The Role of Causal Attribution and Implicit Mindset in Development of Wisdom

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
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2016

Abstract

Many wisdom studies explore the essential characteristics required to be considered wise. These studies fail to consider how one can develop these characteristics; in particular, they fail to explain the personal and cultural characteristics that influence motivation to become wise. In this study, we looked at 160 participants’ causal beliefs about wisdom in two different cultures, Iran and Canada, and created a coding scheme to categorize what ordinary people believe causes wisdom. A mixed method analysis pointed out that attribution styles affect implicit mindset towards developing wisdom in both cultures: people who have controllable attributions (associated with incremental theory) are more likely be optimistic about developing wisdom, while individuals with uncontrollable causal attributions (associated with entity theory) are more likely to be pessimistic about developing wisdom. Our results support previous findings on the importance of mindset and causal beliefs in achievements and add to the wisdom literature by empirically investigating the role of motivational disposition on wisdom scores.
Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Michel Ferrari for his insight and guidance throughout the thesis project. Since joining the Wisdom & Identity Lab, his enthusiasm about ‘wisdom’ and this line of research motivated me to work harder and delve deeper into my studies. None of this would have been possible without his trust in me and his continued and relentless support. I would also like to thank Dr. Rasool Kordnoghabi for his assistance. I would also like to acknowledge the members of the Wisdom & Identity Lab for their friendship and support throughout the past year.

I would also like to thank my parents and siblings for their belief in my abilities and constant support. And finally, I would like to thank my husband, Sadegh, for not only his help in the different stages of my thesis, but also for his unconditional patience and support in every step of the way.
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Chapter 1

1 Introduction to Wisdom

From ancient times, wisdom has been viewed as an important virtue associated with good judgment, on the basis of personal insight, knowledge, or skills, despite the uncertainties of life (Baltes & Smith, 2008; Kaufman, 2006; Opdebeeck & Habisch, 2011). This makes wisdom not only a desired goal of human development but also an attractive concept to study. Both ancient philosophers and modern scholars have tried to define wisdom and its development.

Ancient Greek philosophers like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle viewed wisdom as an accessible and important virtue. For example, as Plato (348/347 BC) mentioned in The Republic, wisdom means acting according to understanding goodness. Aristotle (384–322 BC) distinguished between metaphysical and practical wisdom. In Abrahamic religions such as Christianity and Islam (which developed into the modern Era by integrating Aristotelian and Neo-Platonist philosophy throughout the Middle Ages) God is the first principle of creation and knowledge and that the world is created ‘with wisdom’. In both of these religions, wisdom is interpreted as a legacy bestowed by God achieved through spiritual practice (Ferrari, Kahn, Benayon, & Nero, 2011).

Although philosophers, theologians and even lay people in different cultures contributed ideas about the ontology and development of wisdom, they did not inspect their ideas empirically. This is where psychological scholars contributed to wisdom studies and attempted to define wisdom and turn it into a scientific concept that can be
studied empirically (Kaufman, 2006). Psychological study on wisdom is relatively new and due to the multifaceted essence of wisdom, there have been some disagreements among wisdom paradigms in terms of a unified empirical definition of wisdom and the essential dimensions of its development (Staudinger, 2008). In the following section I will briefly describe several of the most well-known wisdom paradigms relevant to the current cross-cultural study of wisdom.

1.1 Berlin Wisdom Paradigm

The best-known scientific theory related to wisdom is the Berlin wisdom paradigm (Baltes & Staudinger, 2000). In the early 1980s, Baltes and his colleagues at the Max Planck Institution for Human Development in Berlin extracted concepts of wisdom from philosophy and theories on life span psychology (e.g.: Erikson, 1960) in order to define wisdom. Based on this model, wisdom is defined as expertise in the fundamental pragmatic of life which is about life planning (e.g., goals), life management (e.g., dealing with problems and conflicts), and life review (e.g., meaning making of life history). This knowledge has an important impact on living a good life at the individual level. Moreover, it contributes to helping others in the form of insightful advice. In order to develop this knowledge two basic criteria and 3 meta criteria have been specified (Baltes & Staudinger, 2000; Smith & Baltes, 1990). The two basic criteria identified in the model, common to any type of expertise, are: 1) Factual Knowledge, and 2) Procedural Knowledge (Smith, J., & Baltes, 1990). Factual Knowledge is specific knowledge about the conditions of life and its variations, whereas Procedural Knowledge is more about “knowing when and how to apply one's knowledge to review past life decisions, give
advice about current life dilemmas and construct a plan for the future.” (Baltes & Kunzmann, 2004; Baltes and Smith, 2008).

In addition to these basic criteria which Baltes describes as "the first level" of wisdom development, there are three meta criteria which he named as "the second level" of wisdom development. The three meta criteria are: Life Span Contextualism (knowledge about context of life and how it changes over time), Value Relativism (knowledge about differences in values, goals, and priorities which is shown by tolerance and respect of contrary beliefs), and Management of Uncertainty (knowledge about the relative indeterminacy and unpredictability of life an ways to manage) (Baltes & Smith, 2008).

Baltes later expanded the Berlin Wisdom Paradigm to discuss correlates and antecedents of wisdom more specifically. He added Person Factors (age, intelligence), Expertise Factors (education, mentorship experiences) and Context Factors (historical period, national culture, religious upbringing) (Baltes & Smith, 2008). The full and final model of the Berlin Wisdom paradigm (as shown in Figure 1) is not only about wisdom as expertise in life pragmatics, but also includes cognitive appraisal of life dilemmas (Baltes & Smith, 2008).

Although the Berlin wisdom model is one of the best-known wisdom theories, some scholars attempted to revise and review characteristics that have been mentioned in this model. Some scholars argued for example, that if wisdom is a matter of experience (Staudinger, 1998), then it shouldn’t necessarily come with age (Baltes and Smith, 2008; Webster, 2003).
More recently, this approach has been extended to consider the kind of thinking that underlies social problem solving (Grossman et al., 2008, 2016) and more ecologically valid life management tasks, like resolution of marital conflict (Thomas & Kunzmann, 2013). It has also been adapted to focus on self-examination and personal growth leading to what Staudinger calls “personal wisdom”. She emphasizes more on personal development and defines wisdom as a mature personality (Staudinger, 2008).

Figure 1. The Berlin Wisdom Paradigm. Antecedents, consequences of wisdom-related knowledge. Examples of the wide range of context-expertise, and person-related factors and processes that contribute dialectically to the ontogeny and expression of wisdom-related knowledge and behaviour. Adapted from Wisdom. A metheuristic (pragmatic) to orchestrate mind and virtue toward excellence, by Baltes& Staudinger, 2000, The American psychologist. Copyright 2000 by the American Psychological Association.

1.2 Learning from Life Model

Brown (2004) proposed a model of wisdom development that defines wisdom, and the conditions that facilitate its development. This model defines wisdom development as
“learning from life”. Brown (2004) suggests six factors in the Learning from Life model: Self-Knowledge, Interactions with Others, Judgment, Life Knowledge, Life Skills, and Willingness to Learn. Some of these factors (Self-Knowledge, Understanding of Others, Judgment, Life Knowledge) are similar to other wisdom theories such as Berlin model’s factual knowledge. Self-knowledge includes personal authenticity, understanding of self-interests, strengths, weaknesses, and values. This factor is very similar to Staudinger’s understanding of personal wisdom. Interactions with others is about considering different people in varying contexts; this factor echoes Baltes’ lifespan contextualism criteria. Judgment describes looking at an issue from a different perspective when making decisions, and taking into account a variety of viewpoints. Life knowledge refers to understanding of uncertainties and realities over one’s life span. Life skills is the ability to manage different daily responsibilities and understanding and solving problems effectively. This model also added a new element by including Willingness to Learn that indicates the continual interest for gaining new knowledge about the world (Greene & Brown, 2009). Brown and Green (2009) emphasized the importance of motivation by mentioning orientation to learning as one of the main criteria of developing wisdom. Although motivational disposition has been mentioned in the Berlin model as one of the specific factors, it has not been emphasized. In a nutshell this model (see Figure 2) refers to wisdom development as a direct result of life experiences in which one willing to learn from their daily experiences and to apply it to new situations in their life.
1.3 Dimensional Wisdom Model

The three-dimensional wisdom model (most commonly assessed by the 3D Wisdom Scale) by Ardelt (1997, 2003, 2005, 2009) in contrast to Berlin paradigm, assumes that wisdom is in what a person is, rather than what a person knows. According to this assumption, Ardelt proposed a model based on 3 dimensions, i.e. Cognitive, Reflective, and Affective, that are related to one’s personality (Ardelt, 2003). The Cognitive dimension evaluates how realistic one is with respect to life events, their tolerance upon encountering uncertainties, and their willingness to gain knowledge. The Reflective dimension assesses the ability to view an event from different perspectives which requires self-examination, self-awareness, and insight. This dimension is similar to Life Contextualism in the Berlin model. The last dimension, Affective, includes sympathetic and compassionate love towards others which is the opposite of self-centeredness. This is in alignment with the Understanding of Other’s factor in the learning from life model.
Although, it is worth mentioning that Ardelt included feelings such as love and compassion in this category as well that was missing from other wisdom models (Ardelt, 2009). This model indicates that to become wise, it is necessary to have all the 3 dimensions simultaneously (Ardelt, 2003).

1.4 Criticisms of these Approaches

As described above, modern theories of wisdom are mainly based on western culture. While it has been scientifically proven, culture profoundly affects perception of different concepts, and wisdom is not an exception (Trowbridge & Ferrari, 2011). However, little is known about the different perceptions of wisdom and how it fosters among different cultures while. In order to have a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of wisdom, different cultures, religions, and environments have to be considered in wisdom studies.

Second, models of wisdom suggest a variety of factors and dimensions that are essential in order to foster wisdom in life. Although motivation has been implied in some models, it seems as though these theories have not emphasized enough on motivation as an essential factor in development of wisdom. As an example, Brown (2004) indicates under the definition of *Willingness to Learn* that “Willingness to Learn describes a basic humility in which one knows and exhibits continual interest in learning about the world” (Greene & Brown, 2009). In the Berlin Wisdom Model, “Motivational Mentorship” is one of the antecedent factors in development of wisdom. However, it seems that these theories have not studied motivation in development of wisdom empirically. This study, attempts to
highlight the importance of motivation in development of wisdom, factors that might influence motivation to wisdom, and the relation between motivation and wisdom scores.
Chapter 2

2 Wisdom Models and Motivation

According to Baltes and Staudinger (2000), wisdom is a sophisticated concept that allows individuals to optimally self-regulate or manage their lives, suggesting that a mixture of elements and process need to come together in order to foster wisdom. Moreover, learning scholars agree that motivation plays an essential role in development of abilities (Elliot & Covington, 2001; Panadero & Alonso-Tapia, 2014). So like any other complex expertise, wisdom has a strong link to motivation, or as Baltes (2000) pointed out: "motivation to strive towards excellence" or motivational disposition is one of the initial steps toward wisdom (Baltes & Staudinger, 2000). Also, as Staudinger (2008) illustrated, self-motivation based conception of wisdom is the most important criteria that facilitates our understanding toward wisdom development. But, none of the scholars who pointed out these facts about motivation and wisdom (e.g., willingness to learn by Brown and Green) have conducted any empirical research on this relation and the predictive factors of motivational disposition regarding wisdom (e.g. mindset or attributional style). To summarize, although the importance of motivational disposition has been suggested in some wisdom theories (Ardelt, 2003; Baltes & Staudinger, 2000; Baltes & Smith, 2008), to our knowledge there are still no studies of the determinative factors that can influence motivation to wisdom.

In this study, we intend to investigate the elements that impact motivation to wisdom (e.g.: attributional style). Below, we describe previous research that have discussed motivation, mindset, and attribution in order to explain development of intellectual ability.
2.1 Introduction to Motivation

Motivation has been defined as the instigation and direction of behaviour (Elliot & Covington, 2001). Scholars have attempted to determine the factors shaping motivation and have suggested a variety of motivational models spanning from attributional theory to self-regulation and self-determination theory. Although there are many different approaches to motivation, all of them refer to causal beliefs (attributions) about success and failure, and how perceived control can impact motivation and outcome. The basic trend of these studies is that individuals who believe they have more personal control over their own actions and refer to internal elements when it comes to causal locus, have stronger motivation and are more likely to do well in different tasks and achieve higher levels of success. For example, Perry and colleagues (2001) indicated that higher levels of perceived control positively correlated to positive cognitive, motivational, affective, and academic achievement out- comes (Perry et al., 2001). This characteristic can be included in the Self-Knowledge factor that has been mentioned by Staudinger (2008), or even Willingness to Learn element stated by Brown (2009). In contrast, people who have an uncontrollable attribution or external causal locus, such as those with learned helplessness, perform poorly (Margolis & McCabe, 2004; Perry et al., 2001; Pintrich, 2003, 2002; Weiner, 2000; Yeager & Dweck, 2012).

Research on self-determination theory has also illustrated the crucial role of an internal locus of causality and perceptions of autonomy and competence in adaptive behaviors (Deci & Ryan, 2000). These theories provide a clear understanding of the impact of causal attribution on motivation towards different abilities and outcomes. In the following section, we will review some major theories on causal attribution, mindset, and motivation, to lay
the foundations for the current study which attempts to understand development of wisdom and its relation to mindset and motivation in a diverse landscape of approaches to motivation.

2.2 Zimmerman’s self-regulation learning model

Bandura (1977) introduced self-efficacy as an important source of human motivation; he discussed human motivation primarily in terms of outcome expectations and defined perceived self-efficacy as personal estimations about self’s capacity to attain a desirable goal or ability under present circumstances. Building on the work of Bandura and others (1997), scholars have explored self-regulated learning (SRL). Although there are different SRL models, one common presumption is that the best learner is an “active learner”, that based on a general cognitive perspective, learners are viewed as active participants in the learning process. SRL theories hypothesize that learners create their own abilities and skills (the “internal” environment) (Pintrich, 2004). The second SRL general hypothesis is “perceived control” assumption. Based on this hypothesis, learners have a potential to regulate and control their motivation and actions (Pintrich, 2004). Zimmerman (2000) illustrated that self-efficacy beliefs are sensitive to subtle changes in performance context and has a high interaction with self-regulated learning (SRL) (Zimmerman, 2000). Zimmerman’s SRL circular model (Figure 3) not only defines the dynamic relations between self-efficacy, motivation and self-regulation but has explains the specific relation between mindset, attribution and self-belief (Panadero & Alonso-Tapia, 2014).
As this model indicates, self-motivation beliefs - which include self-efficacy, outcome expectations, task interest, and goal orientation - profoundly influence learning performance. Likewise, performance outcomes (achievement or failure), notably affect self-evaluation (self-satisfaction or self-defense). In this model, all the elements have significant, mutual impact on each other. The importance of this model in terms of wisdom development, lies in the fact that forethought wisdom (life-planning) has not sufficiently considered self-motivational beliefs, whereas Zimmerman’s model illustrates the unavoidable impact of such forethought on performance. So in order to understand wisdom development it seems crucial to emphasize on the importance of reflection (e.g., causal attribution) and forethought (e.g., self-motivation beliefs). For this purpose, in the following I will review studies that emphasized the most on those aspects: Bernard Weiner’s attribution theory and Carol Dweck’s theory of mindset.
2.3 Attribution Theory

Several studies have explored the relation between attributions and motivation and uncovered the significant effect of causal attribution on the development of different cognitive skills. Attribution analysis attempts to identify the process by which individuals describe the underlying cause of events and outcomes. The most basic assumption is that feelings, motivation and subsequently behaviors are based on thoughts and especially causality beliefs (Weiner, 2014).

Bernard Weiner (born in 1935) developed attribution theory and has revised it again and again. Although many researchers have studied and continue to study attribution, Weiner’s attribution theory is considered one the best. This theory is concerned with how individuals interpret causes to an event or behavior. Regardless of the actual cause of the event, causal interpretation (attributions) remarkably impact self-belief and motivation. For example, if someone assumes that they are not successful at something due to the lack of inborn intelligence, regardless of the actual cause (e.g., lack of effort), they will feel helpless and soon stop trying even when they are smart enough to successfully complete that task.

According to attribution theory, the way in which people explain success or failure can be classified into three dimensions of attribution: Causal locus, Causal control, and Causal stability (Weiner, 2000).

- *Causal locus*: This dimension is concerned with the location of a cause, or whether the cause is within or outside of the person. The causal locus dimension has two poles: Internal vs. External. In internal attribution, characteristics
belonging to an individual such as their personality cause a certain outcome, whereas in external attribution, situational elements such as family which are not within the individual are deemed responsible for a specific outcome.

- **Causal control**: The controllability dimension refers to the malleability of causes referred to an event. This dimension also has two poles: Controllable vs. Uncontrollable attribution. Controllable attribution indicates a cause that is under the control of self (e.g., effort). Uncontrollable attribution is concerned with causes that cannot be controlled by individuals such as luck.

- **Causal Stability**: This dimension is associated with causal permanence. Similar to the other dimensions, causal stability also has two poles: stable vs. unstable. A stable cause is permanent such as physical disability or genetics. On the other hand, an unstable attribution refers to temporary causes such as mood.

Aside from the attribution dimensions, Weiner (2000) later distinguished between Interpersonal and Intrapersonal attributions. In **Intrapersonal** attribution, an individual attempts to determine the causes of their own actions. As an example, a basketball player might believe bad luck or insufficient effort as the cause of his failure. Intrapersonal attributions directly influence self-esteem because it is about one’s self, and “own” actions rather than thinking about other’s behavior. This is very similar to Zimmerman’s SRL model, which also placed intrapersonal causal attribution in the self-reflection phase (Zimmerman, 2000). Weiner, expanded this idea by demonstrating that in addition to the causal attribution on self’s achievements and failures, attributions toward other’s achievements and failures will also influence motivational disposition - what he termed “**Interpersonal Attribution**”. In this category, individuals seek the cause of another
individual’s success or failure as opposed to their own achievements or failures. For example, an individual might see their classmate’s high exam scores as a result of their hard studying (controllable) or luck (uncontrollable).

2.3.1 Causal attribution and culture

One of the most highlighted elements that plays an important role in the way individuals interpret causes to success and failure is national culture (Choi, Nisbett, & Norenzayan, 1999). Culture influences an individual’s belief system not only through the whole structural system of the society (e.g., individualism, collectivism) but also through upbringing and schooling (Deci & Ryan, 2000). For example, as Choi and colleagues (1999) investigated, East Asians are more likely to explain a behavior based on situational and external elements. However, Americans tend to have more internal attributes due to the fact that American culture is more “individual centered”. Therefore, to interpret different causal attributions it is essential to consider the culture that includes religion, social structure, upbringing, and etc.

2.3.2 Attribution and the development of ability

Attribution exists prior to motivational self-beliefs that are the foundation of performing an act or developing an ability. Therefore, in order to study wisdom development, the first step is to understand the relation between attribution and motivation to develop wisdom. In previous research, neither wisdom scholars nor motivation experts have investigated attribution towards wisdom and how it is related to motivation to wisdom. There are several studies on the relation between attribution and motivation to other abilities (Tan & Martin, 2013; Yeager, Paunesku, Walton, & Dweck, 2013; Yeager &
Dweck, 2012); however, since research on wisdom is relatively new, there has not been an in depth investigation on the relation between attribution and motivation to wisdom. In a few wisdom development models, attribution and mindset have been mentioned implicitly. In the Green and Brown model, willingness to learn is one of the factors that is essential in order to foster wisdom, where a positive mindset is implied in the definition of this factor: “Willingness to Learn describes a basic humility in which one knows and exhibits continual interest in learning about the world” (Greene & Brown, 2009). In the current research we would like to investigate this relation and uncover different sides of it—alluding to an internal, controllable and stable motivation to acquire wisdom.

2.4 Carol Dweck’s Implicit Theory of Mindset

Carol Dweck (born in 1946) is one of the best-known scholars working on mindset and the importance of self-motivation beliefs on performance. As she pointed out, mindset is a set of powerful beliefs about human attributes, including abilities (Dweck, 2012). She highlighted the psychological mechanisms that enable some individuals to thrive under challenges, while others of equal ability do not (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, and Dweck 2007). Her motivational model suggests that basic self-beliefs can cause different response patterns to challenges and result in achievement or failure. Dweck’s implicit studies discovered that lay people hold different implicit theories of mindset that can be placed on a continuum that has two ends (Incremental theory or growth mindset vs. Entity theory or fixed mindset) (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, and Dweck, 2007, 2016; Dweck et al., 1988; Kamins & Dweck, 1999). A variety of studies have shown the lasting impact of causal attribution on mindset and subsequent success’ or failures (e.g., Blackwell & Trzesniewski,
Those studies discovered that individuals who hold a growth mindset (or an incremental theory) view abilities as controllable features that can be developed through hard work and willingness to learn so they are more motivated and are more likely to attain desired ability whereas, those with a fixed mindset (or an entity theory) believe that human abilities are fixed qualities that cannot be changed by effort or over time, and as a result are not motivated to work on those features (Rattan, Good, & Dweck, 2012). Dweck’s research have been mainly focused on academic achievement. She has studied students’ implicit theories of mindset, in which they were asked about the nature of intelligence and they attempted to predict the participants’ mindset based on their answers. Students may have different “implicit theories” about intelligence. Some students believed that intelligence is more of a steady and fixed concept (entity theory), whereas others saw intelligence as a malleable quality that could be improved (incremental theory). As Dweck pointed out: “Even when students on both ends of the continuum show equal intellectual ability, their theories of intelligence shape their responses to academic challenges.” (Blackwell & Trzesniewski, 2007, p. 247). In a study of measuring student implicit theories of intelligence at the beginning of junior high and then assessing their achievement outcomes as they progressed through the end of the second year of junior high school, Blackwell, Trzesniewski, and Dweck (2007) found that student who endorsed more of an incremental theory of intelligence had a great advantage over students who had an entity view. An incremental theory of intelligence at the beginning of junior high school significantly predicted higher mathematics grades earned at the end of the second year of junior high school (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, and Dweck 2007).
Although Dweck mostly studied students’ achievement and their mindsets about intelligence, her implicit theory of mindset can be extended to other abilities and concepts such as wisdom. As a result, how individuals approach a task, analyze it, and assess their abilities, could create a mindset regarding how to complete it. In this study, building on Baltes (2000) and Brown (2009) development of wisdom theories, I intend to investigate the role of attribution and mindset in wisdom development more in dept.
Chapter 3

3 Methods

3.1 The Present Study

The goal of this study is to deepen our comprehension of wisdom development by emphasizing on basic developmental evidence often neglected due to the multifaceted nature of wisdom. Theories on wisdom mainly focus on the characteristics of a wise person, but fail to point out how one can develop these characteristics. To explore any human capacity, one of the crucial steps is to investigate the developmental steps towards it. It will not only enhance the understanding of that ability for scholars, but also provide a down to earth and practical concept for lay people who are perusing that competence. In this study, I aim to fill this gap in wisdom studies by focusing on essential elements in wisdom development, by proposing that causal attribution and implicit theories of mindset play a fundamental role in fostering wisdom.

3.2 Study Design

This study involves mixed methods (triangulation design and embedded design) by different weighting of the qualitative and quantitative methods (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Archive data from the “International Wisdom Study” in the “Wisdom and identity” lab were used in this study. The data were collected from autobiographical and semi-structured interviews, the 3 dimensional wisdom scale (3D-WS) (Ardelt, 2003), and the Adult Self-Transcendence Inventory (ASTI) (Levenson et al., 2005).

The current study consists of 3 related sections:
1. The **first section** includes qualitative data and analysis of lay people’s opinion about sources of wisdom (implicit theory of wisdom) in two different cultural contexts, Iran and Canada. The aim of the first part is to study the cultural influence on perceived causal attribution of wisdom.

2. The **second section** consists of mixed method research on relation between attributional styles and implicit theories of mindset.

3. Finally, the **third section** involves quantitative analysis on the possible relation between implicit theories of mindset (incremental vs. entity) and wisdom scores. The possible relation between education, mindset and wisdom is examined in this section as well.

The central hypothesis is the following:

*Cultural attributions about wisdom will directly impact implicit theories of mindset: individuals with controllable and internal attribution should be more motivated to acquire wisdom and subsequently have higher wisdom scores, as compared to individuals considering uncontrollable factors in wisdom development.*

To test our hypothesis, we investigate the following research questions which divide the study into three related parts.

- **Question 1**: What do implicit theories on causal attribution about wisdom look like in different cultural backgrounds (Iran and Canada)? Are there any cultural patterns in causal attribution towards wisdom?

In the **first research question**, qualitative methods have the most weight. Causal beliefs about development of wisdom have been extracted from each interview and compared between Iran and Canada.
• **Question 2**: Is there any correlation between causal attribution about wisdom and implicit theories or mindset about it?

In order to investigate the relation between causal attribution and implicit mindset about wisdom, I utilized the embedded design of data transformation to code the qualitative interview data into numerical frequencies for the following: first, in order to code and compare data from an open ended question on causal beliefs toward wisdom based on attributional styles, and second, to see the relation between the attributional styles and implicit mindset towards wisdom. In this section qualitative and quantitative methods have the same weight.

• **Question 3**: Is there any relation between implicit theories of mindset about wisdom and wisdom scores? Can we claim that people who are more motivated to wisdom actually become wiser? Does education and age influence wisdom and mindset as well?

To answer this question, the relation between implicit theories of wisdom and 3D-WS and ASTI wisdom scores have been explored. Subsequently, the possible influential factors (age and education) on mindset have been tested such as age and education.

### 3.3 Participants

Participants were recruited in both countries through billboard advertisements on university campuses, email, college classes, word of-mouth, and through staff at retirement residences, community centres, and health care facilities for the elderly. Subjects volunteered, without compensation, except for extra credit in college classes. Participants were purposefully sampled to obtain roughly equal proportions of younger
and older adults, and males and females. The Canadian group was consisted of a young cohort \((n = 50)\) aged from 21 to 30 years old \((M = 24.78, SD = 2.72; 25\) males, 25 females) and the old cohort \((n = 61)\) was aged from 62 to 99 \((M = 80.66, SD = 8.99; 23\) males, 38 females). In the Iranian group, the younger cohort \((n = 72)\) were 21 to 30 years old \((M = 24.44, SD = 3.71; 24\) males, 48 females) and the older cohort \((n = 50)\) were between 62 and 84 years of age \((M = 65.90, SD = 5.17; 25\) males, 25 females).

With regards to ethnicity, the Canadian participants reported 60% White/European, 1% Black/ African American, 5.4% Asian, 1% Hispanic/ Latino, and 26% as Other (eight failed to report ethnicity). All the Iranians were Persian.

In terms of education, 42% of Canadian participants reported receiving a bachelor’s degree or equivalent and 20% completing some college or equivalent. Similarly, 47% of Iranian participants reported obtaining a bachelor’s degree or equivalent, and 19% reported no high school education.

Since some participants had not answered all of the interview questions, we had to analyze complete interviews and interviews in which the participants had answered the questions relevant to this study. In the end, we analyzed 160 interviews \((N\) Canada=80, 20 old males, 20 old females, 20 young males, 20 young females), \((N\) Iran=80, 20 old males, 20 old females, 20 young males, 20 young females).

### 3.4 Procedure

The University Ethics board approved the study in 2008 (renewed in 2014) and all participants provided informed active consent prior to participation. Trained research assistants administered the questionnaire and the interview. A single session lasting from
14 min to 2.5 hr (M = 55.23 min, SD = 30.29 min), either in a lab on a university campus or at a site chosen by the participant, was divided into three sections: (a) demographic questionnaire, (b) a semi-structured interview on the topic of wisdom and (c) Two questionnaires assessing wisdom and psychological functioning.

3.4.1 Demographic Questionnaire

After consenting to participate in the study, participants were administered a demographic survey (see Appendix A) that requested basic information, such as age, gender, ethnicity and education.

3.4.2 Semi-structured interview

The semi-structured interview involved five main sections: (1) life history, (2) nominating a wise personal acquaintance and memory of an event wherein the nominated person demonstrated wisdom, (3) underling reasons for the named persons’ wisdom, (4) a story about a wise cultural-historical figure, and (5) a definition of wisdom (see Appendix B for interview guide). Data for this study were drawn from Section 3, whose primary prompt was a close variant of the following:

Please take a moment to think of the wisest person you know personally. Who is this person? What is one story you know about this person, or one thing this person said or did that demonstrates his or her wisdom? What makes her/him so wise? Do you think it is possible for you to become like her/him?

Follow-up prompts were asked as needed to clarify ambiguous responses. Participants were not restricted in the number of wise persons they wanted to nominate. However, they were asked to select and elaborate on one person from their list of nominees. Interviews were
recorded and transcribed by research assistants. Interviews ranged in length from approximately 15 minutes to 1.5 hours.

3.4.3 Wisdom Measures

In this study two wisdom scales have been conducted, the Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS; Ardelt, 2003) and the Adult Self-Transcendence Inventory (ASTI; Levenson et al., 2005). Both of these scales assess personal wisdom score and are briefly reviewed in the following section.

3.4.3.1 3 Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS)

The 3D-WS includes three dimensions: cognitive, reflective, and affective. The cognitive dimension is assessed by items that measure understanding of life or knowledge of the paradoxical aspects of human nature, tolerance of ambiguity in life, and the desire to know the truth. This section consists of sentences such as: “I always try to look at all sides of a problem.” or, “A problem has little attraction for me if I don’t think it has a solution.” The affective dimension estimates sympathy and positive emotions toward others: “Sometimes I feel a real compassion for everyone” or, “If I see people in need, I try to help them one way or another.” The reflective component captures the ability to look at events from different perspectives which includes statements such as “I always try to look at all sides of a problem.” Or, “Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.”

Items that consist of the words “I” or “me” were measured on a scale ranging from 1 (definitely true of myself) to 5 (not true of myself). All other statements used a Likert-type scale format ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree) (Ardelt, 2003).
3.4.3.2 Adult Self-Transcendence Inventory (ASTI)

Adult Self-Transcendence Inventory (ASTI) includes 18 Likert-scale items ranging from 1 (disagree strongly) to 4 (agree strongly). In order to harmonize this scale with the 3D-WS in this study, another point (neutral) has been added so a 5 point Likert-scale has been used. This instrument consists of statements such as: “My sense of self is less dependent on other people and things.” and “Material things mean less to me.” (LevensoN, M. R., Jennings, P. A., Aldwin, C. M., & Shiraishi, 2005).

3.4.4 Coding scheme

A coding scheme was developed based on Interpersonal Attribution theory (Weiner, 2014). The interpersonal attribution (as opposed to the intrapersonal attribution) has been pursued since the participants were asked to give their opinion about the causes of wisdom of other individuals that they viewed as wise and it is not about themselves. 4 categories were developed: Controllable-Internal, Controllable-External, Uncontrollable-Internal, Uncontrollable-External. Although Weiner mentioned another dimension of attribution and called it the stability dimension, it wasn’t of particular interest in this study since the stability dimension is more applicable to intrapersonal attribution and less relevant in interpersonal attribution (Weiner, 2014). Additionally, the Controllable-External category consists of elements that cannot be controlled personally but someone else can control it and is especially suited in attributions regarding social issues (Weiner, 2014). As a result, this category is not appropriate in the current study since the goal of this study is to investigate attributional styles that each individual has about their own role in the development of wisdom.
During the coding process, every participant was categorized based on either of these attributions: Controllable-Internal, Uncontrollable-Internal, Uncontrollable-External.

Two independent coders read the entire interviews (not just the related questions) to have a better comprehension of each person’s dominant attributional styles about wisdom. Cohen's $\kappa$ was performed to determine whether there was agreement between two coders’ judgement on the participants’ attributional styles. The results indicated that there was a strong agreement between the two coders ($\kappa = .948, p < .000$).

3.5 Analysis

In the first section of the study, a general inductive approach was used to all the answers about the causal beliefs towards wisdom. Inductive analysis involves finding patterns and emergent themes without any previous frame work (Thomas, 2006). To do so, two coders read entire interviews and extracted the exact phrases and words that each participant mentioned as sources of wisdom (most of the participants mentioned more than one element.). Each factor is counted based on the number of individuals who mentioned it. For example, if a participant mentioned the same factor over and over we count it as one. This repetition will be taken into account in the second part of the study. In order to reduce the amount of data, very similar terms are counted as one (e.g., “being responsible about society” and “being committed to society”). The purpose of this section is to give a rich description on how lay people view development of wisdom in different countries by taking into account the frequency in which a theme is supported, and comparing these themes across Iranian and Canadian interviews. Chi square analysis was done on the frequency data to find out if there are any statistically significant differences between the emergent themes in both cultures in order to investigate whether there are any cultural
patterns that can only be understood in light of that specific culture. Example quotations are mentioned to better realize the differences in viewing wisdom development in different cultures.

For the second section, three independent coders read each interview and based on the emphases on factors (e.g., repeating a factor several times, saying explicitly that one factor is the most important.) categorized and coded each participant based on attributional styles according to Weiner’s attribution theory (2000): Controllable-Internal, Uncontrollable-Internal, Uncontrollable-External. These judgements were based on inductive reasoning approach of each transcript. Following this, coders also gathered responses to the implicit mindset towards wisdom (Question: “do you think you can be as wise as the person you named?”). The answers to this question are typically yes, no or maybe. However, some participants explained more which required interpretation and coding. Two independent coders categorized each participant into incremental versus entity mindset. Cohen's κ was run to determine if there was agreement between two coders’ judgement on the participants’ implicit theories of mindset. The analyses indicated that there was strong agreement between the two coders (κ = .987, p < .000.). Afterwards, Chi square was conducted in order to test whether there is any correlation between attributional styles and implicit theories of mindset about wisdom development.

In the third section, only Canadian sample were analyzed since the Iranian participants had not filled out the questionnaires. First of all, reliability statistics were conducted on the 3D-WS and the ASTI overall to assess the internal consistency of the items present in both of the scales. Reliability statistics were conducted on the dimensions of the 3D-WS (cognitive, reflective, and affective). Then Pearson correlation analysis was conducted
between the ASTI, 3D-WS, and its dimensions. Subsequently, in order to uncover possible correlation between categorical variables, a Spearman correlation was conducted between mindset, age, and education. Moreover, correlation between categorical variables (mindset, age, and education) and the ASTI and the 3D-WS was examined using Point-Biserial correlation. Following the correlations, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted between implicit theories of mindset (i.e., entity vs. incremental) to predict wisdom, with the 3D-WS and the ASTI as outcome variables to understand the differences in each of the mindset groups (entity vs. incremental).
Chapter 4

4 Results

4.1 General Inductive Approach

In order to investigate causes that lay people have considered essential in the development of wisdom, two independent research assistants read and extracted all of the elements that the participants had mentioned as the sources of wisdom using the general inductive method (Thomas, 2006). Our specific focus was on the answers to this question: “How did the wise person that you nominated get to be so wise?” Participants mentioned multiple elements in response to this question. In order to reduce the amount of the data and make it representable, we have categorized similar factors under one general theme. All of the factors which includes the exact words that the participants have mentioned about causes of wisdom and the general themes are described in Table 1. This table also illustrates the frequencies of the general emergent themes in Iran and Canada. Chi square analysis was conducted between general themes in each of the country groups to investigate whether the differences across the groups are statistically significant or not.
Table 1. Emergent themes in Iranian and Canadian Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emergent Themes</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Words mentioned by the participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Perseverance, Hardworking, Patience, Openness, Acceptance, Courage, Not act based on social norms, Self-esteem, Self-confidence, Believe in himself, Being calm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Confidence, Trusting himself, Faith in himself Openness, Understanding of different personality, Patience, Tolerance, Bearing, Personality, Being strong, Being calm, Courage, Perseverance Working Hard, Effort, Being hopeful and positive, Being practical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God related factors</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Trust in God, Hope in God, Gifts from God, God, Faith, Having faithful parents, Pray, Spirituality Supporting Islam, Help of religion, Reading Quran, Religious virtue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Believe in God, Talking to God, Going to church, Faith, Guidance from holy spirit, Being a good Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>Personal experience, Using others’ experience, Hardship, Travelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>Life experience, Learning from experience, Willingness to experience, Hardships, Suffering, Traveling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to learn</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Education, Studying, Reading books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>Education, Studying, Reading books, Self-Education, Knowledge of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and friends</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Parents upbringing, Having a good father, Good Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Parents upbringing, Having a good teacher, knowing wise people, Interact with wise people/friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Being committed, Serving the society, being conscientious, pay attention to social values, Empathy, Helping and understanding others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Kindness, Helping others, Empathy, Being committed, Being responsible, Conscientious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Being old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>As you age, you get wiser, Being old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In born abilities</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>Nature, Genetic, Inherent, Intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Nature, Intelligence, Genetic, Inherent, Innate ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive skills</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Critical thinking, Thinking before decision making, Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>Thinking before act decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Inner peace, Luck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Humility, Inner peace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 General Findings

The qualitative analysis presented here illustrates both differences and similarities in the themes that have been mentioned in both country groups. Also, Chi square analysis showed that there is a significant difference between both countries in terms of the causal factors about development of wisdom (Pearson $\chi^2(2, N=160) = 23.25, p=.001$).

Interestingly, the participants in both groups point out many of the same elements such as experience and cognitive skills as causal factors in wisdom development, and there are only a few factors have been mentioned by only one group. Despite these similarities and differences, each group has emphasized the most on a set of elements that is different from the other group. This finding indicates that sociocultural elements plays an influential role in individuals’ causal beliefs towards wisdom development. As an example, Iranian participants tend to attribute wisdom more to God or divine intervention in comparison to Canadians. Differences also emerged in the quantity of factors that each individual mentioned across groups; Canadian participants tend to mention more factors than Iranian participants. Iranian participants mentioned on average 1.8 unique factors, whereas Canadian participants mentioned 2.5 unique elements in their responses.

Furthermore, Canadian interviews are notably longer than Iranian interviews. The following sections will address each theme, discuss similarities and differences, and provide examples from both groups. Additionally, original Farsi translation will be provided for the Iranian interviews (refer to Appendix C).
4.2.1 Personality

Although the participants from both countries pointed out multiple personality characteristics, several elements have been mentioned frequently in both Canadian and Iranian interviews. The most chosen personality characteristics in both groups are: perseverance, patience, and openness. For instance, many Iranian interviewees related wisdom to perseverance and effort:

“To become wise, you have to try hard. Even if people think you will lose, and even if you never win, you have to keep trying. At the end, you can at least say you’ve tried.” (1207)

Canadian participants pointed out perseverance in the same context:

“…. In order to be wise you have to stick to what you believe and just keep going no matter what happens.” (YF03)

Patience is another personality feature that has been pointed out by both groups several times. An Iranian participant said:

“… He became wise because he had patience when he faced difficulties and loss.” (1079)

Some Canadian participants highlighted patience as the main reason of wisdom as well:

“…Patience, I think more than anything. I mean, I think most people that are extremely wise have that tandem of being very patient.” (YM05)

The other popular personality quality that has been highlighted by both groups is openness. In this context, openness means being open minded and accepting of others’ beliefs. An Iranian participant mentioned:
“…. Wisdom will develop by being open-minded and having an open and welcoming family when it comes to sharing thoughts!” (1010)

A Canadian participant also mentioned:

“He’s just he’s always been very open minded he’s done a lot of reading like spirituality psychology and that sort of thing…I’ve always been very aware of his like willingness to learn and to improve and like to better himself which I think is a big part of wisdom… he’s definitely made me more open minded cause when I was younger I was raised in a Christian home I was very you know that’s just how things are there’s really no need to question it. But he um yea because of him his willingness to look at things in new and different ways um I always did too.” (YM01)

Other personality components such as courage, confidence, self-esteem have been repeated in both groups. There are no distinguishable differences between Iranian and Canadian participants in personality characteristics they named.

4.2.2 Experience

Many participants in both groups pointed out the important role of experience in wisdom development, which is in accordance with development of wisdom models. Participants have emphasized on experience in different ways such as: learning from experience, facing hardships in life, having a difficult life, willingness to gain more experience, learning from others’ experience, and travelling and experiencing new things. However, it appears as though Canadians are more likely to relate wisdom and its development to experience. When it comes to sources of wisdom, experience is by far the top choice for Canadians, as 69% of Canadian participants considered experience as the main reason of wisdom.
“I guess it was just her experience in her life, made her to be that person, which then might made her wise.” (YM09)

“Making a mistake, I feel like that’s how you learn but wisdom is being able to apply that new lesson and see it in another circumstance. Although it’s maybe not necessary that I can go and read it in a book or anything like that, but I think it’s more just being more willing to experience things and see.” (YF07)

“Well it seems to me that to be a wise person you have to have the benefit of experiences, many of them, you have to absorb them.” (OM06)

“He came as an immigrant with no money and no language. And went out with a pack on his back and sold stuff to the farmers, so I guess it was distilled wisdom. It’s through distilled experience equals wisdom.” (OF23)

The 27.5% of Iranian participants that emphasized on experience in the development of wisdom used similar descriptions, such as learning from mistakes and willingness to experience. However, in comparison to Canadian participants (69%) the number of Iranians who pointed out experience is notably low. Iranians highlighted personality and God related factors more than experience in wisdom development. This finding suggests there are cultural differences in perceiving wisdom development in Iran and Canada which will be discussed in more detail below.

4.2.3 God Related Factors

One of the most interesting findings in this study is that many participants in both groups mentioned God and his help as the main reason of fostering wisdom. God is one of the most chosen elements by Iranian participants (29.5%). Also, Canadians mentioned God (14%) more than cognitive skills and age in fostering wisdom. This theme describes God
and religious practices as the main reason of wisdom. In Iranian interviews, this theme involves phrases such as: Trust in God, Hope in God, Gifts from God, Faith, praying five times a day, Spirituality Supporting Islam, Help of religion, Reading Quran, and Religious virtue. Canadian participants mentioned factors such as: Believe in God, Talking to God, Going to church, Faith, Guidance from Holy Spirit, Being a good Christian. These different phrases are understandable considering the fact that Iranians were mostly Muslims and Canadians were mostly Christians, so they mentioned slightly different things (e.g., praying five times a day vs going to church). These are technical differences in expected practice, and the themes of how God manifests (e.g., though faith, prayer, reading Holy Books) were similar.

“He had faith in God and he believed in God completely, so that’s why he never made any mistake and he never got angry unless some was being unfair to who was oppressed.” (1044)

“Being close to God and being virtuous has made her such a wise woman.” (1050)

“I know that he understands Quran very well. He wrote some books about Quran. He read many books about Quran and Islam. Thinking of these issues and reading these kind of books makes a person so calm and patience that he can respect different people with different perspectives and improves his well-being.” (1020)

However, the difference emerged when further investigation showed that both young and old men and women mentioned God related factors in the Iranian group whereas old participants and mostly women were the only group who mentioned this theme as a source of wisdom in the Canadian participants. Not even a single young participant
described God as the main reason of wisdom. Although almost half of the young Canadian participants (46%) identified themselves as a member of a religious group (mostly Catholic), and some of them mentioned practicing it, they didn’t consider God as an effective factor in wisdom development. By contrast, some of the older Canadians understood wisdom in theological terms as did most Iranians:

“Well, I'd like to give you a theological answer. I think that [when] in the Scripture it says the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, that it's being accurate. I think that when we bring God into the picture, uh, that helps us to balance selfishness, or-to be first with-with the needs of others.” (OM08)

This gap between young and old Canadian participants can be interpreted by considering the significant change in western culture in the past few decades through the increased in popularity of secularism.

Even participants who mentioned God seemed to be a little hesitant about their answer. For example, the majority of them mentioned that they are giving a theological answer or that they are “getting theological”. This could represent their awareness of this fact, that this theme is not a common answer in Canadian culture. However, none of the Iranian interviewees mentioned something that shows they might think talking about religion is not a typical way of responding, which can be explained by noticing that Iran is an Islamic state in which religion has an immense impact on the way people perceive concepts such as wisdom. This finding, also suggests having or not having religious beliefs is not the only factor that influences considering or not considering God and religion in the development of wisdom. Social structure and prevailing views about
religion can highly impact the way religious participants answer questions about the development of wisdom.

4.2.4 Family and Friends

Being around a good family and wise friends is a common element between both Canadian and Iranian participants. This describes being around wise people and communicating with wise friends or family members who care about them and help them to make rational decisions impact wisdom development.

Below are some examples from the Iranian group:

“She was from a well-known family. She had a good father that helped his children to make decisions rationally…. I think having a good family can be very helpful.” (1070)

“To become that wise it is essential to have a family that has a positive environment: your family’s viewpoint about your plans and ideas, you’re family believing in you and also having this opportunity in your family to talk to them about your ideas and ask them for their suggestions.” (1057)

“My mom was wise because she has a very wise father. All her family was wise, in that family there was enough space for her to foster wisdom.” (1075)

Some of the Canadian responses can be observed below:

“So a teacher imparts his wisdom, the students gather to him to listen. They get along together…. means the knowledge of what’s going on.”(OM03)

“I think uh she has a large family. So there’s, I think, seven other brothers and sisters and she raised them all. She’s not the oldest, but the oldest left. I just think she’s raised so many people that she’s seen so much. So, I think that’s where she
gets it from. She was a teacher as well, before she came to Canada. So probably, I 
would say some of it from my grandmother too because I know they were super-
close. Like she’s taking over. You know how there’s that matriarchal person in 
some families. That was my grandmother. You had to go to her for... for any 
conflicts and stuff. And now, my mom’s that person. I think it’s that kind of 
experience that makes her that way.” (YF25)

There is a slight difference between these two groups. Iranian participants were more 
likely to describe having a good “family” as the main reason of wisdom development, 
whereas Canadians frequently mentioned having good friends and communicating with 
wise people which Iranians hardly ever pointed it. This finding can be interpreted in light 
of taking this fact into account that in Iranian culture, family is very well respected and is 
considered one of the strongest factors in shaping personality features.

4.3 Wisdom, Causal Attribution and Implicit Theories of Mindset

In order to analyze data based on attribution theory, 2 independent coders first read all of 
the interviews and categorized each participant in to 3 different attributional styles based 
on both their answers to the cause of wisdom question and the entire interview. Although 
participants mentioned different factors, all the factors were usually in the same category. 
When elements are not in the same category, we coded them based on the most 
emphasized factors. Table 2 represents the frequencies of each attributional style in both 
groups. 50% percent of the Iranians pointed out Controllable-Internal factors, whereas 
Canadians mentioned this factors 5% more than Iranians (55%). 16.3% of both groups 
considered Uncontrollable-Internal elements such as genetics as the main reason of 
wisdom. And finally, 33.8% of the Iranian participants highlighted Uncontrollable-
External causes when it came to wisdom development which is more than participants who mentioned this category in Canada (28.8%).

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Attributional Styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributional styles</th>
<th>Iranians</th>
<th>Canadians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Controllable-Internal</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncontrollable-Internal</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncontrollable-External</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general Iranians and Canadians are rather similar in their attributional styles about wisdom and there is no significant statistical difference between these groups (Pearson $\chi^2(2, N=160) = 0.63, p=.72$). However, the Iranian participants mentioned more Uncontrollable-External factors in comparison to the Canadians. Although this difference is not significant, taking a closer look at this category in both countries, we realized that the most chosen elements in Uncontrollable category among Iranian interviews are God related factors (29%) while the most chosen factors in this category between Canadian participants are inborn abilities. As mentioned earlier, this difference was expected since the majority of Iranians are Muslims and Iran is a religious state itself in which religious concepts are taught in both the school system and are mentioned frequently in public media. For example, in Islamic Theology, infallibility is one of the necessary attributes of the Prophets and Imams which describes as an ability that God gives to some good people and it is not something that people can obtain simply by being good. As mentioned specifically in the Quran, “God has to give them this gift and only God knows the reason” (Quran, 11:36-47). It appears that these kinds of Islamic lessons have a great
impact on Iranians’ attributions towards wisdom. It is worthwhile to mention that although there are branches of Christianity that hold a similar view, it was not expressed by our Canadian participants.

4.3.1 Causal attribution and mindset about development of wisdom

After considering each emergent theme in both groups, and exploring cultural patterns, we categorized each participant based on their attributional styles. In this part, we have tested the relation between causal attribution towards wisdom (“Why do you think the wise person that you named got to be so wise?”) and implicit theories of mindset about development of wisdom (“Do you think you could become as wise as the person you nominated?”). 36% of the Canadian participants had an entity theory of mindset and 64% held an incremental theory of mindset towards wisdom. 42.5% of the Iranian interviewees had an entity theory of mindset and 57.5% held an incremental mindset towards wisdom. A chi-square analysis was conducted to illustrate whether there is a relationship between attributional styles and motivational mindset towards wisdom. The results indicated that these two variables were significantly related (Pearson $\chi^2(2, N=160) = 89.09, p=.001$), such that participants who mentioned Controllable-Internal elements were more likely to have incremental mindset (growth mindset) and participants who mentioned Uncontrollable Internal or External factors were more expected to have an entity mindset (fixed mindset) towards wisdom. The Cramer’s $V (r=.74, p=.001)$ indicates a large effect size. A chi-square analysis was conducted for both groups individually as well. The results revealed a significant relation between attribution and implicit mindset in both groups (Iran: Pearson $\chi^2 (2, N=80) = 40.1, p=.001$ Canada: Pearson $\chi^2 (2, N=80) = 49.48, p=.001$). Below are several examples and explanations
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(which are written in *Italic*) are provided in order to clarify this significant relation between attributional styles and implicit mindset towards wisdom.

4.3.1.1 Controllable-Internal

The majority of the participants in both groups mentioned Controllable-Internal elements such as acquired personality features, willingness to learn, social skills and learning from experience.

Interviewer (I): How did she get to be wise?
Participant (P): “Umm a characteristic of her of being wise is that that **strength** to know that umm things are going to be okay… I think that you can't be wise or you can't be wise if you’re always thinking oh my God the world's coming to an end or oh my God things are never going to be okay and I think for her part of her wisdom is **knowing that you know being able to control what you can into making the best out of it.** *(Being strong and aware of your control over life: Controllable-Internal)*

(I): Is it possible for you to become as wise as her?
(P): She's definitely one of my role models, one of **my biggest role models** in my life…”. *(incremental theory), (YM14-Canada).*

(P): I think it’s just **experience** that they’ve lived through life and whatever they were able to pick up along the way and share that with you, or allow you to **explore** that you know and share that with you, and encourage you and build that environment that allows that to happen… I think being able to do that you need to be comfortable with knowing your environment but **knowing yourself** as well and get to know yourself a lot, and so… yeah maybe it’s about **knowing who you are** and the more you know about who you are the more comfortable you are and letting other people figure out who they are then. *(Knowing who you are, explore things: Controllable-Internal)*

(I): Do you think you can ever be like him?
(P): Well I hope I do…!”. *(incremental theory). (YM-21)*
4.3.1.2 Uncontrollable-External

33.8% of Iranians and 28.8% of Canadian participants mentioned Uncontrollable-External items; God, luck, being in a special situation or having a good family are the examples that have been mentioned in this category.

“Interviewer (I): Why do you think she got to be so wise?
Participant (P): The age they were raised in, she never shared herself and to this day that’s the one thing I feel like I really didn’t even know her in a way you knew her but you didn’t really know her you know. She was never being one to say what she was feeling. I think in my whole life I only saw my mother cry twice. She was a quiet person. (Being in a specific situation: Uncontrollable-External)

(I): Is it possible for you to become as wise?
(P) No, it is a different world now.” (entity theory). (OF-17-Canada)

“(I): How did she get to be so wise?
(P): She was from a well-known family. She had a good father that helped his children to make decisions rationally…. I think having a good family can be very helpful. (Being in a good family: Uncontrollable-External)

Do you think you can be like her?
No! Not at all, no one in my family is wise.” (entity theory). (1070-Iran)

4.3.1.3 God related factors

Although many people mentioned God in both groups, they did not mention it in the same context. Some participants mentioned God as an uncontrollable force that helps some special people to become wise, on the other hand some individuals pointed out that God smiles on people who try to be moral and it is possible for everyone to become wise.

(P): God gave him the power to do that, so he could feed all those people and uh I believe in the work of the Holy Spirit who guides you in what you say now I’m
getting theological, but I believe that if every day you wake up feeling God, hearing God, here I am this is your day I am your person guide me to the right people give me the right words to say those are the kinds of things that come back to you later. (Guidance from Holy Spirit: Uncontrollable-External)

(I): Is it possible for you to become like him?
(P): No, I think I was unwise since I don’t think I had enough guidance.”. (entity theory). (OF03-Canada)

(P): “Maybe God gave him this insight because he had capacity and he could handle his responsibilities. I think when people have more patience and perseverance, God gives them more hardships to help them grow up. (Having capacity to handle responsibilities: Controllable-Internal)

(I): Is it possible for you to become like him?
(P): I don’t know, but I try to be like him and it makes me hopeful. (incremental theory). (1085-Iran)

4.3.1.4 Uncontrollable-Internal

The Uncontrollable-Internal category has been mentioned by 16.3% of the participants of both the Iranian and Canadian groups. Although this category has been highlighted the least in both groups, the relation between these elements and motivational mindset is considerable.

Interviewer (I): “What makes him so wise?
Participant (P): Being smart
I: Being smart. Okay….and do you think this is something that people can learn?
P: No, I think it’s mostly genetic and heredity, his parents and grandparents were smart as well. (Genetic and heredity: Uncontrollable-Internal)
I- Do you think you can ever be like him?
P: No, not at all.” (entity theory). (1077-Iran)

Interviewer (I): “Why do you think he got to be so wise?
Participant (P): Well it’s… I don’t know if it’s a matter of getting to be wise or being born with it … (Wise people) have to be born with a certain amount of uh wisdom in order to reach the position that you finally reach. That isn’t something that you just acquire there was some genius in him that gave him the ability. (Being born a genius: Uncontrollable-Internal).
Interviewer (I): Do you think you can be as wise as him?
Participant (P): No, I don’t think so.” (entity theory). (OM-16-Canada)

As it has been showed in the examples, participants who have assumed that wisdom develops by uncontrollable-internal factors such as genetics or heredity factors are not motivated to become wise themselves when they believe that they don’t have those uncontrollable qualities.

4.4 Implicit Mindset and Wisdom Scores in the Canadian Interviews

After finding a strong correlation between causal attribution and mindset, I became intrigued to discover the relation between implicit mindset and actual wisdom score. As Wiener (2000) stated, causal attribution has a great impact on motivation and as Carol Dweck pointed out, implicit mindset highly influences performance and outcome. So in the next part of this study, possible relations between implicit theories of mindset and wisdom scores have been explored.

4.4.1 Reliability

The 3D-WS appeared to have good internal consistency, $\alpha = .84$. The cognitive and reflective dimensions of the 3D-WS appeared to have acceptable internal consistency, with $\alpha = .75$ in both cases. The affective dimension of the 3D-WS also appeared to have
acceptable, but low internal consistency, $\alpha = .68$. And finally, the ASTI appeared to have acceptable internal consistency as well, $\alpha = .77$.

4.4.2 Pearson Correlation

Pearson correlational analysis was conducted for Canadian data to examine the relationship between the wisdom scales (3D-WS and ASTI) and 3D-WS dimensions (cognitive, reflective, and affective). The correlational analysis (see Table 3) revealed a significant positive linear relationship between 3D-WS scores, dimensions of the 3D-WS and ASTI scores (**p<001).

Table 3. Correlation Matrix for 3D-WS, ASTI and 3D-WS dimensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ASTI</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 3D-WS</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cognitive</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.82**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reflective</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>.79**</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Affective</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td>.79**</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.54**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05

**p < .001

4.4.3 Spearman Correlation

Spearman correlational analysis was conducted for Canadian data to examine the relationship between the categorical variables: age (old, young), mindset (incremental, entity), and education (from no high school to doctorate degree). The correlational
analysis (see Table 4) revealed no significant correlation between education and mindset, or gender and mindset (p>005). As a result, we did not consider education or gender in the future analysis. Additionally, there appeared to be a negative correlation between mindset and age (**p=002).

Table 4. Spearman Correlation between Mindset, Gender, Age, and Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Mindset</th>
<th>Age cohort</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mindset</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Age cohort</td>
<td>-.39**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Education</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.23*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gender</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.195</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05
**p < .001

4.4.4 Point-Biserial Correlation

In order to determine possible correlations between continues variables (3D-WS and ASTI) and categorical variables (mindset, age, and education) a point-biserial correlation was run. There was a positive correlation between mindset and ASTI, which was statistically significant ($r_{pb} = .31$, n = 80, p = .001). There was also a positive significant correlation between 3D-WS and mindset ($r_{pb} = .51$, n = 80, p = .001). However, there was no correlation between age and wisdom scales (ASTI: $r_{pb} = .19$, n = 80, p = .09), (3D-WS $r_{pb} = -.06$, n = 80, p = .59), and education and wisdom scales (ASTI: $r_{pb} = -.15$, n = 80, p = .16), (3D-WS $r_{pb} = .19$, n = 80, p = .29). There was also no significant correlation between gender and wisdom scales (ASTI: $r_{pb} = .03$, n = 80, p = .78), (3D-WS $r_{pb} = .07$, n = 80, p = .59).
Based on these results, since age, gender, and education had no correlation with wisdom scores, we excluded them in the following analyses.

4.4.5 One-way MANOVA between 3D-WS and ASTI scores and Mindset

A multivariate ANOVA was conducted to follow-up on the correlational results on the two wisdom scales (3D-WS and ASTI), using implicit theories of mindset (entity vs. incremental) as a predictor variable. The MANOVA revealed a significant main effect of implicit theories of mindset and 3D-WS and ASTI, Pillai’s trace = .261, F(2, 77) = 13.56, with partial $\eta^2 = .26$. This result suggests that at least one group differs from the others for at least one of the dependent variables. Follow-up analyses was conducted, showing that implicit theories of mindset regarding development of wisdom significantly predict wisdom scores on the 3D-WS, $F(1, 78) = 26.96, p = .000$, with partial $\eta^2 = .26$ indicating a large effect size and the ASTI, $F(1, 78) = 8.33, p = .005$, $\eta_p^2 = .1$ indicating a small effect size.
Chapter 5

5 Discussion, Limitations, & Conclusions

5.1 Discussion

The present study consists of three complementary parts. In the first part, lay people’s causal beliefs towards wisdom in two different cultures (Iran and Canada) have been explored. The goal of this section was to determine whether there is a cultural difference in perceiving causes of wisdom in Iran and Canada, and whether these implicit concepts are aligned with well-known explicit theories on development of wisdom. Interestingly, participants in both Canada and Iran brought up almost all of the factors that have been mentioned in wisdom development models. For instance, experience is a concept that has been mentioned the most in both groups in different ways such as life experience, hardship, and learning from other’s experiences, willing to experience. This concept has been mentioned in nearly all of the wisdom development theories as well. Berlin paradigm (Paul B. Baltes & Staudinger, 2000) pointed out experience in the “Expertise-Specific factors” section as one of the most essential factors in wisdom development. Also, Learning from Life model (Greene & Brown, 2009) is mostly based on experience and learning from those traits then applying those lessons to new situations. Moreover, Ardelt (2003) emphasized on experience and learning from life difficulties in the reflective dimension of wisdom.

Although most of the emergent themes are mutual in both countries, significant differences were found in terms of frequencies in which those elements have been
mentioned. For example, Canadians mentioned experience and personality the most whereas Iranians mentioned personality and God as the main reasons of wisdom. This finding provides us with a distinct image of concepts that associate the most with wisdom development in these two cultures, and hypothetically in other cultures that are similar to either of these countries.

We are also interested in situations where implicit theories of wisdom are not consistent with the explicit theories. Interestingly, throughout the course of this study, lay people added several factors for wisdom development that had not been emphasized in wisdom explicit theories, but were important in the participants’ perspective due to their cultural and religious views. For example, both Iranians and Canadians mentioned God as a factor which is missing in current wisdom models, and none of the explicit theories have mentioned God-related factors. However, there were slight differences in the role of God between the two cultures. Not only did Iranians mention God more often, but participants in each age and gender cohort mentioned God as the main reason of wisdom more or less equally, whereas the only cohort that mentioned God in the Canadian group were old participants. Inner peace is another factor that has been highlighted by the both groups. However, wisdom theories have not emphasized on this factor. Although mental health has been mentioned as one of the priorities to become wise in the Berlin wisdom model, inner peace is more than just being mentally healthy. But why should we study lay people’s opinion about wisdom? The second part of the study answers these questions and underscores the importance of considering the average person’s beliefs about wisdom in explicit theories.
Although some wisdom models such as learning from life model (Greene & Brown, 2009) or the Berlin Wisdom Paradigm briefly mention the importance of motivational disposition in development of wisdom, they fail to highlight how people motivate themselves to become wise, or what factors affect self-motivation to wisdom, or how serious the role of motivation in wisdom development is. To our knowledge, this is the first study to focus on causal attribution and implicit mindset towards wisdom. In order to understand the importance of causal beliefs about wisdom development each participant was categorized based on Wiener’s attribution theory in order to see if causal attribution influences implicit mindset (growth vs. fixed) towards wisdom. Expectedly, there was a significant relation between causal attributions and implicit mindset about wisdom. Attributional styles can predict implicit mindset toward wisdom. Controllable-Internal attribution indicates that people can gain abilities such as wisdom by themselves and factors within their control. Consequently, participants with Controllable-Internal attributions are more likely to have an incremental mindset (growth mindset) which means that they are motivated and confident that abilities such as wisdom are malleable qualities that can be gained, improved or changed. However, people with uncontrollable attributions, assume that the main reason of wisdom, is due to elements that cannot be controlled (e.g., Luck, Genetics, etc.). Therefore, they feel inadequate and helpless to gain that ability (entity theory or fixed mindset). This finding intrigued us to examine whether there is a relation between mindset and actual wisdom scores which is the third section of this study.

In the third part of the current study, the relation between implicit theories of mindset and wisdom scores has been examined. The investigation of this relation reveals the
importance of causal attribution and implicit mindset in development of wisdom. The way that wise people are perceived in a culture would predict people’s mindset and subsequently their actual wisdom. Therefore, this finding would benefit wisdom scholars to emphasize more on controllable elements that promote motivation to wisdom. This perspective about wisdom development would also benefit lay people in understanding development of wisdom and how to motivate themselves to foster wisdom. A shared trait of wisdom models is that they are often very sophisticated and applicable to a certain culture. They are rarely relevant to a wide variety of cultures and are often suited for the location of the researchers so they are not easily understandable for lay people while as Sternberg (1985) has emphasized, wisdom is one of the most important abilities in adulthood that can lead people to well-being (Sternberg, 1985). So it is essential that a wisdom theory is not only coherent for different people but also motivates them to become wiser. Through this study we have shown how causal attribution and mindset predict development of wisdom, while education or age cannot necessarily predict it. This idea can be easily explained and taught to common people, motivating them, and providing practical means to change their outlook towards life.

5.2 Limitations and future research

Although the current study makes a significant contribution to the wisdom literature, results should be interpreted in light of the limitations of the study. First of all, the country groups may not be representative of the entire population of the country. This research has been conducted in Hamadan, Iran and Toronto, Canada. Even though both of the cities are large and multi-cultural, it might not indicate the view point of all Iranians and all Canadians. Secondly, in the third part of the study, only Canadian interviews and
wisdom scores on the ASTI and 3D-WS have been analyzed since participants who were interviewed in the Iranian part of the study were not the same individuals who filled the wisdom questionnaires. Third, in this study, we only controlled for age, gender, education and culture. For future studies, it would be advantageous to control for socio-economic status or personality. Finally, by investigating the relation between mindset and wisdom, conducting an experimental study containing training about causal attribution through emphasis on controllable elements and also mindset training by provoking a growth mindset and investigating short term and long term effect on wisdom, seems an interesting direction for the future wisdom studies.

5.3 Conclusion

The present study has indicated that people in different cultures have different causal beliefs about development of wisdom and assumed that causal beliefs towards wisdom are a serious component in development of this quality. To examine this assumption, the current study emphasized on the importance of causal beliefs by categorizing them into attributional styles and highlighting the significant correlation between causal attributions and implicit theories of mindset (growth vs. fixed). Finally, to underline the role of mindset in wisdom development, this study has investigated the relation between mindset and wisdom score; individuals who have controllable attribution are more likely to have incremental (growth) mindset and subsequently significantly higher wisdom scores. The present findings lay an important foundation for more comprehensive and in depth studies on theoretical and also practical aspects of wisdom development.
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Appendix A
Demographic Questionnaire
A Cross-Cultural Study of Wisdom

Name or desired pseudonym of respondent: ____________________________ NAME

Date: ______/_____/_______ SURVDATE

   MONTH   DAY   YEAR

Phone number or Email Address (to contact you about the study results):

________________________
**Survey Questionnaire**

This is the second part of our study. I am going to read a number of statements to you together with the potential answers. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers. Simply indicate the answer that describes YOU best. Although some of the statements and questions will appear similar, we would like to ask you to answer all of the questions. Again, remember that all your answers will remain confidential.

**Demographic Characteristics**

First, we would like to ask some questions about you as a person.

1. **Gender:**
   - [ ] Female
   - [ ] Male

2. Are you a member of any ethnic group or people that you identify with?
   - [ ] Gujarati
   - [ ] Punjabi
   - [ ] Other:______________

3. What is your highest level of education?
   - [ ] No high school
   - [ ] High school degree or equivalent
   - [ ] Some college
   - [ ] Bachelor’s Degree or equivalent

_________________________
4. How many years of schooling (including university education) do you have?

EDUCYEAR _____________ years of schooling

1 [ ] Nuclear (Mother, father, and Siblings)
2 [ ] Joint (including grandparents

5. What is your family Structure?
3 [ ] extended (relatives living nearby)
4 [ ] Single parent
5 [ ] Separated

6. What kind of work have you done most of your life? Please be specific: OCCUP

________________________________________________________________________

1 [ ] Never married
2 [ ] Married

7. What is your current marital status?
3 [ ] Widowed
4 [ ] Divorced
5 [ ] Separated

8. Do you have children? yes 1 [ ] How many?: ______ NCHILD
9. What is your religious affiliation?

   RELIGAFF

   ____________________________

10. On a scale from 0 to 10, how

   RELIGIOUS would you say you are?

   RELIGDEG

   0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

   Not at all  Very

   religious  religious

11. On a scale from 0 to 10, how SPIRITUAL

   would you say you are?

   SPIRITDEG

   0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

   Not at all  Very

   spiritual  spiritual

12. Where were you born?

   Country of birth

   BRTHCNTY

   City and State of birth

   BRTHPLCE

13. Where have you lived most of your life?

   LIVEPLCE
14. What is your date of birth? ________________________________

AGE

15. What is your Postal Code? ________________________________
1. Now first, I would like to ask you about your self. Tell me a bit about your self and your life story.
   a. In order to help you remember what has happened in your life and how it affected you, you might find it useful to draw what we call a ‘Life-line.’
      i. As you can see, on the left side of this blank graph paper, we find a line that ranges from negative at the bottom to positive at the top. Along the bottom of the page, we have numbers from Birth to 30.
      ii. Now, I invite you to please:
          1. Trace a line showing the ups and downs of your life at different ages.
          2. Mark significant events in your life with an X at the age they occurred.
      iii. Now, looking at the line you have drawn and the Xs you have marked, what are some of the things you remember most about your childhood and your life?
   b. [Or if you find drawing a life-line like this difficult, please just talk about
your life in any way you like.]

c. Now, considering everything you have said, or anything new you would
   like to add, please tell me what you consider your most important
   memories of events that help make you the person you are today.

d. Do you consider yourself an adult now?
   i. Why/Why not?

e. How does it feel to be an immigrant or from an Immigrant family?
   i. Share your immigrant experience in Canada: What challenges have
      you or your family encountered, and how did you resolve them?

f. What do you value most in your life?
   i. Why?

2. For my next question in this part of the interview, I would like to ask you, to
   please take a moment to think of the wisest person you know in your own life.

   a. Who is this person?

   b. What makes [this person] so wise? (Why did you choose them?)

   c. What is one story you know about [this person], or one thing [this person]
      said or did that shows [this person] is wise?

   d. What was wise about that?

   e. How did [the person the respondent chose] get to be so wise?
      i. How has [this person] affected or inspired you in your own life?

      ii. Is it possible for you to become more like [this person]?
3. **Now how about yourself. Please think of some times in your life when you were wise or approached being wise.**

   a. What were those times?
   
   b. [IF MANY] You have listed [these times]: Please tell me which of these times in your life **you were the most wise**?
   
   c. How were you wise? How would it have been unwise if you had been different?

4. **Finally, please take a moment to think of the wisest person you can know of in history.**

   a. Who is this person?
   
   b. What makes [this person] so wise? (Why did you choose him/her?)
   
   c. What is one story you know about [this person], or one thing [this person] said or did that shows [this person] is wise?
   
   d. What was wise about that?
   
   e. **How did [the person the respondent chose] get to be so wise?**
      
      i. How has [this person] affected or inspired you in your own life?
      
      ii. Is it possible for you to become more like [this person]?

5. **For my final question in this part of the interview, I would like to ask you, now that we have had a chance to talk about it,**

   a. “What is wisdom? What does wisdom mean to you?”
بحث از شجاعت است و بهای بودن سخت و یک در تلاش را برداختن و توانستن اند از انتظارات قابل جامعه و جو قابل یگانگرد، هر چند که به قیمت از دست دادن خیلی چیزها باشه اما شجاعت که این افراد دارند اونها رو به این سمت حرکت داده، چیزی رو که از نظر بقیه بپیدان و حتی اعتراف هم بکن به این شکست اما به سمت امر ارزشمند تلاش کردند(1027).

قدر داشته-ها را دانست و بر کاستی-ها و نبودن-ها بايد صبر پيشه كرد(1079).

برای خردمند بودن باید روشنفکر بود و یک خانواده روشنفکر و یک خانواده که عفاف تو رو پذیرن(1010).

اوت به یک نحوه-ی سیاسی ویژه-تری درگیر معرفت قرآنی هستند، کتابخانهبی راه به قرآن، تفسیر قرآن که کتاب بسیار بزرگ و ارزشمندی هست، کتابی مثل نهج-البلاغ و کتابهای زیاد دیگه که حالا موارد زیاد(1020).

پیامبر بخاطر ایمان و اعتقاد قلبی که به خدا اشتی و عصمت از گناه و استیاء به حدی از کمال سری که اصلاً عصبانی نمی-شد مگر زمانی که به خدا تقوا و عفافش باعث شد که به این خردمندی برسد(1044).

تزدیکی او به خدا و تقوای و عفاف باعث شد که به این خردمندی برسد(1050).

زبعموم از خانواده سرشناسی بود، در او بسیار دانه و عاقل بود. در آن زمان پدر زرنعموم کندخادای روسکا بود و همه از او حساب می-بردن. او هم مانند پدرش عاقل است و به نظر عموم که به چنین خانواده ای وصلت کرده است اوت نیز مانند آنها شده است(1070).

به نظر من این شخص برای-ی رسیدن به چنین خردی در زنگی ایشان دو دسته عوامل خیلی مهم بوده مهیج خانوادگی که ایشان در آن زنگی کرده، نوع نگاه خانواده نسبت به طرح و برنامه-ریزی که داشته-اند، باور خانواده به شخص، امكان اظهار و ابراز وجود و بسیاری از عوامل مختلف دیگر که مهمترین عامل از نظر بدن خانواده و فرصتی که برای او فرصت کرده است، فرآیند کرده (1057).

به نظر عموم مادرم عاقل بودن را از یاد برده است. اصولاً خانواده مادرم به عاقل بودن مصرف هستند.

در خانواده مادرم فضایی کافی برای خردمندی وجود داشته است(1075).

مصاحبه گر: چگونه خردمند شده بود؟ این خردمندی چه بود؟
مصاحبه شونده: زن عمویم از خانواده سرشناسی بود، پدر او بسیار دانا و عاقل بود. در آن زمان پدر زن عمویم کنخدا روسنا بود و همه از او حساب می‌بردند. اگر هم مانند پدرش عاقل است و به نظام عمومی که با چنین خانواده ای وصلت کرده است از نیز مانند آنها شده است.

مصاحبه گر: آیا برای شما ممکن است که شبیه این فرد بشوید؟

مصاحبه شونده: نخیر! من هیچ وقت صبوری و درایت زن عمویم را ندارم، زود از کوره در می‌روم و شروع به دادویدن می‌کنم. نه من هرگز نمی‌توانم مانند او بشوم. داشتن یک خانواده حوب می‌تواند کمک کند که باشد. زمانی که بچه بر سرفه یک پدرمان عاقل می‌شیند، خود به خود نشست و برخاست و طرز صحبت کردن و فکر کردن را آنها یاد می‌گیرد که من در خانواده ای بزرگ نشتم و فقطدام نیز در چنین خانواده ای به دنیا نیایدم (1070).