hand, focuses on outcomes and consequences to determine what is morally right or wrong. That is why it is often referred to as consequentialism. Within this perspective, for a choice to be ethically good, it should necessarily lead to positive consequences on as many people as possible. Alternatively, it should at least produce positive outcomes that outweigh negative ones. This cost-benefit analysis has brought criticism to utilitarianism. A major one of these is that this theory is just another translation of 'the end justifies the means' proverb. McCartney and Parent (2015) note that "utilitarian ethics is concerned about the consequences of our actions, regardless of the action itself" (p.15)**.** Adopting principles of this theory will, for example, lead us to judge stealing money from one person to help other people as ethically accepted. In other words, when an act, regardless of its morality, serves the majority at the expense of the minority, the rights of the latter will certainly be overlooked.

Similarly, Egoism Theory is geared towards interests and consequences. However, the focus is on the self rather than on the community. McCartney and Parent (2015) sum the tenets of this theory:

> According to the tenets of egoism, the core reason that someone does any action is self-serving by bringing happiness or some other benefit to him- or herself. If someone performs an action that appears to be altruistic, the action was likely performed to give the actor gratification in some way. This may come in many forms; for example in the form of positive media attention, or just feeling good about oneself (p.24).

A theory that stands in sharp contrast or opposition to consequences theories is Deontological Theory. Deontologists hold that many behaviors and acts are ethical or moral though they may not bring immediate good consequences either to an individual or to a group. Hence, "an action is independent in itself" (AL-AIDAROS et al., 2013, p.5). This theory is most represented by the German philosopher Emmanuel Kant (1724-1804) who believed in the universality of ethics. In this regard, the value of respect is central in Kant's theory. In addition, For Kant, the moral intent of an action, and not the outcomes that emerge, is what really counts. He also stressed the concept of duty; we all have moral duties towards others. The word deontology itself come from the Greek term 'deon' which literally means 'obligation'. Because of its emphasis on respect, universality, and duty towards others, deontological theory is widely accepted by many Muslim scholars today. (AL-Aidaros et al., 2013)

Relatively different from all the above mentioned theories, Virtue Ethics Theory shifts the focus from the acts of people to people themselves. That is to say, this theory is not concerned with the morality or immorality of given actions or behaviors. It is instead concerned with what sets of personality traits and what sets of values people should live up to. Put simply, rather than focusing on what makes a good act or behavior, virtue ethics theory focuses on what makes a good human being. This theory has its roots in ancient Greece as it relies on Aristotle's views concerning ethics and morality. Aristotle "proposed several virtue traits that every person must have. They are civility, cooperativeness, courage, fairness, friendliness, generosity, honesty, justice, loyalty, self-confidence, self-control, modesty, fairness, and tolerance" (AL-Aidaros et al., 2013, p.6).

Last but not least, Social Contract Theory tackled ethics from a different angle, focusing on laws and regulations. It begins with the premise that society requires law in order for its members to live harmonious lives free of tensions and conflict. Such principles are rooted in the works of Thomas Hobbes (1588-1689). The latter considered a society without regulations to be living in a 'state of nature' (McCartney & Parent, 2015). In such state people would be subject to the jungle's laws wherein the fittest survives, and everyone would be acting according to their own judgements depending mainly on interests and egoism. Humanity, has in fact lived instances when state of nature prevailed. Examples include chaos that results from wars, accidents or disasters during which people seize the opportunity to overlook legal provisions and engage in banned acts. Such examples are proofs that humans need laws to avoid harm and prevent misbehavior.

2.2 Michael Hand: a Theory of Moral Education

The work of Michael Hand constitutes a valuable modern contribution to the field of moral education. This is a reason why research projects on values should refer to it. In his theory of moral education, Hand started from the premise that kids should be introduced to morality via explicit instruction in family and school contexts. However, because modern societies are characterized by high levels of variability when it comes to norms, ethics, and codes of conduct, it is impossible to decide to whose values people should subscribe, and which norms do in fact enjoy societal consensus. Maxwell (2019) points out to this modern social context, which he labels as 'context of moral decentralization' (p.112). He then asks "what rational basis could there be for an adult's – much less a public school teacher's – authority to dictate a set of moral standards to which every child must adhere?" (p.112). Teaching particular ethics, values or behaviors may be considered as indoctrinatory, a way of imparting beliefs in a totally subjective manner characterized by selectivity and exclusion.

The departing point of Michael Hand's theory relates, then, to how can we teach morality without falling into indoctrination. "In my first few published articles," he wrote, "I explored the threat of indoctrination in religious education and upbringing" (Hand, 2018, p. xi). The use of the term 'threat' implies how critical Hand is towards the exercise of any influence on children under the disguise of upbringing, socialization, or education.

The key argument put forth by Hand is that people always disagree about the permitted, the prohibited, and the required acts by moral principles. Besides, they "disagree about why morality prohibits, permits, and requires" (Hand 2018, p.1). Hand refers to this as 'reasonable disagreement' because to his mind people consolidate their moral stands and attitudes and judgements by plausible arguments derived from experiences and well informed reflection. Such reasonable disagreement, according to Hand, represents a challenge to the field of moral education.

However, schools are often spaces of indoctrination. Hand (2018) notes that:

> If a teacher wishes to persuade a learner that such propositions are true, or such standards justified, she cannot do so by rational demonstration, by producing compelling evidence or decisive arguments. She must instead resort to non-rational means of persuasion, to some form of manipulation or psychological pressure, to bring about the desired beliefs (p.6)

The result of such teaching is that students develop non-rational morality, a set of conduct codes, norms and values that students accept or adopt without putting them under the critical thinking process. This is not acceptable for two reasons. First, beliefs in general are subject to potential modification and revision in the light of "fresh evidence, or fresh appraisals of old evidence" (Hand, 2018, p.7). Social values are constantly changing though this change is slow and is of an evolutionary rather than revolutionary nature. Second, indoctrination has a devastating impact on child's personality as it discourages critical thinking, logical reasoning, and the skill of decision making. It, instead, turns the child into a passive recipient of readymade beliefs, and this may represent a threat to society; a child who believes everything, is easily indoctrinated, is prone to being indoctrinated with values and beliefs that do not comply with those that enjoy consensus in the community.

The major contribution of Hand, however, is his dividing of moral norms and arguments into three groups. The first is made up of justified, well-informed and widely accepted standards of ethics and good conduct. This group should be taught to children through 'directive moral inquiry' (Hand, 2020, p.1). By this he means that kids should be explicitly made aware of the need to

commit to moral norms in this group. In other words, indoctrination is acceptable as long as the target values enjoy a high degree of universality like abstaining from stealing and cheating.

The second group includes moral standards and arguments on whose validity and relevance there is 'reasonable disagreement' (Hand, 2020, p.1). By this, he refers to sets of norms and values not unanimously adopted by the social community, like the need to vote in elections. Such matters receive many plausible interpretations by people, and they often lead to moral dilemmas. Pedagogically, Hand suggests a strategy of 'nondirective moral inquiry' (Hand, p.1). That is to say, the teacher's role is to uncover the various, often contradictory, arguments which support each moral stand, and leave it up to the individual child to form his or her own views, judgments, and attitudes, and ultimately subscribe to a given set of moral norms. The third group, Hand suggests, is made up of moral standards which are not justified but still embraced by many people. The theory of moral education proposed by Hand recommend the same pedagogical approach adopted in teaching group one moral norms, namely a method of directive moral inquiry.

2.3 John Dewey: a Holistic Approach to Morality

John Dewey (1859-1952), the famous American philosopher and psychologist, is one of the leading figures in the field of moral education. His ideas on morality and values in education are still influential today. These ideas include, but are not limited to, concepts about the function of education in social transformation, teacher qualities, best instructional methods and morality in educational contexts. The latter will be the focus of this section.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, there was a surge in interest in character education in the USA, and educators conceptualized different forms of what character and morality actually are. The way John Dewey defined character, however, was a bit different from commonly used definitions at his time. He argued that Character is broader in that it encompasses all of the aims, desires, and habits that shape human behavior. It cannot be reduced to mean a simple structure of virtues and vices (Pietig, 1977). To level their practices up to this conception of character, school professionals are tasked to integrate the moral and academic aspects of education via not prioritizing one over the other. Dewey wrote:

> Moral education in school is practically hopeless when we set up the development of character as a supreme end, and at the same time treat the acquiring of knowledge and the development of understanding, which of necessity occupy the chief part of school time, as having nothing to do with character"   (Dewey, 1916, p. 354, cited in Pietig, 1977, p.176)

This broad approach to morality indicates that school curricula should address both students' knowledge and their behavior, as well as their interactions within school and society. For example, literature provides numerous opportunities to instill moral values through poems, narratives, and theatrical works, while history classes can be used to heighten students' awareness of their social context (Dewey, 1909).

Dewey not only highlighted theoretical issues with regard to moral education but he also suggested practical instructional methods that should be used in the classroom. He emphasized that the classrooms ought to be spaces for the practice of social service and activities should be geared towards promoting collaboration and selflessness over individualism and selfishness (Dewey, 1909). Skills to be developed must include leadership, critical inquiry, self-direction, democracy, and initiative. Such skills cannot be instilled in students unless a student-centered approach to learning and teaching is adopted. Children in fact tend to retain what they learn by doing and what they learn from experience and social interaction better than what they are told or what they read about. Improving morality, hence, is more effective when the focus of classroom activities is derived from real events that are meaningful to students, and not when learners are exposed to primarily abstract contents.

However, and despite his contribution to the field of moral education, many scholars accused Dewey of contributing to the decline of morality and to what many labeled as the crisis of character (White, 2015). The latter lists three major accusations that Dewey received:

> First, that Dewey sought to weaken students' wills in the face of difficulty and temptation; second, that Dewey sought to minimize the influence of mature adults who could facilitate and perhaps even ensure character development in the young; and third, that Dewey sought to prevent students from studying and learning the academic content peculiar to each discipline, thus undermining discipline in general
> (White, 2015, p. 128)

For the first accusation, White (2015) notes, Dewey's suggested instructional method, namely student-centeredness, had led to a lack of discipline and self-direction on the part of students. This, in turn, had led to a dramatic collapse of moral behavior in American schools.

However, a scrutiny of Dewey's writing reveals that his emphasis on students' interests and needs was simply meant to allow for a connection between school and the real world to take place, and this will certainly improve learning and facilitate fact retaining. In other words, student centeredness was Dewey's recipe to assure intrinsic motivation.

For the second accusation, Dewey's critics argued that he called for minimizing teachers' presence and influence in the educational process by suggesting that "the teacher's role is to get out of the way and to let children follow whatever temptation arises" (White, 2015, p. 132). Dewey, nevertheless, argued that character development could be promoted indirectly regardless of the degree of freedom given to students. He maintained that guidance and direction in an educational context is never a restriction to the freedom he calls for.

The third accusation relates to a misconception some critics formed about Dewey as a thinker who depreciated academic knowledge. Again, White (2015) refuted this as he noted that "for Dewey, an educative environment is, by definition, subject-matter rich, including both academic content and what might be called character content" (p.134)

In the Moroccan context, the same critics directed to Dewey were often voiced by some school professionals who seem to yearn for strict modes of school management and traditional instructional methods. For some, in fact, discipline and self-direction cannot coexist with freedom and care for individual interests and needs in the same school culture.

2.4 Modern Moroccan Thought on Values: An Essential Lens for Local Research
Moroccan scholars have significant and widely recognized contributions to the debate on values, ethics, and morality. In this section, some seminal works of three contemporary thinkers are briefly and concisely reviewed. Due to the rich literature available, the whole Moroccan legacy in this domain cannot be thoroughly referred to in an exhaustive manner.

2.4.1 Taha Abderahman: Ethics at the Center
Taha Abderahman, is one of the giants of Moroccan and Arab modern philosophy, as he has produced a lot of influential works that relate to neighboring fields such as logic, modernity, ethics, religion, politics, and values. Specifically, he is much known for his sharp critique of key principles of Western secularism or the uprooting of religion from public sphere concerns, political Islam, and current prevailing ethical theories (Bevers, 2017). The alternative he proposed is "a conceptual framework for an Islamic modernity that places ethics at its core" (Bevers, p. 196). Some of these ideas are detailed in his two books *Religious Practice and the Renewal of Reason (1997)* and *The Spirit of Modernity: An Introduction to Founding an Islamic Modernity (2013).*
Western modernity, in fact, has got the lion's share of Taha Abderahman's intellectual interests. To his mind, the secular hegemony of the Western world has marginalized ethics. He denounced how the West has established binaries of reason against revelation and religion against politics. The call for a strict separation of these, according to Taha Abderahman, is the result of the exaggerated overemphasis on rationality that has framed Western philosophy over the years, an approach that he obviously opposed. Such binaries, for Taha Abderahman, have "led to the degradation of ethics that he argues define human existence" (Bevers, 2017, p.196).

Another thing Taha Abderahman criticized is making science devoid of ethics. Of course, he was not against science and technology, but he was critical of how they have been misused by humans in unethical ways (Abderahman, 2009). Such misuse has led, for example, to environmental degradation which manifested itself in issues which include, but are not limited to, global warming, the ozone hole, deforestation, and water and air contamination. These have significantly affected human health and, thus, reduced human life quality. Simply put, without ethics and values, advances in science and technology would never serve humanity.

Religion, for Taha Abderrahman, and unlike from Western perspectives, could provide solutions to the ethics-related crisis detailed above. Precisely, he considers Islamic teachings as a basis for evaluating the morality of people's actions. In this vein, Bevers (2017) argued that "Abderrahman has created an important body of work that seeks to re-ground Islamic philosophy in its tradition by placing ethics at the heart of its practice" *(*p.195). In doing so, Taha Abderahman did not reject Western values altogether, but he tried to reorganize them around Islamic religious principles and ethics. This openness and recognition have spared him from being charged with ready-made accusations such as extremism, fanaticism, or cultural intolerance. Again, Bevers described in a concise way the methodology Taha Abderahman used to build the concept of the Islamic modernity:

> "Abderrahman's approach to conceptualizing an Islamic modernity is a deconstructive/reconstructive method. He first deconstructs Western secular modernity to find its essence, its spirit, its soul, and its essential attributes. He then reconstructs these core essences through an interpretative framework based upon his metaphysical starting point of man as an ethical animal" (p. 199)

Taha Abderahman devoted a whole book to the question of violence, a theme which lies at the heart of the current research project. While he seemed to accept the widely adopted classifications of violence, such as political violence, religious violence, social violence, and legal violence, Taha Abderahman did not approve of the legitimate vs non-legitimate binary, as for him no type of violence is legitimate. All types are "aspects of evil" (Abderahman, 2017, p.36) which are degrading to human dignity. Even the state, as a politically agreed upon system, should by no means resort to the so-called legitimate violence or force to assure submission to taken measures.

To conclude, the integration of Islamic and universal values within the Moroccan official educational discourse appears to reflect Taha Abderrahman's theory of Islamic modernity. Naturally, then, this alignment supports the recommendation to include his work in any research on values within the Moroccan context.

2.4.2 Mohamed Abed El Jabri: The Multiple Sources of Islamic and Arab Values

Like Taha Abderahman, Mohammed Abed El Jabri was a prolific scholar whose ideas influenced a lot of Moroccan, Arab, and International thinkers. What directly relates to the current research project is his 640-page book entitled *Arab Moral Reason: A Critical Analysis of value Systems in the Arab Culture,* published in 2001. To avoid conceptual ambiguity El Jabri declared from the beginning that **"**Our topic is the systems of values in the Arab and Muslim world and this is what we mean by **"**Arab Moral Reason" (Eljabri, 2001, p. 21) [my translation]. In a detailed introduction, **he** mainly pointed to the scarcity of publications on ethics and values from Islamic and Arab perspectives, which justified the need for such research. He also claimed that values in every society are of a hierarchical nature, some are more important than others.

El Jabri, then, explored five sources of Arab and Islamic culture. These are believed to have impacted the way values have been hierarchically ordered from most to least important in the Arab World, and the way some were classified as central values around which other values revolve. Three of these sources are foreign while two are local.

The first, and most important, source which fed and shaped our culture according to El Jabri is the Persian heritage**.** The Islamic state witnessed a severe crisis in values, especially at the political level, the most obvious sign of which was the assassination of the third Islamic caliph (leader) Othman Ibn Affan and the events that preceded and followed it. Such events were behind the importation of Persian heritage relating to values. The main feature of the latter was the concept of "obedience" or submission to the ruler which was desperately needed, by the ruling class, to overcome the turmoil that characterized the early Islamic state after the death of the prophet and to guarantee political stability. The value of obedience to the ruler was considered central and even part of religion. This tendency is still valid today in many Arab regimes.

The second source is the Greek heritage, from which Arabs and Muslims imported the value of happiness according to EL Jabri. This shows that ethics from a Greek perspective related to the philosophical field unlike Persian ethics which mainly related to politics. Also, the Greek perspective is characterized by its keen interest in the individual rather than the state or the community. Here, the influence of Plato's The Republic is obvious. Plato considered that happiness and morality are inextricably linked, and that happy people are those who abide by moral principles and accepted shared codes of conduct. Equally, the influence of Aristotle cannot be denied according to El Jabri. For Aristotle, leading a happy life is the ultimate goal of human existence. Such a goal cannot be achieved unless people stick to their inherently positive values and behaviors and try to constantly improve and refine them.

The third source that nurtured the Arab culture and values is the Sufi heritage. Sufism according to Eljabri is not in line with the true Islamic faith as detailed in the Coran. It overemphasized the principle of obedience to the "sheikh" (the religious and spiritual leader), and the principle of "Imam" (the political and religious leader). Such principles, Eljabri claims, were intended by the Persians to weaken the Islamic state in a context of rivalry and race toward hegemony and regional leadership.

In addition to these three sources, Eljabri talked about the Arab heritage, by which he meant the cultural legacy of the pre-Islamic era, and the Islamic heritage which is derived from religious teachings that relate to moral conduct. While the Islamic heritage is fully depicted in the first part of section four, and from different resources and perspectives, it is important to note that the Arab heritage "**which emphasizes magnanimity (*al-murūʾa)***" (Hashas & al-Khatib, p. 13)** is related to that ideal image of the Arab person as portrayed in classical literature, mainly ancient poetry and prose. It is the image of a model in everything; a person who combines many good human qualities such as generosity, courage, and fairness.

Methodologically, El Jabri reached his conclusions mainly via analyzing and reflecting on popular literary texts that belong to these five cultures or sources. He scanned ancient literary heritage with a cultural lens, which enabled him to see how values are represented and how they have 'migrated' from those above-mentioned sources to settle in the Arab and Muslim world. He also referred to religious texts many times, especially in the sections where he discussed the Islamic heritage.

However, El Jabri seemed to focus only on values from a historical perspective that neglected the recent influences of Western culture on the Arab world (Benfriha, 2021). In fact, such an effect has become widespread and even deeply rooted in many Arab countries today. Tracing the development of values systems 'necessitates combining the past with the present" (Benfriha, p. 460). This would result in presenting a complete picture of the cultural and values scene in the contemporary Arab and Muslim world.

The National Charter for Education and Training (NCET) and other official documents seem to acknowledge all the sources that El Jabri talked about. The declared pedagogical objectives pertaining to values include promoting "the Islamic / Moroccan identity and awareness of its diverse, interactive and complementary components [and enabling] learners to become acquainted with both the contributions and benefits of human civilizations" (Ministry of National Education, 2009, p.11). It is then left up to textbook designers to take such orientations into account while making decisions about what activities, texts, and cultural contents to include.

2.4.3 Mehdi Elmendjra: Local Values, Universalism, and Cultural Hegemony.
Mehdi Elmendjra is a leading Moroccan sociologist and futurist.   He is a prolific scholar who published many books and papers, in addition to widely recognized speeches and interviews, on different areas of social sciences. In many of his works, he referred to values-related issues that concern Moroccan society, the Muslim world, and third-world countries.

In his widely cited book *The Value of Values* (2007), Elmendjra postulated that future conflicts in international relations and between cultures and civilizations would mainly be due to cultural and ideological factors relating to the local values of human communities. This militarization of culture and cultural values is based on the West's tenacious belief in the supremacy and relevance of its own ideals. In this context, Elmendjra referred to the Gulf War in 1991 as the "first civilizational war" because it had military, political, economic, strategic, and civilizational dimensions or facets. However, he noted that "you can destroy cities and buildings but you cannot do this to values; they are the hardest social and cultural components of all communities" (Elmendjra, 2007, p. 156) **[my translation]**. Such a statement can be considered a direct call for militant resistance to an outrageous war against values and diversity. To survive such war Elmendjra concluded that "mutual tolerance, now and in the future, is the solution" (p. 161) **[my translation].**

Elmenjra attributes the state of underdevelopment in which poor countries are stuck to cultural, rather than economic, social, or political, factors. In fact, the Muslim and Arab world, for example, is lagging behind other nations primarily because the inherited and shared culture did not manage to include modern empirical sciences as a subcomponent. On the other hand, the West, according to Elmendjra, managed to employ its values system, which is ideologically loaded with principles of globalization and universal values, so as to gain hegemony over other nations.

Such cultural hegemony is to be resisted. Culture, Elmendjra (2007) notes, "cannot be blindly transported to other regions without taking into account local values" (p. 7) **[my translation]**. Respecting the values of others and believing in cultural diversity are preconditions for reaching universality, which, for him, must be the result of interaction between civilizations irrespective of racial, religious, social or gender considerations. However, what is noted today is that Jewish and Christian civilizations are constantly trying to impose their own value systems on the rest of the world in general and on the Muslim world in particular.

In an educational context, values for Elmendjra represent key elements in the learning process. We need a set of values that truly reflect our culture and identity as they are, but at the same time encourage openness to global values. Such openness can never justify the neglect of our values. So that education could contribute to achieving societal development, he states, we have to preserve our cultural heritage and values system and language, and he gave the example of Asian countries as models. These have prioritized local values, and local languages, being part of culture, have been adopted as a medium of instruction in educational institutions.

Because the media often plays similar roles to education when it comes to values, culture, and identity, Elmendjra criticized some media institutions, namely the public channel 2M, for misrepresenting Moroccan values in its programs. He described the channel as "illegal" (Elmendjra, 2007, p. 68) **[my translation]** because the cultural and values related contents it presents do not relate to Moroccan identity while it is financed from Moroccans' contributions through including a special tax in the electricity bill.

Talking about the increasing rate of crime in Morocco, Elmendjra said that these are closely related to the negative social environment where crime happens. "These scandals are terrible" he said, "but they have originated in a society where other scandals have become accepted, and scandals bring more scandals" (Elmendjra, 2007, p. 302) **[my translation]**. The cause for

this, he states, is the loss of ethics and values and the normalization with negative practices like corruption, violence, and injustice.

Elmendjra's ideas about values, one can clearly note, are in line with the Moroccan educational system's goals in this regard. All official documents that outline the philosophy of education in emphasize the importance of guiding learners to take pride in and remain connected to the values of Moroccan culture and identity, while also being open to universal values and the principles of human rights, democracy, and tolerance.

3. Psychological Theories on Moral Education

The contribution of psychology to understanding morality and ethical behavior is relatively unique. Due to the nature of the discipline itself, theorists mainly relied on solid empirical evidence to formulate and prove their hypotheses. These are primarily related to how people develop their moral judgments and decisions, and to the diverse possible origins of moral values and codes of conduct.

3.1 The Theory of Moral Development: Enabling Researchers to Understand the Stages of Moral Reasoning

Lawrence Kohlberg, the famous American psychologist, was among the leading researchers in the field of moral education. He is most known for his theory of moral development (TMD) in which he postulates that moral character should be seen in developmental terms and not perceived as conventional personality traits of fairness, honesty, and other positive values. Accordingly, Kohlberg proposed that human beings develop their moral judgments in the following six hierarchically ordered stages:

(a) Pre-conventional level

At this level, abiding by moral acts is externally controlled. Moral decisions are either informed by fear of punishment or desire of reward. Kohlberg further broke this level into two stages :

Stage one: The punishment and obedience orientation

The drive to avoid punishment is the sole motivation for abstaining from socially banned behaviors at this stage. For example, a student who does not cheat in school exams only because he is afraid of being detected, but once he is sure exam administration conditions guarantee that no one would notice his act of cheating, he would not hesitate to cheat. So, morality at this stage is based on authority figures, and socially accepted rules are abided by only to avoid the punishment set and communicated by the social community.

Stage two: The instrumental-relativist orientation:

Moral decisions and judgments at this stage are based on the benefits and rewards one would get from moral behavior. We can, for instance, think of kids who help others in a particular situation because they expect they may need their help too if caught in a similar situation later. The drive for moral engagement of individuals at this stage is to "have favors returned" (Kohlberg, 1966, p. 8)

(b) Conventional level

At this level, motivation for moral behavior shifts from personal interests of avoiding punishment and getting rewards to interpersonal interests of maintaining good rapport with others. Like level one, level two consists of two stages :

Stage three: The interpersonal concordance or "good boy-nice girl" orientation.

At this stage, social approval, coupled with the aspiration to avoid dislike, are the main motives that guide good conduct. Kids trying to look good to please their mothers is a good example in this regard. Living up to social expectations and norms is crucial at this stage as the image others have of a person guides and frames that person's moral reasoning and conduct.

Stage four: The "law and order" orientation.

Abiding by fixed social rules and showing respect for authority and social order are two motives that guide individuals' conduct at this stage. People are aware that the act of one member of society may have an impact on other members, and for this reason every person should focus on his duties within the community.

(c) Post conventional, autonomous, or principled level

At this level, moral values and desired behaviors are redefined in such a way that authority or community norms and laws are not taken into account when making moral judgments or decisions.

Stage five: The social-contract, legalistic orientation.
Individuals at this stage show awareness of the relativism of shared values and rules. Democratically agreed-upon laws are challenged by individuals' own values and opinions. People at this stage are willing to change legal provisions that they think of as unfair or inadequate. Militant leaders who engage in protests against governmental decisions around the world represent good examples of individuals at this developmental stage.

Stage six: The universal-ethical-principle orientation.
At this final stage, **"**right is defined by the decision of conscience in accord with self-chosen ethical principles appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistency" (Kohlberg, 1975, p. 670). Such principles are abstract in nature, and they are to be followed even if they are in conflict with legal texts drafted and agreed upon by the whole community. In other words, moral judgments and decisions at this stage are based on abstract reasoning that undermines and questions social norms and conventions. However, Kavathatzopoulos (1991) notes that Kohlberg "could not find empirical support for the existence of Stage Six" (p. 47).

At the pedagogical level, Kohlberg (1966) confirmed previous research by stating that classroom content on morality and ethics had no positive impact on students' behaviors. He noted that "one of the major reasons why the social functions of the school have not been phrased in moral-education terms has been the fact that conventional didactic ethical instruction in the school has little influence upon moral character as usually conceived" (Kohlberg, 1966, p. 3). In addition, knowing about ethics had no impact on ethical conduct in that although students know what is right and wrong they often fail to abide by expected norms and behaviors. Kohlberg, in fact, made it clear that enabling kids to make informed moral judgments is only one part of their moral character. The other, and maybe the most important, part is to have them apply their own judgments. That is to say, children's behaviors should reflect their moral values. Once they become, for example, convinced that cheating is bad, they must abstain from cheating. That is the only evidence of their successful shift from mere moral judgment to moral action.

To stimulate development, teachers should focus more on "genuine moral conflict" (Kohlberg 1966, p. 24) to help children reflect critically and make moral judgments. That is to say, moral education should avoid abstract moral clichés which are meaningless to students. Moral contents presented in the classroom must match the child's developmental level too.

Similarly, teachers should not reduce their understanding of moralizing to the focus on immediate classroom management issues that impede the delivery of daily lessons. They should not evaluate children's level of morality using discipline in class as a unique criterion. Kohlberg (1966) expressed dissatisfaction with his son's teacher as the latter made a judgment of students' level of morality on the basis of respecting classroom rules only. He wrote:

> My seven-year-old son told me one day that he was one of the good boys in school, but he didn't know whether he really wanted to be. I asked him what the differences between the good and bad boys were, and he said the bad boys talked in class and didn't put books away neatly, so they got yelled at (p. 18)

3.2 Moral Foundations Theory

Moral Foundations Theory (MFT), proposed by Jonathan Haidt and others, was mainly a reaction to the Kohlbergian approach to moral development. Kohlberg argued that children's moral reasoning is subject to change over time, and to track this process of change he suggested the six steps theory detailed in the previous section. While the shift from one developmental stage to the other involves cognition according to Kohlberg, Haidt argued that this theory overlooks emotions which play decisive roles in the formation of moral judgements. According to Haidt, "reasoning plays a mostly post hoc role, coming into play only after (affective) intuition produces a moral judgment and serves to justify that judgment of others" (Suhler & Churchland, 2011, p. 2104).

MFT attempts to answer questions related the origin of morality and the reasons why some moral judgments are shared among cultures (Graham et al., 2013). According to the latter, MFT makes four major claims. The first one is nativism, by which the founding figures of this theory mean that people are born predisposed to make right moral judgments. They explain that "Innate means organized in advance of experience. We do not take it to mean hardwired or insensitive to environmental influences, as some critics of nativism define innateness" (Graham et al., p.61). To illustrate this, they give the example of trying to teach a child revenging from and loving an enemy. We can easily instill the desire for revenge by exposing children to narratives in this regard, but we cannot instill in them, as easily, love for an enemy. It is safe to assume, then, that "we are prepared to learn vengefulness, in a way that we are not prepared to learn to offer our left cheek to those who smite us on our right cheek" (Graham et al., p. 62). Just as Chomsky postulated that we are naturally born with the ability to learn language, moral foundations theory postulates that we are predisposed to learn social values, norms, and codes of conduct.

The second claim of MFT is culture learning. Being brought up in a particular culture often modifies the innate morality or what Haidt and others refer to as the first draft. This leads to variations across cultures concerning norms and codes of conduct. Personal experiences and social events play vital roles in writing the second draft, an updated version of our innate moral profile.

The third claim made by MFT is intuitionism. For this theory, people's intuitions about moral issues always precede any logical reasoning process they might engage in. Haidt defines moral intuition as feelings related to the evaluation of a moral situation like hatred, dislike, appreciation, or disapproval. These feelings surface in a rapid, effortless, and automatic manner, without deliberate and profound thinking about the situation in an argumentative way. Those moral intuitions are formed according to Haidt in the cultural context where people grow. That is, the environment contributes into shaping one's automatic moral responses to many situations.

The last claim made by MFT is labeled pluralism. Moral intuitions and judgements in fact vary from one culture to another, and sometimes among people belonging to the same culture. This pluralism is due to the various foundations of morality. Moral Foundations Theory in fact postulates that there are five innate foundations of morality, organized in the following binaries: Care/Harm, Fairness/Cheating, Loyalty/Betrayal, Authority/Subversion, Sanctity/Degradation, and Liberty/Oppression. Suhler and Churchland (2011) note that although people are "genetically endowed with learning modules for all five foundations, the environment in which they are raised may result in second-order modules developing for only some of these domains" (p. 2104). The following table summarizes the five foundations suggested by moral foundation theory:

Table 1. Moral Foundation Theory. (Adapted from Graham et al., 2013)

Care/ Harm	This foundation first emerged from the maternal natural desire to protect a child from harm and suffering and then extended beyond family ties to become manifested in general hate of suffering, neediness and distress. Virtues related to this foundation include **caring and kindness, and denouncing cruelty and aggression.**
Fairness/Cheating	This foundation evolved from the motivation to work in groups with other members to bring mutual benefits. Virtues associated with fairness/cheating include **justice, fairness, trustworthiness, and cooperation.**
Loyalty/Betrayal	The origin of this foundation is humans' inclination to live in harmonious groups with shared values and norms. Values that strengthen belonging to the group are praised. These include **patriotism, loyalty, sacrifice, pride, and heroism.**
Authority/Subversion	Virtues related to this foundation aim at marinating and strengthening the hierarchical social structure. Social cohesion needs **respect for authority, obedience, duty, and esteem**.
Sanctity/Degradation	This foundation is grounded in the feeling of disgust according to Haidt. Disgust turns into social emotions that frame our behaviors and make us, for instance, want to avoid contamination with disease and value cleanliness, piety, and temperance

4. Sociological Approaches to Values Education: Understanding Socialization
4.1 Symbolic Interactionism
Symbolic interactionism is mainly associated with George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) and Max Weber (1864- 1920). Interaction theorists state that individuals construct their attitudes and behaviors depending on the contextual environment. In other words, the immediate social context is vital and the dynamics of daily interactions in school life are to be considered. This approach entails a focus on students' attitudes, motivations, and personal values.

Symbolic interactionism does not share the functionalist view that the behaviors and actions of people mainly respond to societal norms, values and assigned social roles. Instead, Mead postulates that:

> The self is far more than internalization of components of structure and culture; rather he [Mead] suggested that a person's behavior is a social process, a process of self-interaction in which the human

actor indicates to himself matters that confront him in the situation in which he acts, and organizes his action through his interpretation of such matters (Ormerod, 2019, p. 15).

Researchers who apply the symbolic interactionist paradigm rely mainly on qualitative methodology as it allows for gaining deeper insights into how people interact and how meaning is created. They employ research instruments such as field observation, diaries, narratives, and interviews.

"Labeling theory is a theoretical approach stemming from the symbolic interactionist perspective" (Ballantine & Spade, 2008, p. 7). This theory postulates that when students are described in negative terms by teachers, they tend to take such description as true reflection of their intellectual or cognitive abilities. Students' perception of self is, then, highly influenced by teachers' expectations or judgements. These micro interactions at the level of the school classroom are vital in shaping students personalities and in determining academic achievements. In fact, the labeling process is likely to reproduce social inequalities because most of the time poor students are labeled as low achievers and this can impact their academic career and professional future (Ballantine & Spade 2008). It is important to note that labels are mostly derived from race, gender, and social status.

4.2 Structural Functionalism
From the perspective of functional theory, social institutions or structures form interdependent components. This macro level paradigm is more concerned with the complementary social roles undertaken by each institution to contribute to social cohesion and guarantee general stability while in an evolutionary process.

In the educational field, the main focus is on what function (s) school performs in society in relation to other social institutions. This is because, as noted above, functionalism posits that social institutions work together to guarantee social functioning and continuity. In fact, "each part – education, family, political and economic systems, health, religion work together to create a functioning social system" (Ballantine & Spade, 2008, p.9).

4.2.1 Emile Durkheim
Durkheim (1858 -1917), who is often referred to as the leading founder of functionalism, postulated that schools are to maintain social order through socializing kids on moral values as the school class is a small society that reflects the larger community. He noted that "discipline is the morality of the classroom, and without it the classroom can become like an undisciplined mob" (Ballantine & Spade, 2008, p.9). The school is a training for kids for future social roles. They are exposed to how to abide by regulations set by unanimous choice to establish social order. The stability of society depends on whether the school succeeds in transmitting the social values to children as well as the skills needed for the economic sector. In this regard, pressure from some parts may shape the curriculum by including desired contents in textbooks and syllabi.

Generally, Emile Durkheim defined education as the influence which an adult exercise on children with the ultimate goal of making them ready for successful integration in social life and instilling in them the habits, norms and values of the community. Such influence is achieved by the transmission of moral norms, religious beliefs, and national traditions (Peterson, 1974). For Durkheim "Education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by inculcating in the child's mind the fundamental relationships required by life in the community. Through education, the 'individual being' is turned into a 'social being'" (Filloux, 1993, p. 305).

Durkheim referred to the school as a "subsystem" or "machine" to illustrate its role as an institution for socialization within the larger social framework. He also considered that the family often fails to develop 'the social being' as the moral principles to which children are exposed to in the family are mostly particular to the family and do not necessarily align with the community norms. Similarly, he criticized the church as a traditional socialization institution. He described it as being outdated and fostering irrational rather than logical thinking (Durkheim, 1961). Three elements of morality are central according to Durkheim. The first one is discipline or abiding by social rules and refraining from anti-social drives that might lead to social anarchy:

> Moral discipline is not only useful for moral life as such; its action extends beyond that. It plays a significant role in the shaping of character and of the personality in general. Indeed, what is most essential in character is the aptitude to exercise self-control, the faculty of restraint, or, as they say, inhibition that enables us to contain our passions and desires and to call them to order" (Filloux, 1993, p.310)

The second element is attachment to social groups. For Durkheim, moral behavior is directed toward the whole community rather than to individuals. The basic task of education, hence, is to induce in children the desire and habit to function in the community according to its agreed norms of conduct and behavior.

The third element in Durkheim's morality theory is labeled autonomy or self-regulation. This is when an individual develops awareness of what is good and bad, and starts to act, in a spontaneous way, according to this awareness. Durkheim used the concept 'conscience collective' [collective consciousness] to refer to the acquired ability of individuals to live in harmony thanks to the shared values, norms, and rules they impose on themselves through the process of self-regulation.

Durkheim's view on morality faced a significant challenge that relates to how to combine teaching discipline and independence at the same time. Moral behavior, in fact, can never enjoy societal consensus concerning its nature and criteria of acceptance or rejection (Filloux, 1993). To get out of this dilemma, Durkheim suggested striking balance between excessive permissiveness and teacher's use of power derived from his status as agent of socialization (Durkheim, 1956). In Durkheim's words: the teacher "must be on the look-out for everything that may cause all the children in the same class to sense their unity in a common enterprise" (Durkheim, 1992, p. 205. Cited in Filloux.1993, p. 312). Such a professional attitude could certainly minimize the impact of school environment on children's social and civic education.

In the Moroccan context the same dilemma is often reported by many school professionals. The institutional desire to impose a certain level of discipline is confronted by the ideals of human's rights in general and children's right in particular. These limit the options of punishing undesired behavior as they insist on pedagogical measures that do not always manage to reduce misbehavior.

4.2.2 Talcott Parson

When talking about structuralism, we cannot avoid talking about the influence of the American sociologist Talcott Parson, the most influential sociologist of the post war period. He developed his grand theory of sociology on the basis of works of leading early figures such as Durkheim and Weber (Ormerod, 2020). Parson shares Durkheim's view that school is primarily "an agency of socialization" where "individual personalities are trained to be motivationally and technically adequate to the performance of adult roles" (Ballantine & Spade, 2008, p. 81). He sees education as charged with performing the specific role of preparing children for future responsibilities. In this sense the school is a 'bridge' between family life and the larger social life.

For Parson, successful socialization entails developing students' commitments and capacities, two terms which he used to refer to desired personality traits targeted by education. He, then, divided the concept of commitment into two dimensions: commitment to abide by the values of the community in general, and commitment to perform a special role or function within that community. Similarly he divided the concept of capacities into two components: having the necessary competence and skill to perform a future role, and being responsible enough to meet people's expectations while performing that role.

Parson is also known for his concept of meritocracy. According to this, individuals' advancement on the social ladder is mainly determined by their skills, competencies, and qualities rather than by their family background, economic status or social belonging. In the classroom context, academic achievement, that is students' grades, must be strictly based on merit so that equality would take place.

Parson's functionalism was fiercely attacked for many reasons. Ormerod (2019) reported how Wright Mills debunked functionalist concepts of Parson in his widely cited book *The Sociological Imagination* published in 1959. He stated that "Wright Mills and many other critics argue that Parsons concentrates on the mechanisms of stability rather than the mechanisms of change" (p. 11). This is an assumption that cultures and values are of a static nature, and their components are imposed in a top-down manner that gives the impression that individuals cannot actually modify the structure of culture or reorder the values celebrated by the social community:

> The criticism is that Parsons' approach fails to recognise that the voluntaristic action of individuals can also be aimed at changing the cultural values and norms of society (by advocating, debating, voting, lobbying, demonstrating, revolting, and so on). In Parsons' model, culture affects the individual's behaviour but culture evolves according to its own dynamics independent of individual efforts. His model thus does not recognize the possibility of creating radical change through deliberate efforts to change the culture (Ormerod, 2019, p. 12).

In the Moroccan context, and with regard to the scope of this paper being values education, such critics seem irrelevant. Values in Morocco are in fact mechanisms of stability, to use Mills' words. They enjoy societal consensus for the simple reason that they are universal, timeless, and context-free. They do not relate to ideology, political or social orientations, or even to a particular religion. Were the focus of the current research on such types of values, the researcher would definitely take Mills' criticism, and others', into account.

4.2.3 Robert Merton

Robert Merton, who was influenced by Parson, came up with the concepts of manifest and latent functions of social structures. While the first refers to the planned and conscious outcomes expected from a social institution, the second is about the unintended consequences that result from the work of that institution. In educational contexts, for example, the manifest function of school is to empower children with the necessary skills, competencies, and knowledge to prepare them for smooth integration into social life. In addition to this, the school context provides ample opportunities for children to socialize, build friendships, practice hobbies, or excel in sports. Arguably, the Moroccan educational system encourages the school stakeholders to activate the school's latent functions by, for instance, the establishment of many school clubs related to many fields of interest.

Another central concept in Merton's work is dysfunction, by which he refers to that situation which produces counter results. Flecha et al., (2001) illustrate this concept through religion. They wrote that "in a traditional functionalist study, religion performs a function of social cohesion. However, in Merton's perspective, religion can (also) be the cause of completely opposite effects (such as war and social disorder)" (p. 19).

5. Values in the Moroccan Official Discourse: The need to Contextualize Research on Values
5.1 *Values in Islam*

It is of massive importance to frame values from an Islamic perspective before examining other official documents and texts that outline the educational philosophy embraced in our country. When referring to values in general, all of these publications mention the values of Islam as foundations for our system of education. Yet, they do not detail them enough or provide an exhaustive list of what they precisely include. Instead, it is seemingly taken for granted that the Moroccan audience, mainly consisting of educators, knows what these values entail. However, and due to the global nature of research, the set of values cherished in Islam will be first sketched out to facilitate and guide understanding of other official documents that this section will be referring to.

Islamic tradition has constantly regarded education as a societal priority. The holy Quran made this clear many times as in Surat AZ-Zumar, Aya 9: "Say, are those who know equal to those who know not?" (The holly Qur' an, 1956, p. 675). Western scholars, too, testify to this historic truth:

> After all, Islam has had a rich tradition of education going back some 1300 years (Shamsavary *et al.*, 1993). Islamic scholarship led the world for hundreds of years in virtually every known academic discipline, there was a wide range of schools throughout the Islamic empire and the greatest Islamic universities predate Western universities by several centuries (Halstead, 2004, p. 517).

When it comes to values and ethics, the holy Quran and the traditions of Prophet Mohamed (Sunnah), are the moral guides. For Muslims, "Islamic teaching has comprised all aspects of life including the structuring of the relationships between Muslims and Allah (God) and the relationships and interactions between members of society" (Abdelmoumen, 2002, p. 13). Islam upraised all ethical virtues and warned against committing immoral deeds. Ethics are in fact regarded as the cornerstone of individual and societal life, and part of the mission of Prophet Mohamed was to preach values and ethics like politeness, selflessness, tolerance, honesty, responsibility, and respect...etc.

Morality principles in Islam are derived from *Shariah*, which includes legislations that relate to all aspects of life. The two sources of *Shariah* are the Quran and the sayings and actions of Prophet Mohamed known as Sunnah. According to these:

> The ethical system prescribed in Islam is eternally divine and forms the foundation of an Islamic society. Islamic ethics prescribe its followers to zealously guard their behavior, words, thoughts, and intentions and observe certain norms and moral codes in their family affairs; in dealings with relatives, neighbors, and friends; in their business transactions; in their social affairs; and in private and public life (Mohammed, 2013, p. 873)

The Quran, to start with, has highlighted in more than one section (Surah) the prominent place of values in a Muslim's life. In Al-Baqarah 177, For instance, it is made explicit that "righteousness does not consist of turning your faces towards the East and the West. But righteous is he who believes in Allah, and the Last Day, and the angels, and the Scriptures, and the prophets, who give money through dear to near relatives, and orphans and the needy and the homeless" (The holly Qur' an, 1956, p. 36).. Interestingly, and bearing in mind that order of words and ideas in the Quran is not random, righteousness is placed above many cherished practices, even before prayer which is considered as the backbone of Islamic faith.

The value of gentility, to give another example, is praised as Allah addresses his prophet Mohammed in Al-Imran 159: "It is by the grace from Allah that you were gentle with them. Had you been harsh, hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from

around you" (The holly Qur' an, 1956, p. 96). This is a direct praise to the prophet and, accordingly, a call for people to adopt such a quality.

Another key value in Islam is treating others with respect and courtesy, and this of course implies abstaining from mocking others or making fun of them for whatever reason. This is stressed in Al-Hujurat 11, 12: "No people shall ridicule other people for they may be better than they .Nor shall any women ridicule other women, for they may be better than they. Nor shall you slander one another, nor shall you insult one another with names" (The Holly Qur' an, 1956, p. 765). Reading this reminds us of many bad students' behaviors that are rife in many educational institutions, and, as many Muslim scholars claim, the true values of Islam are often not mirrored in the behaviors of some Muslims.

According to Abdelmoumen (2002), Islam suggests practical ways to preach ethics in society. The first one, and probably the most significant, is the prophet's traditions as stated in Al-Ahzab 22 : "You have an excellent example in the Messenger of Allah" (The Holly Qur' an, 1956, p. 609). The deeds and sayings of the prophet cover almost all aspects not only of religious life but of social and everyday life as well. Other ways and methods include, but are not limited to, Quran stories, modeling, and direct preaching. Such methods are believed to restore the values of justice, mercy, honesty, trustworthiness, modesty, anger management, and fulfilling one's promises.

5.2 Values in the Moroccan Educational System Prior to 1999
As it is beyond the scope and objectives of this research to trace back values education in Morocco across historical periods, a brief description of how education served the maintenance of social norms in precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial Morocco is made in this section.

The history of education in Morocco, as in most of the Arab and Muslim world, was marked by the prevalence of traditional systems that took different names like Quranic education and Islamic education. This type predated modern educational systems or even those implemented in the colonial period by European powers. Lotfi and Wagner (1980) noted that It "was the only type of formal education available to children in Morocco and elsewhere in the Muslim world until the advent of European influence" (p. 239). Up to the present time, this system has had a noticeable impact on a number of religious and educational institutions (Ennaji 2005).

In Morocco, Quranic schools together with '*msid'*, which is usually a classroom hosted in the local mosque or annexed to it, offered training on basic skills such as reading, writing, arithmetic, Arabic grammar, Islamic law known as "sharia", and of course Quran memorization and recitation. Students who wanted to pursue their education beyond these institutions had to go to a religious center known as "*zawiya*" where they could profound their knowledge and skills in religious areas and subsequently could hold professional governmental positions as judge (cadi) or notary (adl) (Lotfi and Wagner, 1980).

Such context resulted in the prevalence of values pertaining to both the individual and the group. Because of the emphasis on the Quran and Hadith (prophet sayings), Islamic values of tolerance, respect, modesty, hard work, and generosity were explicitly highlighted. Students were expected to live up to these as guiding principles in their daily lives. Particular priority was placed on the value of obedience to the *fkih*, the local *msid* teacher. He was unanimously respected not only by the students he taught but also by the entire social community to which he belonged. In addition to this, a sense of fair competition was highly encouraged as the ultimate goal of education was to complete the memorization of the Quran, a goal usually attained by a hardworking student in a period of 6 to 8 years (Lotfi and Wagner, 1980). However, competition did not mean absence of collaboration. In the classroom (the *msid*) advanced learners are assigned to help low achievers or new students who have missed many lessons. From modern perspectives, this could be described as a pedagogical environment wherein instruction is effectively differentiated and learning is collaboratively constructed.

The French and Spanish protectorate period brought in some changes to the patterns of education in Morocco. While traditional Quranic schools, *msid* and *zawiah* continued in their educational and religious missions, Western models of education appeared in big cities. The main change was of course the adoption of French as a medium of instruction and the gradual marginalization of Arabic not only in the field of education but in administrative use as well (Ennaji, 2005). This was part of the hegemony plan adopted by colonial powers at the time. In terms of content, Aqil (2019) noted that "the French school curricula were designed to establish certain Western beliefs as the main focus of education" (p. 2). This led to the spread of Western norms, values, and style of life. (Ennaji 2005). Logically, it is safe to argue that this was at the expense of Moroccan traditional and religious values preached by Quranic schools, the *msid* and the *Zawya*. This colonial policy was faced with the establishment of free Islamic schools by prominent national leaders. The objective of these was to shift the focus of education to the Arabic language and Islamic thought, as well as to stimulate nationalism and reduce illiteracy (Ennaji, 2005).

Upon getting independence in 1956, Moroccan authorities faced huge challenges in the field of education. Hence, the prime focus was on reorganizing the educational system which left few space for caring about detailed content that relates to values in general. Four measures were undertaken according to Merrouni (1996). First, the Ministry of National Education adopted the policy of Arabization, under which Arabic replaced French as a medium of instruction. Second, Moroccan professionals were hired to replace French teachers; however, this was done in a gradual manner due to the shortage in human resources. Third, the government tried to melt all types of schools left by the colonizer into one unified national system of education. Finally, attempts were made to make education universally accessible to all children with the aim of reducing the high illiteracy rates.

5.3 Values in the National Charter of Education and Training (1999)

The World Bank report on the situation of Morocco, which was issued in 1996, considered the sector of education to be in a state of crisis (Fahmi, 2016; Fahmi, 2022; The World Bank 1996). The report noted that despite the priority given to education, "Morocco's education system is still plagued by major deficiencies, which are almost certainly curtailing the country's prospects for long-term economic growth" (p. 2). It then insisted on the need to perform an urgent reform capable of raising the efficiency of the economy and achieving social equity. The Moroccan authorities reacted positively to the World Bank report and declared the sector of education a second national priority after that of the Moroccan Sahara.

It is in this context that the NCET came into existence and it was meant to be a clear roadmap towards a modern and internationally competitive educational system. It included a set of standards which aimed at improving the quality of education in Morocco at all levels. As stated in the previous sections, which dealt with the educational policy before and after Morocco got its independence, generating learners who strictly abide by legal legislations and act according to moral obligations and ethics had always been implicit in the Moroccan educational system. The era of the NCET followed the same trend

The charter consists of two main sections. The first one details the unchanging foundations of Morocco's educational system. Precisely, four sets of values were outlined and they included 'the values of Islam, the values of the Moroccan identity, its cultural and ethical principles, the values of citizenship, and the values of human rights and their universal principles' (NCET, 1999, cited in The ministry of national education, 2009, p. 11).

Among these values, the NCET emphasized the importance of educating students about their rights and responsibilities, introducing them to negotiation, tolerance, and acceptance of diverse perspectives, and ensuring that the school environment fosters self-respect, self-discipline, and constructive relationships with others. All these relate directly to the concept of school civility being explored in this research. In fact, once learners interact according to these values inside and outside school, issues of violence, disrespect towards peers and teachers, disruptive behavior and drug use will not arise. The new educational system introduced by the NCET highlights both civic and character development, and this principle is reflected directly or indirectly in the English curriculum for middle and high schools alike.

The Moroccan school, according to the NCET, aims at "providing individuals with opportunities to acquire values, knowledge, and skills allowing them to integrate in the job market or continue their education" (NCET, p.7) **[my translation].** It is important to note that the term 'values' came before the terms 'knowledge" and 'skills' in the text of the NCET.

Moreover, enough emphasis was placed on the necessity to fully respect children's rights and abide by the international conventions approved by the Kingdom of Morocco in this regard. Among these rights, of course, is physical safety, dignity, and fair treatment, three areas which are at the heart of school civility being studied in this project.

Educators are then called to "serve as role models for learners in appearance, behaviors, and hard work" (NCET, p. 10) **[my translation]**. It is safe to assume then that the spirit of the NCET with regard to values education maintained the aspects of the Islamic traditional education which prevailed up to the second half of the 20th century. This type of education emphasized teaching of religious contents and values pertaining to the Islamic culture and tradition.

5.4 School Civility in the White Paper (2002)

The White Paper (2002) (WP) was mainly an attempt to put into effect the general principles outlined in the NCET. According to this ministerial document, which includes seven parts, the curricula in the Moroccan school are based on relatively new choices. These include restructuring primary and secondary education into two cycles; first and second cycles for the primary school and middle, and high school for secondary education. Also, the new school year organization shifted to a two terms system instead of three. Last but not least, there was an attempt to modernize education by introducing new subjects such as computer studies, civic education, and Amazigh.

The WP reiterated the same set of values listed in the NCET, and labeled them as the ultimate goal of our educational system because they have attained national consensus while drafting the NCET. These include the values of Islam, the values of the

Moroccan identity, the values of citizenship, and the values of human rights. Such values are considered to be at the heart of the philosophy of education adopted in Morocco. The Moroccan school is tasked to establish interactions between school and society as the first is a micro model for the latter. Education, according the WP, is to promote Islamic values, patriotism, students' sense of responsibility, tolerance, negotiation, modernity, democracy, cooperation, respect, and openness. Equally, it should target the development of assets and skills such as innovation, creativity, critical thinking, logical reasoning, and autonomous learning. Positive behaviors relating to these values were declared explicitly as goals in the educational system of Morocco, and teachers were advised to bear this in mind while planning for their daily lessons.

In term of pedagogic choices, the WP insisted that the school setting represents an ideal context not only for learning about values but for practicing them as well. This document, hence, has upheld the notion that the school is not preparation for life, it is life itself as proposed by John Dewey.

More importantly The White Paper tried to translate the principles of the NCET into a concrete description of what students should learn and be capable of at each educational level. However, and in addition to setting goals at the cognitive level or the level of competencies, this documents also sets clear goals with regard to the learner's personality development. For example, before moving to high school, a learner should have developed a sense of responsibility, an awareness of the need to work collaboratively with other, respect for human rights, and active engagement in school and social life. Table 2 below depicts the values students should be exposed to at each stage of their school life:

Table 2. Target Values for Each Grade Level in Moroccan Schools

Elementary school	Middle school	High school
- Values based on morality - Principles rooted in Islam - Unity and cooperation - Acceptance and open-mindedness - Openness and honesty - Concern for the environment - Tolerance	- Islamic values - Recognition and respect for the diverse aspects of Moroccan culture - Love for one's country - Understanding and advocacy for human rights - Engaging in community involvement - Acknowledging and fulfilling one's duties and obligations	- Islamic values - Esteem for our national identity - Appreciation of our cultural heritage - Embracing the richness of global civilizations - Embracing values of modernity - Upholding democratic principles - Safeguarding human rights - Ensuring fairness and equity - Displaying constructive social conduct
Content is introduced with consideration for the age and cognitive development of students at each educational stage.		

5.5 School Civility in the Strategic Vision (2015-2030)

The Higher Council for Education, Training and Scientific Research (HCETSR) has come out with a strategic vision (SV) for the period 2015-2030. This document sets two major goals for the Moroccan school. The first one relates to equity while the second concerns quality. The SV comprises 23 articles, each outlining a specific measure with well-defined objectives. Values, as in other official documents, are considered key pillars of the philosophy of education in our country. The following figure illustrates the five functions the Moroccan school is tasked to perform:

Figure 1. The five school functions (For a School of Equity, Quality and Promotion, A strategic Vision of Reform 2015- 2030, abstract. p. 7)

Values have a place in the SV. While drafting the whole document, many principles were taken into account. These include constitutional foundations such as Islam, the territorial integrity of the country, the monarchy, and the values of "moderation, tolerance, [...] belonging, and dialogue between cultures and civilizations" (The Strategic Vision, p. 8) [my translation].

Article 18 of the SV pertains to the exploration of the concept of values within the school context. It regards schools as instrumental in the process of socialization and the imparting of positive values through education. This article acknowledges that "despite Moroccan schools' emphasis on education in values, human rights, and citizenship, inappropriate behaviors such as cheating, violence, environmental degradation, and vandalism of school facilities continue to proliferate" (p.55) [my translation]. After this, recommendations are made to the local educational authorities to reduce aspects of these phenomena and to promote positive behaviors. The article names four areas of intervention in this regard:

1. Curricula: the SV calls for incorporating values in national curricula and syllabi of different subjects. The ultimate objective for this is to make the school a space for practicing civil behavior.
2. Educational infra-structures: providing facilities that could be employed in promoting positive values and behaviors. In this regard the SV recommends creating listening centers and restructuring the school councils in a way that involves students in some decision making.
3. School partners: training all practitioners and school partners on promoting civil behavior.
4. The school environment: communicating with the family as an institution of primary socialization. This could be done via coordinating with parents associations and other NGOs and via encouraging voluntary work and personal initiative.

5.6 Values in the Publications of the Higher Council for Education, Training and Scientific Research
The HCETSR is a constitutional institution created by article 168 of the 2011 revised constitution. Its mission assumes a consultative nature; the HCETSR is tasked to give its opinion and provide recommendations with regard to diverse public policies that relate to education in Morocco. It is also charged with evaluating those policies and mentoring national programs and projects. In fact, HCETSR has a number of publications relating to pedagogical assessment, curricula, language policy, teacher education, vocational training, human resources, and scientific research. Values education was the subject of one of these reports.

The HCETSR, in fact, released a detailed report on values education in the Moroccan educational system in 2017. The introduction of the report sums up the rationale behind it as:

- The fact that values education is one of the foundations of human life in its individual and social dimensions;
- It is at the core of the concerns of the State, society and of the public debate about school, its missions and its social, cultural and qualifying roles;
- It is one of the major levers of training and qualification of human capital and its ongoing development;

- Finally, it represents a structural element for schools' missions, especially those related to socialization, education, culture, socio-cultural integration of learners, strengthening social bonds and social cohesion (CSEFRS, 2017, p. 3).

The report then specifies four objectives it is seeking to achieve: helping the Moroccan school to fully fulfill its basic mission of socialization, raising the quality of the educational system by orienting it to focus on both knowledge, skills and values as well, supporting schools to spread social and cultural values among its graduates, and contributing to the development of pedagogical methods to promote values education.

At the same time the HCETSR emphasized that educating younger generations on socially cherished values can't be restricted to the school. Other social institutions share this responsibility, namely the family and the media. Including such institutions, in fact, could guarantee complementarity and, thus, better results.

The set of values listed in the 2011 constitution, according to the HCETSR report, should provide a framework for Moroccan schools to set their own objectives depending on their immediate context. Constitutional values, to recapitulate, include democracy, human rights, dignity, freedom, gender equality, moderation, and tolerance. Fighting religious and ideological extremism is also stressed.

The report is structured into two parts. The first one, entitled Values Education, Overview and Challenges, refers to some important achievements that relate to values education in the Moroccan school. The first of these is the constitutional focus on "the constants of the nation and its value system" (CSEFRS, 2017, p.6). Second, the NCET, the instructions of royal speeches and letters, the Strategic Vision reform, and the Opinion Statements issued by the HCETSR, have all textually upheld the interest in promoting values in the school setting.

However, the report notes that despite these achievements, many difficulties and inconsistencies still exist. In fact, there is still a gap between the general objectives set in diverse curricula and the reality of everyday school and university life, a reality often characterized by tensions and behaviors falling beyond school legislation. Also, the report notes a lack of regular evaluation of diverse programs and projects related to values education. Such evaluation, had it been systematic, would at least have detected "an irregular pace in the implementation of contents and resources in conformity with legal, institutional and learning reforms at the national or international levels" (CSEFRS, 2017 p. 7); In addition to this, this section of the report refers the absence of constructive partnerships between the school and other institutions with the aim of achieving the goals of values education in Morocco.

The second part of the CSEFRS report, entitled Perspectives of Development and Change, outlines seven areas of developing values education. Two general guiding principles for these areas are:

- "The success of values education depends on the implementation of a system consistent with the nation's fundamental choices as expressed in the Constitution of the Kingdom; a system of values in which rights and duties are impartially mentioned, and embodied in practices and behaviors.
- Values education is a shared responsibility between the school and other social, civil, and institutional actors" (p. 8).

The following table details the seven areas of development proposed by the CSEFRS:

Table 3. The seven areas of development proposed by the HCETSR

Area	Main measures to adopt
Programs, curricula and training	- Adopting new approaches that allow for integrating values education into national curricula - Specifying target priority values in line with the Moroccan constitution - Promoting equality and fighting against discrimination
Diversity of tools and digital space	- Developing multimedia facilities in schools - Using ICT in values education programs - Providing a clean cyberspace to which students can resort to find resources related to values
School and university life and civic practices	- Caring about school infrastructure - Encouraging educational clubs - Promoting the sense of belonging to school - Setting up mechanisms for conflict management
Pedagogical actors	- Investing in pre- and while teacher training and including values education the training curricula - Organizing, on a regular basis, workshops in schools, universities and institutions
Educational relationship between schools, their environment, institutional partners and civil society actors	- Strengthening the cooperation between the school and the family - Encouraging partnerships with other institutions and NGOs
Scientific and pedagogical research	- Encouraging research pertaining to values education - Strengthening partnerships between national research centers which are concerned with human development and similar institutions abroad
Categories of students in special or vulnerable circumstances, and/or those with disabilities	- Caring for the disabled - Fighting against inequality - Paying attention to students coming from vulnerable areas

6. Conclusion:

To conclude, in order to understand and research values and values education within the Moroccan educational context, researchers need a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach. By drawing on philosophical perspectives, such as ethical theories, the theory of moral foundations, and insights from Moroccan philosophers such as Elmendjra, Taha Abderahman and El Jabri, researchers can critically engage with the normative frameworks that shape conceptions of the good, the just, and the moral in educational contexts. Certainly, these foundations not only ground values in deeply rooted intellectual traditions but also help contextualize them within Morocco's cultural and historical specificity, and this will of course enrich research projects in the field.

Furthermore, incorporating psychological theories such as Kohlberg's theory of moral development and Haidt's moral foundations theory, alongside sociological frameworks like symbolic interactionism and structural functionalism, allows researchers for a nuanced analysis of how values are internalized, expressed, and institutionalized in educational settings. These theoretical lenses should be complemented by a careful examination of national policy documents such as the National Charter for Education and Training (NCET), the White Paper, and publications by the Higher Council for Education and Training (HCET),

which reflect the state's vision for value-based education. In fact, bridging theory and policy will enable researchers to contribute to more grounded, context-sensitive, and impactful studies that inform both educational practice and national discourse on values in Morocco.

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