PROJECT TITLE

THE CULTURE OF SCHOOLING

Consequences of Formal Education for Science and Religion

PROJECT LEAD
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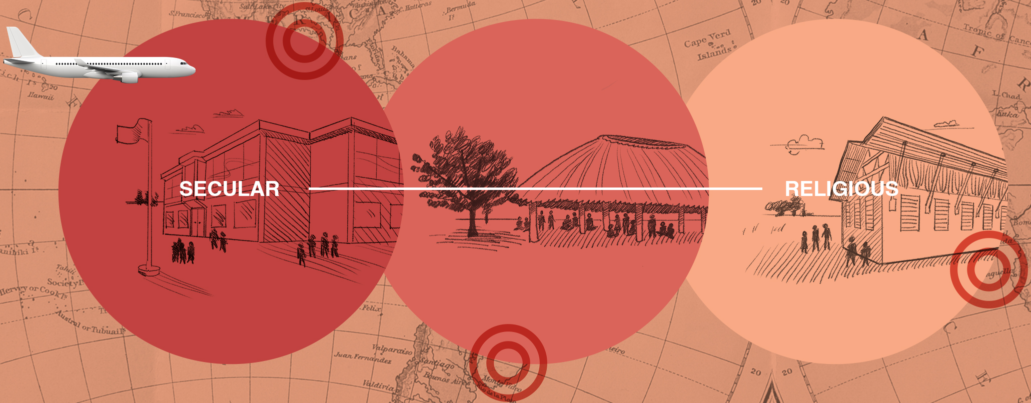
An international and interdisciplinary team is collaborating on a global educational research initiative.



THE GOAL

Delve deeply and broadly into the global impact of secular and religious schools, including a better understanding of how cultural influences shape the environment and content of the classroom, which in turn shapes attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors of students and their parents.

QUESTIONS BEING EXPLORED

How does the type and quality of education impact the attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors of students, their parents, and other people around them? In what ways do they change? And why?"

How does experience with formal schooling influence science knowledge, reasoning, and values? How does it impact innovation and creativity? Does secular versus religious education have different impacts?

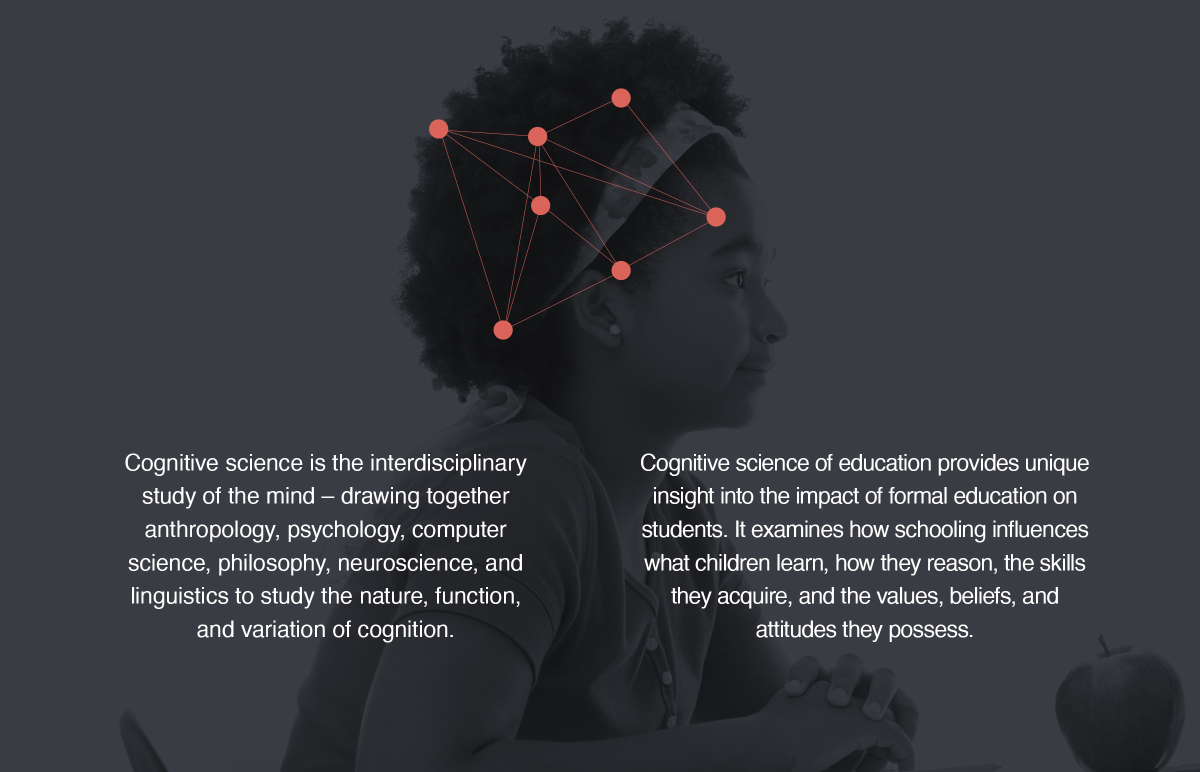
How does experience with formal schooling impact religiosity? Does secular versus religious education have different impacts?

How does the kind of schooling children experience impact how they think about the compatibility of religion and science?

How does schooling impact values, beliefs, attitudes, and practices across generations?

> “Education is transformative in multiple respects. It introduces new ideas. It challenges existing ideas and sometimes changes them. And many of these ideas are relevant to how we think about human nature, cultures, and the pressing problems that face our species and world more generally.
>
> – Cristine Legare, Ph.D.

WHAT IS COGNITIVE SCIENCE?



Cognitive science is the interdisciplinary study of the mind – drawing together anthropology, psychology, computer science, philosophy, neuroscience, and linguistics to study the nature, function, and variation of cognition.

Cognitive science of education provides unique insight into the impact of formal education on students. It examines how schooling influences what children learn, how they reason, the skills they acquire, and the values, beliefs, and attitudes they possess.

SCHOOLS TRANSMIT CULTURE ON A GLOBAL SCALE

A prevailing view of education is that schools are designed to teach academic content, knowledge, and skills, thus education research typically focuses on assessing the facts, theories, concepts, and skills that students learn in different subjects.

In reality, schools also influence values, attitudes, identities, beliefs, and practices of individuals and groups;schools are institutions that transmit culture on a global scale. Therefore, this research project takes a broader approach – studying schools as institutions of cultural influence – examining the interactions among forms of schooling, the development of content knowledge, and the formation of beliefs, behaviors, attitudes, and values.

SCHOOLS

TYPE OF SCHOOL: E.G., PUBLIC, PRIVATE, SECULAR, RELIGIOUS

PEOPLE’S SKILLS, VALUES, NORMS, ATTITUDES, BELIEFS, AND PRACTICES

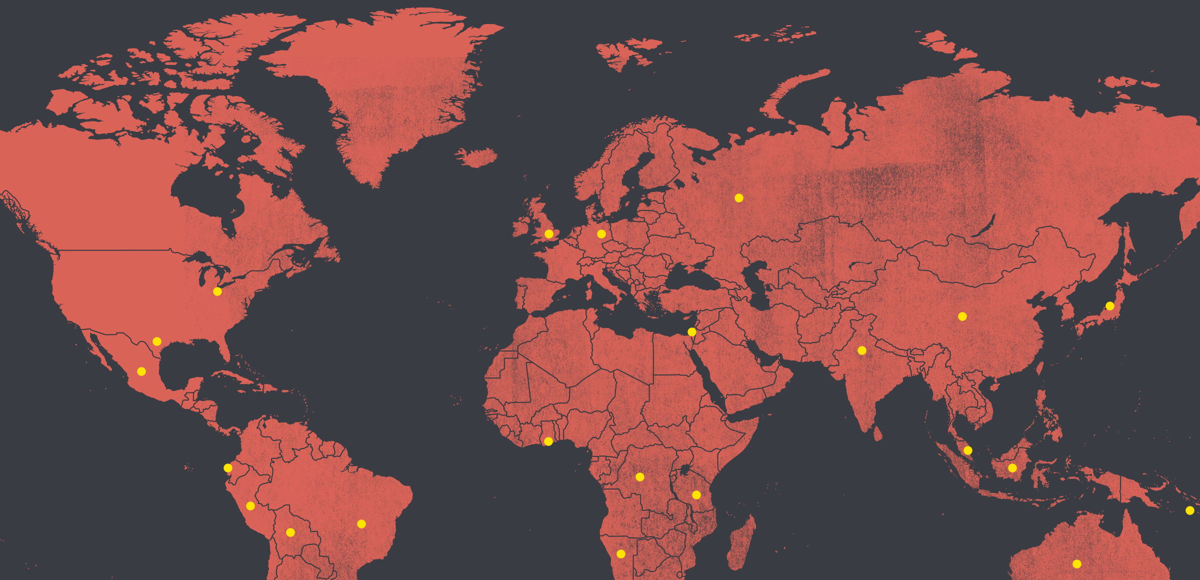
HOW TEACHING AND LEARNING HAPPENS: THROUGH OBSERVATION, EXPLORATION, INSTRUCTION, IMITATION, COLLABORATION

SUBJECT AND DISCIPLINE KNOWLEDGE THAT IS GAINED: E.G., MATHEMATICS, LITERACY, LANGUAGES, LITERATURE, HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, SCIENCE, RELIGION

CULTURAL TRANSMISSION AND CHANGE:

Schooling brings learners in contact with new knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, identities, beliefs, and practices. How does exposure to and experience with different kinds of schooling impact what children learn and what they value? How do different kinds of schooling change learners? In what ways do they change, and why?

Research is underway in small and large scale societies in dozens of countries around the globe.



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