

Spiritual State of the World's Children

Dominican Republic





Spiritual State of the World's Children A Quantitative Study

MINISTRY REPORT

Dominican Republic

September 2010

Prepared by:



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ONEHOPE

OneHope is a non-profit organization with a mission to *affect destiny by providing God's eternal Word to all the children and youth of the world.* With programs in over 125 nations OneHope has reached over 620 million children and young people with a special presentation of the life of Jesus. Committed to presenting God's Word in a format that is relevant and dynamic, research is a critical step in the development of country and age specific products and programs.



The Metadigm Group is a non-profit research organization with the goal of equipping other organizations to conduct research and improve their efficacy. Processes necessary to achieve organizational priorities and embed research skills into day-to-day organizational operations are developed through seamless processes offered in data collection, strategic planning, market profiles, and outcomes development. For more information, visit www.metadigmgroup.com or email us at info@metadigmgroup.com.

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Section I: Key Issues Analysis

Key Issues

- Family composition
 - 64% two parent family (includes 13% living in a two parent household where one is a step parent)
 - 32% parents are divorced or separated
 - 7% live with a grandparent
 - 5% one parent has died
 - 2% both of their parents have died
 - 1% do not live with an adult

- Perception of Family
 - Definition of family
 - 71% define family as any person or group whom you love or care about deeply
 - 19% define family as those related by birth, adoption or marriage
 - 6% define family as any group of people who shares the same set of values and goals in the life
 - 4% define family as any group of people who live together
 - Function of family
 - Place for children –
 - 76% consider an unmarried man and woman with children a family
 - 61% consider a single woman with children a family
 - Relationship –
 - 15% consider an unmarried man and woman a family
 - 15% consider homosexual women a family
 - 13% consider homosexual men a family

- Relationship with parents
 - 58% spend 15 minutes or less a week talking with their father about things that really matter
 - 39% spend 15 minutes or less a week talking with their mother about things that really matter
 - 31% spend more than 60 minutes a week talking with their mothers about things that really matter
 - 18% spend more than 60 minutes a week talking with their father about things that really matter

- Safety and Security of home
 - 44% feel their home is a place where they feel safe and loved
 - 13% are uncomfortable and rather be elsewhere

- Marriage
 - 90% believe God intended marriage to last a life time
 - 85% feel that they will be happy in their marriage
 - 60% admire single life
 - 59% feel the traditional family does not play a significant role in the stability of society
 - 41% approve of divorce even when children are involved
 - 40% report there is too much pressure to get married, would rather live together
 - 27% indicate that anyone who gets married should anticipate divorce

- Sexuality
 - 30%-40% have engaged in some type of sexual fondling
 - 31% have had sexual intercourse
 - 48% feel that sexual intercourse is sometimes to always ok for two people who are in love
 - Most likely to learn about sex from classmates/friends, movies/TV, and textbooks
 - They are least likely to learn about sex from sex related magazines, parents, and the internet

- Satisfaction with life
 - 60% of respondents indicate they are very satisfied and 24% somewhat satisfied with their lives
 - 16% are somewhat or very dissatisfied with their lives
 - Over the past three months –
 - 84% report watching MTV
 - 57% admit having lied to their peers
 - 50% indicate they have lied to an adult
 - 24% admit to reading a pornographic magazine or watching a pornographic movie
 - 19% have had suicidal thoughts
 - 11% attempted suicide

- Influences (cited as having *a lot* of influence over thoughts and actions)
 - 57% Parents
 - 40% Bible
 - 31% Friends
 - 27% Teachers

- Moral behavior
 - 82% feel bending the rules is okay
 - 81% feel that truth can be defined by others in contradictory ways and still be correct
 - 71% feel lying is sometimes a necessity
 - 69% are pragmatic indicating in several ways that moral behavior is relative and justified by whether or not it “works”
 - 58% feel that breaking the law is okay if it does not hurt anyone

- Factors providing future satisfaction (cited as having *a lot* of importance)
 - 87% having a degree
 - 83% good physical health
 - 82% relationship with God
 - 80% working at a high paying job
 - 79% owning a large house
 - 73% having one marriage partner for life

- Religious Practice
 - 88% religion is somewhat or very important to them
 - 47% report weekly or daily prayer
 - 51% participate in weekly or daily youth group or scripture study group
 - 43% report to be likely to attend religious service after they graduate from high school
 - 36% participate in weekly or daily religious services
 - 23% report weekly or daily scripture reading, including the Bible or Koran

- Christian Theology
 - 85% have heard about Jesus and the Bible from family or relatives
 - 82% believe that Jesus Christ was a real person
 - 70% acknowledge that the Christian faith is relevant to the way they live
 - 61% believe that the Holy Spirit is a symbol of God's presence or power, but not a living entity
 - 49% believe that the Devil is not a living being but a symbol of evil
 - 45% believe that if a person is generally good, or does enough good things for others during their life, they will earn a place in Heaven
 - 38% are unsure if human souls die with the body
 - 35% believe that Jesus Christ did not return to life physically after he was crucified
 - 29% believe that people who do not accept Jesus Christ as their savior can still go to heaven

Strengths & Opportunities

- To be determined by Global Ministry's Latin America Team

Weaknesses & Threats

- To be determined by Global Ministry's Latin America Team

Recommendations

- To be determined by Global Ministry's Latin America Team

Section II: Project Description

Acknowledgments

This project was made possible in part by funding from the Maclellan Foundation and Global Ministries - OneHope.

We acknowledge the cooperation of the Secretary of Education, the headmasters and staff of the schools included in the sample, the cooperation of students, volunteers and the OneHope Dominican Republic Staff.

The Attitudes & Behaviors of Youth (ABY) instrument administered in this study was made available by Josh McDowell Ministries.

Overview

OneHope seeks to understand what children and youth deal with in their day-to-day realities. We know that children and youth face a variety of social challenges and experience psycho-social needs to which they are often left without effective responses. We do know that the needs of children vary from country to country and even regionally within countries. However, without reliable information we are unable to tailor our products and distribution programs to address needs specific to particular contexts.

While the issues and challenges facing children and youth in developed countries are researched and documented, those in developing countries are not. Without an accurate analysis of their contexts these populations are treated as though they share a common reality. An awareness of the immediate reality of children is often discovered only after ministry has begun and resources have been committed to a project.

As part of OneHope's *Spiritual State of the World's Children* study, the Attitudes and Behaviors of the Youth (ABY) project will capture the following information about children in the Dominican Republic:

- Typical family situations, relationships and parental contact
- Behaviors and moral values guiding relationships with peers of the opposite sex
- Daily occupations and pastimes
- Worldviews, influences, beliefs, future goals, and religious affiliation
- Theological perspectives and commitment

Research Methodology

The Attitudes and Behavior of the Youth project utilizes the ABY survey, which is a stratified random survey of secondary school children. The survey was stratified by degree of urbanization and gender for Dominican Republic. Additional strata that permit analysis are: family composition, ethnicity, and religious affiliation.

The core survey was constructed using the Survey of Juveniles designed by Chris Sleath of Josh McDowell Ministries. The survey was administered in secondary schools in Spanish. Surveys were administered in randomly selected accessible¹ schools segregated by population density (proportional to national population distribution of urban-rural residents) to students in the schools randomized by gender (proportional to the national ratio of male-female).

¹ Schools considered inaccessible are those that are in conflict zones, areas of extremely low population or that cannot be reached by public transportation.

Project Overview

The time frame for data collection was February 2010 through July 2010. Alexander Polanco served as the local Research Coordinator for the Dominican Republic research project. Oversight was provided by Andrea Barquero, Astrid Cortes and Dr. Allen Reesor of Pompano Beach, Florida. The research followed project design instructions (see below under Logistics).

Data was entered into a web-based database, which was hosted by Philip Issa of Elite Research. The final report includes Metadigm Group's analysis of the data, which has been reviewed by Rene Paulson, PhD. Secondary data is provided when applicable. This report is available for use by partners supporting the utilization of collaborative research in conducting ministry to children and youth.

The final report will be made available to ministry partners who promote ministry to children and youth through collaborative research.

Logistics**Review**

National leaders reviewed the survey and recommended minor edits.

Randomization

Reliability of the survey results depends upon consistent randomization of the participants. Two strata of randomization that govern participant selection employed in this project were gender and population density distributions.

The Secretary for the Department of Education of Dominican Republic provided a list of schools segregated by population density.

Population density was interpreted as either urban or rural. Additionally, the study population was further segregated into one of two classes: less than one hundred thousand or between one hundred thousand and one million. This list was used to select randomly identified schools at Metadigm Group Headquarters. The list of randomized schools was returned to the local Research Coordinator for review. Schools that were inaccessible (see footnote on inaccessibility above) were replaced by following randomization procedures.

To ensure that gender participation reflects the male/female ratio of the national population, randomization by gender was finalized when students were selected for participation.

Verifying Access

Research Assistants met with the administration of each school to explain the survey and obtain school consent for participation.

Survey Printing

A master copy of the survey response form was forwarded electronically to the local Research Coordinator who received bids for the printing of 4,000 collated and stapled copies.

Quality Control

Hard copies of the survey response form were randomly assessed to evaluate survey validity. Hard copy survey response forms will be retained by the local OneHope office in Dominican Republic for one year to verify the accuracy of data entry if needed and as a back up to electronic data files. The surveys are kept confidential and will be turned over to a designated OneHope Headquarters representative on or about 12 months following the close of data collection. After 12 months, a OneHope representative will oversee the destruction of all hard copy surveys.

Implementation & Survey Administration

Data Collection

The survey was administered in the schools identified by randomization and previously contacted. The research agent will identify the number of classes in session on the day of the survey.

- If the average class size at a school was less than 30 students, 15 classes were randomly selected for inclusion in the study. 15 students from each class were randomly selected proportional to the male/female ratio for Dominican Republic.
- If the average class size at a school was more than 30 students, 10 classes were randomly selected for inclusion in the study. 22 students from each class were randomly selected proportional to the male/female ratio for Dominican Republic.

Students were asked to voluntarily participate. Participants were administered the survey in groups that could be accommodated in a classroom. Approximately 200 students were surveyed at each school.

During the time of survey administration, many of the students in 12th grade were in the process of taking their exit exams. Therefore, there was little to no representation for the 12th grade for the Dominican Republic.

The surveys were conducted by two people. A brief scripted introduction was read aloud and students were given the opportunity to ask questions. Administrators took turns reading each question aloud to students.

The following assisted with data collection: Betania Arias, Felix Miranda, Escarlat Fulcar, Evelin Carolina Ysabel, Isaac Nina, and Glenis Rodriguez.

Data Entry

The local Research Coordinator was responsible for accurate input of the data into the web-based survey database. The following assisted with data entry: Eunice Lajara, Victor Bautista, Escarlat Fulcar, and Alexander Polanco.

Section III: Profiles of Youth in Dominican Republic

Data Qualifications

Reflecting the population distribution of the country, 70% of this sample is comprised of urban participants, which means overall attitudes will strongly reflect those of the urban population. Due to gender distribution in the sample, overall attitudes will also tend to reflect female attitudes. The results cannot be extrapolated for application to those 13-18 years of age who are not in school.

Demographics

The total sample size for this survey is 3,863. The sample is comprised of 46% male participants and 54% female participants which remains a constant when analyzed by population density and age. By age, 69% of participants are 15 years old or younger and 31% of participants are 16 years of age and older.

The survey was conducted with high school students; 54% of participants are in grades 7 and 8, 22% in grades 10 and 11, and 15% are in grade 6. Rural participants are twice as likely to be in grade 7 than urban participants. Participants are likely to rate their school performance as good with 47% indicating this, 36% rate their school performance as average, and 16% report excellent performance. Female, older and rural participants are somewhat more likely than male, younger and urban participants to report better school performance.

Overall 31% of the participants report that their fathers and 29% their mothers are employed in the service industry, 21% report their fathers and 24% their mothers are professional, and 18% report their fathers and 30% their mothers are other employed which may indicate that they work from home, are self-employed or unemployed. Overall fewer than 10% of participants' parents in this sample are agricultural workers.

More parents are married, 43% of participants report their parents are married, for other categories of marital status 37% are divorced, separated, or remarried, and 13% categorized as other (possibly the parents live together without formal marriage). Overall 51% of participants report living with their natural mother and father (some possibly not married), 19% report they live with their mother or stepmother only, and 13% report they live with two parents, one of whom is a step parent.

Family Relationships

Overall, 71% of participants define family as "any person or group whom you love or care about deeply", with younger participants somewhat more likely to feel this way than older participants. Only 19% define family as people related by "birth, adoption or marriage". Children are important in defining family; only 15% of participants accept an unmarried couple living together as family however if the couple has children, 75% consider this couple with their children to be family. Similarly 25% of participants would consider two women without children to be family but if a single woman has children this group is considered family by 61% of participants. Homosexual males living together are considered family by 13% of participants and a homosexual female couple are considered family by 15% of participants. Female and rural participants are more likely than urban and male participants to accept an unmarried couple who live together and have children as a family.

While 13% of participants feel uncomfortable in their homes and would rather live somewhere else, 44% feel that their home is a place where they feel safe and loved, and 22% feel their home is place where sometimes they feel loved and other times they do not. Overall male and rural participants are more likely than their female and urban counterparts to feel safe and older participants are more likely than younger participants to feel uncomfortable in their homes and rather be elsewhere.

About 85% percent of participants report the adults in their family sometimes or frequently set good examples for them, are interested in who they are, and expect more of them than fair. Urban and younger participants are more likely to feel the adults in their family demonstrate their love each other than their rural and older counterparts. Younger participants are also more likely than older participants to feel that the adults in their family admit when they are wrong or mistaken.

In this sample, 12% indicate their father is no longer alive or unknown and 5% that this is true of their mother. About half of participants consider their relationships with their fathers as very close and 67% feel this way about their mothers. Additionally, 22% describe their relationship with their father and 15% with their mother as fairly close. Rural participants and younger participants are more likely than their urban and older counterparts to report they are close to their parents.

Children are generally proud of their parents, this is true of fathers for 78% of participants and for mothers by 90%. Similar percentages hold for the feeling that parents show love for them, only slightly fewer report that they show love for their parents in return. Participants are more likely to do something with their mothers (83%) than with their fathers (67%), While 56% almost never or infrequently talk to their fathers about their personal concerns this is only true of mothers for 34% of participants. Male participants are more likely to talk things over with their fathers and female participants with their mothers; younger participants overall are more likely to have a more personal relationship with parents than older participants.

As reported above, participants overall spend little time in conversation with parents about things that matter to them, 58% of participants spend no time or less than 15 minutes a week talking with fathers and 39% with their mothers. However, 30% spend more than 15 minutes but less than an hour talking to their mother about things that matter and another 31% more than an hour a week. Only 18% spend more than an hour a week talking about meaningful topics with their fathers.

Attitudes towards Marriage and Relationships with People of the Opposite Sex

Ninety percent of participants believe that God intended marriage to last a lifetime, 85% believe they will be happy in their own marriages and 74% feel their family experience has been positive. Divorce is unacceptable for 59% if children are involved even when it is a loveless relationship and 75% do not feel one should assume marriage will end in divorce. On the other hand, 75% believe that it is difficult to have a successful marriage these days, 60% find the single life is appealing and only 39% would like to have a marriage like that of their parents.

About 60% of participants value virginity with female participants much more likely than male participants to feel this way. Male and older participants are somewhat more likely than female and younger participants to believe the traditional family plays an important role in society, to want a marriage like their parents' yet to feel there is too much pressure to get married so would rather live together. Younger participants are more likely than older participants to believe that marriage problems are exaggerated, and somewhat more likely to think that successful marriages are difficult these days or to want to be a virgin at marriage.

Participants have learned about sex most frequently in descending order from classmates or friends, textbooks, and TV or movies, they are least likely to find out about sex from pornography, the internet, and their parents. When asked about the influences that would be more likely to make them decide to engage in sexual intercourse if they had the opportunity, overall about 60% would find no compelling reason to make this decision. Participants said that influences to which they might respond were, in descending order, the intent to marry the person, being in love with the person, or if there was no fear of pregnancy; peer pressure from friends is the least likely influence in this decision. Generally male and older participants are more likely than female and younger participants to find all influences encouragement to such a choice.

When two people are in love and the activity is voluntary, 48% of participants feel that it is sometimes or always acceptable to engage in intercourse, 79% feel intimacy such as fondling and intense kissing are acceptable and 87% find hand holding, kissing and embracing acceptable. Older and male participants are more likely than younger and female participants to approve of these activities.

When questioned about past sexual behaviors, overall 31% have fondled genitals or had sexual intercourse with 45% of male and older participants reporting that this is true. Overall 42% have fondled breasts with over half of males and older participants indicating this has been their experience. Sixty-two percent of participants report heavy kissing and 76% embracing and some kissing.

Beliefs and Perspectives on Daily Life Profile

Overall 60% of participants indicate they are very satisfied with life, 24% somewhat satisfied and 16% not too or not at all satisfied with their lives. Rural participants are somewhat more satisfied with their lives than urban participants. It is important to note that 19% have had suicidal thoughts and 11% have attempted to kill themselves in the 90 days prior to the survey.

Factors that are significant measures of future satisfaction or success include having a degree, good physical health, a clear purpose for living, a close relationship with God, a comfortable lifestyle, close and personal friendships, a high-paying job, and a large house for about 80% of participants.

More than 30% of participants spend more than 8 hours of their free time a week sleeping while on break, or chatting on the internet with an additional 19% and 17% respectively spending 4-8 hours on these free time activities. They are also likely to spend their free time in SMS, listening to music, looking for information on the web, watching TV, and studying from school materials in descending order. Overall 54% spend 1 hour or less reading books or reading the Bible; with another 25% spending less than 3 hours on these activities. Female participants are more likely than their male counterparts to spend more time listening to music and chatting on the internet or SMS. Rural and older participants are more likely than their urban and younger counterparts to report sleeping while on break; and older participants are more likely to indicate than younger participants to listen to music.

In descending order of priority parents, Christianity, music, and the Bible are reported to have the most influence in participants' lives. Brothers and sisters, friends, movies, text books and the internet are also influential. Female participants are more likely than male participants to be influenced by their siblings and friends; while male participants are more likely influenced by information from the internet and indigenous faith. The most appealing media are electronic media (MP3, cell phone, laptop computer) followed by Hip Hop; 84% watch MTV weekly. Female participants are more likely than male participants to have interest in fashion magazines and electronic media.

As noted above, religion is an important influence with 90% of participants indicating that the Bible offers indisputable moral truth for everyone and 68% of participants can recall a time when their religious beliefs affected their behavior. Despite holding these opinions, 82% of participants believe that rule-bending is permissible, 71% believe that lying is sometimes necessary, 69% know something is moral if it works and 58% condone law-breaking as long as it no one is hurt. The participants also show strong post modern tendencies in their understanding of truth, 81% of participants think truth can be defined in contradictory ways and still be correct and 55% indicate the following: truth means different things to different people and no one can be absolutely positive that they have the truth.

This is generally reflected in their reported behaviors over the previous three months, 57% lied to a friend or peer, 50% lied to an adult, 42% cheated on an exam, and 25% were drunk on alcohol, watched pornography or intentionally tried to hurt someone (either physically or emotionally). Male participants report that 36% have watched pornography, significantly more likely than female participants and are also more likely to have read

pornography, gambled, been drunk, and lied to a peer. Older participants are somewhat more likely than their younger counterparts to get drunk, cheat on exams watch pornographic movies or lie to an adult.

Religious Background and Practice Profile

Overall, religious affiliation in this sample set is as follows: 41% Roman Catholic, 33% Protestants, and 11% have no religious affiliation. Female and rural participants are somewhat more likely than their male and urban counterparts to be Roman Catholic. Older participants are slightly more likely than younger participants to indicate no religious affiliation. About 85% of participants indicate that their religion is important to them and 83% indicate that church membership is important, with female participants more likely than male participants to respond this way.

When participants leave home or finish school 43% say they are very likely and 32% somewhat likely to attend religious services on a regular with younger participants more likely than older participants to indicate this. However, currently 56% of participants rarely or only sometimes attend religious services and 36% participate weekly or daily in religious services. About the same percentage report that their mothers and siblings attend weekly or daily religious services with a drop of 15% for fathers. Younger participants are more likely than urban participants to state that they and their parents attend religious services.

Attendance at a religious youth group is reported by 69% of participants with urban participants more likely than rural participants to attend. Youth group size is 10-19 attendees for 18%, 1-9 attendees for 15%, and 20-29 attendees for 14%. When asked about religious observances 47% of participants report weekly or daily prayer, 27% religious youth group participation and 23 scripture reading on a regular basis. Female and rural participants more likely than male and urban participants to pray and younger participants are more likely than their older counterparts to participate in all forms of religious activities listed.

Between 80% and 89% of participants have heard about the Bible or Jesus from churches or family/relatives, followed by textbooks and least likely to have heard about the Bible or Jesus from friends or western literature. Eighty percent of rural participants have heard about the Bible or Jesus from other sources (possibly radio or TV) and 71% from missionaries, slightly more likely than their urban counterparts.

Over 90% of participants regard God as the creator of the universe, 86% of participants are certain of God's existence, 9% are uncertain, and 5% do not believe that God exists. God is defined as the omnipotent, omniscient, Creator who rules the world today by 80% with rural participants slightly more likely than urban participants to have this view of God. About equal numbers at 8% each believe everyone is God or that God refers to the realization of human potential.

The existence of ghosts is rejected by 56% of participants, 13% believe they exist and 31% think that they might. Heaven and Hell are believed to be real places by 78% of participants and 62% believe that human souls die with the body, while 20% believe that they do not. Participants in this sample are uncertain about what happens after death; 41% of participants believe they will go to Heaven because they have confessed their sins and have accepted Jesus as savior, 25% think that because you have kept the rites of religion or been a good person you will go to heaven and 22% are not sure what will happen after they die.

Twenty percent of participants in this sample did not answer the questions about Christian theological perspectives. Of those who did, about 80% believe that Jesus Christ was a real person, that he was born of a virgin, that the Bible is accurate in all of its teachings (including miracles described in the Bible), that there is final judgment by God, and that forgiveness of sins comes through Christ alone. Approximately 70% believe that Christianity is relevant to their lives, that those who do not accept Christ will go to hell, and that prayer can change what happens in life. Just less than half of the participants indicate the belief that Satan is merely a

symbol of evil, that the idea of sin is outdated, and that if a person is generally good, they can earn a place in Heaven.

Seventy-three percent of the total sample responded to the question as to whether or not they have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important to them, of these 42% indicate that they have done so. Urban participants are much more likely than rural participants to have made this decision and older participants somewhat more likely than younger participants have made this commitment. Of those who responded that they had made this commitment to Jesus Christ, 42% made the decision between the ages of 9-12 years old, 27% between 5-8 years old and 17% between 13-15 years old.

Section IV: Dominican Republic Secondary

**Secondary Research Profile
Dominican Republic**



DEMOGRAPHICS & POPULATION	
Est. Population (2010)	9,734,901
Population (under 15 yrs)	32.501%
Life Expectancy	68 yrs
Birth Rate (per 1,000 people)	23.58
Infant Mortality (per 1,000 live births)	26.93
Estimated Urban / Rural Population	5,514,532 / 3,660,043
Largest City / Population	Santo Domingo / 2,491,547
EDUCATION & LITERACY	
Literacy Rate (over 15 yrs)	87%
Primary Enrollment	90%
Literacy Rate – Males	86.81%
Literacy Rate – Females	87.18%
ECONOMICS	
GDP (purchasing power parity) (per capita)	\$6,584.58
GDP (official exchange rate) (per capita)	\$3,886.47
Poverty Rate (% below poverty line)	42%

SOCIAL			
Human Development Index ² (out of 177)	90	Children orphaned due to all causes, (per capita 2007)	170
Divorce Rate (per 1,000 population per year)	1.17	Children living with AIDS (per capita)	0.519337
Unemployment Rate	15.6%	All registered NGOs	Not Available
Murder committed by youths (per capita)	5.2	Homelessness	Not Available
Rapes reported	3,036	Child marriage 2008, total	40
Robberies reported	469,899	Child Prostitution	Not Available
Prisoners (per capita)	107/100,000	Child/Teen Soldiers	Not Available
	0		
ETHNIC GROUPS & RELIGIONS			
European / African descent	73%	Roman Catholic	95%
European descent	16%	Other	5%
African descent	11%		
LANGUAGES			
Spanish			

This data is drawn from CountryWatch.com, World Health Organization, and public domain data. Statistics are generally from 2005 but may be earlier if none more recent are available.

² Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite index that measures the level of well-being in 177 nations in the world. It uses factors such as poverty, literacy, life expectancy, education, gross domestic product, and purchasing power parity to assess the average achievements in each nation. It has been used in the UN's Human Development Report since 1993.