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Children's Scientific and Religious Thinking in Indonesia

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Abstract

In Indonesia, religious education is compulsory in schools. How do scientific values and reasoning—being willing and able to change one's beliefs in the face of new evidence—emerge in this context? We recruited Indonesian children (N=240, Ages 6-14) from majority Muslim (Jakarta) or Hindu (Bali) schools. As part of a larger battery of tasks, we asked participants a set of scientific values questions (e.g., "How important is it to think carefully about people, ideas, and events instead of relying on gut feelings or emotions?"), scientific reasoning questions (e.g., "How can Sarah best convince Michael that plants are alive?"), and questions about their religiosity. We will report age- and site-related patterns for each variable, and explore the relationships between religiosity, scientific values, and scientific reasoning performance. The findings will be discussed in terms of the development of scientific and religious thinking in cultural contexts.