

**ANALYZING THE HIZMET MOVEMENT SCHOOLS IN THREE  
DIFFERENT COUNTRIES FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE  
RESOURCE MOBILIZATION THEORY**

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**A Dissertation submitted to the Graduate School-Newark Rutgers, The State  
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## **ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION**

### **ANALYZING THE HIZMET MOVEMENT SCHOOLS IN THREE DIFFERENT COUNTRIES FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE RESOURCE MOBILIZATION THEORY**

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Dissertation Director: Dr. Norman Samuels

The Hizmet Movement (HM) is a civil transnational social movement with ~ operations in education, culture, interfaith and intercultural dialogue, relief, healthcare, media and publishing all around the world. It started in the late 1960s in the city of Izmir, Turkey, as a grassroots movement in the humanistic tradition of Islam and inspired by the ideas and activism of Fethullah Gulen. Apolitical and faith-inspired, it neither emerged from official policy nor as a state ideology. As its most important activity, the Hizmet Movement also known as the Gulen Movement, teaches modern education through its schools spread throughout 170 countries. It has an agenda to open new schools in different countries with an aim on both scientific and moral progress, focusing on the betterment of the individual to create a positive change in the community. It stands as a good example of the process in which social relations and bonds link distant localities by the dissemination of ideas and discourses and by the mobility of resources without the constraints of geography on any social or cultural arrangements. However, there is scant research about Hizmet Movement as a global social movement and especially its schools and other civic activities all over the world.

In this research, the resource mobilization theory, one of the main paradigms for new social movements, is taken up to examine the Hizmet Movement. It redirects the focus from psychological explanations and structural patterns to the organizational dynamics of a social movement, placing emphasis on the effective mobilization of material or non-material resources, and the rational and strategic aspects of collective action. This research concerns the investigation of the movement and its global education network based on the theoretical framework of the resource mobilization theory by offering a comparative analysis of the movement's schools in Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria, three countries each different in religion, culture, language, and regime. It analyzes how the movement mobilizes resources to achieve its educational objectives on a global scale, how their schools adjust themselves in different settings, what adjustment strategies the schools apply to fit in different cultures, how the movement is perceived by local people, and the role of political climate in the performance of these schools. The HM has become a center of interest especially ever since the government of its origin country, Turkey, started oppressing it recently. The Turkish government's global campaign and anti-democratic policies against it aroused curiosity and widespread publicity for this movement around the globe. This research explores the movement, its actions, its goals and its beliefs under these contexts, investigating the controversies it's involved in. This study reveals how this social movement gains acceptance in various parts of the world and helps us understand the ideas of different people about a movement based on Islamic teachings. It shows and answers whether a social movement, operating on a global scale, not political or affiliated with any State, can shape public opinion on issues as vitally important as peace among nations and religions. The successes and failures of a widespread organization such as the HM that this research uncovers is very

important for the global community and provides a unique but effective model for other movements or NGO's to follow. This study follows a qualitative approach by utilizing participant observations and in-depth interviews as a research technique. In order to have comparative data, and to have a representative sample, the research participants were chosen to be the Hizmet Movement School managers, teachers, students, parents, and other outsider, local intellectuals in the three countries. A snowball sampling strategy is applied to reach suitable informants, and the participation in the study was voluntary. The findings that emanated from the analysis of 66 interviews, participant observations, and other data collected allowed for a detailed discussion of themes and subthemes that surfaced through the rigorous qualitative analysis.

Based on the findings, this research has made empirical contributions to the resource mobilization theory by studying the movement, its structure, and operations in three different countries under the name and framework of the theory. It has uncovered weaknesses and shortcomings of the theory. For example, the rational perspective of the theory becomes insufficient to explain the movement participants' motivations and non-rational choices to mobilize their resources for the educational goals of the movement. Therefore, this research also looked at alternative theoretical explanations about the movement's mobilization. This research benefited from the work of Durkheim and Collins on the non-rational foundations of social movements and the sociological perspective to explain better the non-rational mobilization and psychological motivations of the movement. It exposed the crucial characteristics of the movement that distinguish it from other social movements and enable it to successfully spread and take root over such a wide and diverse geography. This research discovered what motivates people to join the movement and take

on different roles in its schools worldwide. It uncovered three main strategies used by these schools to adjust themselves in any country and how the movement was able to simultaneously localize and stay globalized, winning the favor of these localities. The results of analysis also indicated that political support and political pressure coming from both home country (Turkey) and host country (Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria) are critical for Hizmet Movement schools.

Key words: Fethullah Gulen, Hizmet Movement, Gulen Movement, Hizmet Schools,  
Resource Mobilization Theory, Social Movement, Islam, Turkey, Erdogan, AKP

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Following the rapid advances in technology and telecommunication devices in the 1980s, the term ‘globalization’ started to be widely used. Giddens (1990) defined this term, globalization as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (p. 64). Similarly, Moghadam (1999) views globalization as “a complex economic, political, cultural, and geographic process in which the mobility of capital, organizations, ideas, discourses, and peoples has taken on an increasingly global or transnational form” (p. 367). It is a phenomenon that has widely and massively transformed the world and human relations.

These two different definitions of globalization suggest that globalization has brought about a process of significant changes, which have altered the social, economic, and political structures of the world. Individuals, societies, and nations are now more interconnected and interdependent than they were in their former mostly self-regulating situations. Social and cultural relations, both within and between societies, have become noticeably different from those of the less-globalized world. Steger (2005) describes globalization as “a set of complex, sometimes contradictory, social processes that are changing our current social condition based on the modern system of independent nation-states” (p. 11).

In the new globalized world, many new actors have emerged on the world stage and have become increasingly influential in world politics (Fagan and Munck, 2009). In this modern world, states are no longer the only entities that hold power. States, Multi-national Corporations (MNCs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Social Movement Organizations (SMOs), International Governmental and Non-Governmental Institutions, Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANs) are all actors of global governance that have the capacity to shape the world. What has changed from the state-centric perspective of world politics is that the territorial states are no longer considered as the primary actors of politics. International, transnational, and subnational entities have joined states as actors in what Rosenau (2003) labels the “multi-centric” world that he contrasts to the “state-centric” world of past centuries. In this context, the reduction of the states’ importance has increased the role of the global civil society (Rosenau, 2003).

One of the most apparent outcomes of globalization has been the development of a new actor on the world stage in the form of transnational social movements (Moghadam, 2009). Moghadam (2009) defines a transnational social movement as "a mass mobilization uniting people in three or more countries, engaged in sustained contentious interactions with political elites, international organizations, or multinational corporations." Moghadam argues that transnational social movements are structurally linked to globalization and constitute an important sector within global civil society.

Civil society is an intermediate sphere of voluntary associations and activities that take place between the individual and the state. It is independent of the state, market relations, and the private sphere of the family (Ehrenberg, 1999). Stating this more broadly, global civil society refers to the increasing institutionalization of citizens and non-

governmental networks in the governance of our complex world (Langhorne, 2006).

In the contemporary world, global civil societies have an important role to play and are able to change/shape the world beyond national borders if they act transnationally. Therefore, there should be more research done on global civil society. Global civil societies can no longer be considered as a simple social organization crossing borders but should also be understood as an important actor within structural forms ranging from NGOs for public benefit and associations for member benefits, to faith-based organizations, internet-based pressure groups, and anti-war or anti-globalization protestors (Karns and Mingst, 2004). Social associations, NGOs, student bodies, environmental groups, feminist networks, labor unions, human rights advocacy groups, epistemic/critical communities can be considered to be among civil society organizations. These global social associations or social movements can cause change not only within a particular society but also within a broader sphere of influence.

There appear to be many theoretical approaches in the literature that aim to understand social movements and social movement organizations. Various theories such as collective behavior theory (Blumer 1951; Le Bon, 1895), relative deprivation theory (Morrison, 1971), organizational commitment theory (Meyer and Allen, 1991), resource mobilization theory (McCarthy and Zald, 1973; Oberschall, 1973), political process theory, new social movements theory, structural-strain theory, and diffusion theory are applied to study various aspects of social movements. These theories help us to understand the motivation behind the individuals' engagement in social movements, social and structural factors that affect a movement's success, and economic and political factors that make a social movement possible.

Although numerous social movements and NGOs exist around the globe, the focus of the current study is on the Hizmet Movement (HM). The HM, a transnational social movement, originating in Turkey, stands as a good example that points out the process in which social relations and bonds link distant localities by the dissemination of ideas and discourses and by the mobility of people without the constraints of geography on any social or cultural arrangements.

The original name of the movement, the “Hizmet”, is a Turkish word that means service for humanity in the contemporary world. The Hizmet movement has been fulfilling its activities under the leadership of Fethullah Gulen. He is regarded as the founder and inspirer of the Hizmet (Service) Movement, commonly referred to as the Gulen Movement (also referred to in academia as the Gülen Movement). Its participants, however, often call this effort hizmet or volunteer services. The HM is basically a voluntary association and therefore also defined as a “Voluntary Movement” (Gulen, 2002). Williams (2008) mentioned that one of the most important characteristics of the HM is its voluntary association as described in the definition of civil society.

### **1.1. Purpose of the Study**

The world has been growing more global on a daily basis for a long time. Social movements have contributed, among other factors, to these processes. However, nations still have their own boundaries and governments that resist the globalization process. There are some rare movements that have expanded their activities into other countries with different religions, regimes, social contexts, economic contexts, etc. The HM, a grassroots transnational social movement, is one of them. It appears that the HM acts based upon ideas



of tolerance, dialogue and love from a religious and cultural perspective, inspired by Islam, and it calls on the younger generation to combine intellectual enlightenment with spirituality to make the world a better place to live in (Park, 2008). Given this context, Park (2008) states that the movement's activities are likely to change ideas concerning 'the Clash of Civilizations' Huntington (1996) and hence contribute to the evolution of modern Islamic philosophy, improving the image of Islam in the contemporary world (Park, 2008). As an emerging modern movement, the HM is seen as widely influential with the potential to create global change.

The HM, as a non-violent social movement (Fuller, 2017), has constructed and functions in collective action frames such as peace, tolerance, dialogue, brotherhood, love, and respect. It engages and has engaged themselves in types of activities that embrace rationalism, culture, and spiritualism, and strengthen one's commitment to these values. The activities of the HM suggest that it is organized and mobilized primarily in education, interfaith and intercultural dialogue, relief and healthcare, and media and publishing institutions (Cetin, 2012). The movement has attracted considerable attention amongst social movements in the last decade with its increasing influence, number of supporters, and widespread institutions such as schools, relief organizations, interfaith-dialogue institutions, and healthcare facilities.

Among the institutions and activities of the Hizmet Movement (HM), the schools and the education they provide are the most prominent, being a service that they conduct on a global scale. The HM views education as the most important way for individuals to serve their community and country. Today, the HM has become part of a global educational network with increasing numbers of schools around the world. These schools initially

emerged in Turkey in the early 1980s. The first international Hizmet schools were opened in Turkic countries such as Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Kuru, 2005). This was followed by an expansion of other schools around the world, spreading to countries in Asia, Europe, and Africa. The Hizmet Movement Schools (HMS) are non-religious private institutions. They operate in conformity with the legal regulations of each respective country. Rather than making Turkish the primary language in these schools, they teach in the local language, which is the main language of instruction in these schools, which according to the Gulen Institute shows that they value the local language and culture. (Gulen Institute, 2010).

The number of Hizmet schools has been increasing not only because of their high academic status but also because of their ability to operate in diverse cultures in different countries. Therefore, they have attracted both academic and media attention. The New York Times suggested that the HM schools in Pakistan function as a remedy to counter radical Islamic interpretations (Tavernise, 2008). Le Monde offers these schools as examples to Europe's low performing minorities (Borne, 2008). Agai (2003) suggests that one of Hizmet's key focuses is to provide the youth with scientific and high-quality education. He further argues, "Indeed service, work, and education have become imbued with religious meaning" (p. 58). He claims that their educational activities around the world enable the alleviation of identity conflicts and enable individuals to socialize outside of Turkey or their home country and facilitate interreligious and intercultural dialogue (Agai, 2003). According to Helen R. Ebaugh (2010), a sociologist from the University of Houston, millions of people around the world, inspired by Gulen, act collectively to build schools, universities, dialogue centers, and charitable organizations, and organize inter-faith

dialogue meetings, humanitarian aid, and conduct international festival of language and culture. The HM is considered one of the most important large-scale Turkish-based transnational movements due to its gradually increasing number of schools and activities around the world.

However, even though the HM seems to have some success and credit in providing services in different areas such as education, health, charity, social and cultural activities, globally, it is important to note there are some criticisms made about the true goal of this movement. Some critics believe that the HM has a hidden agenda and tries to reach these secret objectives through its institutions and activities. Some of the allegations against HM accuse it of establishing a global Islamic caliphate (Levy, 2011), creating a radical Islamic society (Williams, 2010), working for Western countries' benefits, and spoiling the religion of Islam (Koc, 2011).

The Hizmet movement is considered as a civil transnational social movement operating beyond Turkish borders with activities related to education, culture, and interfaith dialogue (Park, 2007, p. 59). In the last decade, owing to its schools, interfaith and intercultural dialogue projects, relief and healthcare, and media and publishing institutions all around the world, the Hizmet Movement has emerged as a global actor, and can be regarded as one of the best examples of a social movement in the contemporary world. However, there is not enough research about the Hizmet Movement and its activities in detail. Therefore, many questions remain to be answered. And also, there are few studies in the literature that focus on the HM from the perspective of social movement theories. Some studies (i.e., Ebaugh, 2010; Brown, 2014; El-Banna, 2013) that focus on this movement explain the movement through the resource mobilization theory.

My study sought to understand the growing success, influence, and reach of this movement, which raises the question in any observer's mind of how it was able to achieve and reach this point. Therefore, it is crucial to analyze and understand how this movement mobilized itself and utilized its physical and moral resources to become so big and prominent. My study aimed to understand this and how the HM, overall mobilizes its resources.

This study also examined how the Hizmet Movement Schools (HMS) adjust themselves in different cultural and social contexts. As explained briefly, this movement has an explicit agenda to open new schools in different countries with a focus on both scientific and moral progress. The combination of character development and education of the sciences is seen as vital. It may be a paradox that local people prefer these schools even though they may have a different religion, ethnicity, political, economic or cultural background from that of the Turkish Muslims who own or operate these schools. One might expect that parents from the local population would prefer to send their children to schools run by their own people instead of people affiliated with the HM, an organization that originated in Turkey. However, the spread and success of this movement are actually tied to the support of the local communities in these countries. It is a wonder how both the individual participants and the institutions themselves belonging to this movement are able to adjust themselves to numerous different cultures and religions in the countries in which they are stationed. How is the movement able to simultaneously localize and stay globalized, winning the favor of these localities?

On another note, political controversies around HM will not be neglected in this study. In Turkish President Erdogan's speeches and discourses, he considers the HM as an

obstacle to his political goals. He accuses Gulen of being the mastermind behind the putsch in Turkey (the failed 15 July 2016 coup attempt against the ruling Party AKP) and has been repeatedly requesting the U.S. (where Gulen lives) for his extradition (CBC news, 2018). As a result, Erdogan has contacted many other governments to persuade them to shut down the HM Schools and end the Movement altogether. This is an important issue to research. It is worth studying the role of politics in the performance of this movement as it self-proclaims to be non-political and yet is surrounded by controversy. Since the public in these countries supports the movement, their governments approve their citizens' support of this movement. It seems the movement gains the approval of the society in these countries, and this support helps them survive in such a politically pressing situation. While at the same time, there are instances in some countries in which the movement's schools and institutions are shut down or reduced, and the movement's operations are cut back due to political pressure. Bozkurt (2017) points out that Erdogan regime has been pressuring countries around the world to close or hand over control of Hizmet Movement schools. Sometimes by offering money, aid, trade and investment and other times with outright threats, Erdoğan convinced some weak governments to seize and hand over Hizmet schools. Most governments, however, balked at the idea and rebuffed the interference into their own internal affairs. The fair question would be how the HM has drawn this much attention and how it has received acceptance in different parts of the world. Different views about this social movement can be seen through the lenses of the local people in those parts. This study aimed to discover the role that political climate plays in the performance of these schools and what motivates people to join or support the movement and its activities.

All in all, the problem addressed in this dissertation project concerned the investigation of the movement based on the theoretical framework of the "Resource Mobilization Theory". The purpose of this qualitative research study was to analyze how the movement mobilizes resources to achieve its educational objectives on a global scale, how their schools adjust themselves in different settings, how the movement is perceived by local people from diverse backgrounds along with the direction of this perception (i.e., positive or negative), and also to evaluate the role of political climate in the performance of the HMS.

## **1.2. Significance of the Study**

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in the literature of the Hizmet Movement. The literature is relatively new but rapidly developing. The movement is considered to be a transnational social movement in the literature. Many studies examined the movement using social movement theories. Resource mobilization theory is frequently used in the Movement's literature. Unlike previous studies, this projected research study was able to fill a significant gap in the literature by investigating the perceptions of people about the Hizmet Movement schools (HMS) from three different countries. As the first study to do this, the HMS that were studied were specifically chosen from three countries (Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria) that were different in terms of religion and culture. This study contributes to the literature by providing key interviewee accounts on their experiences with the movement. It should be noted that the HMS play a major role in efforts to expand the movement throughout the world, so it was believed that focusing on their educational operations would help better understand the movement itself.

The movement has become a center of interest especially after the government of its origin country, Turkey, started oppressing it. The Turkish government's anti-democratic policies and President Erdogan's hostility towards the HM aroused curiosity about this Movement around the globe. Furthermore, Turkey's post-coup crackdown on anything opposed to the government has turned into a witch-hunt. More and more every day, this crackdown seems to resemble a witch-hunt and political purge, far bigger than Senator Joe McCarthy's campaign and purge against suspected communists in America during the 1950s. For example, its most recent victims include a pop singer arrested for having published columns in a Hizmet Movement-linked newspaper, and a dancer fired by the national ballet for allegedly selling his home through a bank that has links to the HM (The Economist, 2016). Even a Turkish NASA scientist in the US was arrested by the Turkish government in 2016, on charges of terrorism and conspiring against the Turkish government as a participant of the Hizmet Movement (Gall, 2017). The anti-democratic measures taken against Hizmet participants and Erdogan's global "witch hunt" have caused a global-scale issue to emerge. What is it that the movement is trying to achieve around the world? Many people around the globe are trying to find answers to such questions. This study seeks to explore the movement, its actions, its goals and its beliefs under these contexts.

Critics and opponents of the movement, mainly President Erdogan, who advocate against it, have launched a national and global war campaign of propaganda, tirades, takeovers, shutdowns, and global campaign against the movement. However, ironically, this campaign has in turn unintentionally aroused a global curiosity for this global movement. It has piqued outside interest and brought about widespread publicity for the movement. This goes to show that the Hizmet Movement's current relevance and prominence in the media,

society, among the public and on the global scale has given the researcher enough reason to pursue this topic and the answers to the growing questions at hand.

As another reason, the HM has opened institutions and schools in 170 countries. These countries vary in their context by religion, ethnicity, development, culture and social fabric. They also provide educational services under different regimes. It is obvious there is an interesting paradox here. The values and beliefs of the HM have taken its roots from Islamic teaching. Despite this truth, people from different backgrounds still prefer the HMS. This study revealed how a social movement gains acceptance in various parts of the world through educational activities and helps us understand the ideas of people from all parts of the world about a movement based on Islamic teachings, even though the image of Islam has been and continues to stay distorted in the modern world as a consequence of violence, oppression and terrorism in some parts of the globe. This study sought to understand whether a social movement, operating on a global scale, not primarily political in orientation or affiliated with any State, can change and shape public opinion on issues as vitally important as potential peace among nations and among religions. In particular, can a movement rooted in a moderate Islamic outlook, gain acceptance through its schools, for a view of Islam, which promotes peace and counters the predominant radical image? This research investigated and exposed the basic but crucial characteristics of the movement that distinguish it from all other social movements and institutions and enable it to successfully spread and take root over such a wide and diverse geography.

Moreover, global social movements like the HM play a critical role in shaping a globalizing world. They can be agents of great change within their society and around the globe if they are able to spread and take root. That is why the success or failure of a large



and widespread organization such as the HM is very important for the world and provides a unique but effective model for other movements or NGO's to follow. Therefore, the HM may serve as a significant example for other movements and civil societies. One significance of this study lies in the HM's role as a model for others.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

This study provides an important analysis of the Hizmet Movement Schools from the perspective of Resource Mobilization Theory in three different countries and offers a comparative analysis of the schools operating in totally different environments. The best way to explore the topic that emerges from the literature is to examine the responses of people in different social and cultural contexts. Accordingly, I identified and interviewed different people, as defined in more detail in Chapter 3, to evaluate their perceptions of the impact of the Hizmet Schools in three very different countries, with the objective of answering the following research questions. These three research questions were asked to people related to the HM Schools in three different countries. Research participants were the HM School managers, teachers, students, parents, and other local intellectual people in Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria. Three broad research questions were used as follows:

1: "What types of strategies are used by the Hizmet Movement to mobilize its' resources for educational activities in Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria? What are the motivational factors for the Hizmet Movement participants to support Hizmet Movement Schools in these countries?"

2: “What types of adjustment strategies are applied by the Hizmet Movement to adapt to different educational settings?

3: “What is the role of the political climate in the performance of the Hizmet Movement Schools? How do political issues affect the educational activities of Hizmet Movement Schools?”

These three research questions are important to investigate whether or not the resource mobilization theory helps to understand the HMS globally. The first research question tries to identify the resources of the HMS by uncovering the underlying motivations and causes of the HM participants to support this global educational initiative as well as other types of resources and instruments used by the HM. As proposed by the resource mobilization theory, individuals make rational decisions before they join and support social movements. In order to motivate people to rally around a social movement, there needs to be grievances and conflicts of interest. Thus, this study sought answers about what motivates people to take different roles in the HM Schools and analyzed the motivation behind their joining and supporting the HM Schools. In the second research question, the adjustment strategies of the HM are questioned to examine the adjustments and changes that the HMS make in order to adapt to different cultural settings. Political climates play important roles for HM Schools in different countries and the success of social movements is influenced by the political climate. Thus, the third research question explores the role of political climate in the success of the HMS globally. These two research questions (RQ2 and RQ3) also aim to expand the resource mobilization theory’s fifth statement, “The success of social movements is heavily influenced by group strategy and the political climate” (Jenkins, 1983).

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This literature review consists of six sections. The first section explains social movements within the context of the resource mobilization theory. In the second section, the Hizmet Movement is investigated based on the theoretical framework of the resource mobilization theory. The third section evaluates the HM as a transnational social movement. The fourth section looks at Fethullah Gulen, the inspirational leader of the HM. Then, the schools of the HM are explained and described in the fifth section and the criticisms about HM in general and about the HMS specifically are reviewed in the last section.

### **2.1.Social Movements and Resource Mobilization Theory**

Social movements have become an inherent part of today's modern democratic societies. Various theories have emerged concerning social movements which can be defined as organized social bodies that try to realize a social change in society. With the social changes that took place in the United States and Western Europe after the 1970s, the nature of social movements changed as well. In terms of the nature of the actors, new social movements are different from the old movement actors. In my study, the resource mobilization theory, which is an American school of thought that constitutes one of the main paradigms for new social movements, is taken up and the approach of this school is used to examine the Hizmet Movement.

From the perspective of the resource mobilization theory, John McCarthy and Mayer Zald (1977) define a social movement as "a set of opinions and beliefs in a group, which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of society." They view social movements as "nothing more than preference structures directed toward social change" (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Social change is the key element in the study of social movements. A social movement can be considered as "a collectivity acting with some continuity to support or resist a change in the society or organization of which it is a part" (Turner & Killian, 1987). According to the traditional approach, social movements are based on aggrieved populations (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Social movements can always find grass roots support because there is always enough discontent and disaffected people in any society. They should thus try to organize the discontented and harness the disaffected (Ebaugh, 2010).

Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT) was developed during the 1970s to understand how the social movements of the 1960s emerged (Edwards & Gillham, 2013). The main difference between the earliest theories on social movements and the resource mobilization theory is that the latter argues that since the grievances and strain are always present in society, we should focus more on how social movements emerge rather than why (Chesters & Welsh, 2011). According to Ebaugh (2010), "resource mobilization is a sociological theory that emphasizes the types of resources that are necessary for the maintenance and growth of social movements."

For the resource mobilization theory approach, it can be stated that rationality and organization are the basic concepts (Cohen, 1985). These two concepts can be further broken down into factors of self-interest, strategy, efficiency and sustainability. As a factor

that motivates the participants to carry out activities, the gains and interests presented to the individuals are influential. According to the RMT, one of the most prominent aspects of social movements is the fact that it is based on the participant's paradigm of resource mobilizations and rational choices that stem from an informed conscience (Della Porta & Diani, 2009, p.14). Motivating factors, motivational benefits, and total costs are the factors that influence an individuals' decision towards participation in the movement if a participant is to be guided by this paradigm. According to the resource mobilization theorists, groups participating in social movements act to attain strategic advantages, and individuals perform in line with their interests. The resource mobilization theory is mainly based on interest and material gain expectations. It emphasizes rational and strategic aspects of collective action (El-Banna, 2013). Accordingly, individuals do not spend their resources and time in collective action and participate in the social movement (Cohen, 1999) without any pressure, injustice or a material benefit that the movement aims for, as an incentive. According to this approach, members of a movement are active if it is reasonable and profitable for them to participate or work in the said social movement. Individuals or groups have to ensure a cost-benefit balance or profit at low risk before commencing an action. These individuals who are mobilized and incentivized by the potential profit in a venture provide the movement with both the needed resources of labor and the human capital at the same time.

Adopting a rational choice and strategic approach, resource mobilization theory mainly refers to the efforts of making better use of existing resources. Sustainability of organizations and their services are related to effective resource mobilization. Sustainability refers to the availability of resources needed to implement or continue

activities. Sustainability can be held in three groups: programmatic, institutional, and financial sustainability. First, programmatic sustainability refers to anticipating the needs of clients or a target population, which allows organizations to expand their client-base or target population. Anticipating and meeting the needs of "clients" helps social movements reach out to more constituents and gain more supporters. Second, institutional sustainability refers to having a functional and accountable structure that can successfully manage the priorities of their beneficiaries and constituents. The third is financial sustainability, which is related to the availability of sources necessary for funding activities. This is essential for supporting the ongoing activities and promoting the new initiatives and projects (Seltzer, 2014).

According to resource mobilization theory, organizing discontent and harnessing the aggrieved population is not enough to succeed. They need some other resources other than human resources such as financial resources, moral resources, and cultural resources (Brown, 2014). The primary resources which are necessary to succeed are money, legitimacy, and labor. If these resources are not available, it is almost impossible to achieve the goals of the movement (Ebaugh, 2010). The sustainability and development of organizations prominently rely on their products or services and how they use economic, social, and human resources. However, the resource mobilization activities of social movements should be compatible with the organizations' goals and objectives (Seltzer, 2014). Resource mobilization emphasizes the effective mobilization of resources (Flynn, 2011). These resources can be both material and non-material. Material resources include money, labor, organizations, technology, and mass media, while non-material resources

include legitimacy, solidarity, moral commitment, loyalty, social relationships, personal and organizational networks, and public attention (Fuchs, 2006).

According to Edwards and McCarthy (2004), the resource mobilization theory has five main necessary resources for the realization, formation, and operation of social movements: 1. Social-organizational resources: These resources are the resource types that express factors such as organizational strategies, social networks, influence and communication that are unique to the social organization. 2. Human resources: These are the actors involved in the social movement that include the volunteers and staff of the movement and the labor, skill, and expertise of these actors. The concept of leadership, which provides people with communication, integration and movement organization, is also an important resource. 3. Material resources: These are monetary resources and consist of elements called financial and physical capital, including property, equipment, office, and team. Monetary assets are a necessary resource of social movements. 4. Moral resources: These include the support, motivation and solidarity of the group and individual, like the support of those who sympathize with the movement and the members in the movement society. 5. Cultural resources: These types of resources express and include the experiences, cultural works and products that occur during the social movement (Edwards & McCarthy, 2004). It is possible for the social movement to come into play when social-organizational resources, moral resources, cultural resources, human resources, material resources exist and the mobilization of the resources in question is realized. The theory of resource mobilization seeks for the success of social movements in their effective use of resources. Success is directly proportional to the resources allocated and their efficient use for supporting and maintaining the movement.

This theory emerged as a reaction to collective behavior theory and strain and breakdown theory which are both psychologically based (Brown, 2014). Resource mobilization theory “deals specifically with the dynamics and tactics of social movement growth, decline, and change” rather than the social psychology of the participants of social movements that earlier theories focused on (Ebaugh, 2010). It redirects the focus from psychological explanations and emphasis on structural patterns to the organizational dynamics of a social movement (Brown, 2014). The Resource Mobilization Theory deals with the strategy of the social movement. It deals with questions such as what the demands of the social movement are, what they define themselves, and what tactics they adopt to reach their goal. It, says that anger always exists and that participation in protest and social movements is primarily dependent on the mobilization of resources and the rational use of resources. In addition, in the RMT, there is the recognition of success groups as political actors or those with increased material benefits. In this sense, the dynamics and resources that facilitate the emergence of social movements can be listed as follows: political opportunities, social networks, and ideological frameworks (Tarrow, 1994, pp. 23-24).

In the past decade, the Resource Mobilization Theory has fallen out of favor in explaining social movement organizations, especially the new and modern ones. Though it remains to be a prominent and widely-discussed paradigm for social movements and their behaviors, the theory has received many modern criticisms and has been called out for its weaknesses and limitations.

Some have discredited the theory for focusing too much and exclusively on financial resources and political interests. It is criticized for overemphasizing and



exaggerating the importance of material resources as there are many social movements right now whose success and achievement depend more on the time and labor of members rather than on money, for instance. Critics see the theory as too materialist and politically-oriented. According to Canel, the RMT limits the actions of social movements to the political realm and neglects the normative and symbolic dimensions of collective and social action. This materialist and resource-based presentation of movements leaves the actions of these collective actors “devoid of cultural meaning” (Canel, 1997; Gamson, 1987). The cultural dimension of new conflicts is missing (Melucci, 1999, p. 90). The resource mobilization theory examines social movements in a political and historical context, and it ignores the cultural impact on social movements. Furthermore, RMT ignores the emotions, psychological state, and complaints of actors while explaining the social movement (Cohen, 1985).

Canel (1997) argues that the more modern, contemporary social movements are more than political actors following economic goals and looking to exchange goods and resources in the political market or enter politics. Cragun and Cragun (2008) point out, “some movements are effective without an influx of money”, like the civil rights and LGBT rights movement. Overall, critics hold that the RMT fails to explain how social movements with limited resources, and opportunities can succeed, bring about social change, and execute their plans without the help of any political elites.

Canel (1997) further criticizes the RMT by pointing out several of its weaknesses. He claims that the theory fails to explain the “why”, or the meaning and significance of collective action, neglecting structural problems, and the social and power relationships

that the actors of a movement are involved in. According to him, the RMT is too individualistic and restrictive in its view of rationality in collective action for it reduces all collective, social action to “an aggregate of multiple individual decisions based on a cost-benefit assessment of the chances of success” and does not take into account broader macro processes in a movement, ignoring things like collective identity, ideological discourse, social consciousness, etc. Finally, Canel (1997) adds on to say that the RM theory is not able to describe and explain “the processes of group formation and the origins of the organizational forms it presupposes.”

On another point, according to Brown (2014), social frameworks like the RMT are problematic because they have been created and worked on in Western and developed countries according to whatever particular Western society. The RMT, overall is based on American society, culture, and politics emphasizing how a movement works within America, not all around the world.

In summary, Canel (1997) explains the reason behind the modern critique of the RMT, “RM theory cannot explain the processes of group formation and the origins of the organizational forms it presupposes; it fails to explain how a social category — an aggregate of people with shared characteristics — develops a sense of identity and become a social group.” Critics believe the RMT does not give enough weight and attention to grievances, identity, and culture along with many macro-sociological issues. They point out it ignores important opportunities for movements like charismatic leadership and fails to explain social movement communities, large networks of people surrounding and helping the movement organization (Sandelowski, 2000). The RMT theory is also

criticized for implying that social movements need the management or membership of powerful people or elites to achieve their goals and bring change. However, social movements are often led by and composed of powerless individuals and common men, as elites often cause the demise of a movement, not its success

Even nowadays, however, the RMT is still very important and relevant for explaining and dissecting any sort of collective action ranging from interest groups to social movements. It continues to have a significant voice and influence in explaining and critiquing social movements and civic initiatives, past or modern. As of late however, there have been suggestions from different scholars to make modifications to the theory and modernize it so the theory is better able to receive and analyze the newly emerged and emerging movements (e.g., Buechler, 1993; Khawaja, 1994; Opp, 2000). Edwards and Kane (2016) explain clearly that “The broader resource mobilization approach, though underutilized, remains relevant to analyzing the full spectrum of social movement challenges to hegemonic authority across the full range of social and political institutions.” The theory is crucial in explaining factors of collective action that most successful movements have and depend upon: mobilization, resources, especially money, and strategy. Compared to the old and also contemporary approaches, the RM theory uniquely views and explains the emergence and development of social movements as dependent on and born from the availability, mobilization, and use of resources (Cetin 2010). Cetin (2010) argues that the RMT focuses on how “networks of people, professionals, leaderships, permanent organizations, incentives, and cost–benefit calculations” meet together to create direct impacts on political issues and bring about a measurable, tangible change in society. Last but not least, in movements, the RMT concentrates a lot on

organizational resources and participant motivations like rewards, benefits, costs and incentives (Chester & Welsh, 2011:7; Horn, 2013:20).

These things according to the RMT, and in contrast with many other social movement theories are necessary for a movement to initiate, operate and succeed. With the emergence of the internet and technologies like social media, the resource mobilization theory has increased in prevalence and applicability despite all the criticisms. The RMT greatly explains the value, usefulness, and impact of social media and the internet as resources in the hands of social movements because of “its emphasis on the social, historical, and political contexts of collective action, as well as on the utility and interplay of available resources” (Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011). Blank points out, “the increasing use of social media technologies in social movements presents an opportunity to re-examine the utility of resource mobilization in a contemporary context.” Despite the modern backlash against this theory and the “changing landscape” of social movements, the RMT, to many scholars, should not be dismissed because it still has significant relevance and much to offer (Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011).

## **2.2.Resource Mobilization in the Hizmet Movement**

The magnitude of the influence of social movements can vary based on their structures. For instance, a social movement that has large groups of people in three or more countries engaged in sustained contentious interactions with political elites, international organizations, or MNCs can lead to worldwide changes. These kinds of transnational social movements can mobilize relevant actors while sharing common values and goals, to create

a global influence (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). A SMO (social movement organization) is a sustained campaign of claim-making, using repeated performances that advertise these claims, based on various organizations, networks, traditions, and solidarities that are able to sustain these activities. Types of activities SMOs may engage in can be classified as 1. Education and framing, 2. Strengthening identity, solidarity and culture, 3. Organizing and mobilizing and strategizing, 4. Implementing political actions (Schock, 2013). The HM is believed to be an influential social movement organization. In terms of education, the HM teaches modern education through its schools spread throughout 160 countries (Juan & Parkinson, 2014). It has more than 1,000 schools in Turkey and worldwide, supported by millions of supporters (Ebaugh, 2010). In addition, it can be said that HM aims to build and spread universal values and collective action frames such as peace, tolerance, dialogue, brotherhood, love, and respect. Ebaugh (2010) stated that the pivotal motivation of the movement's volunteers is "to spread the universal morality and values with the hope they will pave the way for global peace." Its activities are organized and mobilized primarily through education, interfaith/intercultural dialogue, relief, healthcare, media and publishing institutions. Despite the lack of an umbrella organization, these organizations are in touch with one another. They share their experiences, expertise, and information through local sohbet (friendly meetups and weekly gatherings) and this helps alleviate the potential heterogeneity among different groups in the movement (Ebaugh, 2010).

Resource mobilization theory provides a sound framework to evaluate the "environmental, cognitive, and relational mechanisms" of social movements (Campbell, 2005). Case in point, El-Banna (2013) uses the theoretical structure of RMT to evaluate "the informal social networking mechanisms" of HM and its idealistic activities.

According to El-Banna (2013), the HM uses macro and micro level mobilization mechanisms to pursue its organizational goals. Macro-level mobilization refers to the impetus or motivation of the HM that drives it forward, and the movement's contribution to structural and sociological transformations in the communities. At the organizational level, El-Banna (2013) points out the participation of Hizmet volunteers in social and economic activities and a "micro leadership" as a management model for each HM organization. El-Banna considers that the processes of volunteer participation and "micro leadership" contribute to HM's organizational success and its efficient use of resources. As Oberschall (1973) suggests, "the greater the number of organizations in a collectivity, and the higher participation of members in that network, the more rapidly and enduringly does the mobilization [...] occur" (p. 125).

According to El-Banna, the micro level mobilization is related to individual morality, spur and spiritualism. Evidently, the HM is concerned with "everyday-life-based pious activism (Yavuz, 2003, p. 28). Hunt and Benford (2004) define the "micro-mobilization" processes of SMOs as "the collaborative work individuals do on behalf of a social movement or social movement organization to muster, ready, coordinate, use, and reproduce material resources, labor, and ideas for collective action" (p. 438). Accordingly, the activities of HM enhance social bonds among participants, and promote and attempt to build their capacities.

From an organizational perspective, the HM is based on two non-hierarchical levels of activism, a local/grassroots level and a corporate level of activities. The local/grassroots level of activities provides the resources for the group's general activities and operations, while the organizational/corporate level of activities manages the resources (Leman, 2010

p. 82). Despite its large number of participants, it does not have a bureaucratic structure but is predominantly a “sociological movement community” with “fluid boundaries, flexible leadership structures, and malleable division of labor” (Buechler, 1990, p. 42).

McCarthy and Zald (1977) emphasizes the role of “outsiders” in regards the effectiveness of social movements. “Outsiders” are defined as those individuals who are not actively participating in the movement, but they are somewhat related to them. They can be the supporters, beneficiaries, or target populations. The resource mobilization theory is the first approach, which emphasizes the importance of the outside actors and their perceptions of the movement (Brown, 2014). Einwohner (2002) identifies “outsiders” as “the entire set of those individuals who are not members of the movement-related collectivity with which activists identify, including targets and opponents as well as the allies and third parties” (p. 255). Einwohner does not distinguish “outsiders” from participants of social movements and states, “outsiders are part of social movements because they are part of the systems of action that comprise movement” (p. 264).

Tarrow (1994) defines social movements as “collective challenges by people with common purposes and solidarity in sustained reaction with elites, opponents, and authorities” (pp. 3-4). Similarly, Oliver (1989) explicitly urges those scholars studying social movements not to ignore the role of non-affiliated people who participate in social movement activities, as social movements cannot be restricted solely to the actions of activists or members. It is a “systems of action” (Melucci, 1989; 1996), which is a collective function of “insiders” and “outsiders.” Without incorporating the interpretations and reactions of outsiders to the social movement, one cannot make an exhaustive conceptualization and assessment of a social movement (Einwohner, 2002). The HM, as a

successful movement in line with the resource mobilization theory, receives and has garnered a lot of support over the years from outsiders like the local governments, intellectuals, people and media that it encounters all around the globe.

According to the Social Movement Impact Theory and its theorist Gamson (1975) what really constitutes success for social movements is problematic among scholars. Krippendorff (2013) states that a successful movement follows four predictable patterns: a successful social movement forms around a common goal, mobilizes resources, finds solutions and options and is accepted by or replaces the establishment. In his popular study, Gamson (1975) studied 53 social movements between 1800 and 1945. His criterion for the success of a movement in that study were "New Advantages," or the attainment of organizational goals, and "Acceptance," or being included in national discourse and political circles. Other scholars disagreed with Gamson and set forth the "Collective Goods Criterion" for social movements. This criterion stressed the value of any advancement in the general category of goods like increasing the well-being of a movement's constituents. According to Oberschall (1973), the success of a social movement cannot be determined only by its ideals and goals. The ability to attract assistance from the community and to make their ideas widely accepted determines its success. The perceptions of the community are crucial for a social movement. McCarthy and Zald (1977) argue, "In accounting for a movement's successes and failures there is an explicit recognition of the crucial importance of involvement on the part of individuals and organizations from outside the collectivity which a social movement represents." They also point out the importance of "conscious constituencies" in the success of social movements, rather than only those who benefit from the social movements. Scholars who study social movements identify the "conscience



constituency” as a form of “outside involvement” (p. 1231). The HM seems to realize this and has, according to my study, opened itself up to the outside and gained the support and favor of many non-affiliated people and conscious constituencies.

In regard to the HM, El-Banna (2013) identifies the idea of "conscience constituents” to portray those who have positive opinions about the Hizmet movement based on their observations or information through media sources. These groups may include subjects and participants in the HM’s educational activities, such as seminars, workshops, programs and mosque classes, as well as the participants of large informal conferences or smaller weekly neighborhood or profession-based conferences organized by the HM. These activities and events with society are essential for establishing and maintaining organizational relations, credibility and reputation. The relationships, performance and credibility of the Hizmet organization impact the sustainability of its resources and services, as the organization is primarily based on social trust between the activists and society. One of the primary goals of the HM according to them is to reach out to all communities to convey the message of peace, solidarity, and friendship. Thus, the perceptions and interpretations of the community become critical for the sustainability and development of the HM.

The most important point of resource mobilization theory is that an advanced organizational structure and communication structure are necessary beyond the mechanisms defined by the classical approach for the action of collective behavior (Cohen, 1985). The HM provides a strong emphasis on the importance of the organization’s activities and communication networks, which are important for building social capital among the participants of the movement and their constituents. Putnam (2001) defines this

social capital as “connections among individual — social networks and norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (p. 19).

For purposes of social movements, the demand for participation and support of the community can be achieved through social networking. Gulen, the inspirational leader of the HM is an inspiring advocate of intercultural and interfaith dialogue (El-Banna, 2013). The various dialogue activities of the HM aim to reach out to people with diverse identities, who have different cultures and follow different religions. It is important for the HM to increase its reach, broaden its activities, expand, and maintain its network and space. Through its educational services and schools, HM finds opportunities to reach out to students from different backgrounds as well as their families, community representatives, and leaders (El-Banna, 2013). Relationships with people from diverse backgrounds and social groups nurture the movement’s community roots.

According to El-Banna (2013), the HM implements its events along diverse professions, locations, and cultures and uses associational networks to promote social capital among participants and empower community (El-Banna, 2013; Yavuz, 2003). These events also provide opportunities for HM to know and understand the needs of the constituents, the target population. RMT, on the other hand, ignores the emotions, psychological state, and complaints of actors while explaining the social movement (Cohen, 1985). El-Banna (2013) states the main values and norms she found represented in the HM were altruism, negotiation, honor and dignity, dialogue and consultation (istişare), and tolerance toward difference.

On another important note in the study, Jenkins (1983), points out that the resource mobilization theory has five main principles: 1. The actions of social movement’s members

and participants are rational. 2. A social movement's actions are strongly influenced by institutionalized power imbalances and conflicts of interest. 3. These power imbalances and conflicts of interest are sufficient to generate grievances that lead to the mobilization and actuation of a social movement's intent and plan on changing the distribution of resources and organization. 4. Centralized and formally structured social movements more effectively mobilize resources and achieve goals of change than decentralized and informal social movements. 5. The success of social movements is heavily influenced by group strategy and the political climate.

The HM as a transnational social movement uses its schools to spread its service, mission, vision, and values. The researcher was able to uncover the types of strategies used by the HM participants to mobilize their material and non-material resources to realize their educational agendas globally. As proposed by RMT, individuals provide data that support rational decisions to join and support social movements. In order to motivate people to rally around a social movement, there need to be grievances and conflicts of interest. Thus, the researcher was able to find what motivated people to take different roles in HM Schools and analyzed the motivation behind their wanting to join and support HM Schools. Moreover, the researcher examined the types of adjustments they made and the strategies they used in order to adapt to different cultural settings.

As proposed by RMT, centralized and formally structured movements are more successful in mobilizing resources and achieving their goals than decentralized social movements. Thus, leaders in the HM play critical roles in gathering people around common causes and orchestrating and utilizing resources to do something about these causes. That is why the researcher searched the role of leadership in the HM. In addition, it is important

to note that political climates also play important roles in HM Schools in different countries. As explained in the fifth principle of resource mobilization theory, the success of social movements is influenced by the political climate. Lastly, as methodically criticized by McCarty and Zald (1977), propositions of RMT mainly depend on the American case which includes materials from social movement organizations of the left. Therefore, overall, there is very much a need to look at transnational social movements and social movement organizations, especially a global movement such as the HM.

### **2.3.The Hizmet Movement (HM) as a Transnational Social Movement**

As mentioned, the Hizmet Movement is a worldwide civic initiative rooted in the humanistic tradition of Islam and inspired by the ideas and activism of Fethullah Gulen. As far as Gulen is concerned, he prefers to refer to it as “the movement of humans united around high human values.” (Aslandogan, 2009).

The HM started in the late 1960s as a local service group involving students, teachers, parents, and small business owners who attended the sermons of Gulen in the city of Izmir, Turkey. The movement ever since has focused on enhancing and providing scientific education and moral training based on respect and love for humanity, and intercultural dialogue (Johnson, 2013, p. 1). It has sought to address local educational and cultural needs. That is why, the movement has aimed to provide educational opportunities including scholarships, dormitories, hostels, schools, and tutoring centers for the people (Cetin, 2012, pp.14-15).

It is a faith-inspired, apolitical, educational and cultural movement. The basic principles of the movement are rooted in Islam's universal values, such as love of creatures, sympathy for humanity, compassion, and altruism. The HM aims to increase tolerance and mutual understanding among people of different faith traditions and cultural backgrounds (Johnson, 2013, p. 1). Yavuz (2013) emphasizes the fact that according to Gulen, the goal of the HM is community building through character education (2013, p. 15). Aslandogan (2009) confirms that the HM is not a governmental or a state-sponsored organization, or a state or political ideology. It can be defined as a combination of millions of individuals with multiple voluntary organizations in hundreds and thousands of foundations, companies, professional associations, and intellectual and cultural institutions. Nilufer Gole (2008), an anthropologist, states that the movement has taken advantage of the conceptual and legal frameworks established by transnational movements and globally positioned non-governmental organizations.

According to Ebaugh (2010) mainly the students who graduated from HMS have initiated the many following activities and other institutions of the movement. It has been estimated that millions of participants of Gulen Movement around the world are working collectively to build schools, universities, dialogue centers and charitable organizations. Gulen stresses that the Hizmet never started as a movement, but the activities that were initiated as small projects were turned into bigger projects, which were expanded from the local to the global. According to Gulen, the reasonable tone of these projects has united many people and has led them to work together, thus resulting in the emergence of the movement (Ergil, 2012, p. 151). Gulen does not want people who support the movement to be called followers. He notes that those people are volunteer people that come together to implement

projects, which they find reasonable and logical. He also pinpoints the fact that people from every nation and religion in 160 countries around the world have supported the movement actively or passively, directly or indirectly. Thus, it is impossible to argue that the composition of the movement is homogeneous (Almeida, 2014).

Cetin (2012) argues that in the short run, the goal of the HM is to spread its activities in its mentioned fields, and in the long run, it is to earn God's pleasure by carrying out and accomplishing these activities. In other words, the adherents of the Movement do not seek any personal or political benefits. Also, the adherents act after they reach consensus with others through collective wisdom, discussion, and consultation, which exert informal social control over the adherents and help keep them from doing wrong and from pursuing any self-benefits. The main activities of the HM include education, interfaith dialogue, charity/relief, and non-political/non-violent community building. Yilmaz (2010) argues that the movement has successfully turned its spiritual, religious, intellectual, and human resources into effective social capital. Then, they utilized this capital to promote interfaith and inter-civilization dialogue, which also strengthened the movement's position. Consequently, the movement successfully has attracted students from various ethnic, religious and socio-economic backgrounds (Yilmaz, 2010, pp. 126-127).

Moreover, Cetin (2012) emphasizes that the HM aims to foster humanism based on love for others, enthusiasm for self-improvement, and altruism. One way to realize this goal is to educate people through universal reason, knowledge and values. Gulen argues that the world and human beings suffer from illiteracy, ignorance, strife and many other problems all related to a lack of knowledge, which can be overcome through education rather than partisan politics. For Gulen, civilization can be achieved through well-educated, productive and kind

individuals. In addition, according to him, true wealth and happiness lie in the improvement of spiritual and intellectual rather than material being and success. Ergil (2012) examines the HM from the social science perspective. He states that the so-called Gulen communities have established good relationships with every segment of the communities including rulers, the public, and bureaucrats in every country (pp. 151-153). As a result, these people have sent their children to the Gulen schools, which tend to have a higher quality compared to the local schools in many aspects. The graduates of these schools often have the ability to speak Turkish fluently, and the desire and inclination to support or volunteer for the HM. Thus, not only Turkish people but also other people from different countries are able to adopt Gulen's ideas.

The Hizmet Movement has been based on several philosophical, conceptual and operational foundations (Kalyoncu, 2008; Komecoglu, 2014). In order to understand it, one has to go to the roots of the movement. First and foremost, as explained before, the very word of this movement is hizmet (service for all humanity). This comprehensive term stands for the whole movement, as well. As indicated, "Living and engaging in the world, not for selfish interests but the benefit of others forms the basis of the HM's whole social action. For the Hizmet participants, self-negating service to others can be regarded as a form of modern religious practice" (Komecoglu, 2014). In other words, the teachings of the HM encourage living Islam within the societies and immersed in this diverse world, rather than distancing themselves from the people. Kalyoncu (2008) states that there are several principles held by the Hizmet Movement concept. The principles are used as a common denominator in the movements' activities. These principles focus on "the ultimate purpose of life (gâye-i hayal), altruism (digergamlık) and living for others (baskası için yasama), a sense of personal responsibility (mes'uliyet duygusu), the spirit of devotion (adanmışlık ruhu) and the person

of the heart (gönül insanı).” In addition to these principles, there are also operational concepts such as conversations/exchanges, gathering (sohbet), collective decision-making (istisare), and monetary commitments (himmət).

One of the core concepts of the HM is having a purpose and a meaning in life. In the HM, “one’s ultimate purpose in life should be seeking the Creator’s pleasure by serving the created (humanity)” (Kalyoncu, 2008). This concept is critical for the movement in achieving global peace and harmony by creating ideal generations that value universal ethical values such as dialogue, tolerance, and altruism. This combination of concepts is essential to the previous concept. In other words, the ultimate goals cannot be reached without being as altruistic as possible. Gulen’s original quote explains this as follows, “Those who strive to enlighten others, seek happiness for them, and extend a helping hand, have such a developed and enlightened spirit that they are like guardian angels. They struggle with disasters befalling society, stand up to “storms,” hurry to put out “fire,” and are always on the alert for possible shocks” (1985, p. 211; cited from Kalyoncu, 2008). He claims that “If there is one concept that explains the individual mobility that has brought the Gulen Movement into being, it is the sense of personal responsibility, regardless of whether others fulfill their responsibilities or not.” With this concept, none of the individuals need any external control and/or push mechanism. Each responsible individual might lead to creating a responsible community that is focused on serving all of humanity. Spirit of devotion is about forgetting and avoiding one’s self-demands and desires of any kind worldly. It is the “state of living in complete dedication to the service of humanity and seeking to please God in so doing” (Kalyoncu, 2008). This attribute leads to another concept, which is called the person of the heart.



As mentioned before, there are also some other concepts and principles about the structure and operation of the movement unique to itself. Gatherings or sohbet's are meetings and "the medium through which the necessity for HM is communicated to individuals" (Kalyoncu, 2008). The participants socialize, share their experiences, and network with each other at these meetings. These meeting groups are quite institutionalized regarding time and attendance. Another principle is about collective decision-making. The leader of this movement, Fethullah Gulen, places great emphasis on consultation and asks his followers to make their decisions with mutual consultation and democratic deliberation. The last critical concept for the operation of movement is the monetary commitment. Monetary commitment "refers to one's personal (financial) commitment to carrying out the duty at hand...Himmet is a collective donation made by volunteers to fund the activities of the HM. However, Himmet does not seem to be a prerequisite for involvement in the activities of the Gulen Movement" (Kalyoncu, 2008).

The HM also provides student accommodation in houses and dormitories called Işık Evler for students who wish to stay in a "safe", clean, and productive atmosphere. Hakan Yavuz describes how the movement works to teach morals and virtues to the public, especially the youth (Yavuz 2003:25-36). The movement's Işık Evler, which translates as light houses or houses of light, can be seen as a major contribution to the movement's moralization of the people and the youth. Yavuz explains that these light houses are there to shelter the students from temptations and dangers that big cities and their own youth offer them like alcohol and drug use, premarital sex and disbeliefs (Yavuz 2003:32-33). These houses keep these students in helpful, educational, and productive environments

helping them focus on their education and career, and keeping them away from unhealthy, excessive and time-wasting activities.

#### **2.4.Fethullah Gulen: The Leader of the Hizmet Movement**

Fethullah Gulen (*Gülen* in Turkish) is a well-known Turkish Islamic scholar, preacher, intellectual, thinker, author, opinion leader, education activist, and peace advocate. Gulen was born in 1938 in Erzurum, which is a historic Anatolian town in Eastern Turkey (Ergil, 2012, p.11). The Hizmet Movement is grounded in his universalistic teachings and charismatic leadership (Johnson, 2013, p. 1). Most Turkish intellectuals and scholars acknowledge him as one of the most prominent Islamic scholars of the twentieth century of Turkey. His influence over the Muslim populations is not only limited to Turkey but is prevalent around the world. Some scholars suggest that he has devoted his life to the pursuit of solutions for society's spiritual needs (Kraus, 2007, p. 165). As reported by Ergil (2012), Gulen is not just the spiritual leader, but also has had great additional influence in the movement. Ergil (2012) also added that as an intellectual leader who could guide his followers, Gulen was able to transform his thoughts, recommendations, and exhortations from theory into reality. Gulen's area of influence expanded with the success of the followers' ventures and projects. Fontenot and Fontonet (2008) analyze Gulen's reach and nature of influence over his readers through the dimensions of transformational leadership identified by Bass (1985 cited in Fontenot and Fontonet 2008). According to them (2008), transformational leaders employ a variety of models of expression and utilize all the available media to communicate and express to others their shared

identity. They use metaphors, figures of speech, give examples, tell stories, and relate anecdotes.

To illustrate, Yavuz (2013) summarizes the influential leadership of Gulen:

Gulen not only seeks to mobilize the hearts and minds of millions of Turks but also succeeds in convincing them to commit to the mission of creating a better and more humane society and polity. By stressing social activism and this worldly accomplishment and success --Gulen is a religious modernist and a social innovator. (p.77)

Similarly, Celik and Alan (2005) conducted research on revealing Gulen's leadership type. Based on the data they collected, they found that his attributes matched with those of a servant leadership. Celik points out, research shows that Fethullah Gulen, the leader of the HM, is a servant leader (Celik & Alan, 2005), in spite of his charisma. Gulen describes himself as a "servant," as well. Servant Leadership is a prominent leadership style (Greenleaf, 1991). Greenleaf (1991) claims a great leader is one who is a servant first before he/she becomes a leader. He differentiates the servant-first type from the leader-first one and says that "The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served" (p. 22). Followers trust such servant leaders. Based on the data that Celik and Alan (2005) collected, Gulen's leadership type was revealed to be a servant leadership. For instance, the majority of the respondents in the research study emphasized that he was a servant first, and then, a leader, which agrees with Greenleaf's primary criterion for servant leadership. Celik and Alan (2005) provide some other findings that empirically support Gulen's servant leadership:

The majority of the respondents believed Gulen to be realistic and was convinced that the message he conveys to people is true. Gulen has a courageous nature, and has strong will-power and resolve, and never falls into hopelessness. He is aware of his responsibility and the possible obstacles and stumbling blocks. Systematically and purposefully he is working on his projects and activities. He

is farsighted, proactive and has determined his goals well. Gulen knows the members of his community individually and mobilizes them to reach their goals. Besides, according to the respondents, he has been described as a person who does not cherish worldly ambitions or abuses his authority. Gulen's leadership is based on an extensive understanding of the faith and of the core values that drive his actions.

Celik and Alan also found that Gulen supports and encourages his followers to prefer to serve, and then lead, in order to expand services to individuals, institutions, and societies. Gulen's aim is not to have the greater power to rule and make followers obey and serve him but to gain the approval and love of God. That ideal goal makes him a servant (Celik, & Alan, 2005). In that regard, as indicated before, he is not a leader first, but a servant. He is very much aware of the Islamic principle of leadership: The people's master is the one who serves them.

In addition to being a servant leader, Gulen, has attributes of a transformational leader, as well. Fontenot and Fontenot (2008) believe that all the characteristics of transformational leadership, which are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration, comply with Gulen's efforts and actions. They claim that he very precisely meets all of these requirements of a transformational leader. Gulen was successful in transforming and applying the Islamic thought to the imperatives of modern society. Furthermore, he was able to create change in the followers and transform them to become all-time dynamic, inspired, and devoted to helping humanity. He "fulfills a key requirement of idealized influence by instilling a strong sense of empowerment and ownership in his followers. He shares power and believes in integrating power" (Fontenot and Fontenot, 2008). His influence is not limited to Muslims, only, but non-Muslims, as well. This leads us to another point of his: A human is valuable regardless of his/her membership in a group such as race, ethnicity, or religion. Fontenot and Fontenot (2008) indicates while discussing the

last component of transformational leadership, the individualized consideration, that Gulen acts “as a mentor, giving personal attention, listening to others’ concerns, and providing feedback, advice, support, and encouragement.” Even though Gulen has charismatic standing, regarding that he has unique influence, power, special abilities and skills, he does not portray the notoriety component of charisma. Charismatization can make the leader unaccountable, unpredictable, and arbitrary in using his/her authority, which may cause him/her to abuse his/her power. However, very different from a charismatic leader, Gulen consults (Kalyoncu, 2008). In other words, rather than acting as an authoritarian personality, he practices and promotes collective reasoning, consultation, and decision-making through consensus. Unlike a charismatic leader, he is not in control and in high need for power. Therefore, he is not the sole decision-maker who believes he is always right, but "shares power and believes in integrating power" (Fontenot and Fontenot, 2008).

Importantly, Gulen has linked tolerance and dialogue in a new way, giving a significant message within a global context that provides an alternative to conflict (De Bolt, 2005, p. 1). For Gulen, this degree of tolerance is achieved through a form of education that does not deny the place of religion or spiritualism, nor does it deny the role of what is known as ‘secular’ learning. Their division is only a constructed dichotomy that bears little relevance to the actual attainment of building a holistic self and society (Krause, 2007, p.172). His emphasis on dialogue, emphatic acceptance, and harmonious coexistence resembles Rumi’s discourse. While Rumi speaks of “whirling,” saying “come, come, no matter whoever you are; ours is not the caravan of despair,” Gulen embraces walking saying that “I am coming, whoever you are; is not ours the journey of hope?” He always says that one should have a seat (or a place) in his/her heart for everyone (Yilmaz, 2007).

As emphasized by John O. Voll, "in the clashing visions of globalization, Gulen is a force in the progress of the Islamic discourse on globalized, multicultural pluralism. His vision bridges the modern and postmodern, the global and local, and has a significant influence in the contemporary debates that shape the visions for the future of Muslims and non-Muslims alike" (Voll, 2003, p. 247). Gulen himself stresses the significance of globalization. He suggests that there is a strong connection between globalization and the necessity for tolerance. He states "Although the world increasingly resembles a global village, different belief systems, races, and customs will continue to survive. Each individual is a unique being; therefore, it is a utopian idea to standardize people. The harmony and peace of the global village are based on the recognition and respect of this diversity. In other words, harmony depends on a global tolerance and dialogue". "In contrast, the world will destroy itself through conflicts and wars" (Gulen, 2000, p. 7). Gulen also reminds us that we are humans first and foremost; Muslim or any other religious or cultural sets of identities come next.

Doğu Ergil (2012) portrays Gulen as a modern religious leader generating a Turkish renaissance through establishing peaceful coexistence in the homeland. He argues, "Gulen seeks a Turkish renaissance" (p. 25). Yilmaz (2007) stresses Gulen's role in "social-cultural activism" because of his "exemplary role" of establishing dialogue and building peace between Muslims and non-Muslims. According to Barton (2007), "Gulen can be truly said to be *preaching by example* because he is on the frontlines of social activism and regarding the greater good, his example is one that speaks loudly, not just to the Muslim world, but also to the west (pp. 650-662)." Unal and Williams (2000) defined Gulen as an educator rather than an Islamic preacher. They see him as an educator not only of the mind but also of the

heart and spirit. According to Gulen, the main duty and purpose of human life are to seek to understand. The effort of doing so is known as education (Unal and Williams, 2000, p. 305).

Gulen has inspired and encouraged his participants to develop interfaith dialogue relations with followers of other religions. Gulen's efforts of advocating friendship between religions like his meetings with Pope John Paul II, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomaios, and with Israeli Sephardic Head Rabbi Eliyahu Bakshi-Doron are some of the many manifestations of his emphasis on inter-religious dialogue, based on his pluralist and inclusive mindset. Gulen believes that there are common values in these different religions, and he argues that it is possible to create good relationships across different religions and cultures (Unal and Williams, 2000). It was this idea of the importance of establishing a peaceful relationship with different cultures and religions that inspired and encouraged its participants to open and run educational institutions in different countries.

As an example of peacebuilding, Gulen sent a message in 2014 to the Geneva Peace Conference where he had brought a proposal seven years before regarding the issue of Jerusalem and Palestine, which is a source of conflict in the Middle East. He stated that a supra-national and supra-religious status including visa-free access for the followers of all religions might be a solution. Further, the development of a unique administration for Jerusalem that would be governed by a committee under the UN with the representation of the three Abrahamic religions was included in the proposal (Journalists and Writers Foundation, 2014). The body of these facts suggests that accusations of radicalism have no ground in the life of Fethullah Gulen. Peace-building studies have elucidated and found certain elements that are essential for building and maintaining peace. Two of these factors are education and knowledge. The HM's most significant efforts and contributions are related

to these two fields (Saritoprak, 2007, p. 636).

It seems that Gulen, at every opportunity, raises his voice against violence and radicalization, denounces terrorism, defends human rights and promotes education. He characterizes extremist movements such as ISIS and al-Qaida as cancers destroying all people including Muslims (Gulen 2015, Muslims Must). Gulen is a moderate person, who stays away from the extreme approach to life. For instance, one of the extreme sides is a rationality that focuses more on self-interest and lacks spirituality, whereas the opposite side is a blind adherence to tradition. Gulen's mainstream way is "underlining the necessity of sound reasoning for every individual while promoting spiritual values as a guide for the intellect" (Fontenot and Fontenot, 2008). Gulen noted, "There is no doubt that a person who is armored with love needs no other weapon. Certainly, love is strong enough to stop a bullet or even a cannonball (2004a)". Gulen has not expressed these views only to Western audiences but has also been constantly voicing them in the Muslim world.

In contrast, there are others who criticize Gulen and his ideas along with the Hizmet movement and its actions. I will discuss criticisms of Gulen and the Hizmet Movement below in section 2.6.

## **2.5. The Hizmet Movement Schools (HMS)**

As mentioned above, the Hizmet Movement was interested in education from the very beginning. Since its foundation, it appears that the movement has acted based upon ideas of knowledge, understanding, tolerance, dialogue, and love from a religious, cultural and secular perspective (Park, 2008).



According to the political scientist, Ahmet Kuru (2005), the collapse of the Soviet Union provided significant opportunities for the movement. The HM opened its first schools outside of Turkey in the former Turkic Republics after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Kuru, 2005). Kuru also states that the HM developed a pro-globalization view in the 1990s. In turn, the movement has benefited from the international structures and environments shaped by globalization in several ways. For instance, globalization weakened state control over the prevailing social, cultural, and economic life of many countries (Kuru, 2005; Penaskovic, 2007), and this loosening of control has provided opportunities for the institutional diffusion of the movement into more than one-hundred-sixty countries.

In the interview with Arab newspaper Asharq Al-Awsat, Fethullah Gulen expressed the view that:

The HM aims to solve social problems by focusing on individuals. In my sermons, I have stated that we have enough mosques but not enough schools. I have encouraged the congregation to try to open schools instead of mosques—many of which were empty at the time (Almeida, 2014).

Keskin (2010) stresses that the HMS are not missionary schools. These schools are neither Islamic nor have any theological teachings included in the curriculum. While the schools are secular, they follow each country's requirements in regard to religious education. If religious education is required by the state, they teach according to the amount and content specified by the state. The Hizmet schools around the world operate in conformity with the legal regulations and educational philosophies of each country respectively (Ergil, 2012, p. 289).

To begin with, the HM schools are private institutions sponsored by generous entrepreneurs and altruistic educators. Using cutting-edge instructional technology and having demonstrated outstanding academic achievements, many of these schools rank among

the most prestigious in their countries. The students of the HMS are said to exhibit not only remarkably high achievement levels in math, science, languages, and humanities, but they also show strong moral and character development and a desire to help their fellow human beings. The schools abide by the regulations, which are required by the government authorities in every country in which they have been founded. The teaching includes a modern curriculum integrated with extracurricular activities focusing on social skills, ethical values, science, technology, art and the humanities (Keskin 2010; Knowlton 2010).

The schools primarily offer courses in the local language, which indicates how the HMS value the local culture and heritage. The courses of Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Computer Sciences, on the other hand, are taught in English because English is considered as the universal language of science. In addition, Turkish is taught as a foreign language. In these schools, both Turkish and English are taught in high quality. The students do not learn Arabic in these schools except in the schools located in countries where Arabic is the mother tongue, such as Algeria, Morocco, and Sudan (Ergil, 2012, p.291). Turkish teachers along with local teachers compose the faculty. We can observe that in general, a HM school first becomes established in a country and then it expands. The ratio of Turkish teachers to native-born teachers then favors the native teachers more.

On top of that, the movement schools do not take part in local and regional conflicts. Instead, they prefer to identify common grounds where all stakeholders can come together and cooperate to tackle common problems (Kalyoncu, 2007, p. 605). The non-Muslim religious leaders who use such appreciative words for the schools know that the founders of these schools are Muslims. Obviously, there does not seem to be a sign of conflict between them and the HMS administrators. In such a context, the HM volunteers provide this as an

indication of their school's contribution to the peacebuilding process (Akyol, 2008, p. 28). They argue that the schools in the region are spreading the concepts of tolerance, dialogue, democracy, and pluralism that are essential for a cohesive and sustainable society. Furthermore, they advocate that the schools also promote non-violent processes of conflict resolution by showing how to approach social problems through collective cooperation (Akyol, 2008, p.51). Johnson (2014), states that the HM schools in Nigeria, for example, initiated dialogue between Muslims and Christians through a parent reading group. The parents came together to exchange and discuss the basic values of their belief systems, and such an initiative has been extended to all HM schools and dialogue groups with the involvement of students, parents, politicians, and civic leaders from diverse groups. This allowed and engaged those of differences in opportunities to peacefully come together in their country and understand one another. In addition, schools foster respect for diversity by providing students with the opportunity to worship according to their own religion. No one is marginalized or judged for their differing backgrounds or identities. Instead, at these schools, they're celebrated.

For example, consider the movement's educational initiative in the Philippines. In a region where the denominational split in population between Muslims and Christians is approximately half-and-half, the HMS employs many Philippine teachers (some of whom are Christian) and admits many Christian students. Furthermore, along with the movement's commitment to interfaith dialogue, strong and healthy links are maintained with nearby Christian institutions (Michel, 2003). Thomas Michel, the former Ecumenical Secretary at the Asia Desk of the Vatican Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, stated that these schools have reached millions of children all across the world and have helped with their

education regardless of their races, languages, religions, or nationalities (Michel, 2003). Michel stated that the HMS in the Philippines are peace islands in the sea of conflict as the schools bring together both Christian and Muslims students under the same roof. The Hizmet Schools are characterized as “Peace Islands” because they provide a safe haven for children from all walks of life. People who otherwise would not be sitting at the same table, people who might even be enemies in everyday life, for a moment, at least, are brought together to recognize their common humanity around a safe community. Throughout their education, students are taught and learn to appreciate other beliefs and cultures as well as their own. These students develop strong morals by avoiding bad habits, improprieties, and corruption with the help of guidance counselors and the character education provided at these schools.

To demonstrate, Michel (2016) confirms the inclusiveness and tolerance of the HM schools towards other groups:

I have heard the testimony of Turkish bishops, Jews, and Alevis that the Gülen followers are their partners and allies in striving to build a truly inclusive Turkish society. I have talked with Christian students from Mozambique, Indonesia, and the Philippines, graduates of Hizmet schools, who are grateful for the excellent education they received and deny that they were subject to any form of proselytizing.

Regardless of their location, these schools are regarded as symbols of harmonious interfaith and intercultural relationships (Cetin, 2010). The schools promote respect for other cultures and thoughts of life. It is argued that students who receive education from the HMS learn to appreciate other faiths and cultures as well as their own throughout their education. This philosophy is embraced in these schools and Gulen himself supports this in his publications and speeches. In other words, Gulen values a global tolerance and dialogue, and the schools also pursue the same goal. This is especially the case with the movement's ventures in non-Turkic, and non-Muslim, worlds (Park, 2007). These schools

serve students from different backgrounds, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Jews, atheist, black or white. Many scholars argue that the schools have consistently promoted good learning and global citizenship. The HM schools annually organize cultural events, like the distinctive International Festival of Language and Culture (IFLC), to promote and further the harmonization of diverse cultures around the world. From the movement's description, IFLC is the largest and most outstanding institution for promoting world languages, customs and cultures (<http://www.intflc.org/>).

According to Keskin (2010), the success of the HMS is evident in the choice that the parents of these schools make for their children. They have a good reputation because, the students typically do not engage in negative activities promoted by youth cultures such as drug use, alcohol abuse, and dishonest behavior. The quality of education, together with the positive attitude of teachers towards students and parents makes the HMS successful. That is why the schools are in high demand; but yet they have limited space. For instance, in 2006, approximately 55,000 students applied to HM schools in Kyrgyzstan, yet only 900 students had the opportunity to enter (Ergil, 2012). Gulen (2004b) himself asserts that education is different from teaching. According to him, most people can teach, but only a very few can educate. Therefore, teaching merely conveys information, but education also offers moral guidance alongside the knowledge. Gulen as a spiritual leader (2005a) believes that education has always been the most important way for individuals to serve their community, country, and humanity and the effective teacher should combine the study of the sciences with character development. Thus, success must be measured in terms of both scientific and moral progress.

In his doctoral thesis entitled “The Educational Effectiveness of Gulen-inspired Schools: The Case of Nigeria” Aydin (2011) noted that in addition to the direct teaching of character education, in Nigeria, the HMS integrate academics with extracurricular activities, and focus on global social skills and ethical values and virtues like integrity, sincerity, respect for elders, the need to be humble, to not tell lies, to avoid drinking alcohol and smoking, to be humane, and so on. He adds that the students explained how every week in the Nigerian-Turkish International schools, organized seminars take place for the discussion of moral virtues such as how to be a good person, how to make one's life better in the future, and how to respect elders and people from different backgrounds. They emphasized that they learn how to live together as human beings. In addition, students stated that the seminars — [motivate us] to choose and chase our future careers and learn how to help our country.

## **2.6.Criticism about the Hizmet Movement and the Hizmet Movement Schools**

There are certain criticisms and controversial perspectives on the HM, a worldwide transnational social movement stemming from both Turkey and international audiences. Without addressing those critics and views, any study of the HM would be counted as incomplete. The critics condemn Fethullah Gulen and the Movement itself. For example, Gulen is simultaneously criticized as being an American puppet, a CIA agent, a secret cardinal, a secret Jew, and the second Khomeini. Some critiques claimed that the ultimate goal of the HM is to establish an Islamic Caliphate in the world. On the contrary, ultra-nationalists in Turkey accuse the movement of being a Western Trojan horse in the Muslim

world, which aims to either Christianize Muslims or make it easier for Western powers to exploit the Muslim world (Koc, 2011).

Almost all of the allegations and critiques against Gulen and the HM, intrinsically assume that Gulen and the HM have a political aim or agenda. However, Gulen himself argues that they do not pursue any political agenda and they always sought to avoid particular political engagements. Yavuz (2013) argues that the HM is not based on any form of political power, but on a socio-religious dynamic, that encourages a life on the highest of standards in harmony with other cultures and beliefs. Gulen is a proponent of civil society, and democracy (Harrington, 2015). The ramifications, implications and results of the organization's civil societal activities do not provide enough evidence to relate and tie Gulen and the HM to politics. For example, Gulen's ideas to resolve the protracted ethnic conflicts in Southeastern Turkey, through education and other democratic institutions are nonpartisan and not politically motivated. However, Gulen's universal and nonpartisan democratic ideas may not be compatible with the agendas of ethnic-based political parties who inflame the issues at hand and polarize the people, to get more votes (Harrington, 2015).

Some critics claim that Gulen and, in turn, the HM has a hidden agenda to establish an Islamic Caliphate. An Islamic Caliphate is an Islamic state that is led by a supreme religious and political leader known as a caliph (Aram, 2013). Critics on this topic discuss how the HMS could be playing a major role in establishing this said Caliphate (Levy, 2011). On the contrary, Gulen does not think that trying to revitalize the Caliphate is feasible: "I would say that the revival of the Caliphate would be very difficult and making Muslims accept such a revived Khilafah would be impossible. The perception of the

modern world regarding the revival of Khilafah must be considered” (Gulen 2005b: 457). In addition, after the brutal atrocities of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), which deeply shocked our world, many Muslim scholars, including Fethullah Gulen, condemned the activities of the ISIS terrorist organization and stressed that there is no room in Islam for the brutal atrocities of ISIS. Gulen, via the media, voiced the same messages in all Middle Eastern countries and emphasized that Islam cannot be associated with these atrocities. According to Islam, only states can declare war, not individuals or groups. This rule is similar to Thomas Hobbes’s philosophy that “sovereign authority is the state” (Hobbes, 1985). In this context, Celik (2014) drew attention to this point and explicitly condemned ISIS within his statements.

Gulen and the HM have also been the subject of claims that they are a part of Islamic radicalism that spreads radical Islam through its schools (Williams, 2010). Yavuz (2013, p.116) responds that, on the contrary, the HM made extensive educational efforts to protect the youth in its communities from radical Islamic discourses and rejected violence under all conditions. They continuously reiterate that they unconditionally reject violence. In fact, Helen R. Ebaugh, states that the HM is a moderate voice that condemns terrorism and violence of any sort. “I’m hoping that now in the light of this increasing terrorism around the world, we’ll hear more of the moderate voices,” she adds (Ebaugh, 2015). The British Rabbi Goshen-Gottstein points out the fact that Gulen’s and the HM participants’, “views respecting democracy, the rule of law, and opposing terror and violence have been consistent for decades” (Goshen-Gottstein, 2016).

Gulen has specifically maintained a rigid stance against extremism and violence since the 1970s. During years of political anarchy in Turkey back in the 1970s, he consistently denounced terror, anarchy, and violence, and advised his followers to never respond to the



violence with violence. His stance against violence is not only limited to people who live in Turkey, but also to people who live all over the world. During the first Gulf War, he protested Saddam's rockets targeting Israeli civilians in his mosque sermons even when this protest was very challenging and controversial in the Islamic world. He was blamed for his protests and accused of being a Trojan horse of the West in the Islamic world (Koc, 2011). However, these accusations did not stop him from stating his beliefs whenever he felt compelled. He strived and sought to stand on the side of those who were innocent, irrespective of race or religion and he implored his congregation to do the same (Aslandogan & Cinar, 2007). In this context, he was the first Muslim scholar who publicly condemned the attacks of 9/11. Gulen wrote a condemnation article in the Washington Post on September 12, 2001, just the day after the attack, and stated "*No terrorist can be a Muslim, and no true Muslim can be a terrorist.*" In that article, Gulen called Bin Laden along with the people who follow him a monster and condemned and denounced Bin Laden's actions on humanitarian as well as on religious grounds (Aslandogan & Cinar, 2007). It is very important to note that he did not express these views only to Western audiences but voiced them in mosque sermons and to congregations of thousands of Muslims. Gulen also unequivocally condemns and rejects suicide attacks. He (2013) considers the suicide attacks of terrorist groups as murder in many dimensions and has stated that killing innocent people cannot be justified for any reason [Herkul nagme, 312]. He also contributed to this stance by publishing a scholarly book on the Islamic perspective on terror and suicide attacks named, *Terror and Suicide Attacks: An Islamic Perspective*, and condemned such acts from a humanitarian and religious standpoint (Gulen, 2004c). It is important to note that the allegations against Gulen and the HM mostly stem from radical

and political Islamists, because the HM participants' positions are firmly against radicalization, terrorism, and violence.

According to Komecoglu (2014), Gulen emphasizes the fact that the motivation of Islamists revolves around personal and political agendas resulting from the pursuit of worldly ambitions and power. For him, this is often associated with anger and hostility towards others. He preaches that Muslims must neither act out of ideological or political partisanship and then claim to have Islamic values, nor reflect and cover their mere desires in the form of Islamic ideas and pursuits. Komecoglu (2014) associates this fault with many extremist groups who strangely set out by labeling themselves as Islamists, which distorts the image of Islam in reality. Komecoglu (2014) argues that the HM, however, has challenged the revolutionary and authoritarian ideas of Islamists, as it acts upon the unifying attitude of Islam that is against the politicized doctrine of "us vs. them". Unlike political Islam, the Civil Islam requires sincerity, friendship, honesty, personal piety, and selfless service to others through modern civil society. The HM has been engaging in a variety of social and religious activities to put this ideal into place.

In various instances, radical Islamic groups have discredited Gulen's stance, but this did not prevent him from expressing his beliefs. He, for instance, criticized Turkey's Justice and Development Party, the current ruling party in Turkey, (Erdogan's AKP) government for irresponsibly sending the Mavi Marmara aid flotilla to Palestine in 2009 and stated to journalists that "What I saw was not pretty, it was ugly." He continued his criticism by stating, "the organizers' failure to seek accord with Israel before attempting to deliver aid is a sign of defying authority and will not lead to fruitful matters" (Lauria, 2010). These statements were tough enough and unacceptable for many political Islamists and they

promptly reacted to his remarks but apparently, he did not mind those reactions thinking that his speech would help moderate the extremist views in Turkey about the issue. This incident seems to indicate that Gulen does not necessarily seek popularity in the eyes of the people and prefers expressing his beliefs boldly even when they have the potential to receive extensive, clashing reactions from the conservative masses. Likewise, the movement has also been known to be resolute in voicing their principles and values, despite opposition. For example, the movement and Gulen supported even the reopening of a Greek Orthodox seminary as opposed to the government, despite the potential severe reactions from the political Islamist groups. This tendency in the movement to speak out, whether reckless or admirable, has gotten it in trouble with different entities, mainly in Turkey.

For five years, accusations and serious criticisms have arisen against the HM in Turkey. According to Shank (2013), there was an “obvious” crackdown by the Turkish government on Gulen and Hizmet participants– who did not officially endorse a political party but rather supported the reform movements of the government in the context of democratization. On December 17, 2013, the Turkish Judiciary system and the police made criminal investigations that revealed the biggest corruption scandal in the history of Turkey. The accusations in this corruption case were mostly against the members of the ruling AKP, and the family members of the key figures in AKP, including the then Prime Minister and now President Erdogan (Harrington, 2015). Harrington (2015) pointed out that President Erdogan described the corruption investigation as an attempted "judicial coup" by those jealous of his success, namely the Hizmet movement, backed by foreigners, without any aura of proof. Within the regular functioning of democracy in Turkey, all these politicians and their relatives normally had to follow the judicial process and answer the

accusations to clear their names. However, the suspects and the AKP under the leadership of Erdogan undermined and circumvented the judiciary system to escape from trial by establishing new courts, abolishing the competent, standing court, and scattering all criminal justice professionals around the country. Such a resistance to the system increased Erdogan's authoritarianism to block fundamental democratic institutions in the country (Kuru, 2014).

Kuru (2014) states that after the public knew about the corruption, instead of letting the judiciary system try the case, Erdogan placed the HM at the center and as the target of his campaign to escape from justice and argued that the corruption case was a conspiracy against him, which was organized by the Hizmet movement. Since December 17, 2013, Erdogan has used the term "parallel structure" as an alias to implicate and describe the Gulen Movement and has made efforts to link any dissident in and out of the country to this parallel structure, regardless of the political preferences and beliefs of the person of interest. Gulen strongly denied allegations that the corruption probe was launched as part of a row between the government and the HM (Today's Zaman, 2013). Victor Gaetan (2014) argues that Erdogan has repeatedly portrayed Gulen, and his movement, as part of a political conspiracy, calling it a "parallel state" responsible for initiating a series of corruption investigations against his administration. According to Gaetan, these accusations seem to still not have been substantiated. HM has no formal membership, no headquarters, and no hierarchy, which makes it impossible to know whether Hizmet movement participants are overrepresented in law enforcement and the judiciary, let alone know whether they have been orchestrating a putsch (Gaetan, 2014). Begum (2013) expresses that the HM has been successful in staying distant from daily political debates

as a non-state and non-governmental movement. However, the defamation campaign following the well-known corruption case has pulled the movement into the political arena, though many hosting countries where the HM operate still have not agreed to close these schools.

The accusations of PM Erdogan against the HM are not only limited to the Turkish Judiciary System and the police but extend to the HM's schools all over the world (Today's Zaman, 2014). Notably, the accusations and statements of PM Erdogan seem very similar to the McCarthyism (i.e., witch-hunt) experienced in the United States during the 1950s (Akyol, 2014). The HM was accused of having close ties with CIA and MOSSAD, and PM Erdogan claimed that the purpose of the corruption investigations was to oust the AKP government (Yilmaz, 2013).

When Turkey experienced the coup attempt in July 15, 2016, the Justice and Development Party (AKP) immediately accused HM participants for being behind it. Then, the Turkish government declared the HM a 'terrorist organization' and started a massive crackdown against HM organizations, schools, and its participants. The witch hunt (Kuru, 2017; Phillips, 2017; Momani, Sezgin 2016; 2016; Gollu, 2016; Dunder, 2016; Michel, 2016; Arango; Yeginsu; Timur; 2016) against the HM was enormously accelerated and intensified after the coup. Participants of the HM were declared members of the so-called "Fethullah Terrorist Organization" by the Erdoğan regime (Kuru, 2017). In addition, Erdoğan (2017) has called for an expanded witch-hunt against Gulen followers and supporters and has announced in June 2017 in regard to HM members and affiliates, "Wherever you know of or find a member of them you will report them to us. If you do not inform us, you will be held responsible" (Turkishminute, 2017). Director of the Program

on Peace-Building and Rights at Columbia University's Institute for the Study of Human Rights, David L. Phillips (2017, p 48) states in his book, *"An Uncertain Ally: Turkey under Erdogan's Dictatorship"*: The conspiracy mentality in Turkey before and after the coup fueled a "witch hunt" resulting in the dismissal and discharging of police officers, military officers, prosecutors, and judges across the country. Phillips (2017, p 156) adds that, "The witch hunt which followed (after) revelations of corruption in December 2013, was a device to accelerate the consolidation of power by Erdogan." According to Phillips, the crackdown aimed to silence dissent and eliminate all opposition. It was a ploy to eliminate political adversaries in the judicial branch and the police bureaucracy, who have the power to implicate Erdogan in their investigation of government corruption.

The coup perpetrators consisted of only several hundred low ranking soldiers or non-ranking troops who attempted several things to alienate the public, but they did not harm any politicians, despite the fact that politicians naturally must be the primary target of any coup. Just after the beginning of the coup, Erdogan said before the public "the (coup) attempt is God's gift to wipe the opponents out of the military" (Tharoor, 2016). The senior communications advisor of the Jewish united fund of metropolitan Chicago Aaron B. Cohen (2018) states that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan used the events of July 15, 2016, which Cohen calls a dubious coup attempt, "as a pretense to crush Fethullah Gulen and the Hizmet Movement he inspired, in what devotees call 'our Reichstag Fire and Kristallnacht rolled into one'". The coup attempt failed in a couple of hours, and the government declared a state of emergency through which Erdogan's purge victimized millions of people and alleged participants of the HM. More than a hundred thirty-five thousand people were purged, detained, and tortured. More than a hundred fifty thousand

people were dismissed from their jobs. More than ninety-six thousand people most of them teachers, police officers, military officers, judges, prosecutors, and businessmen were arrested without due process of law. The total number of judges, prosecutors dismissed by the regime due to their oppositional views is more than four thousand and more than six thousand academics were fired. One hundred and eighty-nine media outlets were shut down, and more than three hundred journalists were arrested up until March 2019. All their properties were confiscated, and many arrested were heavily tortured. Many pregnant, old, and fatally ill were arrested without even knowing what they had been indicted for. Many people were abducted and killed during torture. Several of Turkey's biggest companies worth billions of dollars were seized; and their owners with their families were tortured and jailed without due process of law (<https://turkeypurge.com/>). New arrests are announced almost daily. Another 150,000 have been suspended from their jobs presumably for cooperating with the Hizmet Movement participants, although no evidence has been offered to confirm this (Eissenstat, 2017). Kuru (2017) emphasizes that most people in Turkey do not care about or acknowledge the endless persecution of thousands of innocent individuals—particularly those who are affiliated with the Hizmet Movement and the Kurds. Pandya (2017) confirms that in immediate and rushed response, President Erdogan accused Fethullah Gulen and his followers for said coup, taking all measures to punish and hurt the movement before even considering or waiting for the evidence. Erdogan has blamed and threatened everyone who has even the slightest affiliation or proximity to the movement, roughly consisting of about 10 million sympathizers and participants, in an effective fear tactic to suppress his opposition (Pandya, 2017).

President Erdogan (2018) has vowed to pursue and catch Gulen movement participants who according to him, have ‘escaped the sword’:

Gulen movement members are paying with life imprisonment and aggravated life imprisonment. They will all pay. Of course, there are still some who escaped the sword. They will also be caught sooner or later” Erdoğan told the AKP congress on February 2018 (Turkishminute, 2018).

According to Sophia Pandya (2017), a professor of religious studies from California State University, there have been many theories and rumors as to who was actually responsible for the attempted coup and what the actual cause was; even now, however, there are no clear answers, no simple explanation. Former Turkish Parliament member under the Republican People’s Party (CHP) and senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, anthropologist Aykan Erdemir expressed this obscurity and uncertainty when he stated: “There is still a lot of fog after the coup. Whatever sketchy evidence we have so far points to a makeshift alliance, we are certain about that. What we still do not know yet is who or what brought all these officers together. My suspicion is that it was simply an anti-Erdoğan sentiment.” One outlandish rumor is that the coup attempt was orchestrated by CIA-Gülen-Ecumenical Patriarchate collaboration. This popular rumor was later dismissed and recognized as a Russian misinformation campaign aimed at shifting Turkey’s loyalties away from the West. Pandya (2017) confirms that some people argue that it was Erdogan who staged the coup behind the curtains in order to amass and consolidate his power and authority. Erdogan’s quick seizing of the opportunity to defeat all opposition after the coup attempt and the convenience or benefit it has given him cause many to suspect him. Some also wonder and suspect whether any ultranationalist secular forces and factions within Turkey’s powerful military have played a role in the coup



attempt. A final theory is that the United States had something to do with it, that they were significantly involved or partly responsible for it. According to a poll, 69 percent of Turkish citizens believe the United States did play at least some role in the failed coup attempt. President Obama has denied any involvement. To the US, Turkey, being a member of NATO, is a moderate and stable Middle Eastern ally on which the US has relied many times (Pandya, 2017).

As a response, Pandya (2017) also adds again that the failed coup gave way to Erdogan's expansion of power and authority, raising some suspicion over the whole thing. There have been many questions, speculations, and skepticisms regarding the unusually sloppy and incompetent execution of the attempted coup and the bizarre manner in which it unfolded, lending some merit to the theory that it was staged. For example, the coup plotters oddly did not detain Erdogan while he was vacationing in Marmaris, on the southwestern coast of Turkey. In fact, he was even allowed and able to travel one hour by plane to Istanbul without any problems. Also, why did Erdogan appear to have lists naming people to arrest, pre-made and already prepared, before July 15, the day of the coup? There is a lot of oddities about this coup and its aftermath that raise many suspicions about the nature of the coup and Erdogan's role in it, if there is any. Erdogan has even called the failed coup attempt, "a gift from God."

The world has noticed Erdogan's recent pursuit and expansion of power both inside and outside Turkey. The president of the Stockholm center for freedom, Abdullah Bozkurt (2017) noted that Erdoğan had created a giant educational foundation called Maarif with a special law he pushed through Parliament in June 2016. Resultantly, full diplomatic clout was bestowed on the foundation's chief executives, who apparently have close connections

to controversial Islamist groups in Turkey. The common characteristic of the Maarif Foundation management is that they share a common profile that is rooted in political Islamist ideology. Bozkurt (2017) also added that Erdoğan posits himself to be the caliph, the leader of all Muslims in the world, and sees the Maarif Foundation as a tool in his investment efforts to reach out to and influence non-Turkish Muslim groups. He hopes that he can raise a generation of loyalists on foreign soil in his endeavor to enlist new recruits. Erdogan even pressured foreign countries to close the HM schools abroad or to transfer the participants of the schools from the schools to the Maarif Vakfi foundation.

This recent political situation against the HM is important for the current study because Erdogan has been running a political campaign against the HM and instructing Turkish embassies around the world to convince the political figures in the respective country to shut down these schools. He has further visited countries to reiterate this ambition and request to political figures (Turkone, 2015). The Turkish government has even hired a UK-based international law firm, Amsterdam and Partners LLP, to investigate and carry out lobbying activities against the HM worldwide (Pamuk, 2015).

Overall, Erdogan has carried out a purge of the participants of the HM in Turkey, and abroad to the extent that was possible. However, despite the persecutions and oppressive policies against the HM, no violent attack of the members of HM has been recorded so far. There was not even a single episode of anger or violence before, during, and after the detention and jailing of more than a hundred thousand HM participants. A sociology professor at Loyola University Maryland, Joshua Hendrick (2017) who has researched and written about Gulen and the HM before, states that a coup would directly contradict the goals and values that participants of the movement along with Gulen claim

to stand for, which include peace and democracy (Adely, 2017). Hendrick (as cited in Adely, 2017) also points out that in regard to the movement, “In every which way, it (coup) contradicts their collective identity and their publicly stated aims”. Hendrick (as cited in Adely, 2017) believes and argues that Turkey’s labeling or portrayal of Gulen and the movement as terrorists was used and intended to have a political impact. He said, “To compare the Gulen community with armed insurrectionist groups has no historical precedent...There is no noted history of violence within this organization, which is again what makes the events of July 15 so challenging for people such as myself to believe” (Hendrick, as cited in Adely, 2017). That is because Fethullah Gulen and the HM do not justify any form of violence. The peaceful reactions of the members of HM to the extreme government persecutions are a good indicator of the movement’s peaceful character. The HM participants have not been involved in one single violent incident throughout the Movement’s 50-year history. (Gulen, Le Monde, 2016). Contrary to what Turkey claims, in the 2018 EU Commission’s Annual Turkey Report (2018), the European Commission did not recognize the Hizmet Movement (Gulen Movement) as a terrorist organization. The EU denies claims of designating Hizmet Movement as a terrorist organization. The report on Turkey clearly states that Turkey continues to move away from the EU’s core democratic values and principles, especially with this purge against the HM and all other opposition for the ruling government. In demonstration, the commission report points out that since the introduction of the state of emergency, 150,000 have been taken into custody, 78,000 have been arrested and 110,000 civil servants have been dismissed (European Commission’s Turkey Report, 2018).

Importantly, Kuru's (2017) criticism, however, is that the movement's participants fail to self-critically reflect on their mistakes even after all this political trouble and conflict. He mentions three major mistakes that the movement has made which it needs to fix. The first one is the movement's reckless relationships with politics, the government and the bureaucracy. Second is that the movement has mistakenly long seen itself as superior to other groups, movements, and institutions in Turkey. It also failed to differentiate various spheres of life, such as religion, politics, bureaucracy, science, media, banking, and charity and over-ambitiously attempted to function and operate in each of them. The third mistake, according to Kuru, is that the movement has had a major incongruence between its large size and its non-professional management structure with its ambiguous and suspicious decision-making system. Kuru argues that if these problems are fixed, the movement will be able to make positive contributions to Turkey and other countries in the future. However, according to Kuru, instead, in response to the purge, Gulen has recently promoted fatalism in his speeches, which helps his followers refrain from radicalism and avoid hopelessness and depression but prevents them from learning lessons from recent tragic events. Kuru also states that politically, the movement made major mistakes by initially allying with the AKP and then engaging in "a zero-sum struggle against it" (Kuru, 2017). His main criticism is that after all that the HM has been through, the movement still neglects to think if there was anything that they are doing wrong and whether there is a way for self-improvement.

Other criticisms of the HM are concerned with the very nature and motive of the movement. In 2013, sociologist Joshua Hendrick published his book, *Gülen: The Ambiguous Politics of Market Islam in Turkey and the World*, in which he criticizes the

Hizmet Movement, the way it operates, its structure, and its presence on the national and global scale. Hendrick (2013) questions the integrity and character of the Movement. He argues that it lacks answerability, that there is no practice or exercise of accountability among the members and for the leaders of the movement. Furthermore, he claims that it practices a deliberate policy of strategic ambiguity and employs the charismatic leadership of Gulen in its day to day operations in order to achieve its goals. Hendrick accuses the HM of being non-transparent and discreet. According to him, the Movement is purposefully ambiguous, quiet and reserved, not very open or comprehensible to outsiders. Additionally, in his 2009 dissertation (Hendrick, 2009b), Hendrick calls the Hizmet Movement out for political ties when he argues that it has relations with the conservative Justice and Development Party (AKP). Hendrick argues and believes that the Hizmet Movement works more to attain power and rank rather than for other perceived romantic purposes like spiritual revival, charity, peace, education and other goals. Hendrick concludes that “their use of Islamic categories, their glorification of Anatolia’s Ottoman past, and their focus on Turkish exceptionalism in the world of Islam should not cloud the fact that, collectively, the Hizmet Movement’s primary motivation is power, not religious revival” (pp. 14, 15). Overall, in his criticism, Hendrick argues that the Movement is a conscious political brand and closed organization that works secretly and ambiguously for purposes that may not be as noble as they seem.

As a response to Hendrick’s criticism, in 2017, Professor Simon Robinson published his book, *The Spirituality of Responsibility: Fethullah Gulen and Islamic Thought*, writing about and discussing the complaints and objections made by Hendrick about the Movement. First of all, according to Robinson, the argument and use of the term,

“strategic ambiguity”, one of Hendrick’s main grievances against Hizmet, is problematic and unproven because it implies a deliberate action or policy that the Movement is supposedly organizing and practicing, for which Hendrick cannot provide any clear evidence. Robinson (2017) claims that there is no direct or valid proof of an intentional planning of this strategy especially within a movement so diverse, large and complex. He argues that strategic ambiguity implies a lack of integrity. Hendrick, however, does not give any definition of integrity, let alone one that relates to a complex organization such as the Hizmet Movement. Robinson (2017) states overall, for many of Hendrick’s criticisms that, “Hendrick does not take account of diversity within the HM. As with any movement of this size, there will be many different perspectives and motivations, and Hendricks’ analysis ignores the possibility of such complexity.” Furthermore, according to Robinson, Hendrick does not critically reflect on the nature of ambiguity. Robinson argues that ambiguity is inevitable and “a critical part of any social or moral relationship (de Beauvoir, as cited in Robinson, 2017).” He explains that the ambiguity is naturally there in the Hizmet Movement’s attempt to bring together distinct but connected moral and universal ideas: “a shared understanding of meaning, worth and values and the freedom to determine how those values will be embodied in practice.” This sharing and understanding of ideas and forging of bonds between people are central to the thought of Gulen and Hizmet. However, it also naturally brings with it ambiguity because of its practice in different, diverse social contexts. On top of that, Robinson adds further on that ambiguity in a global movement is inevitable and necessary. In a movement as big and diverse as Hizmet, there will be many different perspectives, principles, values, motivations, and dynamics pushing the movement forward. In fact, Robinson makes the point that the lack of ambiguity in

movement that big and complex would be much more problematic. According to him (2017), “Absence of ambiguity would precisely indicate totalizing of thought and cult dynamics (cf. Bauman, as cited in Robinson, 2017). Gulen recognizes this in relation to action, accepting that there is not a need for total agreement.”

Second, while Hendrick accepts that there is evidence of altruism and the spiritual motivation of the teachers in the movement, he argues that the movement still has a larger, underlying materialistic motive. However, according to Robinson, Hendrick’s claim that the Hizmet Movement’s primary aim and motivation is to develop and amass power, economic and otherwise, remains to be complete speculation. Robinson (2017) further adds that the business leaders involved in the movement will, by profession, be naturally concerned about profit; however, there is also clear evidence that these people view their business as part of their response, obligation and duty to God. Robinson holds that many of these people in the movement act out of their core values rather than greed and ambition.

Third, Robinson makes the point that there is clear, direct evidence that goes against Hendrick’s argument that the HM is politically tied to or allied with the AK party. Robinson notes in his book, “There has been a breakdown with the party, focused in ongoing condemnation from Gulen and the wider Movement about the corrupt practices which have been alleged to be carried out in the AK party. The subsequent backlash from the Turkish president effectively shows that the two groups are quite distinct.” Robinson argues that the Movement and the AKP, contrary to what Hendrick says, are very distant, as the AKP is very hostile towards the HM for criticizing and condemning many of the party’s actions and alleged practices. Robinson mentions an article that Gulen (2016) wrote for the New York Times in which he explains his stance against the AK party. Robinson (2017) explains

how, “Gulen takes on a prophetic role which challenges the ruling party to address corruption charges, and to fulfill its responsibility for the rule of law and the protection of freedom.”

Fourth, in another case, as another response to Hendrick’s accusation that the Movement is non-transparent and too discreet, Harrington (2011) explains that “popular movements often engender apprehension because they are too difficult to measure, especially when, as with the Gülen phenomenon, the movement lacks a standard organizational structure” (p. 15). According to Harrington, because the HM lacks a standard and set structure, it tends to make onlookers nervous and confused. Having been thrown off and bothered by the difficulty to measure, evaluate and comprehend a large, diverse, and complex movement phenomenon such as Hizmet Movement, Harrington argues that people can be inclined to often fear and suspect popular movements like the HM of non-transparency and reticence.

Fifth, Hendrick argues that the HM is directed and operates under a charismatic leadership. Fontenot and Fontenot (2008), on the contrary claims that Gulen acts “as a mentor, giving personal attention, listening to others’ concerns, and providing feedback, advice, support, and encouragement.” Kalyoncu adds that, very different from a charismatic leader, Gulen consults (Kalyoncu, 2008). In other words, rather than an authoritarian personality, he offers collective reasoning, consultation, and consensus. Unlike a charismatic leader, he is not in a control and high need for power. Therefore, he is not the sole decision-maker who believes he is always right, but "shares power and beliefs in integrating power" (Fontenot and Fontenot, 2008).



As a response to criticisms made of the HM, Pandya (2017) points out that the types of accusations and rumors made against the Hizmet movement and Gulen, in particular always differ according to the region where they arise and are believed in. In Turkey, unfriendly portrayals and depictions of Gulen make him out to be a Zionist crypto-Jew or cast him as a secret cardinal working for the Pope, or even label him as a CIA agent. Similarly, but on the contrary, in the United States, defamatory comments, reports and portrayals of Gulen range from allegations that he is an anti-Semite wishing and working for the downfall of Israel, to accusations and claims that he is an enemy of the West, secretly trying to Islamize the United States. Clearly, he cannot be all of these at once. Paranoia, wild rumors, and conspiracy theories run rampant in Turkey just as Islamophobia and its ensuing prejudices and fears run rampant outside of it, like in the West. The charges and accusations of Gulen's critics "reflect larger fears (i.e. regarding the security of Israel, or the secular/religious identity of Turkey) and very little, if any, of Gülen's actual agenda." On November 1, 2016, Erdoğan's chief adviser came up with a totally unsubstantial claim that Gulen had "deep connection" to the 9/11 attacks. It is unsurprising; therefore, that Gülen and his movement have been the target of such accusations and conspiracy theories.

And she (2017) also adds that on August 10, Gulen (2016) wrote in an op-ed for *Le Monde*: "If there are any officers among the coup plotters who consider themselves as a sympathizer of Hizmet [Gülen] movement, in my opinion those people committed treason against the unity of their country by taking part in an event where their own citizens lost their lives." A government takeover or the attempt to even do so directly goes against the Hizmet movement's own proclaimed values, beliefs and mission and would only undermine its appeal to its own (also coup-weary) followers as well as any outsiders. Even if the ones that

were truly guilty and responsible for the coup attempt were in some way associated with the movement, that would not serve as a justification for the Turkish government's exceedingly high number of arrests and detentions of ordinary HM participants. It would not justify his persecution. Erdogan has succeeded in using chaos, hateful discourse, and fear mongering to unify his supporters against any potential opposition, and the Hizmet movement (along with the Kurds) poses and serves as an easy and advantageous target. According to Human Rights Watch, Erdoğan's government has shut down clinics, hospitals, schools, institutions, associations, and trade unions considered to be linked to the Hizmet movement, which he classifies as the "Fethullah Terrorist Organization" (FETÖ), while offering "no specific citation of any criminal activity by the affected individuals" (Pandya,2017).

Thomas Michel (2016), SJ, the author of several books on Muslim-Christian relations and Islamic thought in modern Turkey observes that:

For those who know Gülen personally or have had contact with the open-hearted and idealistic members of the movement, claims of subversive "terrorism" seem incongruous. I for one have known Gülen for more than twenty years and find the retiring, soft-spoken Qur'an teacher to be preaching and living a particularly attractive interpretation of Islam. His bedrock concept is that of *ikhlas*, which means doing everything, no matter how modest or unassuming, wholly for God's pleasure. This spiritual principle, which is hardly original or unique to Islam, has motivated Gülen's followers to commit themselves to administering and teaching in schools in places as diverse as Phnom Penh, Brussels, Accra, and charter schools in inner-city neighborhoods in urban areas such as Milwaukee and Cleveland. They are digging wells in Somalia and Mali, running clinics in Kenya, and establishing interreligious dialogue programs in more than two hundred locations in the United States.

Michel (2016) continues on to point out how some argue, as was noted in Politico and the Independent that the coup was "stage-managed" by Erdogan in order to create an excuse or alleged reason for destroying Hizmet, silencing his secular and leftist critics, and eliminating any opposition ("in the same way Hitler used the Reichstag Fire to suppress all opposition"). Michel notes that Erdogan had the most to gain from the coup attempt and

has in fact gained the most. Although still, according to him, the Hizmet movement's involvement in the coup is theoretically possible, even if it may be a far-fetched and improbable scenario. However, just like John Kerry and many other observers impressed with the movement have, he asks Erdogan to produce evidence for this alleged involvement and any other of his accusations. If he cannot, there is no reason anyone should take his word for such a seemingly "groundless assertion" against a movement that has so far been only known for the good it is doing around the world. This begs the question of whether these accusations are legitimate or just acts of revenge and distractions in Erdogan's attempts to dodge corruption charges and prevent any further whistleblowing against himself.

Many of the accusations and criticisms against the Hizmet movement are very groundless and ill-founded. I personally conclude from my research, that most of the serious and weighty criticisms, and suspicions about the movement are inconsistent with one another and with the reality of Hizmet Movement's actions and behavior. They consist of ill-founded rumors and conspiracy theories unfounded in the movement, its values, its members, and its institutions. The most serious criticism for the movement, I believe, is that it is equivalent to a terrorist organization with a secret and evil agenda. This claim however has never been able to be proven. It remains to be a very implausible comment, unbelievable to many for it lacks all proof and fails to match with any of the activities and beliefs of the movement. There are no terrorist organizations who start up modern, secular schools providing proper education to thousands all over the world. There are no terrorist organizations who insult, criticize, object, and advocate or teach against terrorist groups and all forms of terrorism, violence, and discord. There are no terrorists who write, publish,

and distribute scientific, spiritual and literary magazines and establish intellectual press and media institutions such as newspapers and TV channels that promote democracy, freedom, and peace. Terrorists do not start dialogue institutions and projects organizing and facilitating interfaith and intercultural dialogue aimed at conflict resolution, peace, tolerance and communion in areas of discord around the globe. The Hizmet movement have done and continue to do all these things contrary to the questionable criticisms they receive. What kind of a terrorist organization composes mainly of teachers, renowned academics, doctors, journalists and businessmen? Some invalidly cite the coup in 2016 as proof of the movement's terrorist and violent nature. However, the movement has been called a terrorist group before then too. Despite all the violent oppression and persecution, it has faced from the current Turkish government over the years, not even once has the Hizmet movement reacted with or committed any violence in its 50-year history. On the contrary, it has declared that it will never respond to violence with violence. The Hizmet movement has been called many things and called out for things unheard and unseen of by anyone. There is a big disconnect between all the harsh criticism thrown its way and the important achievements, humanitarian actions, and the upstanding behavior of the movement along with the friendly reception or support from those it has encountered. Terrorist organizations, fraudulent institutions, and selfish, greedy groups do not dig wells in third world countries, provide relief and charity for impoverished areas of the world and run hospitals around the globe. The Hizmet Movement is accused of all sorts of things that negate and conflict with one another without any substantial consensus on any one criticism. Overall, from a personal standpoint, the main reason the Hizmet movement has been accused of terrorism is its place in the world as a barrier to political Islam, its refusal

to meet Erdogan's authoritarian requests, its lack of support for President Erdogan on the international stage and its rejection of Erdogan's profession of being the world leader of Muslims. There are some criticisms, mainly regarding structural, management problems and issues of representation in the Hizmet Movement due to human errors that warrant some reflection and attention by the movement in order to further improve. It is up to the movement to be self-critical, acceptant of its shortcomings, open to change and eager to learn for the sake of improvement and betterment. All in all, in my opinion, most of the criticism against the movement fails to reflect the movement and the evident truth behind all that it does. Instead, it is painted as being something beyond what they were, are and continue to be.

### **3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

This study aimed to analyze HM schools from the lenses of the resource mobilization theory. The HM, as a global movement, has schools (from preschools to universities) and many other institutions in more than 170 countries around the world. This research explores how the HM operates its global education network from the perspective of the RMT. The RMT provides a broad framework and theoretical paradigms to understand the educational activities of the HM movement on a global scale. Mainly, this research sought to understand how the HM mobilizes its resources for its educational initiatives, what types of adjustment strategies HM schools apply to fit in different cultures, and what the role of political climate is in the HM schools' performance. Therefore, it was felt that the current research would benefit from the application of the RMT to explore its

research questions about HM Schools in three different selected countries, namely Cambodia, Georgia and Nigeria. Jenkins (1983) summarizes the main assumptions of the resource mobilization theory (RMT) that were applied in this research as the five main principles of RMT, which goes as follows:

1. The actions of a social movement's members and participants are rational.
2. A social movement's actions are strongly influenced by institutionalized power imbalances and conflicts of interest.
3. These power imbalances and conflicts of interest are sufficient to generate grievances that lead to the mobilization of the social movement's intent on changing the distribution of resources and organization.
4. Centralized and formally structured social movements more effectively mobilize resources and achieve goals of change than decentralized and informal social movements.
5. The success of social movements is heavily influenced by group strategy and the political climate.

To give detailed information about the research methodology of this research project, I will explain the research questions, the research design, the research setting, the sampling, data collection, data analysis, and the limitations below.

### **3.1. Research Questions**

The three main research questions in this study are as follows:

RQ 1. What types of strategies are used by the Hizmet Movement to mobilize its' resources for educational activities in Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria? What are the motivational factors for the Hizmet Movement participants to support Hizmet Movement Schools in these countries?

RQ 2. What types of adjustment strategies are applied by the Hizmet Movement to adapt to different educational settings?

RQ 3. What is the role of political climate in the performance of HM Schools? How do political issues affect the educational activities of HMS?

The HM as a transnational social movement uses its schools to spread its ideology and values. But we know little about how they do this. Thus, this study asks two research questions to find out how. The first one is, "What types of strategies are used by the Hizmet Movement to mobilize its' resources for educational activities in Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria? What are the motivational factors for the Hizmet Movement participants to support Hizmet Movement Schools in these countries?" And the second question is, "What types of adjustment strategies are applied by the Hizmet Movement to adapt to different educational settings?" By asking these two questions, this research aims to uncover the types of strategies used by HM participants to mobilize their material and non-material resources in order to realize their educational agendas globally. As proposed by the resource mobilization theory, individuals make rational decisions before they join and support social movements. In order to motivate people to rally around a social movement, there needs to be grievances and conflicts of interest. Thus, this study seeks answers about what motivates people to take different roles in HM Schools and also analyzes the

motivation behind them to join and support HM Schools. Moreover, the study questions and examines the adjustments the HM participants make and the strategies they use in order to adapt to different cultural settings.

Political climates play important roles in HM Schools in different countries. As explained in the fifth principle of RMT, the success of social movements is influenced by the political climate. That is why; I explored the role of political climate in my research settings by asking RQ 3, “What is the role of political climate in the performance of HM Schools? How do political issues affect the educational activities of HMS?”

### **3.2. Research Design**

This research explored how the Hizmet Movement mobilizes its resources for its educational initiatives, what adjustment strategies the HM schools apply to accommodate different cultures, and what the role of political climate is in the HM schools’ performance. In order to provide an in-depth understanding concerning the research topic and to develop rich descriptions that might enhance our understanding of the HM Schools and Movement, the study followed a qualitative approach by utilizing participant observations and in-depth interviews as a research technique (Strauss and Corbin, 2008). In qualitative studies, the researcher scrutinizes the entire phenomenon; it is not restricted by the limitations of a quantitative approach that involves only a limited number of variables to explain the phenomena of interest (Bernard, 1988).

Qualitative method was deemed the most suitable approach for this kind of study. Qualitative method is a research methodology that is used in efforts to discover new concepts, phenomena, and their relationships from data that is systematically collected from the field



and rigorously analyzed by the researcher (Flick, Kardorff and Steinke, 2004). In this form of research, the qualitative approach provides a critical research tool for helping the researcher conceptualize patterns of action and the interactions between and among three different research settings. Because there is limited knowledge about the HM in the research literature and limited studies about HM schools, the qualitative method was chosen to provide flexibility during the research process and the possibility of theory development as a result of the research.

### **3.3. Research Setting**

Since the Hizmet Schools are situated in many different regions and operate in 170 countries, focusing on only one country would be insufficient for answering the research questions. However, having the opportunity to explore certain areas and not others might support why the selection of one research site is preferred for study over another. In order to have a representative sample to answer the research questions, this research was conducted in three different countries. The researcher chose these countries after careful review of the HM presence in the world. In order to have comparative data, the researcher identified Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria as countries for the current research project. As portrayed in Table 1 below, these countries have unique features good for the purposes of study in this type of comparative research on the HM.

TABLE 1: Comparison of Three Countries by Characteristics*				
	CHARACTERISTICS	CAMBODIA	GEORGIA	NIGERIA**
General Characteristic	Location	Southeastern Asia	Southwestern Asia	Western Africa
	Population	15,708,756	4,931,226	181,562,056
	Country comparison to the world (Population)	69	122	8
	Government type	Multiparty democracy under a constitutional monarchy	Republic	Federal republic
Economy	GDP - per capita (PPP)	\$3,300	\$7,700	\$6,000
	Unemployment rate	0.30%	14.90%	23.90%
	Population below poverty line	17.70%	9.20%	70%
Ethnic-Cultural Differences	Ethnic groups	Khmer 90%	Georgian 83.8%	Hausa and the Fulani 29%
		Vietnamese 5%	Azeri 6.5%	Yoruba 21%
		Chinese 1%	Armenian 5.7%	Igbo (Ibo) 18%
		Other 4%	Russian 1.5%	Ijaw 10%
			Other 2.5%	Kanuri 4%
				Ibibio 3.5%
	Languages			Tiv 2.5%
		Khmer (official) 96.3%	Georgian (official) 71%	English (official)
		Other 3.7%	Russian 9%	Hausa
			Armenian 7%	Yoruba
			Azeri 6%	Igbo (Ibo)
			other 7%	Fulani
	Religions			Over 500 additional indigenous languages
		Buddhist (official) 96.9%	Orthodox Christian (official) 83.9%	Muslim 50%
		Muslim 1.9%	Muslim 9.9%	Christian 40%
		Christian 0.4%	Armenian-Gregorian 3.9%	Indigenous beliefs 10%
		Other 0.8%	Catholic 0.8%	
			Other 0.8%	
Education	Education expenditures (% of GDP)	2.60%	2%	NA
	Literacy (age 15 and over can read and write)	77.20%	99.80%	59.60%
	Internet users	5.40%	50.60%	37.60%
Hizmet Movement Institutions ***	University	1	1	1
	High School (9th -12th grade)	1	5	11
	Middle School (5th-8th grade)	1	5	12
	Elementary School (1st-4th grade)	1	7	4
	Kindergarten	1	7	4
	College Prep, Language Centers	1	1	1
	Interfaith Dialogue Center	1		1
	Humanitarian Aid Center	1		1
	Health Organization			1 (Hospital)
	Chamber of Commerce, Business Association	1	1	1
	Mass Media	1	1	1
***Resource: The Hizmet Movement Schools' administrators from three countries.				
**Africa's most populous country, is composed of more than 250 ethnic groups; the most populous and politically influential are reported.				
*Resource: CIA, 2015. The World Factbook. <a href="https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/docs/guidetowbook.html">https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/docs/guidetowbook.html</a>				

The purposive sampling method was applied to identify the sample countries among the population of interest. In the purposive sampling method, the researcher may select and identify the most suitable samples that he or she evaluates to be the most

beneficial for the research. This is quite common in qualitative studies (Silverman, p.129). The selection of countries selected for study was determined based on the country profiles evaluated by the researcher.

As mentioned above, the Hizmet Movement operates schools in more than 170 countries and all of these countries had the potential to be included in this research sample during my research design. However, after reviewing all the countries in the list, I tried to have three countries, which have unique features to represent the population. Using this approach, Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria were the countries selected in which to examine HM schools. The most important reason for choosing these countries was to include countries that represent different ethnic, religious, and cultural characteristics. These various examples were evaluated in order to uncover the opinions of the interviewees, which contributed to the overall wealth of the study. Another reason to choose these three countries was that their potential participants were easier to reach in terms of language and contact persons, which is an advantage in terms of being able to carry out the desired communication processes.

This study was conducted in three different countries: Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria. In Georgia, the majority of the population are Christian, and less than 2% of the population have different religious beliefs. In Nigeria, while 50% of the population is Muslim, nearly 40% of people are Christian and the remaining have beliefs of different local religions. On the other hand, the majority of Cambodians follow the Buddhist religion, and less than 3% of the populations follow other religions. While Cambodia is one of the least developed countries in the world, Georgia and Nigeria are developing

countries. Where Cambodia is governed under a constitutional monarchy, Georgia is a democratic republic, and Nigeria is a federal republic.

The reason for not conducting this research in the US is that there are limited numbers of HM affiliated private schools in the U.S. The students and parents of these schools are mostly Muslims and of Turkish ethnicity. The majority of these people select Turkish private schools because of their cultural and religious proximity to the school affiliates.

The other important point in any research study is the researcher's ease of access to the proposed study sites (Silverman, p.125). Rossman and Rallis (1998) suggest this approach be applied when selecting the study areas or the population to study. Accordingly, "the ideal site is [one] where; a) entry is possible; b) there is a rich mix of the processes [in question]; c) you are likely to be able to build strong relations with the participants; and d) ethical and political considerations are not overwhelming, at least initially" (Silverman, p. 125). After considering all of these factors, the researcher contacted appropriate reference persons in order to determine the study population.

### **3.4. Sampling**

The purposive sampling method was applied to this qualitative study. The purposive sampling method is the most appropriate sampling method if a researcher wants to explore the research areas where few studies are conducted. In addition, the purposive sampling method is one of the best strategies to use when the qualitative method is applied as the research approach. To have the purposive sample for the current research, teachers, administrators, students, parents of HMS, community leaders such as opinion leaders, official

leaders, and intellectuals, from each country were the subjects of study. From each country, approximately five teachers, one principal, five students, eight parents and three community leaders were selected and interviewed. The total sample size was approximately 66. Even though qualitative research studies are associated with the problem of generalizability, this study selected a sample of countries to increase the generalizability of the research by reaching the best diverse sample population possible. This qualitative study was designed to extend the initial findings on the population being interviewed, while providing samples from other countries. To answer the research questions, the unit of analysis was teachers and administrators of HMS, the parents and students, and community leaders. The fundamental idea in selecting the administrators and teachers in the HMS as the unit of analysis in the study was that these people would likely have more information about these schools, their goals, messages, and this Movement compared to other people in the countries being studied. On the other hand, parents, students, and community leaders could reflect the overall perceptions about this movement.

In the social sciences, in order to be able to study a comparatively large population, which is often heterogeneous in many ways, drawing a sample is unavoidable because not every individual can be studied. Sampling is commonly carried out to help the researcher to “estimate the true values and parameters of the sample” (Bernard, 1988, p.79). As outlined by Bernard (1988), the reason for sampling is to assist in minimizing the time and effort in the context of qualitative research. The most important aspect of sampling is to assure that the sample drawn is representative of the population and adequate in size.

This study’s basic sampling strategy was designed to reach a sample of teachers, administrators, parents, and students enrolled into the Hizmet schools. Moreover,

community leaders, who reflected the thoughts and perceptions of their society, were approached to solicit their opinions about HM schools. A snowball sampling strategy was applied to reach suitable informants, and the participation in the study was voluntary. First, the researcher contacted the appropriate school administration personnel with the assistance of Dr. Y. Aslandogan, head of the "Alliance for Shared Values," which is a HM organization. In my preliminary conversations with him, I was informed that it was not possible to obtain the entire list of students attending the HMS because of their privacy policy. However, I was able to work on the lists at the school facilities under the supervision of school administrators in order to carry out the sampling process and the primary communications with parents prior to the interviews, as regards to their consent, which was handled by the school administration. Community leaders were selected through snowball and purposive sampling methods with the help of school principals. These interviewees were selected among those who had information about these schools.

In addition, the principals of the selected schools were initially interviewed considering that they might have had more detailed information about the school settings, their students and parents, and the local activities of the movement to provide a better understanding of the context in particular.

### **3.5. Data Collection**

The contact person for the researcher was the President of the Alliance for Shared Values (AFSV), a non-profit umbrella institution serving in New York to deliver a unified voice for the civic and service organizations associated with the Hizmet Movement. AFSV is composed of many diverse organizations dedicated to promoting community service,

education, and interfaith understanding in order to elevate humanity and bring greater peace to the world (AFSV, 2014).

This research could not be realized without the generous assistance and support of the AFSV. The researcher was fortunate to build a good relationship with this institute and its administrative personnel. The researcher was able to reach school directors through the help of this site's administration personnel. Even though it is asserted that HMS do not have a bureaucratic and hierarchical structure; access to the Hizmet Schools in different countries were facilitated through the activities of this institute. From this viewpoint, the researcher had the ability to contact and work with this institute. The researcher is grateful to all the staff of AFSV, the principals, teachers, parents, students of the HM schools, and the community leaders in the three countries, who gave support to achieve this study through their voluntary participation and assistance.

The researcher completed the first round of data collection to assess the feasibility and practicality of the research methodology at the HMS in Nigeria. In order to complete the data collection in Georgia and Cambodia, two research aides from each country were contacted and recruited from a pool of individuals who are fluent in English and also have qualitative research skills and experience before. In order to ensure interrater reliability, the researcher arranged two video conferences with the research aides before starting any data collection activities. During these meetings, the researcher discussed the goals, objectives, and methodology of the research project with the research aides and explained his data collection experience in HM schools in Nigeria. During the data collection process, the researcher was always available to contact research aides through emails, audio, and video calls in order to clarify any confusion or give guidance to complete the research

project without any problem. In general, the researcher and two research aides worked as a research project team during the data collection process in three different countries and this successful collaboration resulted in fruitful research results. The researcher acknowledges that the data collection in three different countries could not be completed without the professional supports of research aides.

The basic techniques used for the qualitative data-gathering process in this study were participant observations and in-depth interviews. First, in order to understand the perceptions of outsiders in three different countries, the researcher/research aides spent considerable time to make and carry out observations in each research setting. The researcher/research aides started to investigate the research questions above while carrying out observations in the school settings of HMS in the three different countries studied. The researcher/research aides spent at least one month observing the interactions among HMS officials, teachers, students, and parents. Conducting these observations assisted the researcher in developing an understanding of the interaction between the insiders and outsiders of HMS's, specifically between teachers and students and the officials and parents.

This process of investigative analysis and observation also assisted the researcher/research aides as far as recruiting informants for interviews. While conducting observations in the school settings, the researcher/research aides aimed to develop robust relationships with school officials and teachers as well as parents and students in order to identify key informants for the purposes of an interview. The researcher/research aides used all possible opportunities to approach parents to invite them to take part in the research project as an informant. The researcher/research aides gave them information about the research project, the goal of the research, and their voluntary role to participate in the research. They



also delivered a one-page paper to them explaining the research project in the local language of each parent and community leader with the assistance of the HMS management team. This paper also included the contact information of the researcher/research aides and asked for the voluntary participation of parents in the research project as an informant. In order to communicate with parents who do not speak English in Nigeria, the researcher used a translator, but research aides did not have any problems in communicating with parents and community leaders in Georgia and Cambodia since they spoke the same languages.

During the observation period in the setting and environment of the HM schools, the researcher/research aides only observed and analyzed the research setting by taking intensive field notes without interfering in the ongoing interactions in the field. In order to minimize the researcher effect during observation, the researcher/research aides were able to find available places, which provided opportunities for minimal intrusion into the everyday school life. Moreover, the researcher/research aides spent enough time in the research setting to minimize the observer effect in the field. To organize the field notes, to remember every detail of interaction during the day, and to create valuable memos for the analysis, the researcher/research aides spent at least one hour every night transferring the field notes, memos, and diagrams to a computer. The researcher/research aides took every possible opportunity to join events organized for parents by the school administration in order to view the interactions between the parents and the school officials and administrators. Thus, the researcher/research aides aimed to fully understand and immerse oneself in the research settings of the three different countries, which have completely different cultures, languages, and issues in their societies.

After completing the observations in each research setting, the researcher/research aides started doing face-to-face interviews with available informants who voluntarily accepted to participate in the research project. Most of the interviews in Nigeria were conducted in English, if possible. However, if any informant could not speak English, an interpreter was used in the interviewing process. The same method was followed for other interviewees in Nigeria. However, most of the interviews in both Georgia and Cambodia were conducted in local languages. A semi-structured interview method was used as an interviewing technique in this study. Semi-structured interviews provide opportunities to kindle discussions on important issues as well as allowing for more detailed responses to specific probing questions where the interviewee is left free to elaborate on their answers in order to convey additional information on all aspects of the topic in the manner he/she prefers to narrate (Bernard, 1988). For the purposes of semi-structured interviews, a preliminary questionnaire was prepared to outline the basic points of interest (See the Appendix A for the questionnaire). However, the actual questions posed varied according to the nature of the different countries involved as well as the individual outsiders selected for the interviews, in order to provoke meaningful conversations. The questionnaire also included some basic demographic questions in order to situate participants in terms of age, education, income level and religion, which also helped to categorize the informants later on in the process of analysis.

The interviews started with warm-up questions in order to remove any barriers and break the ice between the researcher and informants. When obtaining their signatures on the informed consent forms, all participants were informed about the aims of the current study and that their participation was absolutely voluntary. The researcher/research aides also reminded them that they could withdraw any time during the interview and they might choose

not to answer any question they did not feel comfortable with. During the interviews, the researcher/research aides allowed informants to talk about the research topic freely. Rather than asking directive questions, the researcher/research aides only asked questions when there was a need for clarification or the informants stopped talking about the topic. The types of questions considered by the researcher/research aides were those succinctly explained by Spradley (1979). Spradley proposed three main types of questions for interviews: descriptive questions, structural questions, and contrast questions. Descriptive questions aim to understand what is going on in the field from the perspective of the informants and serve to establish a rapport between a researcher and an informant. Spradley (1979, p. 86) identifies five types of descriptive questions that can be used during interviews. These questions are grand tour questions, mini-tour questions, example questions, experience questions, and native-language questions. Structural questions are used for eliciting structural relationships, uncovering terms, and creating taxonomies for emerging terms used by informants. Lastly, contrast questions are asked to elicit the details of relationships among different terms by using the compare and contrast type of questions (Spradley, 1979, p. 121). When conducting interviews in order to find answers to the research questions of the current study, the researcher/research aides considered all the types of questions outlined by Spradley above.

Where possible, all interviews were conducted in local languages; where not possible they were done with the help of an interpreter. The researcher tried to find competent interpreters in Nigeria in order to minimize the risk of losing meaning due to translation. To crosscheck the quality of the translation, two translators did all translations without knowing each other's work for each country. All interviews were translated into English if conducted in the local language and analyzed after the interviews were recorded upon consent from the

interviewee. If consent was not provided, the researcher relied on field notes that were kept for each interview.

### **3.6. Data Analysis**

The main data for this research stems from two different sources: participant observation and in-depth interview. Data from participant observations are mainly intense field notes, memos, diagrams, pictures, videos, and other official documents that the researcher had the opportunity to collect during the observation. All the data collected during the observation process were logged into the computer in an organized manner to aid in the data analysis process. The researcher/research aides transferred all field notes, memos, diagrams, pictures and videos on a regular schedule at the end of each day during the data research. As advised by experienced researchers, it is better to put everything into the computer at the end of each day in order to not deal with huge compilations of field notes, memos, diagrams, and visual data at the end of the observation period. When the researcher uses their observation time wisely, it yields manageable and valuable data for the researcher during the data analysis process. The researcher/research aides for the current study followed the same strategy and transferred all data collected during the observation process to the word processor program on a daily basis. This data was then logged into a qualitative analysis program, ATLAS-ti. This program assisted the researcher in analyzing not only the observational data but also the in-depth interviews, during the data analysis process.

After analyzing the data collected from the observations and in-depth interviews, the researcher transcribed all interviews verbatim and logged these into an ATLAS-ti

qualitative analysis program for purposes of analysis. To carry out the desired systematic analysis of the observational data and in-depth interview data, the researcher used the qualitative method, which consists of three major phases of data analysis: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Strauss and Corbin, 2008). In the open coding phase, the data is coded according to emerging categories defined by their dimensions and features. In the axial coding process, the data is further coded according to developing and relating categories by using the main categories and subcategories recorded in the codebook. In the final phase of the coding process, selective coding is used to refine and develop the theory underlying the observations. In this phase, the researcher will focus on the core category to identify related categories and subcategories under the main category. This coding process requires that there be an intensive and iterative series of interactions between the researcher and the data in order to develop any meaningful analysis of the data. When the researcher had completed the analysis for each country's data set, a comparative analysis of three countries was carried out to provide a better picture of the HM schools from the perspective of the resource mobilization theory.

### **3.7. Limitations**

This study is based on qualitative techniques; therefore, the number of participants is limited and prone to provide a low level of representativeness and little or no generalizability to larger populations. However, this limitation was addressed as much as possible by using purposive sampling as the sampling strategy. At the same time, in-depth interviews also provided invaluable insights not available through other techniques.

Concerning the participants, the researcher was mindful of the fact that all parents interviewed were the parents of current students. The parents were free to choose to send or not send their kids to the HM schools, which are private. Therefore, it is likely that most of them were currently happy with their and their children's experience with those schools. However, I would like to emphasize that most of those parents were not affiliated with the HM. Moreover, countries for this research were chosen from those where these schools are mostly serving non-Muslim and/or non-Turkish students. Finally, my hope was to address the research questions by conducting an in-depth inquiry with the benefits provided by semi-structured interviews. This afforded me the opportunity to analyze different factors that are likely to affect the perceptions of informants about HM schools. To obtain the desired data, I tried to keep my questionnaire as open-ended as possible.

One distinct limitation of the research methodology was that information from the research participants was collected through qualitative self-reporting in semi-structured interviews. The interviewees were allowed to give free open-ended responses by themselves to the given and explained questions, without researcher interference unless they asked for it. However, although self-reporting has many advantages, it does have a few shortcomings. Due to the personalities or psychologies of the participants, these self-reported answers may be exaggerated or understated, opening the way for various biases which can influence the data results. There could be some miscommunication, misinformation, or inconsistency on the respondent's part when they're given free, personal reign over their answers. However, this is part of the reason why the researcher made sure to interview a diverse set of people from different groups of society in three different countries, so that any potential and overwhelming bias could be reduced and set

to a minimum, through cross-checking and comparative analysis. In addition, the researcher also gathered data through observation and field notes (by researcher or through aides), in order to collect information free of any direct bias or inconsistency and cross-examine that information with the data from the interviews.

The other limitation that is likely to influence the study was a language barrier. The interviews were done in local languages where this was possible. However, in some cases, the researcher had to rely on interpreters, which had a negative influence on the fluency and depth of interviews along with the interlocutor's desire to talk. Moreover, the research aides translated all field notes and interviews they collected from Georgia and Cambodia. These translations were subject to the risk of losing some meanings during translation. However, in a study that includes three different countries, this is an almost unavoidable limitation.

#### **4. RESEARCH FINDINGS: MOBILIZING RESOURCES ANALYSIS**

This section shares the results from the analysis of data related to the first research question of this study, which investigates how the HM mobilizes its resources, and what motivates its participants to support HMS, in three different countries, namely Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria. This research aimed to understand the HM movement from the perspective of resource mobilization theory. According to Ebaugh (2010), "resource mobilization is a sociological theory that emphasizes the types of resources that are necessary for the maintenance and growth of social movements." This theory emerged as a reaction to collective behavior theory and strain and breakdown theory which are

psychologically based (Brown, 2014). Resource mobilization theory “deals specifically with the dynamics and tactics of social movement growth, decline, and change” rather than the social psychology of the participants of social movements that earlier theories focused on (Ebaugh, 2010). Resource mobilization theory redirects the focus from psychological explanations and emphasis on structural patterns to the organizational dynamics of a social movement (Brown, 2014). It places emphasis on the rational and strategic aspects of collective action (El-Banna, 2013). As Brown (2014) argues, "It questions the centrality of grievances of collective actors to the growth of a movement, rather refocusing on structural factors."

According to the resource mobilization theory, organizing discontent and harnessing aggrieved populations are not enough to succeed. They need resources other than human resources such as financial resources, moral resources, and cultural resources (Brown, 2014). The main resources, which are necessary to succeed, are money, legitimacy, and labor. If these resources are not available, it is almost impossible to attain the goals of the movement (Ebaugh, 2010). As mentioned earlier, resource mobilization places emphasis on the effective mobilization of resources (Flynn, 2011). These resources can be both material and non-material. Material resources include money, labor, organizations, technology, and mass media, while non-material resources include legitimacy, solidarity, moral commitment, loyalty, social relationships, personal and organizational networks, and public attention (Fuchs, 2006).

The first research question aimed to find possible answers as to how HM as a transnational social movement uses its schools to spread its worldview by mobilizing its resources. Specifically, it sought to uncover the types of strategies that are used by the HM



participants to mobilize their material and non-material resources to realize their educational agendas globally. As proposed by RMT, individuals make rational decisions to join and support social movements. In order to motivate people to rally around a social movement, there need to be grievances and conflicts of interest. Thus, this research question tries to identify what motivates people to take different roles in the HM Schools and the motivation behind them to join and support the HM Schools. After conducting a rigorous analysis of the participant observation and interview data to obtain answers to RQ1, I identified several essential codes as depicted visually below:

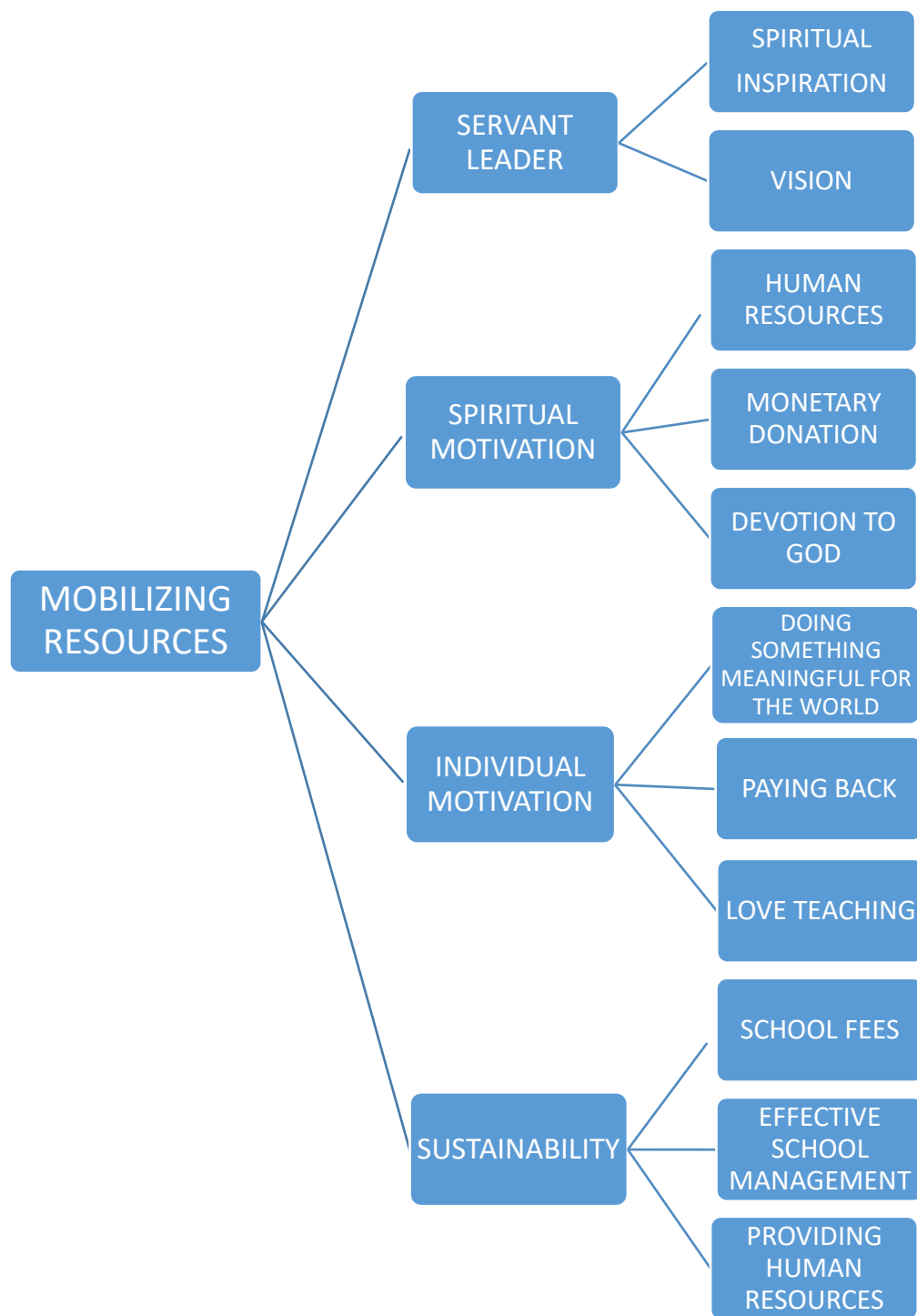


Figure 4.1. Mobilizing Resources' Codes

#### **4.1. Servant Leader**

From the analysis of the data, one of the critical factors in mobilizing the resources of the HM Movement is the leader of this movement: Fethullah Gulen. The Hizmet Movement is grounded in his universalistic teachings and charismatic leadership (Johnson, 2013, p. 1). Most Turkish intellectuals and scholars acknowledge him as one of the most prominent Islamic scholars of the twentieth century. His influence over the Muslim populations is not only limited to Turkey but is also prevalent around the world. Some scholars suggest that he has devoted his whole life to the pursuit of solutions for the spiritual issues and needs of society (Kraus, 2007, p. 165). Even though there have been many critics (Koc, 2011; Levy, 2011; Williams, 2010) of Gulen's goals, objectives, and strategies, many people from different countries around the world, mainly Turkey, still follows his words, teachings, and philosophy.

During my participant observation and in-depth interviews, the servant leadership of the movement seemed to always be the main source of inspiration and guidance for school administrators and teachers. Celik and Alan (2005) found that Gulen supports and encourages his followers to prefer to serve, and then lead to expand services to individuals, institutions, and societies. Gulen's aim is not to have a greater power to rule and make followers obey and serve him but to gain the approval and love of God. That ideal goal makes him a servant (Celik, & Alan, 2005). In that regard, as indicated before, he is not a leader first, but a servant. He is very much aware of the Islamic principle on leadership: The people's master is the one who serves them. When the HM participants at these school were asked "What motivated you to be here?", almost of all of them referred to Fethullah Gulen's teachings and inspirations as

their main motivation. One of the teachers from Georgia, who has been working at HM schools for more than 19 years, shortly explained his motivation to work for these schools:

My main motivation to be here is Gulen's teachings. He taught us that we should spread out to the world, be helpful and beneficial to people, show them our morals and ethics, and learn from each other. I first met with this movement when I was in high school. In those years, I frequently met with others in the movement to study our classes. I was impressed with those people. I learned altruism from them. They were very polite and helpful. They helped me a lot without expecting to receive anything from me. They were very warm-hearted. I became a participant of this movement when I went to college. I was living in a house with another student who, just like me, was an adherent of the movement. We all helped other students who sought help with their courses. I have been inspired by Gulen's understanding of service, and therefore decided to be a teacher and work in education.

In addition to being a servant leader, Gulen, has attributes of a transformational leader, as well. Fontenot and Fontenot (2008) believe that all the attributes of transformational leadership, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration, do comply with Gulen's efforts and actions. They claim that he very precisely meets all of these requirements of a transformational leader. As the transformational leader of the HM movement, Fethullah Gulen has created spiritual inspiration and worldly vision for his followers since the 1960s in Turkey. According to Ergil (2012), Gulen has not just been the spiritual leader of the movement but has also had great additional influence. Ergil (2012) also added that being an intellectual leader who could guide his readers and followers, enabled Gulen to transform his thoughts, recommendations, and exhortations from theory into reality. Gulen's area of influence expanded with the success of the participants' ventures and projects. One of the school principals in Nigeria who has more than 11 years of experience in HM schools concisely explained the role of transformational leadership in shaping the participants' vision:

It started from the admiration of Fethullah Gulen, the visionary. He is sensitive and upright in practicing Islam and spreading others merits, virtues and good characteristics arising from Islam. This is used to promote friendship and peace regardless of religious, tribal and ethnic variations. He initiated the movement in Turkey in 1960. He reached out to people, and they paid attention to what he preached and lived. To me, he was able to do this as a result of the undiluted sincerity he practiced. This motivated and convinced many to support and follow his footsteps. Hizmet is a humanitarian movement that started going abroad in 1990 and currently has schools in almost 170 countries across the world. It has been doing well, and it is welcomed by the host countries. This is great evidence and obvious proof that Hizmet is promoting understanding, education, and peace all over the world.

As a transformational religious leader, Gulen gave inspiration to his readers to do something meaningful and helpful in order to change the world for the better, according to his vision. As mentioned before, the HM is a global civic initiative rooted and inspired by the ideas and activism of Gulen. The movement started in the late 1960s with participants dedicated to the advancement of scientific education and moral training based on respect and love for humanity, along with intercultural dialogue to increase tolerance and mutual understanding between people of different faith traditions and cultural backgrounds (Johnson, 2013, p. 1). It started out as a local service group of students, teachers, parents, and small business owners who attended the lectures of Gulen in the city of Izmir, Turkey. Out of these discussions, this service group decided to address local educational and cultural needs. The movement aimed to provide educational opportunities in the form of scholarships, dormitories, hostels, schools, and tutoring centers. Today, the movement is considered a civil transnational social movement operating beyond Turkish borders with activities and projects in education, culture, and dialogue initiated mainly by students who have graduated from HMS or involved with the movement's other institutions. It is a faith-inspired, apolitical, cultural and educational movement. The basic principles of the movement

are rooted in Islam's universal values, such as love of creation, sympathy for humanity, compassion, and altruism.

In continuance, an English teacher in one of the Georgian HM schools told his story of how he joined the movement and how he encountered and understood the vision of Gulen that inspired him to work at the school:

I first heard about the Hizmet Movement from my friends. They told me the movement helped and supported students to complete their education. During my high school years, I came to know over time that the movement had a lot of educational institutions like private schools, dormitories, college prep courses, etc. At the same time, I met many students who studied at these institutions. And their distinct behavioral features like politeness, sympathy, tolerance, sincerity, honesty, and thirst for knowledge and so on caught my attention and I started to like them. Then I started to study at these institutions and got more familiar with the people in this movement. I saw that they indeed practiced the universal humanistic moral values in their lives many of which are only talked about by others. Later I wondered about the origin of and inspiration for this excellent practice of moral values, and I learned that the Islamic scholar Fethullah Gulen was the inspirer and guide of this movement. I read many of his books, and from them, I learned that he wished for a world in which people from different cultures live together in peace and harmony, in love or at least in toleration by means of mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue. Thus I decided to contribute to this vocation of peace as a teacher and volunteered to work abroad to contribute to the larger community. That's why I am here.

According to the analysis of the in-depth interviews, the role of Gulen as a transformational spiritual leader has played a transformative role in creating inspiration among his readers. As the leader of the movement, he patiently paid attention and devoted all efforts to young generations who were raised at the HM educational institutions, were inspired by his understanding of serving humanity, and shared the same interpretation and worldview of faith. While Gulen encourages his Muslim readers to learn about their religion from the authentic, reliable sources of Islam, he also asks them to follow updates in science, technology, and world news and be an active part of modern society. Thus, traditional values

coming from the religion and new ideas and modern developments from science, technology and world affairs shape the everyday culture of HM participants. This culture includes basic teachings and morals of Islam, which are reinterpreted and adapted according to the needs of a modern life. In fact, Gulen gives several religious talks and lectures every week, all of which are recorded and uploaded online in Turkish, some English and Arabic, at a site called [www.herkul.org](http://www.herkul.org). These lectures serve as a source of inspiration and wisdom for many people in and outside the movement. One of the teachers from the Georgian HM schools who has more than eight years of experience commented on the role of Gulen's sermons in their daily practices:

As for human resources, we never care about religion, nationality or any kind of feature except for their (personal) quality while we are recruiting teachers. Schools give extra professional training to the teachers. For example, at the beginning of a new academic session, annual workshop always takes place to enlighten and refresh teachers towards a new academic session. This has become a yearly ritual and it is working for the system. To recruit teachers, oral or written exam is held and teachers are employed based on their success. We sometimes gather with Turkish friends to discuss the current situation and make decision to raise the achievement or to solve problems that we have at the moment. By meeting each other, we motivate and influence each other greatly for further actions to be taken in future based on past experiences. During the visits among Turkish people, we try to follow weekly-sermons of worthy Fethullah Gulen to be inspired as he enlightens our way of thinking and acting.

Outsiders, due to its strong presence, could recognize the role of leadership in motivating the HM participants. During my observations and interviews with parents, students, and community leaders, some of them related the motivation of school administrators and teachers with the teachings and guidance of Gulen. For example, one of the Muslim community leaders from Nigeria commented on the HM participants' motivation:

I will say they are doing this for the sake of "Allah". They are doing it for the service of humanity, the love, and progress of humanity. If you look at the

participants of Hizmet, they were all motivated by Fethullah Gulen. When you read his book; when you listen to him and when you read what the people say about him, you will know that he is the force behind this great movement. He is the one motivating them because he has a clear vision. He is gifted by Allah. I always tell people that Fethullah Gulen is the gift from God. This is somebody who cares for everybody. He is teaching us this irrespective of our color, creed, race and religious affiliation but rather as children of Adam. He looks at the diversity and says if you want to be successful anywhere you have to admit and accept that there is diversity. Hizmet is successful; their schools are successful. I think those that support and follow the movement were motivated by the strong faith and teachings of Gulen.

#### **4.2. Spiritual Motivation**

According to the Resource Mobilization Theory, social movements depend on resources to survive and be successful (Jenkins, 1983). Resource mobilization theorists state that social movements mobilize material and non-material resources to achieve their goals and objectives. While material resources include financial resources, human resources, organizational resources, technology, means of communication and media, non-material resources are intangible resources such as legitimacy, loyalty, social relationships, networks, personal connections, public attention, authority, moral commitment, and solidarity (Fuchs, 2006). As a transnational social movement, the HM gets its material resources from its participants' voluntary contributions, including monetary ones. However, these voluntary contributions are results of the spiritual motivation inspired by Gulen. In his speeches and writings, he asks his listeners to make monetary and non-monetary contributions to the services given. He successfully framed the goals of the movement as a duty towards God and humanity. As explained before, there are important principles in HM movement such as *the ultimate purpose of life, altruism, living for others, the spirit of devotion, and monetary commitment that* provide spiritual motivation for the HM participants to make monetary and



non-monetary contributions to the HM. When I asked a teacher working at one of the Cambodian HM schools about how they acquire financial and human resources for the school, he succinctly commented:

Both (financial and human resources) are coming from voluntary action. Nobody forced me to be here. Nobody forced me to go to Russia, Thailand, and Myanmar. It is my decision. This is how Hizmet gets its human resources. Likewise, many businessmen donated voluntarily to the establishment of educational institutions before it became self-sustaining through school fees.

When I spoke with administrators and teachers in three different countries about their motivations to work in HM schools, almost all of them referred to spiritual inspirations they acquired from the worldview and teachings of the HM. They see their roles as educators that teach and serve the children of this world, having willed to sacrifice and spend their whole lives for them. They believe they serve humanity and live for the sake of peace and love in the world, which is what they believe will please God (Allah) and reward them in the afterlife. This culture of helping others through education comes from the basic roots of the HM, which praises global educational activities to make the world a better place for humanity. Thus, the HM schools get their human resources mainly from its participants who are raised in the movement and ready to work to achieve the goals and objectives of it. One of the school principals working at Nigerian HM School explained his motivation:

Like I said before, it is like faith-inspired, but the main thing is helping others which really gives you pleasure and satisfaction, very much different than the ones you get from being very rich economically and living in luxury. Helping others and seeing joy and fulfillment in their lives motivates me as a person and many of my colleagues. Being helpful to others motivates me and others, more than any other thing. If not so many people working here currently would have preferred to stay in their hometowns. Even in term of economic standards and living conditions, they would have been better off, but they prefer to be here regardless of any inconvenienced condition. I think these are the reasons that motivate all of us here.

When we look at the profiles of administrators and teachers at HM schools in the three countries, we can see they all graduated from the top universities and colleges of Turkey, yet they mainly preferred education majors in order to be teachers in HM schools at home or abroad. Even though most of them had opportunities to pursue degrees in more prestigious and profitable majors such as medicine, engineering, etc., they preferred to take majors in education in order to take roles in the HM global education initiative. One of the teachers working at a Georgian HM school expressively told his story of deciding to be a teacher as a profession:

When I was in the senior year of middle school, I was supposed to choose which area of study or major I was going to pursue. My childhood dream was to become a medical doctor. My elder brother (counselor/guide from the HM), however, encouraged me to be a teacher saying that the society needs teachers more as everyone in the country gets the education from teachers; and good and dedicated teachers can change the destiny of a country. I never thought of becoming a teacher before. I thought about it for a while. I had learned that life is full of sacrifice and challenges. Finally, I decided to give up on my childhood dream to pursue my moral ideals, which were taught to me by my elder brother. He didn't force me, but he explained the importance of teachers and left the decision to me. I started my language class in the school while most of my friends continued their education in science or art. From that day on, I prepared myself mentally and spiritually to convince myself that I would never regret my decision. My parents and relatives had high expectations for me as I was in a better school, Anatolian Teacher Training High School. I had passed a test and earned to be registered there. So, when I told them that I would be a teacher, they didn't disapprove it or criticize, but I felt they expected me to do something better than that. In time, though, all these negative feelings disappeared, and I actually started to like being a teacher. Now I like being a teacher, and the difficulties in teaching do not change my opinion. Maybe one reason for that is that I realize I had made a tough decision and sacrifice, so I cherish my current job and consider it to be meaningful and valuable...really valuable. Shortly, I became a teacher knowing that I should and cannot depart or stay away from the HM and those virtuous good people that make it up. I knew that in a society where materialistic gains and interests are valued more than anything, I cannot stay a good person myself if I left them. I liked these people. I hoped to be one of them. I believe in the hereafter. I believe, no matter what, Allah is not going to separate me away from these good people while they are going into paradise. That is my life, and I will

not be given a second chance after death, so I want the best shot that I can have in my capacity in this short life here.

As explained above, while the human resources of HM schools mostly come from its participants, financial resources come from businessmen who make voluntary donations to the movement. When I asked about how HM schools were established in three countries, I learned that almost all of them were constructed with the money donated by philanthropic businessmen who support the HM schools. For example, currently, there are 16 HM schools in six different states of Nigeria educating more than 4,000 students every year. Most of these schools were established with the monetary donations of Turkish businessmen. One teacher commented on the history of HM schools in Nigeria:

I did know much about the problems encountered at the beginning. I learned that they ran into financial problems. Most of the people behind the Hizmet movement in Turkey are ordinary people with little resources. Most of these people and other businessmen in Turkey contributed to the establishment of this school. Many of them donated money without knowing the location or site of the school even in Turkey. I learned that the former late president Yar'adua assisted the school by donating land for the Nile University and Nizamiye Hospital. The government did not support us with money, but they encouraged us to start the school. It is only the Yobe state government who established the school with their money and collaborated with the Turkish people for management. Apart from the Yobe School, all other Turkish schools in Nigeria were established by Hizmet and they did not get any financial assistance from the Nigerian government.

Even after finishing their undergraduate education, although there are many opportunities for the HM participants to have a better job and a better life, they prefer to work at the HM schools in order to work towards the goals of the movement, which they see as a religious obligation and commitment. The devotion of the teachers and administrators is another thing worthy of mention that makes the HMS special. Spirit of devotion is the “state of living in complete dedication to the service of humanity and seeking to please God in so doing”. I saw many examples of this devotion to God and humanity in HM participants.

One teacher who teaches English at a HM school in Georgia explained why he preferred to be a teacher rather than choosing alternative options:

When I was in my third year at the university, a friend of mine told me that I should be a lecturer or a university professor (rather than a teacher) telling me to let other people from other universities become teachers as I might be more useful to Hizmet in another way. I was a student at Bogazici University in English Language Education, which is a very prestigious one in Turkey. I agreed with the person and thought inside: Let me be prepared in terms of lessons, credits, etc. so that when the time comes, I will tell elder brothers about my wish and preparations. The first thing to do was to choose which faculty and what course I should continue for my Master Degree. I liked psychology and sociology classes. So I decided on Sociology. I took several non-credit classes from Sociology just to learn more about the subject and to be familiar with the professors in that faculty. I was the only student who took such classes apart from the students of the sociology department. The lessons were not so easy as I was not very familiar with the courses. I actually got good results from these courses and got to know many professors from the department. Meanwhile, I also studied French with the goal to continue my Ph.D. in France after my MA. I also completed my French classes successfully. I was in my senior class, and I was asked for an interview with elder brothers about my future. That was the time I had been waiting for in my whole life. I went there and told the person about my preparations, extra classes, MA degree and my French classes. I was very excited. He, however, to my worst fears, told me that they wished if I could be a teacher since they really needed some English teachers in some schools abroad. Right at that moment, I knew that I had to swallow and forget everything and all the dreams. Not because I was obligated by them, as they only just told me about what they needed and what they wished. They asked me. That was all. However, I realized that I was at a very important point (in life) to make some choices, and it was not random chance that I was asked to be a teacher. I didn't know if my dream was only a wish of a selfish act. I knew that if everybody says let others be teachers, not me, then who would be there to make sacrifices to educate a new generation of virtues? So, I chose to become a teacher.

Note: Elder brothers is a term in Turkish that refer to an older male adult that one is familiar with. In the context of this quote and the HM, it is used to also refer to male HM counselors, advisors, and participants.

In actuality, HM participants see the journey from their home country to the country they work in as a religious emigration, which was done before by Prophet Muhammad from Mecca to Medina in 621. This symbolic, historical resemblance in the minds of HM participants motivates them to be ready for any challenging mission they are asked to fulfill for the movement. One of the mathematics teachers from the Nigerian HM schools who has more than six years of experience revealed her feelings and thoughts:

‘Serving humanity to serve God’ and ‘living to let others live’ are principles of Hizmet movement that motivate me to be here. We believe that Allah is going to reward us if we be patient against hardship or be a good person in every action. So we try to overcome problems with this idea. We know that from many hadiths of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) holy emigration which is called ‘hijira’ is so valuable for us. All these religious-based ideas motivated me spiritually or guided me.

#### **4.3. Individual Motivation**

Besides spiritual motivation, another important motivating factor, which facilitates the mobilization of resources for HM schools, is individual motivation. From the analysis of data, I have noticed there are several individual factors influencing the HM participants to take on roles in the global education initiative of the HM. The first individual motivation is doing something meaningful for the world as a responsible citizen. Almost all school administrators and teachers in the three different countries of HM schools emphasized their individual contribution to achieving the global peace vision of the HM movement. They believed that the HM envisions global peace, tolerance, and harmony where all the people in the world can live together without conflict, enmity, and war. They see their roles as critical for realizing this vision because they convey the messages of the movement all over the world through

education. Even though administrators and teachers have feelings of helplessness individually regarding current problems of the world, such as poverty, illiteracy, and conflict, they think that they can fight against these problems together and contribute collective goodness through taking on different roles in HM schools. One of the school principals from the Georgian HM School commented:

When I watch the news on T.V., I become sad and I worry. I feel awful. I see just blood and violence, and I see people and politicians who want to stop violence with violence. Hizmet Movement provides a solution for all kind of these problems. It is dialogue, tolerance, mutual understanding, faithfulness, peace, love, devotedness, friendship, helpfulness, respectfulness and etc. In this movement, they are not just words on the paper. They are presented as a real example. This is my motivation to be here. I want to make a change in the world. But I am weak and not powerful enough, you know so I need to be a part of an organization which provides me a chance to make a change in the world to make it a better place. You know it is better to light a candle than curse the darkness.

As HM participants, school administrators and teachers see themselves as representatives of the HM, ready to serve anywhere in the world, in order to realize the goals and objectives of the movement. They volunteer to be a school administrator or a teacher whenever there is a need for it. This flexibility and commitment of HM participants help the movement mobilize their resources easily and swiftly. The HM participants believe that they will be rewarded, favored and praised by the God (Allah) if they accept any offer to work in HM schools in any part of the world. One of the teachers from Nigerian HM schools described his feelings about being ready for any HM mission:

With the Hizmet movement, we do not really care about where they are taking us to, we have great respect for humanity because we are all human beings. That is why; where ever they need me I will go anywhere. We did not receive any monetary motivation before I came here. They said they needed a computer teacher and I volunteered to go with my family. We believe that education is the solution to the problems in the world. Not only in Nigeria, but I also had a lot of my friends in different countries all over the world.

Another individual motivation for school administrators and teachers is the feeling of paying back to the movement. Most of them have been raised in the movement, and they received monetary and non-monetary assistance from the HM. This type of relationship with the movement has created the feeling of owing something to the movement, and they feel obliged to pay back by doing some kind of service in return. A teacher from the Georgian HM schools who teaches English at school explained her feelings about why she thinks she voluntarily works at HM schools:

Well, I was introduced to the HM in 2005 when I was in High School. My family was poor and could not afford to finance me to take private courses in any University exam preparation Center. I took an exam in a University preparation center of the HM and I got 4th place. As a result, I got a good discount from them and started to study there. Many teachers were quite devoted to help me and persuaded my family to let me study at a better university out of state. After my teacher visited me and my family at my home, they agreed with my teacher to allow me to study in a university far from my hometown because they believed people from the HM would take care of me as if I were their daughter or sister. And they were not mistaken. People from the HM always have been supportive in my difficult time or happy moments. That is why I am so much grateful to them who have taught me the importance of universal values and to disseminate these values all around the world. As a result, I am here now to teach universal values to my students and have dialogue with people of different cultures and religions.

According to the observations and interviews, I have gathered three different accounts of three teachers (one from each country) about how they came to love and join the Hizmet movement:

One of the teachers from Nigeria has been working at the school for six years. She decided to join the Hizmet movement back when she was in college studying to become an English teacher. Her friends at her university attracted her to the movement through their model behavior and upstanding character. They influenced her to check the movement out. She was inspired to learn from and read with them in the movement's local spiritual

reading meetings and discussion gatherings, which finally led her to join the movement. Another teacher from Cambodia became interested in Hizmet and the teachings of Gulen, through his tutors and teachers, in his test prep courses for his college entrance exam. Although he went to a public school, the movement had been offering college prep courses for the university entrance exams, in which he took part. His teachers served as great role models for him through their conduct, intelligence and mindset. Once he began to look up to them, he became attracted to the movement. Last, a teacher from Georgia who was an alumnus of a Hizmet school in Turkey attested that she received a phenomenal education from the movement and learned from them how to be a good and real human being, which inspired her to become a follower. She said the students at her school learned by example and active guidance from their teachers, which kept them away from bad habits, like alcohol, violence and smoking. For her, the movement has always been about being there for others and dedicating your life to save and live for others. This mission of thinking and striving for others has made life more meaningful for her. It has given her happiness and life worth living. It has inspired her to become a teacher.

There are the general individual motivations expressed by most HM followers, participants, and workers at these schools in the three countries.

#### **4.4. Love Teaching**

Another individual and prominent motive for school administrators and teachers of HM schools is their passion for and excitement in teaching. When I observed and talked to or researched teachers about their incentives to work at the HM schools, I witnessed their



enthusiasm to teach and be around students. Even though they seem to have and have had opportunities and many chances of getting better jobs and positions elsewhere, they prefer to stay in the movement to continue teaching which they believe in the necessity of, for young generations. One teacher working at the Nigerian HM schools commented on this:

I am really glad to be part of this movement. I wish that God would give me a long life so I could contribute immensely to the growth of the movement. I am really happy to be a teacher because as a teacher you are making and building good characters out of students. While some professions deal with financing and investigating, as a teacher, you have the opportunity of molding student's life into a better citizen. I really want to say it is a privilege and opportunity for me to be part of this movement.

According to my participant observations and deep-interviews, even though school principals and teachers work in countries and places where most people do not want to work, they believe in their crucial roles of changing the world through education, and they see education as the main remedy for the contemporary problems of the world. They believe teaching at the HM schools is a privilege given to them by God to serve people, and they do not expect monetary rewards and compensations. They see teaching as a divine responsibility and that they can pass their service, understandings and views to the next generation who will shape the future of our world. One of the teachers at Georgian HM schools who has more than 20 years of experience of teaching at HM schools in different countries talked about his experiences while he was working in Afghanistan:

Again in Kandahar Afghanistan, during wartime, we were 7- 8 families. There were suicide attacks almost every day since the war was serious at the time. There were bombs exploding around the school every 2-3 days. Teachers and their families were not going outside of school, sometimes they did not go outside for ten months and continued the education in school and did their best to help the people. They made self-sacrifices. This is a good example of "living to make others live." It is very important to endure the physical conditions. Again, in Afghanistan, one of our teachers, also a close friend of mine, rescued away his student from a minefield. His parents and relatives refrained from getting into the

field, but our teacher got into the minefield and saved his student. The parents, children, and all the students were impressed very much by this incident. They presented gifts to our friend in the Hizmet School and selected him as the teacher of the year. Allah the one who gives the love to your heart makes you love the place you live in, its people and the students. While some were fueling the war and conflict, these schools were inciting peace and love. You can always find “peace islands” in Gulen’s teachings, and it is inspiring us. And again, in Afghanistan, which has just come to my mind, there was such an incident that I can never forget. The children of two adversary tribal leaders were having education in the same class and were sharing the same desk and were good friends. Think of that, the children of two fathers who want to kill each other were good friends and had shown us how to serve Afghanistan. They were discussing the future of Afghanistan and showed us that these conflicts and wars were meaningless.

Moreover, HM school administrators and teachers are also driven to continue teaching when seeing the results of their efforts in the field, which create positive changes in people’s lives. Actually, they believe in focusing micro changes to reach macro goals. In order to change the world in accordance to their worldview, they see each person as a unique opportunity to teach, help out, and influence his/her life. This cultural understanding of the HM induces its participants to focus on and work for each person patiently and persistently. Consequently, when they see some positive changes at the micro level, they become happy. One of the English language teachers in a Georgian HM school explained her experience about micro changes:

I wanted to share some experiences that are very important to me. I decided to work abroad at Hizmet schools after seeing an Azeri person that graduated from a Hizmet school in Azerbaijan, speak Turkish so well. She loved the Turkish people so much and was so fluent in Turkish that I just adored her teachers so much for teaching her so well. And she even wanted to live in Turkey, and I really couldn't believe my eyes. Then, I understood the role of Hizmet schools in building bonds of friendship between nations. And also last year, when I was at the International Festival of Language and Culture (IFLC), I met a girl coming from Indonesia, who was bringing an Indonesian student. She looked like a Turkish person and spoke Turkish probably better than me. And I had never thought that she was of a different nationality. When I learned that she was Tajik, I was literally shocked. And I learned that she graduated from a Hizmet school

in Tajikistan and continued studying in Tajikistan. Now, she was working, and I think is still working with us in Indonesia. I was so pleased. And such experiences have proved to me that I have made the right choice by choosing Hizmet schools to work in.

#### **4.5. Sustainability**

Another critical factor for the HM in mobilizing their resources lies in the sustainability of their schools. HM School administrators and teachers show tireless efforts to efficiently maintain robust financial management of their schools. Even though, at the beginning, they received donations and borrowed land from the host country or from businessmen to establish the schools and institutions, they are now trying to stay financially self-sufficient. School administrators mainly take financial responsibility, and they try to get rid of any financial dependency, even on the movement. To achieve sustainability, HM schools in the three countries generate revenue mainly from school fees. Families have to pay a decent amount of fees in order to enroll their kids to HM schools. Being so popular, HM schools have entrance exams for all new students every year. According to the results of the exam, students get accepted to HM schools and their score from the test is used to calculate their school fees. Nearly 20 % of students get scholarships, and their school fees are waived due to their success in the exam. One of the school principals working at Nigerian HM School explained their scholarship policy:

We have schools in six states in Nigeria with the population of about 4000 students. We are trying to educate them in the best form, morally and academically. We have a certain percentage of students under scholarship receiving education with others. Close to 17% of our students are on scholarship.

However, even though school administrators and teachers see the school tuition and fees as crucial for financial stability, some parents complain that they are too high. When I asked a parent about the advantages and disadvantages of HM schools in Nigeria, He responded:

Thanks to the school, number one advantage is that I get value for my money, I get quality. The environment there is conducive for learning especially the one I know both in Kano and Abuja here. The environment is good, and the location is accessible. The disadvantages are only the cost that is so astronomic sincerely especially the school in Abuja here. The only thing I have been complaining about is the high school fees which are not easy at all. If there is anyway, they can consider reducing the school fees too. I think it will be very wonderful. Sincerely the environment is conducive to learning.

Similarly, several families in Cambodia are pleased with the quality of education at HM schools, but they have complained about increasing school costs every year. When a parent was asked, "Have you ever thought about switching school for your child?" he complained about increasing school fees annually:

To be honest, one downside of studying there is the annually-increasing fees. There should be static fees for at least a certain period of time or with specific intervals. And if the annual increase is unavoidable, it should be applied to only new students instead of all the students. By raising the fees, parents are most affected because once they decide to enroll their children at specific school fees at one time, they surely have to develop their budget to cover the whole schooling period.

In order to stay economically stable and self-sufficient, administrators of HM schools are careful and cautious in managing their resources effectively. Even though they obtain considerable revenues from school fees, they seem to be careful about their spending in order

to maintain a financially healthy organization. One community leader who works at the Nigerian Police Force and is a Ph.D. holder shared his observations about HM schools:

I think the Hizmet schools are charging school fees which they are utilizing to provide the quality education for their customers. However, the management of Hizmet is very prudent in spending their resources, and this is the secret of their success. Why many organizations default on the payment of salary to their staff. Hizmet schools pay their staff both Turkish and Nigerians as when due. They equally upgrade the school amenities from time to time. Sometimes I wonder how they manage to do this in an unpredictable economic climate like Nigeria. To be fair to them, they manage their resources effectively and efficiently.

Also, regarding the movement's sustainability and growth, I have learned from my participant observations and deep-interviews, about these student houses called Isik Evler (light houses) that many teachers, administrators, and members in the movement have lived in during their college years. These light houses or apartments, often run, managed, or occupied by the HM, are where young adults choose to live together while they study at a university or college. Each one houses normally about 4-5 students of the same gender living together. The Hizmet movement provides this hospitable accommodation for students who wish to stay in a clean, safe, and productive environment with friendly, trustworthy people. Parents who send their children away to study in big cities or somewhere distant feel more pleased and relaxed to know and be ensured that their children are in a safe, responsible and moral environment that the movement creates. These houses of the HM, the Hizmet people running them, the movement's participants living in them, and the warm environments they create, inspire the other students living in them to learn about the Hizmet Movement, its understanding, its mission and be attracted to what it stands for. Many students who live in these houses end up joining the movement after. In

fact, several of the teachers and administrators I met had become participants and supporters of the Hizmet movement while they were students in the Isik Evler. These houses have brought many young people into the movement, ensuring that the next generation moves it on forward. These light houses successfully and effectively raise and mobilize the human resources that the movement always needs. They are crucial for the movement's growth and its resource mobilization.

All in all, as explained in the analysis above, the HMS benefit from several critical factors and methods in their organizational success and growth, that enable and help them mobilize their resources and develop their operations. First, the leader of the HM, Gulen, plays a critical role in motivating his followers to work at the HMS and to give monetary support to start up school construction projects in different countries. Second, the HM participants working at the HMS develop different individual motivations to work at these schools. They believe they are doing something meaningful for the world by educating kids in different countries. They also want to pay back to the movement by working in the HMS because they feel they owe something to the movement since they were raised in it. Besides spiritual, individual, and leadership motivations, the HMS also generate and receive school fees in order to meet their expenses and the administrations of the HMS try to use effective management and finance strategies to reduce costs and spend resources wisely for school needs. Through these strategies, the HMS reach or strive to reach a state of sustainability and self-sufficiency.

However, it has come to my attention that the rational perspective of the RMT becomes insufficient in some aspects to explain the HM participants' motivations to mobilize their resources for the educational goals of the HM in different countries. As explained above, HM participants work and support HMS in Nigeria, Cambodia, and Georgia without

considering individual gains and monetary compensations. They devote themselves to the success of movement and their individual motivations mostly come from the teachings of Gulen and their spiritual commitment to the HM. Rather than behaving as rational actors, HM participants prefer non-rational choices in order to ensure the educational achievement in HM schools. However, these emotional and spiritual motivations can be explained by Durkheim's sociological perspective of understanding individuals' behaviors in religious groups. Durkheim sees religion as a product of human activity, not a divine intervention and asserts that it can be analyzed as a social fact (Carls, 2018). Sadovnik (2007) explains how Collins takes both from Durkheim and Freud, and from Weber to come up with a synthesis of these two sociological perspectives. Based on Durkheim and Freud, Collins makes the case that the world and society are things held together and erected by non-rational and rational factors. From Weber, Collins argues that conflicts and clashes between different groups over money, wealth, status and any other advantage are "the fuel of social life" and action (2007 p.12). Durkheim proposed that every religious group has three main features (Durkheim, 2012): a system of beliefs, a moral community, and rituals. The system of belief defines sacred and profane objects for a religious group and give them ideas of what to worship and respect. A moral community is shaped with these religious beliefs and the group members, in order to ensure conformity and group behavior, enforce rules and norms. Moreover, rituals play a critical role for a religious group because individuals socialize and learn the sacred rules of their religions in these rituals. Rituals create collective representations, which then produce the collective identity of the religious group. During religious rituals, people gather to share moments, excitement and emotional feelings collectively. This creates an "electricity" with a result of collective emotional excitement

(Carls, 2018) or emotional energy as labeled by Collins (1993). As Collins (2004) said, that emotion serves as a bond in keeping the society intact. The HM, as a religious movement, carries all three main features defined by Durkheim. As depicted in the analysis of mobilizing resources above, the system of beliefs for HM is mainly shaped by the sermons, teachings, and writings of Gulen. His teachings and principles are very inclusive, embracing, and universal. His ideas bring together all humans as humankind, unify all countries, the Earth, and the world outside and inside of it as one shared universe, and connect both humanity and said universe with the creator. Gulen emphasizes, “God, humankind and the natural world are all purposefully linked” (Harrington, 2011, pp.7-10). These ideas have inspired, in those who hear it, great and profound feelings and passions of love, and admiration and reverence for humanity and the natural world, bringing about friendship and camaraderie among all humans no matter the faith or lack of one.

The HM participants show tireless efforts to follow his teachings and admire him as a transformational spiritual and an intellectual leader. His spiritual inspiration and vision have initiated the idea of opening schools in different countries and still his teachings and words influence HM participants working at HM schools in Nigeria, Cambodia, and Georgia. During my participant observations and interviews with HM school administrators and teachers, the role of Gulen as a religious leader strongly emerged in discussions, activities, and even in conflict resolutions. Moreover, school administrators and teachers of HM schools ensure conformity to the rules and norms of HM through several means of social control mechanisms. As explained above in the analysis, HM schools first recruit their staff from like-minded individuals who socialized in the movement during their high school and university educations. When new recruits start their job at HM schools, they find themselves in a



working environment that supports their beliefs and worldviews. Teachers and administrators of HM schools socialize with each other during their free times, make family visits to each other's house, and become close friends who share similar religious worldviews. In addition, teachers and administrators do weekly gatherings in order to discuss their school issues as well as to listen to the latest sermons of Gulen, uploaded to the Internet. Thus, the working environment of HM schools serves as a "cocoon" (Collins, 1994) for teachers and administrators. This helps HMS create a collective identity among its staff in order to control individual attitudes and behaviors. While all religious rituals coming from Islamic teaching create and sustain an emotional energy among HM participants, Gulen's interpretations of contemporary issues in his weekly sermons revitalize the motivations of administrators and teachers and refresh their commitment to the educational goals and objectives of HMS.

## **5. RESEARCH FINDINGS: ADJUSTMENT STRATEGIES ANALYSIS**

This section of the analysis focuses on the adjustment strategies developed by the Hizmet Movement participants in order to be successful in their global educational efforts in different cultures. As emphasized by Jenkins (1983), one of the main principles of resource mobilization theory is that "The success of social movements is heavily influenced by group strategy and the political climate." Thus, strategies and tactics applied by the HM participants, especially school administrators and teachers, are important in efforts to understand how the HM as a transnational social movement adjusts in the context of different countries and cultures. RMT sees the effective mobilization of material and non-material resources as critical for the success of the social movement (Flynn, 2011). While

material resources come from Hizmet participants such as monetary donations from businessmen and voluntary labor from administrators and teachers, non-material resources, such as legitimacy, solidarity, moral commitment, loyalty, social relationships, personal and organizational networks, and public attention, are gained through several adjustment strategies and tactics (Fuchs, 2006).

When we look at the HM schools globally, they have substantive educational achievements and operate successfully in different, diverse cultures. While mobilizing material resources is important in efforts to achieve this kind of global educational initiative, adjustment strategies are also important for attaining the desired non-material resources in those different cultural settings. Therefore, in order to understand the kinds of strategies and tactics that have been developed and applied in three different research settings, namely Nigeria, Cambodia, and Georgia, I conducted and analyzed related observations and interviews. According to my analysis of the field observation notes and in depth-interviews, I identified several important codes related to adjustment strategies as depicted visually below:

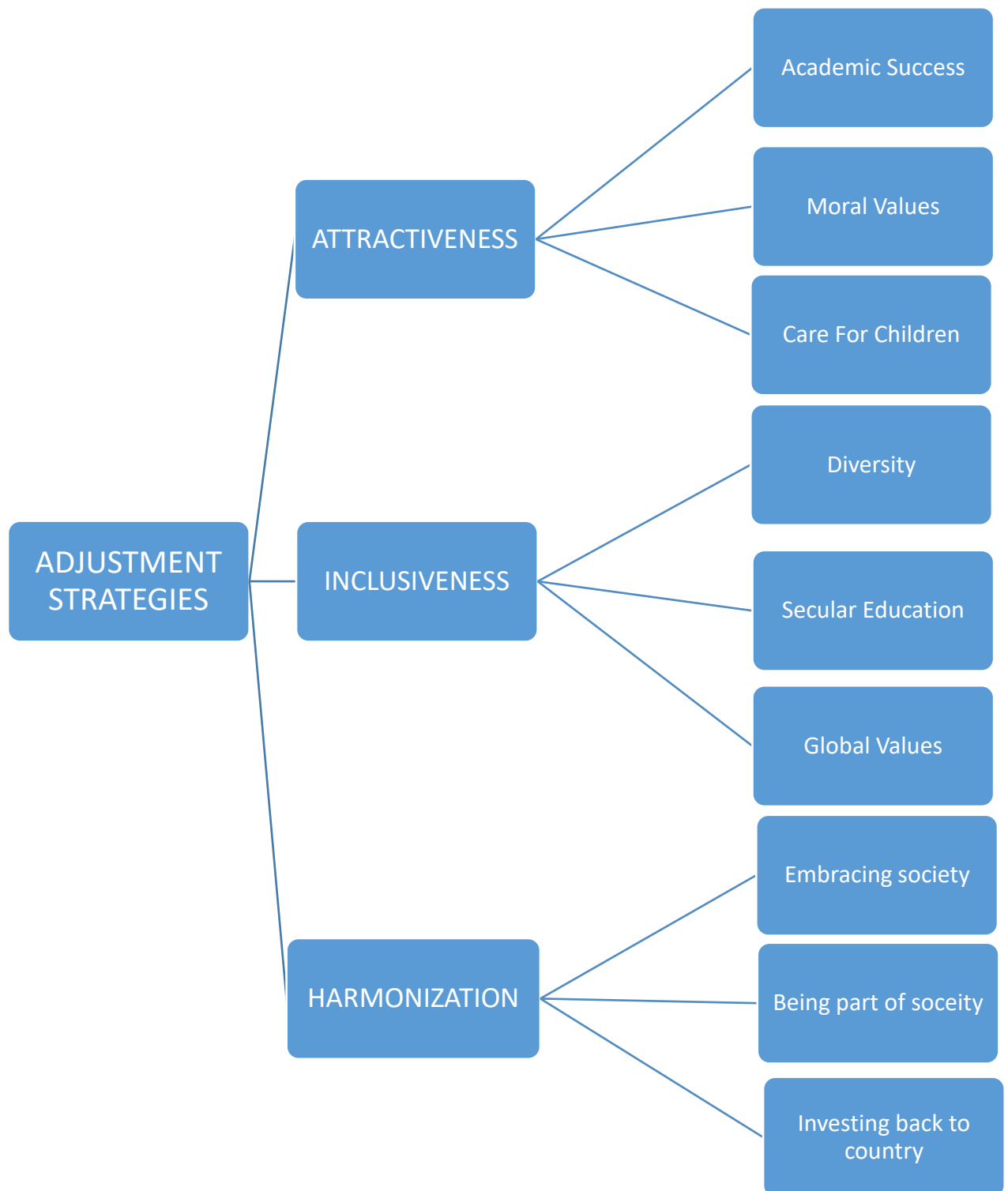


Figure 5.1. Adjustment Strategies' Codes

### **5.1. Attractiveness**

In order to be attractive for families and students in any country, the HM Schools aim for academic success at the national and international level and emphasize moral values for its students. First, the HM schools have high standards in the education/academic realm, and they aim to attain academic excellence for its students at the global level. The HM schools give importance to science, technology, and mathematics, which are necessary fields of knowledge for students in every country. They encourage their students to join global competitions such as Math and Science Olympiads in order to be competitive and high-achieving both at the national and international level. The HMS in their respective countries often achieve and win many different awards and accomplishments in competitions and nation-wide projects. Obtaining this success in national and international competitions proves that the schools provide a quality education for families, parents, and guardians, and encourages them to choose HM Schools and to remain at these schools. In addition, the HM schools prepare and raise their students for the best universities in the world, making sure they develop the qualifications and skills to get accepted to top schools around the globe. They provide language courses in English, French, Chinese, Russian, Arabic, and Turkish. Having strong academic knowledge with the ability to speak international languages provides opportunities to students who graduate from the HM schools to be accepted to distinguished universities in different countries. A school principal from Nigerian HM schools commented on his school academic success:

Actually, at NTIC (Nigerian Turkish International Colleges) that is the abbreviation for Nigerian Turkish International College; the schools have been

doing very well since the inception in 1998. Many of our students got admission into very reputable universities all over the world, e.g., MIT, Cornell, Maryland, Waterloo University Canada and many other great universities worldwide. In fact, many of our students' got scholarships from the aforementioned universities. What I would call the greatest achievement of Hizmet schools in Nigeria is its winning medals in international Olympiads, in Mathematics, Sciences, and Informatics. There are seven medals that Nigeria had won up till now. It is my pleasure to say that five of the winners were students of Nigerian Turkish International colleges. Five medals in mathematics and four of the winners were NTIC (Nigerian Turkish International Colleges) students. Two in physics and one of them was a student of NTIC. This is what I can call the greatest achievement of the school.

In order to understand the attractiveness of HM schools from the perspective of parents and students, I asked parents and students about their reasons for choosing HM schools. Even though they had many different reasons in these countries, the first reason they emphasized was the academic success of HM schools. For example, when I asked a parent from Georgia about her reason for preferring HM schools, she explained:

We were considering other private schools as well, such as Italian, German and British schools; however, at that point in time, Chaglari Education system was older and, accordingly, more experienced than European-oriented schools, respecting Georgian traditions and envisaging Georgian methods of teaching. Also, one more important factor was that technical subjects were being taught here in English, and courses in all subjects from which a child could have acquired some extra knowledge on, were also available here. In this school, one more important factor is the economic benefits regarding scholarships and academic awards. The chance of getting these benefits even more motivates students to learn well in order to keep the already obtained benefits. Other schools lack all this. Another important factor was that after starting to attend this school, my daughter's respect for Georgian traditions, culture, values, customs, and rites became stronger. This was also conditioned by her respect for others religions and traditions.

Based on the observations and research data, the HMS in these three countries are prestigious schools with a high quality, great reputation and high-end campuses. In

Cambodia, the Kindergarten School has a swimming pool, a garden and a playground where students can play freely. The primary school campus is designed to provide students with a secure and pleasant environment. Each classroom has an electronic board and provides Wi-Fi for students and a projector to make learning fun and easy. High school is held on a highly secure closed campus where students have access to many facilities, from canteens to science labs. Students study a national and international curriculum, and after class, students can enjoy club activities where they can learn new languages or skills. The high school is famous for its international achievements in science, math and IT projects and the Prime Minister of Cambodia even rewarded its success. Moreover, there is Zaman University, a HM institution, that is a newly established university in Cambodia; however, Zaman's praiseworthy reputation is already widely acknowledged. In a short period, many students have achieved high-level accomplishments in academic, co-curricular, and professional competitions. The strong commitment and tremendous support of faculty and staff seem to have a significant effect on the student's accomplishments. The university has comprehensive partnerships with relevant industries, where students have opportunities to do internships or pursue careers after their graduation. Currently, there are ten departments at the university, which are Civil Engineering, Architectural Engineering, Architecture, Construction Management, Computer Science, Digital Arts and Design, Management of Information Systems, Business Administration, Banking and Finance, Political Science and International Relations.

Similarly, in Georgia, the Hizmet schools have been successful in fulfilling the requirements of a modern education. They win the most medals and often the highest awards in the science Olympiads out of all the schools in Georgia. The students of these

schools have participated in many international science contests and have received many medals. Four of the eight students in Georgia's national team in Chemistry for these Olympiads are the students of Demirel College, a Hizmet school. There are also students from other Hizmet schools who compete in the science and math Olympiads in different branches every year. One community leader and parent from Georgia who is a professor at a University revealed her feelings and thoughts:

I want to point out that I have been actively involved in this system since 1994, and I know what kind of attitudes the school administration has to each and every teacher, parent, and student. This is a family and in my opinion, a core mission of this system and the principle characteristic of it as well because its teachers and administrators endeavor to create a family-like atmosphere and approach, and while creating this warm atmosphere, they all together strive to achieve common goals. They are all one team, and the administration never looks down on teachers – the relationships of these two parties have not developed in this morbid way, and I believe that in our day-to-day world, this is one of the key prerequisites of the success of this Movement which has existed for 22 years so far. I can stress that the Hizmet Movement's educational institutions are all modern institutions with research laboratories of the highest standard, that meet modern requirements. And these words are applicable to all the laboratories, be it the laboratory of Chemistry, Physics laboratories, etc. These educational institutions also adjust the studying process to the system perfectly well. Furthermore, different clubs within the school, dance clubs, painting clubs, chess clubs, etc. are also noteworthy since they give educational directions to children and prepare them to level up and move to the next stage. To us, all the three levels – nurseries, school-lyceums, and higher educational institutions -- are interesting. Thus, through this system, children successfully pass all the levels that will help them to become a decent member of the society. One more key factor distinguishing these schools from others is (high) class attendance.

From my travels in Nigeria, I learned that the students are selected and admitted into the Hizmet schools after passing four or five screening exams. Each year, 150 out of, approximately, 5,000 applicants are admitted to the movement's Middle Schools. Students admitted to these schools are highly qualified. So far, all the graduates of the movement's

high schools were able to pass the qualifier exam in the university admission examinations and continued to their higher education. Hizmet schools have extensively contributed to Nigeria's education system. One of the most important contributions of these schools is introducing the national Math Contest to Nigeria. The National Math contest has been continuing for 14 years with the collaboration of a government agency, the National Math Center (NMC). The Math Contest is held among 5th and 6th graders simultaneously all over Nigeria. So far, 33,000 students have participated in the exam. The HMS have sponsored all of these activities. The HMS have been organizing the contest in 30 out of 36 provinces, while NMC has been organizing the rest. One of the objectives of the math contest is to help students deal with their "fear of math" and to provide scholarships for the most successful 100 students in the exam. These tests also provide critical information to government officials and parents for the assessment of the students' performances. Another area in which the HMS are pioneering is the Science Olympiads. School administrators promoted and shared the importance of Science Olympiads with the Nigerian government and encouraged them to participate in the international Science Olympiads. So far, Nigerian students have won a large number of medals in the international Science Olympiads; five medals in Math, two medals in Physics. Students from NTIC (Nigerian Turkish International Colleges), a Hizmet school chain, have performed outstandingly and taken 4 out of 5 medals in Math, and one out of two medals in Physics. So far, the Hizmet Schools in Nigeria have overall received 218 medals from international science Olympiads and outstandingly represented Nigeria on these international platforms.

According to my research in the three countries, the HMS in the three different cultural settings have similar broad objectives even though there are differences in each



research settings. In each country, research participants emphasized some distinctive features when I asked them about the HM schools' academic achievements. For example, while research participants in Nigeria mentioned academic achievements in STEM Olympiads and admission with scholarships to renowned universities for students, research participants in Cambodia highlighted bilingual education, success in high school entrance exams, and awards from Science and Math Olympiads. On the other hand, research participants in Georgia emphasized the high rate of university admissions, success in Olympiads, and intensive international language training. One of the school administrators from the Georgian HM school system talked about his school's achievements:

My school is especially successful in certain areas. These achievements can be classified as the university admissions rate of our students, the noteworthy national and international Olympiad results and achievements of our students, and the high quality of English language education. First of all, almost all of our graduates are admitted to any university. Among those, many are admitted to prestigious universities in Georgia and abroad with 100% grant or 50 and so on. Secondly our students participate in national and international Olympiads, and usually, they are awarded gold silver and bronze medals. What's more, some of our students are selected to be members of national Olympiad teams in many different fields. Thirdly foreign language education is valued at our school similar to other Hizmet schools. In addition to the Georgian language, English, Russian and Turkish languages are taught. English education is especially important in our school as it is throughout the world. In fact, our school is a Cambridge Exam Centre, so our students are encouraged to learn and acquire English starting from an early age. Our teachers support the students to prove their English level by taking Cambridge ESOL certificates such as KETs, PETs, and FCEs (tests). They provide the students with additional courses for these purposes like PET, FCE courses on the weekends and on weekdays after regular lessons.

Besides academic success as an attractive reason for families and students preferring HM schools, HM schools are also renowned for emphasizing moral values and giving a strong character education to its students. Families, parents, and guardians decide

to send their children to HM schools due to their emphasis on moral education and moral behavior. One teacher from the Nigerian HM school system explained his thoughts about why moral education is important besides academic knowledge for his students:

In our school, we lay emphasis on moral values in addition to academic excellence. We know that well-educated people with good moral values will not be harmful to society. I watched a video of a man who pretended to be blind and looking for his 50 dollars. You will be surprised that many well-educated people cheated him thinking that he was really blind. Some people collected the money and ran away. This is just to show how morally bankrupt many are. This is nothing but a lack of inbuilt moral values in the people. Good moral values and academic success will make a complete human being.

Similarly, when I asked teachers in the Cambodian HM schools about their school's distinctiveness, they explained how they try to provide not only academic knowledge and skills but also a moral education for their students. When I asked an Orthodox Christian parent from Georgia to understand how she evaluates the moral education of HMS. She responded:

My children never lacked motivation – they've always known that education is of vital importance in this life. Education is a prerequisite of success and a core element of our life. Thus, they have always been motivated kids; however, this school boosted their motivation. Moreover, this school has formed them and their character; their sense of responsibility has become stronger as well as their desire to get into details and study this or that situation as thoroughly as possible... I remember how my children were inclined to argue with each other; they often had rows at home; however, with time their relations became more civilized; now they respect each other more; to put in a nutshell, they not only receive education in this school but their personalities also are being formed; they are developing self-respect, and this is of crucial importance in today's world, where conflicts are commonplace because of people being aggressive and malevolent to one another. They spew hatred, while this school instills tolerance in the students who

communicate with their peers, representatives of different cultures and religions, on a daily basis here.

In order to provide moral training and raise ethical, virtuous individuals for society, HMS provide a moral education on agreed upon global values and virtues such as friendship, tolerance, honesty, peace, etc. Even though the HM is a religious-based movement, the HMS provide secular training, and they refrain from giving any religious education in their schools. School administrators, teachers, and other staff are aware of their critical roles for young generations, and they try to be role models for their students. As stated by the HM, you have to practice and internalize any good behavior or virtue before you advise this behavior to anyone else. According to my observations and interviews, people working at HMS are mindful about their behaviors, and they all agree with the saying "Actions speak louder than words." They know they are under the surveillance of their students all the time and their behaviors will be references and models for their students. To illustrate, one of the teachers from the Georgian HM schools explained their efforts to be good role models for their students:

The difference of our school from other schools is that our teachers are sincere, well-intentioned, well-behaved, engaged with universal values. My friends' characteristics and attitudes are important in contributing to the global peace. When I asked parents about the school, they are most likely looking for safety and an environment of "family." It's a school of foreign teachers which is somehow different from other schools. The harmony among the staff and teachers is important, and there is a strong conscious of collectivity in my school. Again, we are trying to be role models for students to teach them moral values. In general, it is easy to distinguish our students from other schools' students when you look at their behaviors and respect for others. In general, every parent wants their children to stay away from bad habits and have virtuous and decent habits. They can find the appropriate environment in our school to raise their kids that way. Our teachers refrain from being a bad role model and do their best to be a good role model.

Even though school administrators, teachers, and other staff at HM schools emphasize and teach moral education, which attracts families and parents that come to prefer their schools as a result, they are aware of how difficult it is to mold the behaviors of their students. In order to raise globally responsible individuals, they organize extracurricular activities for their students. These activities aim to develop trusting relationships between the school staff, and students and their families. The HM School administrators and teachers show tireless efforts to develop individual relationships with students and their families to create a collaborative environment between the school, students, and their families. One of the teachers from the Georgian HM schools explained their efforts to foster these relationships:

My school Private Demirel College is quite different from any other school in Georgia for many reasons. To begin with, close relationships are set between students and teachers, parents and teachers, as well as administration and staff. Most parents claim that the main reasons why they want their children to study in our schools are safety, academic excellence and our mission of instilling and paying attention to the universal values and morals of our students. Our student's success has always been improved by close teacher-parent relationships. At our school, teachers interact very closely with the parents. HMS usually organize numerous teacher/parent meetings every year which provide good opportunities to discuss the situation of the students in detail and to improve their success. In fact, Demirel College is encouraging its teachers to make home visits to their students as a policy to increase the quality of education in the school. Furthermore, our school aims to not only teach academic subject matter but also ethics and universal morals. Our goal has mainly not changed but improved to provide a more quality education. For instance, I have accompanied our students when they participated in the International Festival of Language and Culture (IFLC) in Germany and Belgium. The students consisted of different age groups ranging from 12 to 17. Before we went, the parents had told me that they could allow their children to go because I was the one responsible for taking care of them as they trusted me. I was really happy when I heard these things from them. One parent told me she would allow her child to go to wherever I'd like to take

her to. She said I treated her child as if she were my daughter. I am grateful to them for their trust and reliance.

As discussed above, the HM schools' distinctiveness regarding academic success and moral education depends on the school administrators' and teachers' tireless efforts for the students. They care about their students' academic success and moral education. Even though they work seven hours during the week at the school, they voluntarily carry out several extracurricular activities such as home visits, after-school activities with students, and community activities. Thus, they believe they devote their spare time for the goals of their movement in order to get rewarded by God in the afterlife. This type of spiritual motivation among HM school administrators and teachers makes them distinctive among their competitors in the countries they operate. I have observed that parents and students have overwhelmingly expressed their appreciation for how Hizmet schools have promoted positive and human values for the students. HMS overall have served to foster and raise trustworthy, honest, and hardworking generations. When I asked a school administrator at one of the Nigerian HM schools about the differences of his school from another school in the country, he responded that:

Regarding educational standards, there are many schools trying their best and improving daily to provide better education like us too. Even in term of the physical standard, there are many other schools doing well too. But the main thing that differentiates ours from others is selflessness, self-sacrifice, and self-devotion. We do not see our students as just students; we see them as a family that needs our support and care for human life. We teach them morals and all that they need to become a global citizen, and we consider them as good elements and agents of harmony and society. We see their success as our success and this tallies with the goals of the Hizmet movement. This is what distinguishes the Turkey schools from other schools. We put much emphasis on behavioral, academic, moral and other positive stuff. This is the hallmark of our education. We try to mold the child into a complete, respectable global citizen.

## **5.2. Inclusiveness**

One of the main principles and qualities of the HM schools is to provide an inclusive learning environment for students from any culture, religion, ethnicity, or origin. In order to adjust to every culture and find suitable places for education all over the world, HM schools have anti-discrimination policies, and try to be religiously neutral to maintain equal distances to each religion, culture, and ethnicity. Even though the HM is based on the religion of Islam, the HM schools aim to provide an inclusive education for everyone who is interested in attending their schools. According to my observations and interviews with school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community leaders in three different countries, HM schools easily adjust themselves and get accepted in diverse countries due to their inclusive approach to all students. For example, Nigeria is one of the most diverse countries in the African continent with a population of more than 186 million and more than 250 tribes with two religions, mainly Islam (50%) and Christianity (40%) (CIA Factbook, 2017).

In Nigeria, according to Aydin (2013), it is estimated by the HM that by educating students to love others and tolerate ideas different from one's own, they will learn how to live in peace with one another; and, in adulthood, they will be able to serve as leaders who will encourage positive change for Nigeria. The schools see their roles as agents of change aimed to help change Nigeria into a more peaceful, tolerant place. One of the school principals in the Nigerian HM schools explained how they understand and realize diversity in their schools:

Diversity is something that is very important for us, that is why we always try to get students and teachers from various states be it Yoruba, Hausa, Fulani, Igbo, Igala irrespective of whether they are Muslim or Christian. We believe that as long as we respect other people and show them a good place in our heart and welcome them to our school, all of us will live together in peace and love. We appreciate the diversity and multiculturalism of Nigeria. Our success lies in diversity, and we are working towards that direction at all times. In term of secular education, we respect our parents for entrusting the most precious asset (children) they have, to us to nurture. This shows that they trust us. They are comfortable that we are not going to convert them to Islam or Christianity. We don't want them to be like us; we want them to respect their religion; we want them to respect the religion of other people. We want all our students to be good Christians and Muslims. We want them to be happy with their identity. Irrespective of your faith as a Yoruba Muslim or as a Yoruba Christian, the most important thing is to be more useful to people and society at large. We value secular education very much; without secular education, the school cannot be successful. We are not missing religion (diversity) with education in our school. All religions are accommodated equally. Many of the very successful students in our school are Christian. They come here they study, and they feel comfortable; we support them and their education because we believe that a good Muslim and a good Christian is not going to be a threat to anybody.

Similarly, when I asked a student from Nigeria about the role of his school in shaping his ideas regarding how to live with other people from different backgrounds, he explained the contribution of inclusive teaching as:

The school has taught me how to socialize and live with people from different backgrounds. In the primary school I attended, in my class, we were mostly Hausa/Fulani pupils who dominated the class. There was no room for other cultures to display their own identities and traditions. But when I joined NTIC in JSS 1, I realized that it was a different setting. In my class, there were Ibo, Yoruba, Turkish, Igala and students from other ethnic groups. We were together in class. Living with them has taught me to be tolerant and understand their own background and religious beliefs as well. The school has the good intention of helping us become better people who will contribute meaningfully to the development of our country in their nearest future. It is even training us to become better representatives of our country. I think the school has molded me to be a better person especially in the aspect of academics.

Likewise, we see similar approaches in the Georgian HM schools, about being inclusive and respecting diversity. Georgia has more than 5 million people with 86.8% Georgian, 6.3% Azeri, 4.5% Armenian, and 2.3% other ethnicities; in terms of religious diversity, they are 83.4% Orthodox (official), 10.7% Muslim, 2.9% Armenian Apostolic, and 1.2% other religions (CIA Factbook, 2017). In this diverse country, HM Schools accept students from all different national ethnicities and religious backgrounds. One of the teachers from the Georgian HM schools commented on the inclusive education provided to their students:

Our school consists of students of many nationalities, and most of them are Georgian, Azeri, Armenian and Turkish. But also we have some students who are Ukrainian, Polish and Scottish. And these students communicate so well that I haven't seen a fight or any bullying for a year. And they have really different cultural and religious backgrounds. But as I know there are Muslims there are Christians and Jewish students too. But each student respects each other. And the school and the teachers respect each of them. For example, when a class goes on a field trip to visit some churches, they are careful to visit some mosques too. And when there's a school celebration even the songs are sung in a lot of languages like Turkish, Georgian, English, etc.

A community leader, a Clergyman of two churches, whose all five children attended the HM schools in Georgia, succinctly explained his observation of the inclusiveness of HM:

I've known the philosophy of this Movement with regard to children and education for more than a decade, and, certainly, my impression about it is exceedingly positive. All five children of mine have attended this school, and in a nutshell, the fact that all my sons and daughters have studied at this school speaks for itself, and this decision of mine clearly demonstrates that I place confidence into the members of this Movement. Religious diversity is obviously commonplace in these schools. Thus, cultural and ethnic diversity is a natural characteristic of these schools; however, for us, Georgians, cultural and ethnic



diversity is nothing new – the representatives of different religions and nationalities have always resided in Georgia. I would also underscore one thing – these schools are not centered on knowledge only which is one of the top priorities here; however, equally important is the fact that these schools create such a good atmosphere for children that they find the process of acquiring knowledge something pleasant. In other words, the relationships between students and teachers, teachers and parents are excellent here.

On the other hand, Cambodia has more than 16 million citizens in their population with 97.6% Khmer, 1.2% Cham, 0.1% Chinese, 0.1% Vietnamese, and 0.9% other national ethnicities, and 96.9% Buddhist (official), 1.9% Muslim, 0.4% Christian, and 0.8% other religious backgrounds (CIA Factbook, 2017). According to my interview with research participants in Cambodia, HM schools are respectful to and accepting of all national ethnicities and religions in the country, and they provide an inclusive education for their students. One of the school principals at Cambodian HM schools commented on this as follows:

Our school is an inclusive, comprehensive educational institution. In other words, we offer equal opportunity to all interested students despite their religions, beliefs or ethnicities. And what we teach includes all the matters necessary for the students while refraining from incorporating any aims of religious or cultural influence. So, we're not trying to convert them. Plus, we take triumphs of our students seriously. We're working to equip them with the abilities they need not just to stand out in national competitions but to ensure victory in international contests as well. We have programs like visiting students' homes and admitting students from different backgrounds like religions. Here we have Buddhist, Muslim and Christian students. And the point is that they are in harmony and collaboration with one another.

Similarly, as a community leader, a member of the Cambodian Senate, Professor, parent and Buddhist follower from a Cambodian HM school revealed his feelings about the inclusiveness of the HM schools:

At first, I believed that I should send my kids to public school. Then I wanted to send them to a school with diversity. This school has not only diversity in students but the teachers as well which include teachers from Singapore, Ireland, and other. I don't see any religion-related teaching, but I can see my kids involved in Charity work in which they helped orphans.

In summary, when we look at the diversity in the countries with respect to ethnicity and religion, the HM schools are good at being inclusive of all students, regardless of ethnic and religious background. However, when I analyzed the inclusiveness of the HM schools according to socio-economic backgrounds, I noticed the HM schools generally aim to reach students from middle-class families who can afford to pay the school tuition. As discussed in the mobilizing resources section above, HM schools see school fees as a vital resource for sustainability, and they charge a fair amount of school fees to students similar to other private schools in the country. However, students from lower classes, especially from working and poor classes cannot afford to send their children to HM schools due to costly school fees. In order to be inclusive towards the lower economic classes of society in each country, HM schools give scholarships to successful students who get excellent scores in the school entrance exams.

Importantly, Hizmet Schools have been successful not only in Nigeria overall but also in a particularly heated and troubled province of it, Yobe. The most important thing about the Hizmet school in Yobe is the fact that it operates in a region of Nigeria, namely Yobe Province, where there is a serious problem of poverty, terrorism and security. There has been a wave of violence unleashed in this region by the militant terrorist group called Boko Haram. The region has become the epicenter of Boko Haram's activities. "The region has some of the world's worst economic indicators. More than 70 % of the population live

in extreme poverty, and 85 % of people in Borno are illiterate” (Tull and Weber, 2015). Thus, education is essential for the region to strengthen its social structure and cohesion. Support for education and reconciliation initiatives are especially vital for Yobe. That is why the HM projects and school in that region are so important for its development and overall future.

According to my research in the three countries, nearly 15-20% of students in each HMS have scholarships to attend the school for free. The HMS try to increase the socio-economic diversity of their schools and to be inclusive to brilliant students who cannot afford to pay school fees. In Nigeria, nearly 17% of the students in Hizmet schools and universities have received scholarships through the NTIC initiatives. The scholarships help especially those who live under the poverty line. One school administrator from Nigerian HM schools explained their policy of being inclusive and welcoming to all students from different socio-economic backgrounds:

We can say that our students are from different ethnic and religious backgrounds. We have Muslim and Christians students cohabiting together in peace without any problems. Regarding the socio-economic status, due to the tuition fees most of them are from middle-class parents. However, we have 17% of students on scholarships receiving education. We can say that socio-economically, we are mixed because these percentages of scholarships are for parents who cannot afford our school fees.

On top of all of that, HM schools try to ensure a sense of inclusiveness for its students through secular education. Even though the HM is a religious-based movement, they strictly follow secular curricula in their schools. Thus, they are open and flexible in their efforts to attract and accept students from different religions and cultures. When we

look at the HM schools globally, they operate in more than 170 countries and have many students who come from different religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. The HM schools as a model was first developed and applied in Turkey where education has to be secular due to the "laicism" principle in the Turkish Constitution. Due to their successful experience on the national level in Turkey with secular education, the HM schools continue to provide secular education in other countries and on an international level. Hence, they can easily adjust to every country's education system and are open to students from different backgrounds. One of the teachers from the Georgian HM schools explained an instance of enforcing their secular policy in education with an interesting story:

Our school has a secular education. And I can say that there isn't anything about religion in our books. And none of our teachers force students to believe in anything. If there's anything religious related in our books we skip that part and move on. I once heard something about this issue from another teacher. One of our graduate students is now a reputable businessman. And some years ago our Turkish teachers had gone to visit him where he showed them a Turkish book for one his classes at our school, that he still kept. He told them that he trusts them and that he doesn't believe that they are here to force anyone to believe in something or anything after showing them a page of the book. Apparently, back when he was a student, on that page, a part was crossed out because it was something about religion. And his teacher had told the class that he wasn't there to make them believe in his religion and so asked them to cross that part out.

Although HM schools have secular education programs and they seem to follow this rule strictly, there are some initial biases and concerns among parents and students related to religion. Due to being a part of a religious-based movement, HM schools create some concerns and fears among people that go as far as their believing that they follow a religious curriculum and agenda at its schools. Some families and parents have been skeptical about HM schools because of these religious concerns, but their concerns decline

after checking out and experiencing the schools for themselves. A teacher from the Georgian HM school system actually mentioned this issue:

Our school is quite famous around Georgia for providing a quality education, safety, and friendship. The school also provides scholarships for students who are successful and hardworking. Some parents told me that before they sent their children here to Demirel College, they thought that our school was teaching something Islamic and that we were trying to convert people to Islam. But after they sent their children here, they said they realized that the school is quite secular and teaches only academics and universal values, while respecting all religions.

Similarly, when I asked a Cambodian parent who follows the teachings of Buddha whether there was a change about her daughter's values and religious behaviors after attending the HM school, he responded:

Presently, she respects her ways of life and adjusts herself to how our family practices our religion. Again, as I mentioned earlier, I may not be a firm believer, but I still practice religion like most of the Cambodian people. Since the beginning, she has done that. So, I am sure that even though some of her teachers are Turkish Muslims, she has maintained her own way of life.

In addition, one parent, a businessman from Nigeria who is Christian explained his observation of HM participants who came to his country to carry out projects related to education, health, culture, and charity. His observation succinctly explains the main philosophy of HM participants and HM schools:

I have known the Turkish people as I mentioned earlier in the last interview. The Turkish people came here in 1998, and since then they have tried to impact this country in the areas of education, culture, health and the areas of understanding

culture. The Turkish people are known for peace, and there is this philosophy I hear them talking about always "Reserve a place in your heart for everyone." The interpretation is that each individual must accommodate others irrespective of tribe, color, religion or affiliation. The philosophy of trying to live together with one another wherever and whatever is a wonderful philosophy and I believe if the world can embrace this philosophy, the problem of religious crisis will stop; the problem of communal clashes will stop. I appreciate this philosophy and encourage everyone to embrace it. They are the agents of change that God sent. I am aware that they are involved in and took on a lot of corporate responsibility to assist the fewer privileged people in many areas. In spite of our diversity, they were able to create a safe haven for everybody to come together in.

According to my observations and interviews, HM schools embrace global values of respect for diverse cultures, religions, and societies. This global perspective creates an inclusive learning environment in HMS. Moreover, school administrators and teachers as the participants of the HM movement put these values into practice. They try to realize and apply the values and virtues of HM such as peace, tolerance, harmony, respect, and friendship in their schools. HM schools emphasize global values, which are accepted as common principles for every human being. Thus, HMS adjust themselves to different cultures and are easily accepted by different societies.

One example of the HM schools' respect, toleration and admiration for diverse cultures and religions, I observed in an intercultural and international festival in Nigeria that many HM schools had attended and helped organize. I attended this cultural festival in Abuja, Nigeria where I witnessed an HM school administrator and his son sing and dance Hausa songs in the language and clothing of the Hausa tribe, the same tribe that lives in the place, where the school the father works at, is located. The native Nigerian audience gave a roaring applause and became very pleased with their performance. In fact, the students and parents of the father's school gave a standing ovation. This festival was a very touching

and compelling experience for me as it revealed to me the inclusiveness and wonderful adaptability of the movement when faced with other cultures and people.

During my research in Nigeria, I attended a dialogue conference on peace and tolerance aimed at countering and ending the terrorism and discord in the country. It was organized and hosted by the HM's dialogue foundation, Ufuk Dialogue. As one of the members of the diverse audience of people from many different tribes, ethnicities, and religions, I watched in wonder as Christian cardinals, college professors, Muslim community leaders, government officials, different activists and academics each from another tribe, conversed and collaborated in peaceful, intellectual and thoughtful dialogue amidst the conflicts throughout the country. One school principal from the Cambodian HM school system commented:

The school imposes making a peaceful world to live together in. From the entrance of the school, you can see the mission and vision of the school that fosters international moral values and global citizenship. We are aware that our students are from diverse backgrounds; our objective is to make them live together in peace without any bias and discrimination. Truly our school is secular because we welcome students from both Muslim, Christian and other major religions and denominations. Our objective is to let them know that all of them can live together in harmony without affecting one another's faith. In fact, in our schools students from diverse backgrounds live in harmony. There is no discrimination. Everybody respects each other's ideas and principles. Nobody tries to change or convert others.

In the Georgian schools, Turkish and Georgian staff have been successful in working in harmony. They have shown that people from different ethnic and religious groups can build strong and warm relationships with each other. When I asked an administrator a question about why HM schools were opened in Georgia, he mentioned the

goals of the HM movement such as creating a peaceful world and a better place for everybody, initiating intercultural dialogue and friendship between countries, and being open to talk and share as the main motivation for them to have HM schools in Georgia:

The school opened here to establish universal peace, friendship, and intercultural dialogue between two neighboring countries. We are locally bound and respectful to the Georgian government, and we aim to contribute to universal peace and share in the richness of being different between two countries. Our main motivation is that we want to see that people who are educated with universal values, are respectful to each other, have compassion for other people, and have the ability to establish dialogue with other people, who can then further engage in and continue the dialogue. We see it, and it motivates us.

Even though the HM is a religious-based movement, it embraces differences, respects different religions, cultures, and lifestyles, and is flexible in creating dialogue and friendships with other people. Similarly, teachers and school administrators working at HMS have the same approach in their pedagogy and try to create an inclusive environment for every child with respect to her/his culture, tradition, religion, and ethnicity. They only promote global values without imposing their own cultural and religious understanding on their students. One school administrator from Nigerian HM schools explained their strategy of adjusting in different cultures:

HM Schools never try to change cultures, or any values that belong to the countries. That is why they can easily adjust themselves in different cultures. Like the HM school's philosophy, I try to teach my students common human values which are acceptable values for everyone so I can easily adjust myself to any country's culture.

Overall, the HM seeks peaceful globalization without losing local identities along with the spread of scientific knowledge paired with moral virtue. John Voll (2003) observes



that the increasing integration of the secular and religious in the world, in a way, which parallels the process of “glocalization” (globalization and localization), is creating a significant frame that is useful for recognizing the ideas of Fethullah Gulen in the arenas of religion, faith, and life at the beginning of the twenty-first century (p. 244). To Fethullah Gulen, modernity and the path followed by mainstream Muslims (the sirat al-mustaqim) are not opponents, but the middle way of interpreting Islam, providing a balance between materialism and spirituality. In my research, I have noted that the HM constantly strives to be universal, think globally, and act locally in a middle path between secularism and spirituality. As a social movement, the HM adapts its products and services according to the general needs and demands of the local communities. When I asked about efforts of the HM in terms of glocalization (think globally, and act locally) in Georgia, a Georgian community leader who works as a professor commented that:

It is also worth mentioning that Turkish teachers always make strenuous efforts to instill in a Georgian child love towards Georgian traditions while raising him/her. The Turkish Olympiads also are an example of this – there the children from our schools represent Georgia in national costumes and in this manner present our country to the entire world; in this manner, they make our culture, cuisine, national dances or songs as well as music known throughout the world, and here I can state that this is a really well-done job and a perfect course chosen by the Hizmet Movement schools. I, for instance, have attended different events held in these schools many times, and I can boldly say that these events are fascinating; I can name some of them such as the event celebrating The Day of the Georgian Language, which is held annually, and also extremely noteworthy is the vigor and disposition of each child participating in this event. Another important event is held on May 26 each year, celebrating Georgia's Independence Day, and this event is also inspired by the same dispositions and love. About this, I want to bring the phrase by His Holiness and Beatitude, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia, Ilia II: "Never forget your history, your culture, and religion but always respect the culture, religion, and history of others." Thus, if we stand by our Turkish friends and preserve and develop the system they have nurtured for

22 years, I am sure we will contribute to the emergence of new generations inspired by respect for others, love and the desire to build dialogue with the representatives of other cultures and religions.

Moral values and integrity are emphasized among the students. The schools try to live up to the society's expectation in this area. This is a place where you will see people from all walks of life. The concept of dialogue is paramount in the school system. The Hizmet Schools never look at the issue through the prism of religion or race or ethnicity. Their philosophy is about love, understanding, and togetherness. Students are taught high moral lessons and values. After attending these schools, students are often taught the need to be honest, tolerant, caring and respectful of other peoples' cultures and faith, and of humanity in general. Movement participants stressed that by teaching students to love others and to tolerate ideas different from one's own, students will learn how to live in peace with one another and, in adulthood, they will be able to serve as leaders who promote positive change for Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria.

### **5.3. Harmonization**

Harmonization is another important adjustment strategy applied by administrators and teachers at the HM schools. In order to develop strong relationships with the families of students and other people in the community, the schools try to carry out and organize extracurricular or community activities and social events. Through this, the HM school staffs try to meet the citizens living in their communities and develop long-term relationships with them. With these visits or get-togethers and other social and charitable activities, they believe they can exchange ideas, love, and friendship with the communities

they live in. Thus, they try to harmonize with the community in an effort to become a part of the society.

As an initial harmonization strategy, the HM school staff try to organize social activities with students, families, and parents and reach out to them. They conduct several 'tuning in activities' with students, families, and other people in the community so they can all get to learn about, share with and respect each other. According to my analysis from three different countries, the HM school staff (administrators and teachers) tries to develop close, robust relationships with the school and parents, close relationships between the teachers and students, and good relationships with the community. In order to create these relationships, they visit the students' families at their homes, celebrate students' birthdays, attend important events of the family (birth of a new sibling, wedding, sickness, funeral, etc.), and do charity activities for people in need, in the community. When I asked what types of activities they carry out to build and have a close relationship between the school and the students and parents, one teacher from the Georgian HM schools gave me detailed information about their activities as follows:

I can say that it has three parts considering the school. These are students, parents, and teachers. And as for students, we approach them like we're their parents. And we try to celebrate all of our student's birthdays, and we try to surprise them somehow. By this way, they can see that they are important and special to us. We came here for them. They are the only reason we're here. Also, we go to some fun activities and play together and hang out with the students. We have many clubs where we do that. We both teach and relay information to them, while at the same time they relay information to us. The relationship is mutual. The clubs are more informal than our normal courses so they feel more free and comfortable there and we communicate much better in the clubs. And we try to attend our students' special events too. For example, when they have a new baby sibling we go and visit them at home. And some of them sing in concerts, and some have

birthday parties, and we try to attend all of these events. For example, last year I had a student who invited me to her concert, and I said, of course, I would go. But when I went there her mother saw me, and she hadn't expected me to come, and she was surprised and was very pleased. I think that this is the difference between our Hizmet school teachers and others. And as for the teachers, we celebrate their birthdays with some presents. We invite them to our houses and prepare food that we know they will like. And sometimes they fast, and we respect that and cook accordingly. And when they deliver a baby or when they are ill, and at a hospital, we try to go and visit them. And sometimes they lose their relatives, and we attend their funerals, and we try to collect some money together to help our teacher. Even when one of our teachers passes away, we collect money to help her or his family. And we celebrate their religious festivals and holidays too for which we prepare special programs and gifts that we think they will like. And as for the parents, we do home visits. We inform them about their children, and we develop communication and bonds with them. And they feel free to contact us whenever they want to. And again for them too we celebrate their special days and events like when they have a baby. So I think we don't have a fixed work time. It is 24/7 for us.

Besides the students and families, HM school staffs also try to engage in some social and charitable activities in order to reach other people living in the community. They establish charity foundations to assist people in need in that particular community.

In Cambodia, I have learned that the Mekong Charity was established by the HM to help vulnerable poor communities in the country. It has been working on emergency aid, food donations, clean water, the environment, scholarships and education projects and it has received two gold medal awards from the government for its activities. The Time Learning Center, which is a training school founded by the movement provides support and tutoring for poor students using the national curriculum. It also provides accommodation for students who live in villages. The Mekong Journal is a daily news website established by the movement, which provides political, social and educational news for people, in English and Khmer (local language). One Buddhist lecturer at the university from Cambodia explained HM's charity efforts:

I witnessed sometimes when Turkish people came to Cambodia to contribute their money to disaster relief and stuff like that, ...the distribution of beef... This is something that shows not only the ideal philosophy of achieving peace around the world but also actions that tell a lot about people, about the culture of sharing, about uniting people and harmonizing with people regardless of their religious background. I have seen a lot of good deeds by the movement and people of the movement, particularly their contributions. Money is not that much significant but the distribution of beef to people in communities, for example, this is very important, however not in the sense of finance or money. It's not about the meat people get for a few meal times. But it's an action that shows that people regardless of their nationalities, cultural or religious background, should share and live together peacefully.

Likewise, in Nigeria, in addition to schools and hospitals, the Hizmet movement has also founded the NTIC foundation, which works with other Hizmet institutions in organizing aid initiatives, projects and operations in Nigeria. For example, in collaboration with the Nizamiye Hospital, which was built and founded by the movement, the NTIC conducts free health screenings for students. They have planned to screen 20 schools, identified by the Ministry of Education. So far, volunteers have visited 13 schools and screened 9,000 students. Then, they provide outpatient care and medication according to students' needs. Health workers from the Nizamiye hospital periodically conduct free health screenings in villages located close to the capital city. In fact, there has been a large number of patients in serious conditions who were taken to the hospital for medical operations. Besides health screenings and outpatient care, 150 free cataract surgeries have been carried out by the hospital. Their initial goal is to reach out to 400 patients who need cataract surgery. Along with health services, the NTIC conducts periodic visits to orphanages and nursing homes to provide and help meet their needs. In addition, the NTIC organizes aid campaigns during the holy month of Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, and Eid al-Adha. They give iftar dinners during Ramadan and deliver aid packages to needy people. On top

of all that, in a joint project with the Nigerian Ministry of Education, the NTIC delivered free stationary equipment to students in public schools. 5000 stationary bags were delivered in the first year of the campaign, 8000 in the second year and 13,000 bags were delivered in 2016. The NTIC aims to give away 15,000 stationary bags in the 2017 campaign. In addition to these issues and charities, a large proportion of Nigerians lack a critical infrastructure for accessing safe drinking water. Access to clean water is very limited in Nigeria. In response to this issue, the NTIC has even opened 120 nautical wells in places where there is a lack of clean water. When doing these charity activities, the movement still tries to reach diverse groups while respecting their religious holidays and festivals. One teacher from the Nigerian HM schools explained their charity efforts:

Local people are the people that live around us. They are the people we communicate with all the time. Our students are from the local people, and that is why we are trying to maintain a good relationship with them at all times. For example during the month of Ramadan, we give out food packages to the local people around in the mosques and to people in the churches during Christmas time. We similarly give stationary packages to the public schools in rural areas. Thousands of these packages are prepared by the NTIC foundation for local people. We believe that if we did not receive favor from those around us, Allah will not favor us. We believe that we cannot be successful without the prayers of these people. Two years ago we went to a public school to give out packages. Most of these pupils did not have enough materials for their school needs. When they received these packages, they were very happy. This was a special moment for me. Making people happy always makes me happy. It touched me very much. I realized that with a little bit of effort a very big impact can be achieved in the life of other people. The most important thing is to have the mind and effort to do the right things, the rest is the work of Allah. We need to show good intention in order to touch the lives of others.

In addition to charitable activities in the community, HM schools also see their scholarship programs for successful students as another contribution they make to their community. They believe in the role of education for the future of the country they operate

in, and they give scholarships to students who get the highest scores in the school entrance exams but cannot afford school fees. When I asked about the social responsibility programs of HM schools in Nigeria, one school administrator pointed out the scholarship program in addition to the other charity activities they do:

Our foundation and charity program is established to assist the local people. We organize a lot of social activities, foundations, charities, and stationery packages for underprivileged students and people, in general. Notebooks and writing materials are given away; boreholes are dug in some communities, and we share and give out foodstuffs and Sallah meat during the Eid Kabir festival and Christmas packages during Christmas. Apart from this, a lot of ingenious, brilliant poor students whose parents cannot afford this school were given scholarships after having distinguished themselves in placement examinations. This shows the local people that we are with them. Thus, we can say that the local perception about us is positive.

All in all, in order to adjust to the country, get accepted by its society or community, and take root, HM schools use their resources to invest back into the country they operate in. Rather than working with the mentality of an international education company, they try to spend their resources they acquire, from the country, on and for the country. Thus, their acceptance and approval from the host country increases. For instance, in Nigeria, I visited a top-notch hospital belonging to the movement and learned that a group of Turkish businessmen made a large investment to build and open this hospital in 2012. The government officials assisted the investors and allocated a piece of land for building “the Nizamiye Hospital.” Now, the Nizamiye hospital provides critical health services to Nigerians with the latest technology and well-qualified medical personnel. Many general operations and surgeries can be done in the hospital. They have started conducting open-heart surgeries for one year, and so far, ten open-heart surgeries have been completed. The

hospital staff has received great appreciation from Nigerian officials and people for the high quality of service they provide. Nigerians no longer need to go abroad to receive such quality health services. The quality of HM services overall is improving over time as the HM investors are reinvesting their profits back into the country to provide even better services in Nigeria.

Similarly, in Cambodia, there is the Pacific Chamber of Commerce which works and helps out in the business sector. The Chamber organizes business events, meetings, visits and field trips to contribute, facilitate and increase investments in Cambodia, mainly from Turkey. Unfortunately, the recent political developments in Turkey limited the work of the Chamber as most of the partner organizations were shuttered, and members were arrested by government directives. There is also the Rainbow Education Consultancy, which carries out educational trips, seminars, and workshops with students, lecturers, and policymakers as well as providing consultancy for individuals in education abroad.

One community leader from Nigeria, a traditional ruler (from the south-east council of traditional rulers) his Royal Highness Dr. Eze Uche Egenti who is Cristian explained his personal observations of the HM participants. He mentioned that giving back to society is one of the Hizmet Movement's cardinal objectives and its corporate social responsibility. His observation interestingly explains the main philosophy of HM participants:

I must say that I am wondering how they made the money they use to invest in education, health, and charity. Let me start by saying that my wondering stems from the fact that they award a lot of scholarship to students in colleges and Universities. I wonder how they manage their money knowing fully that the fees they charge may not be enough for the many projects they embark on. Even out



of the school fees they charge and receive, they use them to pay staff, establish schools, hospitals and they encourage charity. In another word, I will say that the Turkish people and the Hizmet movement are returning to society what the society has given them. Giving back to society is one of their cardinal objectives and a corporate social responsibility. What surprises one most is that we have donor agencies; we have Nigerians who have so much and yet contribute so little towards the social, economic empowerment of their people. We have people who steal so much money from Nigeria and take it overseas to hide it there.

Moreover, the HM schools also encourage their students to work for the success of their own country's future when they graduate and start their careers. The HM school staffs believe that the host country needs talented and educated students the most, in their workforce, in order to solve the problems in the country and contribute to the development and enhancement of it. These schools play a significant part in the host country's society because they produce educated, patriotic, well-mannered and intelligent generations necessary for that country's future. Many Cambodians, Georgians and Nigerians have great hope that the Hizmet Schools will help solve their country's problems in the present and future by raising virtuous men and women from their own people. Thus, when people in the host country see graduates from the HM schools serving their country in the private or public sector, they embrace the schools like their own schools. They also feel that these schools contribute to their country's future and provide benefits for their own society. When I asked about the current efforts of these schools to contribute to the country's future and its own society, to a community leader who is a Buddhist lecturer at a university from Cambodia, he commented:

I think this movement and its schools have contributed, to a great extent, to the development of qualified human resources as support for the development of the country particularly in the context of regionalization and globalization. We need very qualified people to compete with countries in the region, so Hizmet schools

in Cambodia have contributed a great deal to the building of human capital for the development of this country. These kids... most of their day is spent at school, and they learn things about what's going on around them... the values, ways of thinking, perspectives, perceptions. All these values, judgments, perspectives and outlooks are shaped by these schools and their teaching. The school is like manufacturing places where students go and then get the kind of products we want in the future. So, it is important that we ensure the schools will produce people not only specialized in their respective skills but also with the heart for other people, having the sense of selflessness, the strong sense of community and readiness to give to their country and the world. I think it's a big contribution to the development of human resources in this country. Cambodia experienced genocide where millions of people were killed, particularly educated people. We do need human capital to support human development in the future. What I see in this most important contribution to Cambodia's society as a whole is that in Cambodia after the wars, particularly Khmer Rouge, people's trust is very low, so such contribution will help to build the sense of community of people in this country. This is important for the future, peace, and sustainable development of this country. We want to rebuild this sense of community because it has been destroyed by successive turbulence.

Notably, the overall ratio of Turkish citizens working in Hizmet inspired foundations is less than 10% as of 2017 in Cambodia. This is a clear indication that Turkish volunteers or Muslims are not the only targets of the HM. Furthermore, they are not the only groups that take part in the movement's activities. A Cambodian professor was assigned recently to Zaman University as the new rector and is one of the first graduates of the movement's high schools in the country. The students and the Higher Education department as well as the Ministry of Education warmly welcomed it. Another alumnus who had completed his bachelors and master's degree in Turkey got married to a Turkish citizen and now works in a Hizmet High School. It was the first cultural interaction ever in Cambodian Turkish relations. Also, an alumni association was established and has been operated by Cambodians. From schools to institutions, the ultimate goal of the HM is to hand over the projects to the local people, so they can take over. People in the HM are aware that Hizmet is not limited to a certain ethnicity or religion. To achieve this goal,

volunteers equip local people with the mission of service for their country. The Zaman Alumni Association was founded as a platform to bring along Zaman graduates whose number exceeds 1200 as of 2016. The Association organizes academic, social and sports events to keep the alumni connected and maintain a network among them.

Similarly, in Nigeria, the overall reputation of the graduates of the HM schools has been highly positive among Nigerians. Some of their graduates became teachers in their schools. Some local people were able to take even higher positions in Hizmet Schools. Currently, there are three Nigerians serving as school principals and dozens of Nigerians working as vice-principals. The Hizmet movement employs 1500 Nigerians in their organizations. One teacher from Nigerian HM schools explained this feeling and their ultimate goal for the ownership of their schools:

It is believed that the government is supporting our efforts in all ramifications. I heard that the people in the government do say that these are Nigerian schools. They did not see them as Turkish school but rather as a Nigerian school especially when they began to see that the graduates of these schools are working in the schools. One of the ultimate aims of Hizmet is to educate Nigerian students so that they will be the one controlling the schools in the future. It has started now, the graduates of the school are working here. Do not be surprised one day if you do not see any Turkish people here again, or probably you see just a few of them. Hizmet is global movement; it does not belong to anybody, it belongs to everybody. It is not something that belongs to Turkish people. It is a fact that they have started it, but it is not their own, it belongs to everybody. It is a global movement, and everybody can find a place for himself and herself in it.

Besides the schools, some non-governmental civic initiatives were established to reach and embrace a wider range of the community. In Nigeria, the HM founded the Ufuk Dialogue Foundation to promote inter-faith dialogue between different ethnic and religious groups. The foundation undertakes a critical task due to the fact that Nigeria is a country

where half of the population is Muslim, 40% is Christian, and there are about 450 different tribes. Nigeria is remarkably diverse in ethnicity, religion, and culture. This incredible diversity makes you wonder how this collection of people could possibly have lived together and co-existed for a century. The fact is that Nigeria could still not fully master its diversity and unfortunately has yet managed to establish a social cohesion successfully. The diversity comes with its set of problems, which should be addressed and resolved. The Ufuk Dialogue Foundation is one of the social initiatives, which works on addressing and resolving social, ethnic and religious problems and tension as well as promoting the idea of peaceful co-existence in Nigeria. The foundation has successfully generated a platform, which brings people from different religions and tribes together and encourages them to converse and share ideas on their similarities rather than their differences. The foundation organizes iftar dinners during Ramadan, invites guests from different parts of society, and gives peace awards to those who contributed to peace. So far, the Ufuk Dialogue foundation has organized more than ten international conferences, panels, and seminars, in which they received tremendous support from the representatives of local social groups. The foundation has constantly emphasized the importance of peace, dialogue, and conflict management and resolution in their organizations.

In 2013, the Mekong Dialogue Institute in Cambodia started as a civic approach to promote education and dialogue among people of different faiths, ethnicities, and professions. The government and other stakeholders recognized its fast and progressive achievements in interfaith dialogue, media, education and research. One of the Buddhist community leaders from Cambodia explained his observation of the HM participants who

came to his country to carry out projects related to education, health, culture, and charity. His observation clearly explains the main philosophy of HM participants and HM schools:

The most impressive deed Hizmet has done is the organization of interfaith and intercultural dialogue. From a personal to an international level, it has never been easy to convene and gather people with different religions. To my astonishment, Hizmet did it. Evidence can be found in Cambodia as Mekong Dialogue Institute regularly offers opportunities to religiously different people to gather together in a pacific environment for a talk and sharing of experience with any sense of enmity eradicated. Speaking of diversity and multiculturalism, Hizmet schools obviously conform to the expectations of people, for the schools create an inclusive educational environment where students, despite their nationalities, ethnicities, religious beliefs, skin colors and other physical properties, can get equal access to their academic pursuit; that is, there exists no form of discrimination whatsoever.

In summary, in this section of analysis, the adjustment strategies of HMS were analyzed to see how HMS successfully operate in different social, cultural, and political settings. According to the results of my analysis, there are three main strategies used by HMS to adjust themselves in a country where they operate. These adjustment strategies are attractiveness, inclusiveness, and harmonization. With attractiveness, the HM tries to make their schools appealing with international levels of academic success or quality, a fostering and teaching of global moral values, and the sincere display and practice of care for each student. The HMS apply inclusiveness as a second adjustment strategy in order to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment for all children without considering their social, economic, demographic, or religious backgrounds. Finally, harmonization assists and allows HMS get accepted by the local community they live in, blend in with the society, and establish a home for themselves.

## **6. RESEARCH FINDINGS: POLITICAL CLIMATE ANALYSIS**

This chapter shares the results from the analysis of data related to the third research question of this study, which investigates the role of political climate in the performance of the HMS. The HM is considered to be a civil transnational social movement operating beyond Turkish borders with activities in education, culture, and dialogue, initiated mainly by students who have graduated from HMS and/or the movement's other institutions. It has been argued that millions of participants of Hizmet around the world are acting collectively to build schools, universities, dialogue centers and charitable organizations under the title "Hizmet" which is a Turkish word meaning service (Ebaugh, 2010). The basic principles of the movement are rooted in Islam's universal values, such as love of creation, sympathy for humanity, compassion, and altruism. The movement itself argues that it is distinguished for its support of democracy, its openness to globalization, its progressiveness in integrating tradition with modernity, and its humanistic outlook (Gulen Institute, 2010).

Moreover, the HM is not a governmental or a state-sponsored organization. It neither emerged as a result of official policy nor as a state ideology. It is not contentious, oppositional, conflict-ridden or political. It is neither a cult, nor a sect, and it started with faith-initiated, non-contentious, cultural and educational service projects. It is an apolitical social, altruistic set of actions and projects. As reported by an anthropologist, Nilufer Gole (2008), the movement, as a result of its growth, has taken advantage of the conceptual and legal frameworks established by transnational movements and globally positioned non-governmental organizations.

As a transnational social movement, political climates play important roles in HM schools in different countries. As explained in the fifth principle of resource mobilization theory, the success of social movements is influenced by the political climate. RMT sees the political climate as a critical factor for acquiring resources and getting support from insiders and outsiders of a social movement (Brown, 2014). Therefore, I will explore the role of political climate in my research by asking RQ 3, “What is the role of political climate in the performance of HM Schools?”

According to my analysis, I identified several important codes to explain the current political climate for the HM schools as visualized below (See Figure 6.1). There are two main important factors affecting the political climates of the HM schools. The first one comes from Turkey as a home country, providing political support/pressure to the HM schools and the second factor originates from the host country where the HM schools operate. Turkey, as a home country, plays a critical role in the political climate of the HM schools with its initial support at the beginning and political pressure nowadays. Similarly, countries where the HM schools operate also play vital roles for the success and development of the HM schools by providing supportive political environments as host countries.

When we look at the role of the Turkish government in the political climate of the HM schools, we first see the initial support provided by them to assist the HM in opening their schools in different countries. When the HM had problems getting permission to open its schools in some countries, Turkish politicians and bureaucrats played supportive roles to assist the movement's global education initiative in the 1990s. However, we see drastic changes in the attitude of Turkish governments towards the HM and its schools after 2012. Due to political rifts between the AKP and the HM, the Turkish government began a disruptive

political campaign against the HM and its schools globally. While the Turkish government started a massive campaign at home by shutting down all organizations, schools, and other entities affiliated with the HM, and putting people in jail due to their links to the HM, it also started to use its diplomatic and political powers in other countries in order to shut down the HM schools and extradite HM school administrators and teachers to Turkey. While some countries have cooperated with the Turkish government's requests, most of them responded negatively and let the HM schools continue to operate in their countries. The efforts of the Turkish government are still active, and I have had a first-hand opportunity to observe and interview people about this topic with the present research participants. In the next section, I present my analysis concerning the role of political climate for the HM schools by providing the data from the observations and in-depth-interviews I conducted or had someone else conduct during my research project.



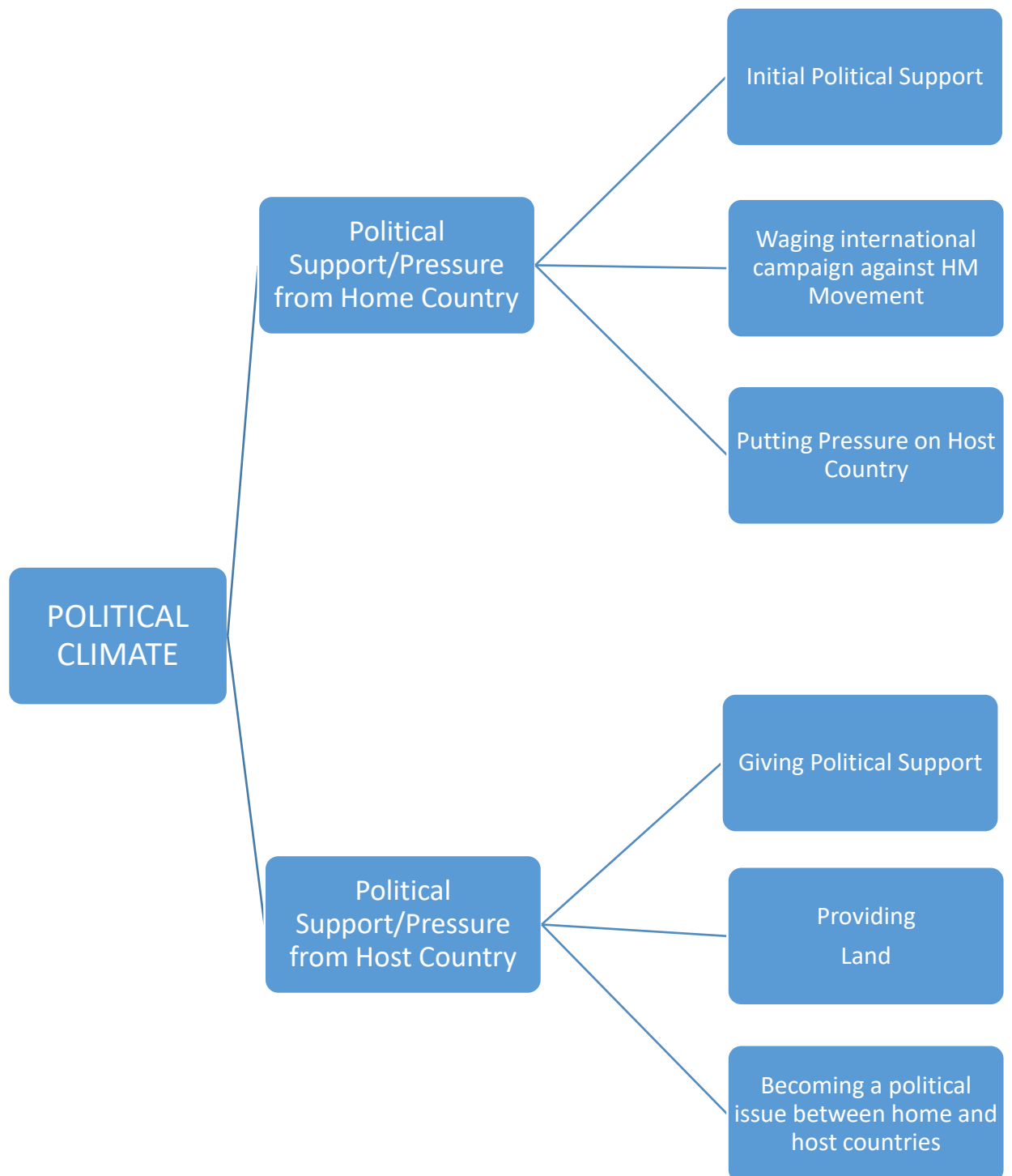


Figure 6.1. Political Climates' Codes

### **6.1. Political Support/Pressure from Home Country**

The HM started to open its schools in different countries at the beginning of the 1990s. Even though the HM had schools in Turkey since the 1970s, they started a global education initiative during the 1990s. The timing of the opening of the HM schools at the international level coincided with the onset of the world's globalization movement. According to Kuru (2005), the collapse of the Soviet Union provided a significant opportunity for the movement. The HM opened its first schools outside of Turkey in the former Turkic Republics with the collapse of the Soviet Union (Kuru, 2005). Kuru also states, the HM developed a pro-globalization view in the 1990s and throughout the later decades. Since then, the Movement has benefited from the international opportunity structures shaped by globalization, in a number of ways. Mainly, globalization weakened state control over the prevailing social, cultural, and economic life of many countries (Kuru, 2005; Penaskovic, 2007), and this loosening of control provided opportunities for the movement's institutional diffusion into more than 170 countries.

According to the resource mobilization theory, the HM would have needed political support to obtain the material and non-material resources for establishing schools in different countries around the world. As discussed above in the resource mobilization section, the HM already gets financial support from its supporters, businesses, and participants who are willing to work at the HM schools after graduating from various universities. However, the HM schools needed more resources especially non-material resources such as legitimacy, acceptance, and recognition in the host country to start their school projects (Fuchs, 2006). During the 1990s, the HM received political support from Turkish political leaders such as Turgut Ozal, Suleyman Demirel, and Bulent Ecevit who were the presidents and prime

ministers of Turkey back then and supported the opening of HM schools in some countries. For example, a teacher from one of the Georgian HM schools explained the role of the political support of Suleyman Demirel, the 9<sup>th</sup> President of Turkey, who helped initiate and establish HM schools in Georgia:

Well as I have heard, Demirel College opened in 1993 in Tbilisi. I wasn't there back then, but I'll still tell you what I know. People from Turkey came to Georgia in 1991, and they managed to open the school in 1993 in spite of many obstacles. Some obstacles they encountered were the difficult economic conditions and domestic troubles in Georgia as they had just finished a war, and the differences in culture, nationality, and religion. So in the country, there were some security problems and financial problems. Because of the war, there were still some domestic disturbances, and even if we were neighboring countries, the Georgian people didn't know the Turkish people so well. These were some of the obstacles that the Turkish businessmen came across when establishing the school. These were all challenging problems that made it hard to establish and run a school here. However, Suleyman Demirel, the Turkish president at that time, helped to establish the school. He sent a letter to the Georgian government. The previous minister of education in Georgia didn't initially let the school open, but after that, he was quite helpful. With the help of the Turkish president and the minister of Georgia, the school was opened. That's why our first college is called Demirel.

Even though the Turkish Governments did not provide any material resources such as financial support or human resources for HM schools, former Presidents Turgut Ozal and Suleyman Demirel sent letters to the leaders of countries where HM schools needed political support (Tastekin, 2014). These letters provided political support for the HM schools to build trust and legitimacy in the eyes of politicians and officials at the host countries. The HM schools then were opened using private entrepreneurship approaches according to free-market principles and emerged where political climates were permissive and open to starting an education business. In my research, I noted that, Nigeria and Cambodia were good fits for this type of initiative. In Nigeria, the HM participants obtained support from the host country, and

they did not encounter any problems with the Nigerian government. Similarly, the HM entrepreneurs did not encounter any obstacles from the Cambodian government to open their schools in that country. One Nigerian parent who played a role in the opening of the first HM school in the country explained his efforts:

I will tell you one story, back in 2004 when we started. I met with the then Minister of State for Abuja, and I had a discussion with him. He said when he was the Minister of State for FCT, that was when NTIC came to Nigeria and that was when they wanted a place, and he granted them space. Because then they were looking for investors. Nigerians welcome them. It was a good opportunity for this country to have them. NTIC has opened a lot of opportunity for this country.

Later on, the ruling party, AKP came into office in 2002, and it still holds the political power in Turkey. At the beginning, the HM and the AKP had good relationships and had no conflicts. Turkish Ministers, Prime Ministers, and Presidents even visited HM schools in different countries when they made an official visit to these countries, and members of the AKP (BBC, 2016) applauded these schools. However, when the AKP and HM started to display differences and conflicting viewpoints around 2012, the Turkish government started to put pressure on the HM first at the national level and then at the international level. Even though the AKP came into office with appealing promises for the Turkish society such as modern democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and joining the EU, these promises started to fade away after 2011, during the third term of the party's political leadership of the country. Especially, Recep Tayyip Erdogan started seeking and amassing more power in order to create an authoritarian-type government. Moreover, there were several political corruption allegations against the members of the cabinet and their close relatives. The leader of the HM, Fethullah Gulen, and his readers started to criticize the political leadership for not following

their original promises and commitments and asked the government to get back on the track of modern democracy and EU membership. These resentments and criticisms about the government started a bloody fight between the Justice and Development Party and the HM. When Turkey experienced the coup attempt in July 2016, the AKP hastily accused HM participants for being behind it. Then, the Turkish government declared the HM a 'terrorist organization' and started a massive crackdown against HM organizations, schools, and its participants. All activities of HM including education, charity, and other social activities were banned, and all organizations, schools, and universities which are affiliated with HM were expropriated by the government without considering or undergoing any due process of law.

Due to a political battle in Turkey, the Turkish government has initiated an international campaign against the HM and its schools. It has requested countries to shut down HM schools and extradite school administrators and teachers to Turkey. However, according to a BBC Report (2016), the Turkish governments' efforts to close down the HM schools have not been successful due to the opposition of the host countries. HM schools in other countries including Nigeria and Cambodia are still open even though the Turkish government calls to close them.

From my observations in Nigeria, the HM has presented a successful education model, which has received wide acceptance, recognition and most importantly appreciation in Nigeria. Despite this fact, the Turkish president, Erdogan has declared war on the HM, not only in Turkey but also on a global scale. The Turkish government made many accusations against the Hizmet Movement institutions, which serve and operate in Nigeria with over 1,500 Nigerian personnel. To denounce these allegations, Nigerian parents organized a press conference, in which parents and alumni expressed their positive

perceptions of Hizmet schools. The common theme of the press conference was how Hizmet Movement schools promote peace, individual virtues and moral values, as opposed to the allegations. The HM participants also paid many visits to government officials and parents to reach out them and inform them about the Turkish government's accusations. These Hizmet volunteers were welcomed and received great support during these visits. During such visits, locals expressed their trust and praise for the HM. The movement is valuable for Nigerians, as they serve with passion and enthusiasm to raise well-educated and morally developed generations for Nigeria. They found the Turkish government's political demands irrational as they have personally witnessed Hizmet's activities and gotten to know Hizmet volunteers for more than a decade. Instead of taking the Turkish government's accusations seriously, they actually encouraged Hizmet volunteers to continue and multiply the services they have been doing for years. One teacher from Nigerian HM schools commented on this issue:

We are aware of the war of attrition by the Turkish government against Hizmet. It is rather unfortunate that our government is calling us terrorists and they are inciting countries and the government against us. We are happy that Nigerians and their government are aware of our businesses and dealings with them. All our conducts and disposition are averse to terrorism, radicalism, and extremism. Our students are properly educated and enlightened to shun all these excessiveness. Our old students held a press conference to lend their voice and send a strong signal to the Turkish government to desist from the campaign of calumny orchestrated by the ruling party. Even many top government officials patronize our schools. They all support us because they know us.

In fact, even though a positive relationship between Turkey and Nigeria had been developing in the recent years, the two countries had a diplomatic quarrel over their conflicting views on the HM schools. When the Turkish government asked the Nigerian government to shut down

the HM schools, the Nigerian Government responded negatively and decided to keep the schools open. This created a political crisis between the two countries. The Turkish government even deported some Nigerian students who attended HM universities in Turkey because of Nigeria's negative response to the request of the Turkish government to close HM schools (The Sun, 2016). However, Nigeria, as a sovereign state, refused to shut down HM schools because it sees these schools as an asset and valuable benefit for its educational system. One school administrator from Nigerian HM schools explained this:

We are not new people here; we have been in Nigeria since 1998. They have known us for who we are; we are transparent, trustworthy and straightforward in our dealings with people and the government agencies. Our students and parents are the good ambassadors of the school who propagated our image to the world. Our students are the special products we are molding in our school. Since the majority of them are doing well and cutting a right image for us, we are satisfied with them and the people who patronize us. Substantial numbers of our graduating students are academically and morally successful in all their fields of human endeavor. This is our strong point. When the Turkish political agent came to Nigeria to pollute the minds of the government and her people saying most of the Turkish teachers are terrorists, a lot of people were wondering how people who use every avenue to campaign and preach against fundamentalism, terrorism, and radicalization can be involved in terrorism. Which terrorist will be educating and assisting students to be a better citizen? This and many other questions are begging for answers from those who tagged the Hizmet movement as a terrorist movement. All that we stand for and teach our students is contrary to what these people are saying. The Nigerian government and people are not dullards. They have been observing us since we have set our foot in their soil; thus they know us and what we stand for. They cannot believe in unknown people who came here to trash our image. All their effort to tag us as terrorists in Nigeria and other parts of the world fail to be significant because they have not achieved their goals in any form. I am unhappy as a citizen of Turkey because my country that is supposed to protect my image is the one terrorizing me and my colleagues from all angles. We have contributed a lot to Turkey in terms of its economy and its prestige. Just because of our relationship with Nigeria many Nigerians visited Turkey for business, and many Nigerian students are schooled there. All is possible because of our mutual and good relationship with our students, parents and the Nigerian government.

In Georgia too, nowadays, there is intense pressure on the schools from the Turkish government. Turkey is Georgia's largest trading partner. 18% of Georgia's import comes from Turkey. Relying on these strong economic relations, Turkey has pushed limits and tried everything to shut down the Hizmet schools, extradite all Turkish teachers, and stop Hizmet activities in Georgia. Turkish officials have been accusing Hizmet schools for two years with accusations, such as terrorism and money laundering. However, the pressure from the Turkish government and allegations did not impact the Hizmet schools too much. Georgia has been a country where democracy and the rule of law flourish, as it has been negotiating with the EU and complying with its international agreements. Thus, it is challenging for the Turkish government to force Georgian politicians to shut down these schools. Closing schools in Georgia is not as easy as closing schools in nondemocratic and authoritarian countries. In a press conference, the Turkish ambassador to Georgia even alleged that these schools are raising "terrorists." The local people did not welcome the ambassador's comments. They declared a strong refutation of his accusations. They stated that they have never witnessed any of these allegations ever since their first introduction to teachers, students, and other Hizmet volunteers. From my interviews, the alumni do not accept the accusations either. They intended to organize a rally to speak up against the allegations; however, school administrators recommended them to show their reactions in a more peaceful way without interrupting the social order. Then, they have used social media to inform the Georgian people about the contributions of the Hizmet movement to Georgia and the reasons why the Turkish government is attacking Hizmet schools, not only in Georgia but also all over the world. Many alumni stated that they would already be the first ones to have witnessed the alleged crimes if any of those accusations against the



schools were true. Many of the alumni spent 16 years in these schools, 12 years in primary education and four years in college. However, it is still quite challenging for the Georgian government to resist Turkey, a country with about 80 million population and strong economic ties with Georgia. Under the intense political and economic pressure from the Turkish government, the Georgian government has started conducting special inspections of Hizmet schools. After conducting extremely sensitive investigations of the schools, Georgian authorities revoked the license of only one Hizmet school, which was given one year before by the same commission, to fix a minor violation, which would normally not have caused any closure. Following the cancelation of the license, one of the members of the committee resigned and announced that the commission had made a political decision under pressure. He emphasized that there was no acceptable reason to cancel the license and shut down the school. He expressed the fact that the HM had spent an extensive effort and provided substantial service to Georgians by teaching human values and promoting universal peace. He expressed that the contributions of Hizmet schools are not fake, but genuine and real. The other five schools and one university still continue to operate.

Similarly, the latest political developments in Turkey inevitably affected the projects in Cambodia. The Turkish Ambassador targeted the schools and alleged that the schools were involved in the coup attempt, which failed on the 15th of July. The Cambodian people and officials were confident that the Hizmet participants had nothing to do with those claims, as they had a good reputation and were known as peaceful and law-abiding people. The Cambodian people gave great support in social media and sent endorsement letters to government offices to keep the schools operating. The Cambodian government has not taken any action against the schools; instead, they renewed the school

license for upcoming years. Many journalists had interviews with parents, students, graduate students, and staff, in which they overwhelmingly denied allegations that accused the Hizmet schools of imposing any religion or political ideology on its participants. When I asked about the current efforts of the Turkish government to close down HM schools in Cambodia, a community leader who works at a public university as a lecturer responded as follows:

I think Cambodia is an independent sovereign state and politics in Turkey don't actually influence politics in Cambodia. It is within the rights of the [Cambodian] government to recognize any institutions that contribute to the development of the country, not because of foreign policy. The Turkish government is trying to crack down on the activities of the movement, but that doesn't affect what happens in Cambodia... the schools remain operational. On top of that, the government and the PM and Ministry of Education actually celebrate the achievements of the schools. So, I think, the recognition is based on merits, not politicization... it's about merits. Such recognition can be considered as support. But I don't know to what extent this can be measured. But I do agree that such action is a sort of endorsement for the schools. The government actually recognizes the existence of the schools and recognizes the contribution of the schools and fantastic words by these schools through the achievements of students. So, I think this is an endorsement from the government.

However, even though the Turkish government's efforts to close down HM schools seem to be unsuccessful globally, it still shows tireless efforts to gain some success one-step at a time. This bitter relationship between the Turkish government and the HM will affect the HM Schools negatively and globally. The attitude of host countries where the HM schools operate will play critical roles in the future of HM schools.

## **6.2. Political Support/Pressure from Host Country**

As discussed above, the expansion of the HM schools globally started around the 1990s when globalization increased due to several factors such as the collapse of Soviet Union, the invention of the Internet, the intensification of global economic activities, the ease of travel, etc. HM schools first started to open in the Turkic States when they gained their independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Then, HM schools started to expand their networks through African countries, Asian and southeast Asian countries, and Western countries. As a transnational movement, the HM has sought opportunities in every country to open its schools since the 1990s. Starting this kind of global education initiative forced the HM to prioritize its financial and human resources by assessing the political environment in each country regarding the feasibility of opening a school and its sustainability. In order to minimize these costs, while the HM depended on its participants for financial and human resources, it sought the support of the host country to provide land or investment for its schools to initiate its school projects.

When we look at the historical development of the Hizmet Movement in Cambodia, the HM came to serve Cambodia around 1993. Due to the financial constraints and political disorder, the first school only started in 1997 in a relatively small villa. This was during the civil war in Cambodia when political turmoil was at its peak. However, these circumstances did not hinder volunteers from working towards their missions. With limited human resources and funds, the Movement's first participants and volunteers in the country applied to the Ministry of Education. It is important to mention that between 1993 and 1998 two cabinets and two Ministers of Education governed the country. Having completed the paperwork, they obtained a license and proceeded to find a building in the center of the

capital, Phnom Penh. There were five volunteers, and they all worked in the renovation of the building where they converted it into a school. The next challenge was finding students, which was the hardest job of all. The volunteers visited public schools, talked to parents and even went to villages to choose students to study in a new 'foreign' school. Finally, the school started with three students and finished the year with around 30 students. Throughout the years, the number of students increased as well as the number of buildings. As of 2017, there are around 2,000 students operating in 4 campuses; The Nursery and Kindergarten Campus (2014), Primary School Campus (2007), Secondary and High School Campus (2005) and University Campus (2010).

Similarly, Hizmet volunteers first came to Georgia in 1991. Hizmet's first school in Georgia, which is also their second school all over the world, was opened in Tbilisi in 1993, two years after Georgia seceded from the Soviet Union. It was a great achievement for the Hizmet volunteers to open a school, during a civil war. It was an extremely difficult period for the founding volunteers, as most Georgians were escaping from a conflict in Abazia, a dangerous province in the country. Despite the difficulties and extreme hardship, they were successful in opening the first school through their incredible determination and ambition. Currently, there are six Hizmet schools along with a university serving in Georgia. While all Hizmet schools in Georgia started with Turkish administrators and staff, many of the administrations of these schools were transferred to Georgians. Currently, Georgian principals administrate five out of the six schools in the country. Georgians play a significant role in the administration and the operation of Hizmet Schools. The movement's Blacksea International University has become one of Georgia's most prestigious universities. Besides schools, Hizmet volunteers even founded an association

for industrialists and businessmen, which is called GURSIAD.

According to my research, the HM has been in in Nigeria since 1997. The HM volunteers first came to the Kano Province. After a year of assessment, they decided to open their first school in the capital. It started in a rental villa used as a residence by one of Nigeria's former presidents with only seven students; however, it completed the 1998-1999 academic year with 42 students. The increasing demand from the public encouraged school administrators to open more schools. In the following year, they opened the second school in Kano Province, which was followed by another two schools in Lagos and Kaduna provinces in 2002. In 2006, the then governor of the Yobe Province, Mamman Ali, paid a visit to the movement's Kano Girls School where two of his daughters were studying. While he was very much happy and satisfied with the education his kids were receiving from the school, he was also concerned with improving the school's physical conditions. He was very much touched by the school's education system which was based on teaching math and the sciences on a high level and also teaching universal human values such as respect, love and peaceful-coexistence. He was a firm believer in peace and was well aware of Nigeria's everyday realities regarding issues of peace and co-existence. Therefore, he believed that these schools should be supported and opened in more places. During his visit, when he learned the school had issues with electricity power, he donated a 100KW generator. The close relationship between the governor and school administrators has continued since then. He encouraged school administrators to extend the school activities and open new branches. He offered many options, including a land plot and rental buildings, to open another school. He even offered Hizmet volunteers to take over a state-run project for a public school. The governor continued his support by sponsoring 100

students to be educated in Nigerian Hizmet Schools and sponsoring another 150 students for higher education in Turkish universities. During one of his visits to the Hizmet schools, he said, “If even one of these students will serve their country and its values, it is worth all these efforts.” The Hizmet Schools now serve more than 800 students in the Yobe Province. In the Ogun Province, as of 2006, girls and boys can receive their education in a boarding school, located close to the Logan border. In 2009, the then Nigerian president Umar Musa Yaradua encouraged Hizmet volunteers to open a university. He provided great support by asking the governor of Abuja, Modibbo, to allocate a plot in the center of Abuja for construction. The university was constructed in a short time and is named Nile University. It includes a Law School opened in 2015 and a Medical School opened in 2016. The university offers master’s programs in various areas and they are currently getting ready to offer PhD programs. Currently there are 16 schools serving 4000 students in 6 provinces of Nigeria. In addition, The Nile University provides education to 2,000 students in undergraduate and graduate programs. However, there were several challenges for the HM when they tried to realize their plan for these schools. One school administrator from Nigerian HM schools explained the challenges they faced since the inception of their plans in Nigeria and how they overcame the problems:

Though I was not here at the inception, I learnt from the people who were here then that they encountered a lot of administrative cumbersome...rules and regulation and above all financial problems. Luckily with the help of Allah, they were able to surmount the challenges and this is where we are now. The second year, the government gave land to the school. It took time for them to gather money to do something at the very beginning. Because the land is situated in the heart of Abuja, many people then were ready to buy the land. Having given the land to school, the government mandated the school to start development or else they may be forced to revoke the land. This was almost six or eight months after

securing the land. This made the forerunner administrators reach out to participants of Hizmet for donations to build a little structure on the land. The land is 60,000 square meters. When they started building on the land, the government gave up the idea of revoking the land. Currently, we have 1,500 students receiving education within the premises. If I may say this, NTIC started with seven students in 1998 on a rented building. As a result of self-sacrifice before the end of the year the number of students reached 42. Since then the number has increased. Thanks to Allah for this achievement.

HM school administrators and teachers acknowledge that they could not open schools and could not be successful without the permission from the host country and support from the local community. It seems the biggest assistance from host countries to start HM schools is providing land to construct a school. One teacher from Nigerian HM schools commented on this:

Of course, the government really supported the first group of Turkish people that came to Nigeria. Without their support, it will have been impossible to get the land here in Abuja and elsewhere where we have schools across the country. With the management source for the money to build this structure, but without land from the government it, would have been impossible to build anything.

Besides material resources, HM schools have gradually gained non-material resources such as legitimacy, approval, and appreciation from the society and the host government where they operate. As discussed above in the adjustment strategies section, HM schools applied several adjustment strategies such as attractiveness, inclusiveness, and harmonization in order to strengthen their positions in the host country. At the beginning, permissive political climates enabled the HM schools to prove their academic success in the eyes of the people in the host country. Later, the success of students from the HM schools on national and international levels has created positive credit for HM schools. Especially, when the Turkish government started to wage a negative campaign against HM schools, their credit and

reputation prevented their closure by the host countries. During my research, there was intensive political pressure from the Turkish government on host countries to close the HM schools down, and the efforts of Turkish officials are still ongoing. For example, the Turkish government has requested the Georgian government to close down the Georgian HM schools from the highest political level and has asked the government to extradite the Turkish school administrators and teachers working at Georgian HM schools to Turkey. According to the latest news, Turkish diplomats and Georgian officials are still discussing how to solve this issue (Maisaia, 2017). One teacher from the Georgian HM schools explained why the Georgian government is hesitant to respond to the Turkish government's request positively:

We see here that the Georgian government is quite democratic and that is why they indicate that the schools here in Tbilisi support the education of Georgia and prepare them for a bright future. If a country is democratic, they try to understand whether all these accusations are true or not. They check and examine all schools. If they see any problem, they do not let them continue anymore but if there is no problem, as a democratic country, they just help them do more and better. I think this is what the Georgian government does. We have the same mission as that of the Georgian government. They and we want to raise generations who have universal, moral values. This is what we do here. This is the reason why those people left their countries and are traveling around the world. The Georgian government supports our schools. They have even become sponsors of our international organizations and Olympiads. All our works here are transparent. Whenever inspectors come to visit our schools, they tell that there is no problem in these schools in terms of education, maintenance and official documents. So when you ask why they support you, although there is political pressure from the Turkish government to shut them down, the answer is the democracy and reality.

When I asked about the current efforts of the Turkish government to close down HM schools in Georgia, a Georgian community leader who works as a professorial head of the Department of Eastern Studies at a University responded:



....The Turkish Government's approach to the issue of closing these schools is another matter. I think all this will end in the short run since I strongly hold that the Turkish schools, i.e., the schools of Hizmet Movement showed the entire world what the Turkey of 21st century should be like. I am sure that the misunderstanding which now exists between the Turkish authorities and the representatives of these schools will come under control under the next government. And I think they will soon realize that their attempts to make the chief executives of different foreign countries close these schools is an outrageous mistake and a very wrong step, since I don't really think that any government will ever desire to drag Turkey back to old days by turning a democratic and European Turkey with its western values into a traditional and feudal country. I strongly believe that the Hizmet Movement will pass through hard times which God sent to it now and will make all of us see a real Hizmet soon.

Similarly, the Turkish government carried diplomatic efforts in Cambodia to close down HM schools in the country. According to the news (NSNBC International, 2016), the Turkish Ambassador to Phnom Penh conveyed the Turkish government's request to shut down HM schools to the Cambodian Foreign Minister in August 2016. However, the Cambodian government has not yet decided about HM schools, and they are still open in the country. When I asked about the accusations from the Turkish government about HM schools and its efforts to close them in Cambodia, one member of the Senate from Cambodia explained:

The government supported the school as you can see in IFLC (The International Festival of Language and Cultures) with the representative from a different Ministry which improved the abilities of students. The school followed the policy of the Ministry of Education which is why the Ministry of Education supported it. I do not know about the pressure from the Turkish government, but as long as they gave a good education and followed the Ministry of Education in Cambodia, they do not have to worry about shutting down because they did not do anything wrong. I do not know about other governments, but the Zaman School is in Cambodia, and if they are helping Cambodia, they are doing a good job.

Moreover, the HM schools have forced a diplomatic crisis to unfold between Nigerian and Turkish governments. The Turkish government has requested Nigeria to shut down HM

schools but could not get a positive result, and the HM schools are still open in Nigeria. When I was in Nigeria to conduct my observations and interviews, there was a hot dispute between the two governments due to HM schools. When I asked about the accusations from the Turkish government about HM schools and its efforts to close them in Nigeria, a Nigerian professor who works at a public university responded:

In my country here in Nigeria, Hizmet when they provide something for you, they provide it with all their heart. They are very sincere in whatever they do. The people and government of Nigeria know that the people behind this movement are committed, very sincere and God-fearing. They are here just for the purpose of serving humanity nothing to do with politics. Fethullah Gulen is far removed from politics, and most of his followers are running away from anything that has to do with politics. What I want you to know is that we Nigerians know that this school is of great benefit to us. They have contributed, and they will continue to contribute to the development of this great country. If you want to stop the development of this country, then close these schools. Nobody can stop this progress, it is like a moving train, it has started moving, and nobody can stop it. Instead of stopping it, think of how to come and compete with it and bring something different. If you are thinking of closing it, I don't think any sensible government will support this. In Nigeria, the schools we have are not enough, and we want more. Then how can somebody tell you to close or reduce the existing ones, when rather we want more? Nigerians are asking investors to come establish more schools and businesses, and you are here to tell the government to close the existing one; honestly, nobody will listen to you. Don't deceive yourself because Nigerians will not allow that one to happen.

As explained above, it seems the efforts of the Turkish governments to close down HM schools actually have created counterproductive results. Even though host countries have increased their inspection and reviewed these schools' role in their country, these efforts helped HM schools to prove their innocence and increased their legitimacy in the society. For example, the Nigerian government and Nigerian people have embraced HM schools more, and they have learned much about the role of HM schools in their education due to an ongoing debate between countries.

Since the HM is supported by the public in these countries, their governments approve their citizens' support of this movement. It seems the movement gains the approval of the society in these countries, and this support helps them survive in such a politically pressing situation. The Turkish government's anti-democratic policies and President Erdogan's hostility towards the Hizmet Movement aroused curiosity for it around the globe.

Evidently, it seems that the Hizmet Movement schools, which are seen as the biggest export commodity of Turkey in the last decades, have become the victims of a political battle between the Turkish government and the HM (Tastekin, 2014). The political climate has become less permissive and even more hostile in the last five years for HM schools due to political issues between the Justice and Development Party and HM. As a result, Turkey will lose one of its most precious opportunities to have "volunteer ambassadors" in each country around the globe where HM schools represent Turkey and the Turkish culture successfully.

In summary, this chapter analyzed the role of political climate in the performance of HMS in three different countries, Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria. The results of my analysis indicate that political support and political pressure coming from both home country and host country are critical for HMS. The home country, Turkey, provides important resources; both material and non-material resources, for HMS and its supportive role at the beginning of HMS projects helped the HM initiate its school projects in several countries including my research countries. However, current pressure from Turkey against the HM and HMS also create problems for the schools and affect its global presence and performance. The Turkish government's international campaign against HM negatively affects HMS and its activities in my research countries. Diplomatic pressure from Turkey on host countries also creates tensions and stresses not only between Turkey and the host

countries (Nigeria, Georgia, and Cambodia) but also between host countries and the HMS. Similarly, political support and pressure from host countries are also critical for the performance of HMS since host countries provide the educational environment and legitimacy in the eyes of the people living in the country. Even though they provided political support and even gave lands for the construction of HMS in their countries, current pressures from the Turkish government create ongoing issues and problems for HMS in these research countries.

## **7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

This qualitative study provides an important analysis of the Hizmet Movement Schools from the perspective of the Resource Mobilization Theory in three different countries, namely Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria. The main research questions of this study attempted to answer how the HM mobilizes its resources to achieve its educational goals, what kinds of strategies they use to adjust to different cultures, and the role of political climate in the performance of the HM schools. To answer these three broad research questions, this study began by describing the qualitative procedures for the collection and analysis of the data, gave an overview of the Hizmet Movement Schools in three different countries, recalled their mission, historical background, theoretical framework and concluded with a summary of the research responses.

The first chapter provided information about the purpose, significance, and research questions of this study. The second chapter involved a literature review about the Resource Mobilization Theory, the HM, its schools, and criticisms or allegations about the HM and

its schools. The third chapter presented information on the research design and methodology. The fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters presented the findings that emanated from the analysis of the 66 interviews, participant observations, and other materials collected that allowed for a detailed discussion of themes and subthemes that surfaced through the multiple levels of analysis. In this chapter, a summary of the main research findings, conclusions, a discussion of the theoretical and practical implications of these findings, and the importance of the success and failure of the movement in question are explained below.

This research provides a detailed analysis of the HM schools in three different countries from the perspective of the resource mobilization theory. It focuses on the findings from these research settings, explains how the HM mobilizes its resources, explores the strategies it uses to adjust to local environments, demonstrates how it is affected by the political climate of home and host countries, and provides a comparative analysis of HM schools operating in three different continents.

This research has made significant contributions to the resource mobilization theory by studying, for the first time ever, a transnational social movement in three different countries under the name and framework of this theory, one that is based in America. This study has made empirical contributions and conducted a comparative analysis of three different countries, having obtained similar findings from each.

According to my research in the three countries, the HMS in the three different cultural settings have similar broad objectives and results with some differences in each one of them. I have noticed that the teachers, school administrators, and other HM workers

in each country all look at Gulen for inspiration, as he has the role of a leader (servant and transformational) for each one of them. During my observations and interviews with parents, students, and community leaders for all of the three countries, some of them related the motivation of the school administrators and teachers with the teachings and guidance of Fethullah Gulen. From my informants and my own data, I witnessed the shared worldview of the Hizmet participants in each country and the similar ways they were acting to achieve their philosophy. In all of the countries, the teachers and administrators' worldviews and philosophy were visibly reflected in their lifestyle. Their worldviews, I noted, were each very similar to the one Gulen often expresses in his books and messages he sends to reach out to the followers and inspire them. This common philosophy or worldview that Gulen has inspired in his followers in Nigeria, Georgia and Cambodia, has motivated and brought out the hard work activism, the collective action, the passionate dedication and the holistic education model, of the movement, that I have observed in each country.

According to my participant observations and deep-interviews, there are several individual factors influencing many of the HM participants in Nigeria, Cambodia, and Georgia to take on roles in the global education initiative of the HM. The first individual motivation is the feeling of and the desire for doing something meaningful and important for the world as a responsible citizen and a worthy human. The second individual motivation is God, religion and a humanitarian philosophy. Many of the school administrators and teachers in all three countries believe they will be rewarded, praised and loved by God if they work, act and live for the sake of others. In all the three countries, the HM participants perform the work needed from them as a holy duty, inspired by the Islamic traditions and the Turkish culture of helping others. They serve humanity and try to work for the sake of peace and love

in the world. They believe that their service will help and save humanity, as well as please God. The third individual motivation for the school administrators and teachers I researched on in the countries is the feeling of paying back to the movement. Most of them have been raised in and taught by the HM and this type of relationship has created the feeling of being part of and owing something to the movement. As HM participants, school administrators and teachers see themselves as representatives of the HM, ready to serve anywhere in the world and help anyone they can, in order to realize the goals and objectives of the movement. They feel obliged to pay back to the movement for the help it has given them, by doing some kind of service in return. Finally, the fourth common motivation, especially in the HMS teachers, is the passion and duty to teach and the belief in the power of education. The HM school principals and teachers in the three countries all believe in their crucial roles of changing the world through education, and they see education as the main remedy for the contemporary problems of the world. They know they are under surveillance by their students all the time and their behaviors will be references and models for them in the present and future.

Furthermore, I have realized that the HM schools in all three countries similarly believe in focusing micro changes to reach macro goals. When they see some positive changes at the micro or local level, they become happy and satisfied no matter how small, with an eagerness to cause more. Moreover, the people are driven to continue teaching and working in these schools when seeing the results of their efforts in the field, which create positive changes in people's lives by giving young generations a chance at a better life. The schools and its workers all agree with the saying "Actions speak louder than words" no matter the country or place. They see each person they encounter as a unique opportunity for them to teach, help out, and influence his/her life in a helpful way.

When we look at the profiles of administrators and teachers at HM schools in three countries, we can see they all graduated from the top universities and colleges of Turkey, and they mainly preferred education majors in order to be teachers in HM schools at home or abroad. Even though most of them had opportunities to pursue degrees in more prestigious and profitable majors such as medicine, engineering, etc., they preferred to take majors in education, in order to take roles in the HM global education initiative. Even after finishing their undergraduate education, although there are many opportunities for the HM participants to have a better job and a better life, they prefer to work at the HM schools in order to work towards the goals of the movement, which they see as a religious obligation and a personal commitment. The devotion of the teachers and administrators is another commonality worthy of mention that makes the HMS special and the same, no matter the place.

When I asked about how HM schools were established in the three countries, I learned that almost all of them were constructed with the money donated by philanthropic businessmen who support the HM schools. First, the leader of the HM, Gulen, played a critical role in motivating his followers to work at the HMS and give monetary support to start up school construction projects in the three countries. Most of these schools in Cambodia, Georgia, and Nigeria were established with the monetary donations of Turkish businessmen. As explained above, while the human resources of HM schools have mostly come from its participants, financial resources have come from businessmen who make voluntary donations to the movement.

I have learned that there were many obstacles faced when establishing these schools. The movement overcame many difficulties like finding the right place, the right building for the school, getting enough students to start the school, and meeting all the legal



requirements and conditions to start a school, all in countries foreign to a movement of Turkish origin. Besides that, many HM volunteers had to deal with other problems, internal and external, especially when first establishing and maintaining these schools, like issues with language, cultural incompatibility, corruption in the government, poor living conditions in the country and so on. For instance, back when there were only five HM volunteers in Cambodia, they all had to work alone in the renovation of the building, that they manually converted it into a school. Their next challenge was finding students, which was the hardest job of all. However, they still finally managed to achieve all of this during a civil war in Cambodia, right when political turmoil was at its peak. Similarly, it was an extremely difficult period for the founding volunteers of the first Georgian HMS back when they were in the process of establishing and building the school, as most Georgians were escaping from a conflict in Abazia, a dangerous province in the country during yet another civil war. The school administrators and teachers in the three countries all acknowledge that they could not open their schools and could not be successful without permission from the host country and support from the local community. It seems the biggest assistance from all the host countries to start HM schools was providing the land in which to construct the school.

The HM school administrators and teachers in all the researched countries show tireless efforts to efficiently maintain robust financial management of their schools. Even though, at the beginning, they have received donations and borrowed land from the host country to establish the schools and institutions, like when the Nigerian government gave a plot of land in Abuja for the HM to build a school there, they are now trying to stay financially self-sufficient. School administrators mainly take financial responsibility, and they try to get rid of any financial dependency, even on the movement. To achieve sustainability, HM

schools in the three countries all commonly generate revenue mainly from school fees. Families in each country have to pay a decent amount of tuition and fees in order to enroll their kids to the HM schools.

According to my observations and interviews with school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community leaders in three different countries, there are three main strategies used by HMS to adjust themselves in a country where they operate. These adjustment strategies are attractiveness, inclusiveness, and harmonization.

The schools in each country that I analyzed organized weekly meetings and gatherings for the school administrators and teachers to discuss student performance, academic issues, the school curricula, etc. These meetings served for the purposes of teaching and advising the administrators and teachers on any school issues and consulting with them about school decisions and plans. They aimed at enhancing school education, bettering school conditions and improving student experience, knowledge and character. Some other gatherings (generally for the HM participants) were spiritual and religious in that they read books, listened to Gulen's sermons and discussed religious topics in them. The meetings, overall, functioned to strengthen and improve the collective identity of the school, guiding everyone toward a common goal and helping everyone address their concerns, thoughts, and ideas for the school.

According to my research in the three countries, nearly 15-20% of students in each HMS receive scholarships (some full, some partial) from the school or another HM institution to either attend at a lower cost or for free. The HMS try to increase the socio-

economic diversity of their schools and be inclusive to all hard-working students who cannot afford to pay school fees.

These schools also abide by the laws of any society or country in which they operate. Cambodians, Georgians and Nigerians have placed a lot of hope in the Hizmet Schools in solving their problems in the future. Even though the HM is a religious-based movement, they strictly seem to follow secular curricula in all their schools in these countries. According to my observations and interviews, all HM schools commonly embrace global values of respect for diverse cultures, religions, and societies, no matter the country.

However, in each of the three countries, the Turkish government has pushed limits and tried everything to shut down the Hizmet schools, extradite all Turkish teachers, and stop Hizmet activities. For example, the Turkish ambassador to Cambodia has personally requested the Cambodian government to take action against the Zaman schools (HMS) in the Cambodia, and the Turkish government has asked Nigeria for the closure of 17 schools that they have linked to the HM. The Cambodian, Georgian and Nigerian governments all responded negatively to these requests and allowed the HM schools to continue to operate in their countries. The efforts of the Turkish government are still active, and I have had a first-hand and second-hand opportunity to observe and interview people about this topic with the present research participants. From my observations, the HM has presented a successful education model, which has received wide acceptance, recognition and most importantly appreciation in Cambodia, Georgia and Nigeria. However, even though the Turkish government's efforts to close down HM schools generally seem to be unsuccessful in these countries, it still shows tireless efforts to gain some success one-step at a time. This bitter

relationship between the Turkish government and the HM has affected the HM schools and students negatively in the three countries. For example, due to pressure from the Turkish government, one of the HM schools in Georgia was shut down. On top of that, the Turkish government also deported Nigerian students, due to their attending the HM schools in Nigeria and then transferring to a HM-linked university in Turkey.

In these times of oppression and hardship faced due to the current Turkish state, the teachers and administrators of the HM schools in the three countries all remain focused on their craft, job, and duty. Rather than react to the Turkish government and its infractions, they prefer to persist in doing their jobs, living their lives, and following their personal missions, all the while in fear of persecution by Turkey.

The HM schools have gradually gained legitimacy, approval, and appreciation from the Cambodian, Georgian and Nigerian society and their governments. At the beginning, permissive political climates enabled the HM schools to prove their academic success in the eyes of the people in the three host countries. The success of students from the HM schools on national and international levels then created positive credibility for the schools and the movement. Especially, when the Turkish government started to wage a negative campaign against the HM schools, their credit and reputation prevented their closure by these host countries.

From my research and analysis of the HM in the three countries, I have realized that there are far more things that these schools share than there are differences between them. However, when it comes to these differences, there are still many worth mentioning. I have observed that the parents and the communities of the schools in Cambodia know

much less about the Hizmet Movement and Gulen than do those in Nigeria and Georgia. Instead, the Cambodian HMS are known and perceived more as Turkish schools, even if the number of Turkish teachers in these schools is low. In addition, in contrast with Nigeria and Georgia, Cambodian parents have been criticizing the gender separation in the HM schools. Between the HMS in the three countries, I have also noticed in my research some differences in the mobilization and use of material and non-material resources. For example, the human resources in Cambodia in the number of teachers and administrators directly from the HM, is low relative to Georgia and Nigeria. Moreover, dialogue projects and resources are bigger, more dominant and foremost in Nigeria due to its extreme diversity in religion and ethnicity, than they are in Georgia and Cambodia. Another differing factor is the issue of school pricing in Cambodia and in Nigeria. Even though school administrators and teachers see the school tuition and fees as crucial for financial stability, some parents in Cambodia and a few in Nigeria complain that they are too high. Several families in Cambodia are pleased with the quality of education at HM schools, but they have complained about the increasing school costs every year. One final but major difference among the three was also that Georgia was the only place where a HM school was actually closed down due to pressure from the Turkish government.

The RMT argues that social movements achieve success by effectively mobilizing their resources to fulfill a common objective. The basis for a movement is the acquisition, application, and actuation of its resources. In other words, if the groups that have come together for certain purposes have the necessary resources, a social movement will arise. A movement, therefore, requires there to be a collective control, by a group, of resources

needed to move its plans into action. For example, social relation networks are needed and used by many movements to mobilize and control their resources.

This study of the Hizmet Movement confirms this argument, as the HM uses intelligent strategies to mobilize and utilize its material and non-material resources in order to spread itself globally and achieve its goals. The resource mobilization theory sheds light on the human and financial resources that enable a movement to grow and succeed in its mission. This approach assumes that without such resources, the HM cannot be effective, and that dissent and disaffection alone are not sufficient to create social change via a social movement. If human and financial resources are not available to support the goals of the HM, it will eventually collapse or merge with a movement that is more successful in attaining resources. This study examined both the macro and micro determinants of this process and according to these, the HM, in the three countries, has succeeded in achieving its goals in its community. It has effectively mobilized moral, socio-organizational, human, and material resources to do so.

According to the resource mobilization theorists, groups participating in social movements act for strategic advantages, and individuals act for their own interests. In other words, for a social movement to emerge, it is necessary to carry out and fulfill the financial demands and interests of the “angered” individuals involved in the movement, for the participants are individuals who think and act rationally out of self-regard. The ultimate goal of these rationalist actors in the social movements is to benefit the public and, in a way, themselves. In this respect, individuals do not participate in any movement unless they have certain demands for their own financial interests and for better economic opportunity and circumstance, in general. The RMT emphasizes that participants as a

movement act using rational and strategic decisions. Groups look for and work for strategic advantages, as do individuals who act for their own interests, and that driving force of both is instrumental in a movement's performance.

The RMT is mainly based on interest and an expectation of material gain. However, this approach tends to consider social movements as interest groups with expressed views. The emphasis on resources defines and brings about social movements regarding interests, opportunities, and strategies. This makes it appear as if social movements are mobilized only within the framework of benefits. However, this model of explanation, which is put forward, was not adopted by my research because it is not possible to fully explain social movements solely in terms of money, power, resources, and opportunities. Of course, all these factors are needed for a social movement to take place. However, a social movement like the HM does not act only to find and use resources, but also to deal with social conflicts and change. The RMT states that all members of a movement act rationally, and work towards or for their benefit, and look to their profits as motivation. However, in this research, I have discovered something to the contrary. The participants of the Hizmet Movement do not seek any personal or political benefits, other than spiritual or moral satisfaction. They push themselves to be selfless and seem to work for others' benefits rather than for themselves. They are not motivated by profit or any material gain. As one example of this, I found out about people from Hizmet who graduated from places such as Bogazici University, Turkey's best, top-ranked university, and still moved to Afghanistan to become teachers on a \$300 salary when they could have been making lots more at better jobs in their own home country. Furthermore, I have realized that many teachers, administrators, and participants in the HM schools and institutions all around the globe are

all in situations similar to the one given above. I have noted that there are many people from the movement that have abandoned great opportunities, financial and professional, in their home country, ignored their own needs, comforts and desires, and moved to countries they have never been to before, to work in jobs for wages many times less than what they would potentially earn, had they chosen otherwise. In addition, the adherents often acted only after they planned and reached consensus with others through collective wisdom, discussion, and consultation with other movement participants, which exerted a type of informal social control or regulation over the adherents and prevented them from doing wrong and from pursuing their self-benefits. The commitment of the teachers is another thing worthy of mention that makes the HMS special. I saw many examples of this commitment and the HM participants' general devotion to their cause. This further supports a non-rational aspect of mobilization.

In this context, the RMT does not explain nor account for my finding because rationality and self-gain, two things opposite to what was observed above, are fundamental concepts in the resource mobilization approach. As a major factor that motivates participants to do any sort of activity for a movement, the gains and interests presented to the individual members are foregrounded in the RMT. Motivational benefits and deterrent costs are the main factors that influence individuals' participation in a movement that is guided by this resource mobilization paradigm. The problem lies in the complete dismissal and denial of any psychological and emotional aspects or qualities. By rejecting psychological explanations and prioritizing rational actor theories, the RMT misses the non-rational foundations of seemingly rational actions. Because of this, the resource



mobilization theory falls short in explaining the quality of self-sacrifice in the Hizmet Movement.

The RMT has some shortcomings in its explanation of the HM because it ignores the emotions, psychological states, and complaints of actors when explaining the social movement (Cohen, 1999: 113). According to the RM, however, participants are rational individuals who are aware of their interests. One of the areas where this approach is most strongly emphasized is the "rational actor" approach. With the concept of a rational actor, a profile, that is mobilized with resources, follows resources and has a pragmatic and rational motive, is drawn. Resource mobilization theorists deny the influence of economic decline on a social movement, the belief that emotions and complaints are motivating, and the power and determination gained from psychological factors. Human beings do not only think in complex ways; their thinking is emotional and bounded by many social and cultural forces.

In fact, in my research, I have discovered something to the contrary of the RM approach. I have observed costs, risks, and sacrifices being made by the Hizmet Movement participants that cannot be logically assessed and evaluated by the resource mobilization theory, due to the absence of a profit motive, as there often results negative or zero net gain for these HM participants. The volunteers of this movement seem to be acting solely on an expectation of spiritual satisfaction, favor from God, and/or happiness. The teachers seem to teach, the administrators administrate, the supporting businessmen fund and support, all for and with a certain spiritual pleasure, taking delight in their service. In my study, I saw that the HM participants' faith is involved in every aspect of their lives. The success of the HMS lies in their values such as sacrifice, altruism, compassion, commitment, and

dedication to education. All these analyses forced me to look to alternative theoretical explanations about the motives of HM participants. Durkheim's sociological perspective about religious behavior perfectly explains the non-rational activities of HM participants. As discussed in the analysis section, HM participants do all these altruistic activities due to their spiritual and emotional motivation which is mainly shaped by Gulen's teachings. As discussed by Durkheim (2012), religious behavior is a social behavior and can be analyzed as a group behavior. There are three main features in religious groups: a system of beliefs, a moral community, and rituals. In HM, a system of beliefs is mainly created and continuously updated by the religious leader, Fethullah Gulen. The HM participants socialize into the group rules and norms since their inception to the movement in their early educational life and then they conform to the expectations of the group when they start working at HMS. The working environment of HMS serve as a "social cocoon" (Collins, 1994) for HM participants to obey and follow the norms of HM. Moreover, HM participants acquire emotional energy from each other through weekly gatherings, religious talks, and family visits.

According to many other approaches and what I have noticed in the HM, the lifespan and resilience of a social movement is determined by an emotional unity. This emotional coalescence provides emotional and thinking environments that different people can assimilate into without losing their personality. The coexistence of emotions is an important element in directing the masses and forming a community. In this context, the communication of the emotions and ideas enables members to really "understand those who share the same feelings, not" necessarily, "the same spoken language." as Rumi puts it. Although people may have different religions, races, languages, and cultures, such as

those of the HM, the partnership of their feelings create a synergy of masses. In around 170 countries, Hizmet participants seemed to have managed to build and form "bonds of the heart" with people of many different religions, cultures, and languages. Through and with these bonds of the heart, they succeeded in bringing together universal values, without receiving any backlash. In the countries they moved to, they spoke a language of the heart and soul, as the common language with the local people there. Rather than with words, they entered and stirred the hearts of these people with their actions and behaviors, which resulted in many people including the locals to inherit the cause of Hizmet and/or join the movement. These motivations are non-rational meaning, they are based on emotion, often unconscious, not on rational thought. The problem is that in rejecting psychological explanations and privileging rational actor theories, RMT may have missed the non-rational foundations of seemingly rational actions. This is especially true of religious movements.

However, the HM can be explained, in many ways, through RMT by its amount of resources (such as institutions, the media, capital, and money), their application and their management; using RMT, it can be seen that the HM has been able to mobilize a variety of resources from very different channels through leadership, expertise, social capital, communication, and even logistical support. The HM has successfully turned its spiritual, religious, intellectual, and human resources into effective social capital.

At the forefront of the issues that the resource mobilization theory is criticized for, one is that it ignores the concept of collective identity. Often in response, many movements criticize the rational benefit-cost calculation of the resource mobilization theory for not giving the necessary value to and discounting the concept of collective identity. This

collective identity is what is believed by many to be a driving force as well as the essence of a movement. However, the Resource Mobilization theory indicates that social discontent is universal, but that collective action is not. It states social movements should be understood as explaining collective behaviors with a conflicting perspective. According to RMT, social movements are best explained by variables such as resources, strategies, interests, and organization instead of anything psychologically, ideologically or spiritually based. Collective action is determined by the connection between resources and opportunities. Demands to distribute resources, which emerge from different parts of the society, in different ways, can be considered as the primary reasons for social movements, rather than a “worthy” cause, a social spark, or dogma.

However, I have noticed that in the Hizmet Movement, the individual is often incapable of making a difference. The strength and ability lie in the collective action for the collective good. Individualism is not placed over fellowship. The communal clash and communion of hearts and ideas, the gathering of people, and their symbiotic operation as a group are believed to be their source of success, good fortune, and productivity. Individual pride, arrogance, and selfishness are discouraged and pushed against. In many ways, this belief in intellectual and emotional communion, these attitudes towards fellowship and these methods of collaboration are the sources of sustainability, strength, and success for the movement, more so than its leadership or resources. The collective identity of the Hizmet Movement depends on how a multitude of services, decisions, goals, relationships, and representations are handled and held together. Collective identity is “the general structure of shared understandings, norms, and beliefs.” It is therefore an all-embracing, inclusive notion. The meetings and weekly local gatherings (sohbet) helped

towards building a collective identity for the teachers, administrators and other HM participants. The HM participants' everyday life was structured around the ideas and the mission of the movement, and in places and circumstances, that allowed them the opportunity to mobilize and execute their ideas according to their common beliefs.

The resource mobilization theory also states that a movement can only grow through both insider and outsider support. That is what I have actually discerned in my research, regarding the movement. One of the most important factors for the development and globalization of the Hizmet Movement is its strong, loyal participants on the inside and its friendly supporters from the outside. However, this may not be only due to any form of resource mobilization on Hizmet's part. It also seems to involve a more psychological, spiritual or emotional quality of the HM. I saw in the HM, through my study, a society-centered, humanitarian activism that focuses on broadening and increasing public relations and support and an activism that can successfully mobilize resources for different projects. As per resource mobilization and networking, I have noted that the Hizmet Movement connects their local participants, supporters, and constituencies to media, academia, and local authorities through consistent and transparent channels to give them a voice, which multiplies local support and trust in the movement. On top of that, the movement reaches out, interacts and networks with participants of the community, different local authorities and leaders, and citizens all around the country in order to establish relations and garner support.

According to the RMT approach, actions take place in a rational pursuit of the groups' own interests and demands. However, the HM not only adopts and pursues its own interests and demands but also the interests and demands of the communities it settles in.

Therefore, this RMT analysis does not fully explain the movement's interest in adaptation and adjustment, integration of different ideas and values, and relating its goals to those of others, which is the basis for one of the Hizmet Movement's most effective strategies and methods for global localization and expansion. The HM localizes in the countries it settles in, adjusts itself to its culture and beliefs, and lives as if it was born in that country without forgetting its personal identity. Another important example of the HM's openness and interest in all ideas and values is its advocacy for the integration of the religious and secular, the modern and traditional, next to its process of "glocalization" (globalization and localization). This creates a vital frame that is useful in recognizing the picture of Hizmet and Fethullah Gulen in the spheres of religion, the sciences, and life at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

In my research, I noted that the HM appears to constantly strive to be universal, think globally, and act locally taking a middle path between secularism and spirituality. As a social movement, the HM adapts its products and services according to the general needs and demands of the local communities. By the HM's change, development and evolution of values and systems, it can be better perceived how the Hizmet movement and any other movement transforms itself, as it becomes international.

The resource mobilization theory states that the concept of leadership, which establishes and enables communication, integration and movement organization, is merely an initial important administrative resource. El-Banna (2014) states that by these findings, the Hizmet organizations function in accordance with Melucci's (1999) triple criteria for an SMO's success: (1) the reliability and legitimacy of Gulen's influence; (2) the density and robustness of the formal and informal networks of belonging; and (3) the ability to

restructure and adapt these networks to new situations, such as the challenge of religion tainted with extremism.

From the interviews I have conducted, I have noticed a common, emerging theme integral to the movement: servant leadership. What I have gleaned from this research is that contrary to the resource mobilization theory, which devalues and undermines the role of leadership in SMO's, Hizmet, as a social movement, relies heavily on leadership, but servant leadership, in particular. Much of the HM does not see itself or identify as a movement based on a charismatic leadership; yet, Gulen's leadership still proves to be an important factor in the movement's success. However, it is not Gulen's charisma that seems to resonate with the movement. It is Gulen's sense of servanthood, his servant leadership. In addition, "Service reminds (one of a) servant. A servant is a person who makes efforts to be useful to his or her nation and to the whole of humanity" (Celik and Alan, 2005). In that regard, Fethullah Gulen is a servant leader, rather than a charismatic one. In addition to being a servant leader, he owns some attributes that belong to a transformational leader, as well. Again, when compared, he is a servant leader first, and then a transformational leader. Yet, it would not be wrong to say that he has the bright, moderate side of charisma, as well, not the dark and notorious side of it. The RMT fails to explain this dynamic of leadership and its importance within the movement because it ignores and dismisses the importance of leadership in social movements especially like that of Gulen and of types like servant, charismatic, and transformational. It views it only as an administrative tool, a mere resource to be used like any other. The principle of the visionary, Fethullah Gulen, provides a great inspiration and motivation to Hizmet Movement participants, having successfully mobilized many dedicated young people across the globe.

It can be argued that the resource mobilization theory focuses more on the formation rather than the reasons for the movement. The fact that the causes of movements are kept on the 'back burner' and the inner processes of the movements' operations are emphasized can be clearly seen. Resource mobilization theorists view social movements as actions or reactions that regularly meet the changes in society and are aimed at renewing the social order. They only focus on the how a movement emerges and operates rather than why. However, this theoretical viewpoint is insufficient in explaining the mechanism of social movements because it does not give importance to the differences in principle among the various types of social movements and cannot explain how they are born and what they are looking towards. Hence, the RMT has been criticized for not emphasizing the economic, ideological struggle in the explanation of the social movement, and for ignoring the movements based on their class and their base. This theory deals with how social movements develop, succeed, and decline, not with why groups form social movements. According to the resource mobilization theory, the emergence and regulation of social movements like the Hizmet Movement is difficult. The Hizmet Movement, however, never started as a movement, but the activities that were initiated as small projects were turned into bigger projects, which were expanded from the local to the global. The reasonable tone of the HM's projects then united many people and led them to work together, thus resulting in the emergence of the movement. In the RM, however, the formation of a movement depends solely on the resources and the changes in opportunities. Resource mobilization more emphasizes the critical role that financial and material resources play in the development of social movements.



The resource mobilization theory also believes that a movement cannot start from nothing and is solely born as a product of its environment. It does not take into serious consideration nor values the notion and role of servant/transformational/charismatic leadership in social movements. However, back when Hizmet Movement was nothing but a dream, Gulen brought forth his mission, vision, and leadership with which he managed to start this movement from scratch in the 1960s. I have realized that Gulen did not find this movement ready in his hands right from the beginning. He worked, day by day, for 30 years, establishing and raising human resources by giving sermons, lectures and convincing the people around him, while establishing and growing financial resources through donations and charity.

El-Banna (2014) states that, thus, the Hizmet Movement comprises of two broad levels of activism. Leman states (2010) that while the local/grass roots level provides resources, at the organization level, these resources are managed through a condensed, yet equally diffused, non-hierarchical structure. In this way, Hizmet proves more of a "Social Movement Community" than a strictly bureaucratic SMO, with "fluid boundaries, flexible leadership structures, and malleable division of labor" (Buechler, 1990). This also explains why it is impossible to estimate the number of its participants (Ebaugh, 2010). On both national and transnational levels, no umbrella organization coordinates the communication among organizations. As El-Banna observed in the London case, organizations are scattered over a range of varied activities, goals, participant profiles, and institutional development. Through local circles, these organizations, enterprises, and charities come together and stay in touch with one another. They exchange expertise, information, and resources through local gatherings, bringing a degree of homogeneity to

their mobilization mechanisms. Competition among organizations is based on motivation, rather than for purposes of differentiation. The two levels, local and organizational activism, are complementary in the way in which grassroots local circles provide the flow of resources that are processed and efficiently used through organizations. In this way, no single organization can claim to represent the HM, while each one covers a spectrum of Hizmet activities to various degrees. Organizations and enterprises collectively fulfill the vision of the Hizmet Movement in education, intercultural dialogue, media, and business. However, it is still important to emphasize that the HM is a civil society movement and shares similar characteristics with other global social movements, but cannot exactly fit in the relatively narrow frame of the definition of a social movement.

Also, the resource mobilization approach avoids the macro level and actually reduces each collective action to the political level. Thus, the cultural dimension of new conflicts is missing from it. The RM examines social movements in a political and historical context, and it ignores the cultural impact on social movements. This theory is weak in explaining the identity, autonomy, social norms, and the cultural demands of the actors involved in the act. Such an approach ignores the cultural and structural dimension of the conflict and emphasizes a very political dimension, instead. It is an incomplete view especially given that in the dimension of contemporary conflict areas, the only view taken is one taken politically. Because of the emphasis on strategic struggle and power relations, cultural and spiritual values are being ignored.

The inspirational leader of the Hizmet Movement, Gulen, affirms that the cultural dimension is a necessary component of collective or national consciousness, without which people cannot progress or move forward on a path they can value, own up to and call their

own. He claims that much of how we steadfastly manage ourselves and our affairs in harmony has to do with our cultural resources. Rejecting one's culture and the valuable principles and core parts that make it up is "blindness" and "trying to remove them from society means total confusion." Turkish society, as a given example, is complex and multifaceted; its needs cannot be expressed, understood, and sufficiently met without some relation and intelligent reference to the cultural resources of its people. The Hizmet Movement, therefore, attempts to call upon, mobilize, harness and bring together universal cultural elements and features within the traditions, codes, and idioms of the past and the local. It also fosters and cultivates ways of thinking, speaking and acting that is able to stand out as independent, and free of control and standardization by the provincial traditions, codes, and idioms that are currently imposed on people in Turkey and elsewhere (Cetin, 2010).

In the RMT, recognition of the success group occurs in reference to being a political actor or one with increased material benefits. Resources in the resource mobilization approach can be political opportunities. According to the political process approach, social movements can only emerge with the realization of political opportunities. The time when a social movement will emerge and how successful it can be depends on how well participants evaluate political opportunities. This approach argues that political resources and processes are of the utmost importance and a priority for any social movement to develop and succeed in their endeavors. According to it, the success of social movements is heavily influenced by group strategy and the political climate.

In my study, I saw this to be the case for the Hizmet Movement as well. Building off on that, the resource mobilization theory mentions another dynamic when it claims that

the political atmosphere plays a very important role in the development of a social movement. My research supports the theory's claim that without a political climate, there would be no social movements. Interestingly, in my study, I have discovered, as a first, that a political climate can be both a pillar of support and an obstacle or a source of opposition for the HM. However, from my research, it seems the Hizmet Movement has figured out an effective group strategy in adjusting themselves according to the political climate of their location, which is why they have been able to garner so much support locally around the globe. This increased support attests to the importance of the political climate in the performance of any social movement, as the RMT dictates. The HM's success and adaptive operations are based on the different political climates it finds itself in. The time when a social movement like the HM will emerge, and how successful it can be depend on how well participants evaluate political opportunities. Similarly, the HM seems to fit this model in many ways because it uses the media, establishes networks of dialogue and institutionalizes mediums of communication, advocacy, and support with local governments, institutions, and the public in order to befriend and win the support of the government and the public. On another note, I also discovered a conflict in the movement with this model. I saw the Hizmet Movement's rejection of political partisanship, its maintaining equal distance from all political parties, while obtaining government support for community service projects, developing effective communication channels and multiplying the resource base for the movement's organizations.

This research suggests that the Hizmet Movement has successfully mobilized material and spiritual resources as well as learned to transfer a good, useful practice or project that they happened to develop or discover in one country and carry it out in other

countries and areas of operation. They have moved and transferred their successful projects in bundles to all the countries they operate in. Additionally, all their new projects and ventures are supported with material, technical, and financial resources in order to ensure a successful start. Looking at this, I can say that the Hizmet Movement is a project-based movement. The HM carries out its feasible and useful projects from one place to another. Their projects are very persistent and thorough, and this is very important for the Hizmet Movement's success. Through local circles, these organizations, enterprises, and charities come together and stay in touch with each other. They exchange expertise, information, and resources through local gatherings, bringing a degree of homogeneity to their mobilization mechanisms. Gatherings are the medium through which the needs and objectives of the Movement are communicated to individuals. The participants socialize, share their experiences, and network with each other at these meetings. These meeting groups are quite institutionalized regarding time and attendance. In the Hizmet Movement, collective decision making is performed on a consensual basis by participants in a network, activity or project. In addition, the possibility that leaders might exploit their position, authority, information, or resources for their own benefit is checked by the way in which "everyone is accountable to everyone," which resounds with Gulen's note about collective decision making.

As mentioned before, the findings indicated similar data results from each of the three countries. I am able to say that the answers to my research questions obtained in all three countries are almost all the same. However, I have observed one major difference among them: the movement's schools and organizations in Cambodia are generally known as Turkish schools and institutions rather than those of the Gulen Movement or the Hizmet

Movement. The HM is little known as itself in Cambodia, but its success and prominence is the same as in the other countries. This fact, very much, intrigued me, for the movement somehow managed to have the same success and growth in Cambodia that they have had in other countries without relying on or using their appealing brand, already established institutions, prominent figures like Gulen, and their existing labels. They have obtained the same product without revealing their identity or relations. From this, it can be seen that rather than through empty words and marketing, the actors of the movement instead are able to give their own and prove themselves, through action, deeds, and performance and by adjusting themselves wherever they go. There is a continuous process of adjusting the movement's discourse and mechanisms to new challenges and demands from the surrounding environment, internal and external. This performance can be credited to the Hizmet Movement's devotion to, understanding of and real-life application of their own core concepts: their goals of inclusiveness, adjustment strategy, and the value of glocalization.

I have seen that the merit of their success lies in the motive that the Hizmet Movement go to these countries not only to give and help but also to receive and learn. They succeed because without looking down on the people and places they move to, they open themselves to receiving, learning and adopting the beauties of that local people and land whether it be their culture, literature, values, food, etc. Without saying or boasting we came to give or we came to get, they are successful in heartfelt exchanges of giving and receiving. They are able to effectively adjust themselves in different cultures in very different countries, learning and adopting without losing their own values and beliefs.

The findings from this study revealed that the Hizmet Movement's educational institutions are all modern institutions with research laboratories of a high standard and quality, which meet modern requirements. And these descriptions are applicable to all the laboratories or facilities, be it the chemistry lab, physics lab, sports/recreational fields, etc. In addition, different clubs within the school like dance clubs, painting clubs, chess clubs, and other academic clubs, are also noteworthy since they give educational directions to children and prepare them to learn, explore, grow and move to their next intellectual stage. All the three levels of school education – nurseries, school-lyceums and higher educational institutions – are impressive in their quality. Thus, through this system, children successfully pass all the stages that will help them become a decent, productive member of society. Another key factor distinguishing these schools from others in their area is constant and consistent student attendance. These schools are maintained under good sanitary conditions and located in clean areas. The environment of these schools is very conducive to learning. Their friendly atmosphere makes learning easy and appealing for students.

Next, the participants in the study emphasized that the idea of blending scientific knowledge with moral values to provide standard education for the teeming youth, who are the custodians of the future, is one thing that makes the HM schools special. Cambodian, Georgian, Nigerian and Turkish teachers working with the Hizmet schools are highly committed to the ideals of the HM. In my study, the configuration of schools reflected a mini Cambodia, Georgia, Nigeria and a melting point for Cambodians, Georgians, and Nigerians. There is discipline in the administration. The administrations and teachers are committed and dedicated to the core values of the movement. The core mission of this system and its principal characteristic are the endeavor to create a family-like atmosphere

and approach, and while creating this warm atmosphere, to strive together to achieve common goals. The teachers are not only concerned about formal education, but they also are concerned about morality, virtue and ethics. All the Hizmet Movement schools have the goal of relying on just tuition payments to meet their needs without external support. The HM schools are run as nonprofit organizations. Any monetary surpluses from tuition are used to improve the schools and their educational activities.

What's more, in my research, I never noticed any incidents at these schools where they differentiated or discriminated against people according to their religion or ethnicity. In general, the research participants emphasized the fact that the education system they were involved in was built on the core concepts of the Hizmet Movement. These are the pure and good aims of the visionary leader, Gulen. The kind of relationship that the school is building with and among these students who hail from various backgrounds suggests that the future of this youth is bright. Cultural or religious boundaries have not been a barrier to fostering relationships. The school sees its role as that of an agent of change, an institution that teaches students about love and tolerance to promote peace and positive change.

In general, Hizmet operations range from educational activities to interfaith dialogue, media, health service, finances, charity and humanitarian aid. My research showed that these operations change over time, through the diversification and expansion in the movement's projects and activities. There is always progress and expansion in their enterprises and operations. They even run charity and humanitarian aid organizations. This is something that shows not only the ideal philosophy of achieving peace around the world but also actions that tell a lot about being truly human, about the culture of sharing, about



uniting people and harmonizing with people regardless of their background. It is an action that shows that people, regardless of their nationalities, cultural or religious backgrounds, should actually live together harmoniously in peace, happiness, and comfort.

I observed that the participants in the study emphasized that the Hizmet Movement Schools promoted moral values in a secular school environment, not in an Islamic school. Parents send their children to these schools because their graduates have gotten accepted in reputable colleges and universities, and their students are less susceptible to illegal or unhealthy activities and the negative influences of drug and alcohol abuse. The school's teachers cultivate universal values such as truthfulness, trust, respect for parents, respect for the elderly, respect for one's heritage, and love for human beings. The findings from this study indicated that moral values are shared by all religions and people, and so their promotion in these schools would and do not disaffect the non-Muslim learners. If not, this would alienate non-Muslim learners and parents, and the school would lose its non-Muslim support. This moral mindset and educational framework is then an extraordinary feature of the HM school. Believing in the separation of religious and state affairs, the inherent fruits of democracy, and the benefits of modernity and intellectualism, participants of the HM have become especially active and successful in education.

Non-governmental agencies like the HM play a critical role in shaping a globalizing world. They can be agents of great change within their society and around the globe if they are able to spread and take root. The impacts of social movements are generally studied at a political level, but they have important individual, cultural, institutional, and international effects, as well. Individual change is related with the psychology of the individuals who participate in movements. When these individuals connect with other individuals, create

new networks, share values and undergo a process of empowerment to form a movement, they can often target and change state and non-state institutions and policies. In turn, this organization of collective action or social movement can often result in the dissemination and change of culture. Finally, political change can be achieved or impacted by the social movement, depending on its level of influence or appeal. These are the impacts and successes of social movements, which can transform society, to varying degrees, for the better, if directed and managed efficiently and reasonably. That is why the success or failure of a large and widespread organization such as the HM is very important for the world and provides a unique but effective model for other movements or NGO's to follow.

As I mentioned before, Krippendorff (2013) states that successful movements follow four predictable patterns: a successful social movement forms around a common goal, mobilizes resources, finds solutions and options and is accepted by or replaces the establishment. Indicating the arguments about defining success in social movements, the HM will be reconsidered in the light of the above success criteria. It should be noted now that Krippendorff's (2013) criteria are met and therefore, accordingly we can say that the HM is following the similar way in which social movements operate and are effective in a globalized world. The HM forms around common values and goals, mobilizes its resources, finds solutions for contemporary problems and is widely accepted in many countries around the world.

*“Gulen rejects that a clash between the “East” and “West” is necessary, desirable or unavoidable. In Gulen’s worldview an abstract West is not the enemy of Muslims, but ignorance, poverty and disunity are”* (Yilmaz, 2011). Many sources of trouble in the globalized world is a lack of education and poverty. Gulen states that human society’s three

greatest enemies are ignorance, poverty, and disunity; he inspires people to consider devising and applying solutions to these issues, also proposing some of his own. I have seen, from the participants in the study, that administrators and teachers feel helpless individually, regarding the current problems of the world, such as poverty, ignorance, illiteracy, and conflict. However, they think that they can fight against these problems together and contribute collective goodness by joining this active, collaborative collective (the HM) and taking on different roles in HM schools. The HM succeeds in embracing and forming a universal set of values and a diverse group of people, despite the difficulty of keeping people from different backgrounds with different identities together, working in teamwork towards the same goals. It is evident that Krippendorff's (2013) criteria are met and therefore we can say that, by following a similar way, other social movements can be effective in a globalized world.

Meanwhile, Gamson's (1975) SMO success criteria of the attainment of goals, inclusive methods, and acceptance or being included in national discourse, are also met. Even though HM participants are from diverse backgrounds, they clamp together around the same goals because of the Hizmet Movement's inclusive methods and wide acceptance in many countries. As an institution, it is globally accepted in the education sector with its schools, and it is well known and often heard of in national/international discourse. Even currently, the Hizmet Movement is attracting intense international media attention. Parallel with the Collective Goods Criterion, the HM also cares about the well-being of its participants and tries to increase their virtue and education. One of the most important goals of the HM is to raise well-equipped good individuals, which in turn, makes an institutional and cultural impact. As discussed previously, HM participants go to many countries of

different cultures and engage in cultural interaction, not only give but also to learn and receive. With discussions included above, it can be said that movements, which embrace similar goals and values as the ones the HM embraces, can have an important impact on global governance. It is important to emphasize once more that the HM is a civil society movement and has similar characteristics with other global social movements, but it cannot exactly fit in the relatively narrow frame of the definition of a social movement. The success of the HM lies in its values such as sacrifice, altruism, peace, promoting dialogue, accepting people as they are, and dedication to education. In addition, the movement holds a value and stance of non-violence, refraining from any type of violence under any circumstance, and a principled refusal to exchange its values for political gains. Prospective social movements can be successful not only locally but globally if they adopt the similar goals and values that the HM adopted. On the contrary, social movements, which only prioritize political gains and use violence or deceit as a tool for change, will most probably face failure.

Furthermore, McCarthy and Zald (1977) argue that "in accounting for a movement's successes and failures there is an explicit recognition of the crucial importance of involvement on the part of individuals and organizations from outside the collectivity which a social movement represents." They also point out the importance of "conscious constituencies" in the success of social movements, rather than only those who benefit from the social movements. Scholars who study social movements identify the "conscience constituency" as a form of "outside involvement." The HM seems to satisfy each of these differing definitions or criterion for a social movement's success.

The impacts and successes of social movements are studied on many levels and they have individual, cultural, institutional, and international effects. When connected with others, individuals create networks, share values, become a movement, undergo processes of empowerment, and collectively realize real change, leading to a success of the masses. State and non-state institutions are targeted and changed by these social movements. The HM is successfully causing change not only within the Turkic or Muslim world but also in a broader sphere of influence. The following, in addition to the ones explained and observed further above, are some more of the successes, failures, and strategies of the HM, that offer good examples and advice for other organizations to learn from.

Globalization has a transformative effect. While the society preserves its local values, it also supports, actively participates in and contributes significantly to global values. The timing of the opening of the HM schools at the international level coincides with the onset of the world's globalization. The Hizmet Movement, in this respect, is unique in their approach to globalization because it is able to localize and stay globalized simultaneously. The HM is a combination of globalization, local interest, and local setting. The HM constantly strives to be universal, think globally, and act locally. As a social movement, the HM adapts its products and services according to the general needs and demands of the local communities. They are open to change but also respect the local people's traditional values and identities. The Hizmet Movement, despite being a part of globalization, also protects the individual from its resulting side effects. As mentioned earlier, being both local and global is a main characteristic and strategy of the Hizmet Movement.

As one of their successes or achievements, the HM schools have been successfully engaging in community building through character education. The Hizmet Movement schools are making a valuable contribution to peace building and community building through their educational philosophy, like by teaching their students to respect cultural differences and learn the basic characteristics of other cultures. Almost all school administrators and teachers of HM schools in the three different countries emphasized their individual contribution to achieving the global peace vision of the HM movement. They believed that the HM envisions global peace, tolerance, and harmony where all the people in the world can live together without conflict, enmity, and war. They believe in their crucial roles of changing the world through education, and they see education as the main remedy for the contemporary problems of the world.

According to my analysis from three different countries, the HM school staffs try to develop close, robust relationships between the school and parents, close relationships between the teachers and students, and good relationships with the community. In order to create these relationships, they visit the students' families at their homes, celebrate students' birthdays, attend important events of the family, and do charity activities for people in need, in the community. They conduct several 'tuning in activities' with students, families, and other people in the community so they can all get to learn about, share with and respect each other. They try to carry out and organize extracurricular or community activities and social events. Through this, the HM school staffs meet the citizens living in their communities and develop long-term relationships with them. Besides the students and families, HM school staffs also try to engage in many social and charitable activities and programs in order to reach out to other people living in the community.

Besides the schools, some non-governmental civic initiatives were also established by the HM to reach and embrace a wider range of the community. The movement establishes charity foundations to assist people in need, in that particular community. With visits or get-togethers and other social and charitable activities, HM members believe they can exchange ideas, love, and friendship with the communities in which they live. Thus, they try to harmonize with the community in an effort to be a part of the society. While doing their charity activities, they still try to reach diverse groups all the while respecting and celebrating their religious/national holidays, traditions and festivals. HM foundations and organizations have been working on emergency aid, food donations, clean water, the environment, scholarships and education projects. For example, a large proportion of Nigerians and Cambodians lack a critical infrastructure for accessing safe drinking water. Access to clean water is very limited in Nigeria, Cambodia. In my travels, I have noticed that in response to this issue, these HM schools have opened nautical wells in places where there is a lack of clean water. As another example, these HM foundations conduct periodic visits to orphanages and nursing homes to provide and help meet their needs. These kinds of activities bring together many different groups and enable them to interact and work together towards a common goal.

In each of the three countries, I have seen that the HM founded dialogue foundations to promote inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue between different ethnic and religious groups. The dialogue foundations are one of the main social initiatives of the HM, which work on addressing and resolving social, ethnic and religious problems and tension as well as promoting the idea of peaceful co-existence. These dialogue foundations have successfully generated a platform, which brings people from different religions and tribes

together and encourages them to converse and share ideas on their similarities and celebrate their differences. The foundations organize iftar dinners during Ramadan, invite guests from different parts of society, and give peace awards to those who contributed to peace. These dialogue organizations have organized international conferences, panels, and seminars, one of which I have personally attended in Nigeria, all in which they received tremendous support from the representatives of local social groups. The foundations have constantly emphasized to the people, the importance of peace, dialogue, and conflict management and resolutions.

On another note, as I have observed, the alumni association of these HM schools organize academic, social and sports events to keep the alumni connected and maintain a network among them. All in all, through its educational and community services and schools, the HM finds opportunities to reach out to students and the locals from different backgrounds as well as their families, community representatives, and leaders. Bringing people of different religions, cultures, ethnicities together in different circles brings together the idea of working with others and the idea of building a civil community. It teaches and normalizes the idea of working, sitting down and talking with people who are different from one another. It encourages people of different backgrounds to eat together in communion. This also leads to a mutual understanding of differences and ways to act positively, constructively and peacefully despite those differences; it prepares the ground for complementary action and collaboration for the greater good in a globalized world. Keeping dialogue open, keeping dialogue moving, keeping dialogue that engages people of different outlooks is a major contribution of the HM. The HMS successfully generate a platform, which brings students from different religions and ethnicities together and



encourages them to share conversation on their similarities rather than their differences. It can be said that the Hizmet movement contributes to global peace through interfaith dialogue, community services and education, since many sources of trouble and conflict in our globalized world are ignorance, poverty, and the lack of education.

The global problems today need universal cooperation to get solved. The movement is aware of global issues and problems, and they believe sincerely that these problems can be solved only by global cooperation and collaboration. The Hizmet movement schools help build bridges between the movement and other communities in the world. The Hizmet Movement's service projects and networks successfully open possibilities for new solutions by getting people together to talk about vital issues in their communities and showing them how to approach social problems through collective cooperation. In this way, the movement helps produce insights and solutions for common issues and common concerns. From the movement's description, the schools in conflict-ridden regions such as the Philippines, Nigeria, Macedonia, Afghanistan, Northern Iraq, Bosnia, and Kenya serve as peaceful, learning environments for intercultural, interethnic, and interfaith harmony. Regardless of their location, these schools are regarded as symbols of intellect, harmony, and unity. The HM's success in promoting and maintaining cooperation and dialogue among communities pushes people to contribute to the common good in many conflicts. The HM acknowledges that we live in a global world, so as Muslims, non-Muslims, or any other different groups, we live in the same community. Therefore, we have to create a shared understanding, a shared experience, and a shared code of ethics. These principles and practices are accepted and welcomed by people around the globe and have added popularity to the HM.

In addition, it is important to note that the HM schools also encourage their students to work for the success of their own country's future when they graduate and start a career. The HM school staffs believe that the host country needs talented and educated students most in their workforce to solve the problems in the country and contribute to the development and enhancement of that country. Thus, when people in the host country see the graduates from the HM schools serving their country in the private or public sector, they embrace the schools like their own schools. The HM aims to raise local people that can adopt the movement's ideas and goals, take over its operations, and continue working for the success and betterment of their country. For example, currently, Georgians administrate 5 out of 6 HM schools in Georgia. Because of all the movement's efforts and projects, the people feel that these schools contribute to their country's future and benefit their society.

The number of Hizmet schools has been increasing not only because of their academic success but also because of their ability to operate among different cultures in diverse countries. The HMS promote values of tolerance and open-mindedness towards different points of view. The Hizmet movement system of education gives students and parents the opportunity to see the difference in others, appreciate the difference, and create deep values of peace and love in each other. Education leaves people off with a capacity for comparative judgment. Once you can compare different values, perspectives, and positions, you can understand them. If people are left with only their own values or perceptions, they do not accept those of others. They see them as strange, dangerous, and violent; they attribute negative intentions to other groups. The HM helps teach that you do not have to accept another point of view. What you have to be able to do is be open and

respectful to different perspectives. It is important for us to be able to understand different views and be able to live with them.

As far as I have studied, the Hizmet schools, are also making some contributions to the promotion of democracy by properly training and educating thousands of students and successful alumnus who would not have been taught a modern, secular education had those schools not existed. So, in that sense, by raising living standards, and by teaching students modern education, the Hizmet Movement is contributing in a very significant way to the process and spread of democracy. Certainly, democracy requires much more than just education. However, the more people there are that have higher levels of education, the more they are literate, the more they can read, the more they can participate, the more they can contribute to the political development. An educated mass or public has the knowledge, understanding, open-mindedness, and critical thinking to prevent the rise of authoritarian dictators and desire democracy.

On another note, as a non-governmental organization operating on a global scale, the HM, not primarily political in orientation or affiliated with any state, and rooted in a moderate Islamic outlook, helps gain acceptance and support through its schools, for a view of Islam which promotes peace and counters the predominant radical image. It gains acceptance in various parts of the world through educational activities and helps people from all parts of the world understand and appreciate ideas about a movement based on Islamic teachings, even though the image of Islam has been and continues to stay distorted in the modern world as a consequence of violence and terrorism in some parts of the world. The Hizmet movement schools contribute to the non-Muslim world's understanding of Islam, indicating Islam's potential role of promoting peace in the future. In regard to this

issue, I have especially asked my informants and research participants about the HM's or the schools' perspective on and response to violent extremism. In fact, in the Islamic world, according to the local people, one of the significant successes of the HMS is that it has protected the youth against radical and/or political Islamic discourse and rejected violence under all conditions including suicide attacks. From the data I have gathered, especially from the interviews, I have observed that the movement's activities have the potential to change and improve the image of Islam in the contemporary world. Professor Samuels (2015) states, "The solution to radical Islam can only come within Islam". Maybe the HMS can be a part of the solution. The HM schools work on both preventing and solving the issues of radical Islam.

Even though the HM is a religious-based movement, the HMS provide secular education, and refrain from giving any religious education in their schools. When we look at the HM schools globally, they operate in more than 170 countries and have many students who come from different religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, which shows that they may easily adjust to any country's education system and are open to people from all backgrounds. In order to adjust to every culture and find suitable places for education all over the world, HM schools have anti-discrimination policies and try to be religiously neutral, treating and caring for each religion, culture, and ethnicity equally. The HM schools easily adjust themselves and get accepted in diverse countries due to their attractiveness, inclusiveness, and harmonization approach to all students without considering their social, economic, demographic, or religious backgrounds. Through three main strategies, the HMS make themselves known and accepted by the local community they live in and easily blend in with their society.

Just as how the political climate is an effective and influential factor for many movements, I noticed it also had a great impact on the Hizmet Movement's expansion and contraction processes. In my research, I have essentially observed that the HM is not a political movement and has the ability to work in harmony with all-round political views and visions, to which the existence and continued operation of its institutions in 170 countries can attest. Political climate plays an important role in the performance of HMS. There are two main important political factors affecting the success of HM schools. The first one comes from Turkey as a home country providing political support and then pressure on the HM schools and the second originates from the host country where the HM schools operate. The home country, Turkey, provides important resources, both material, and non-material resources for HMS, and its supportive role at the beginning of HMS projects assisted the HM in initiating its school projects in several countries including my research countries. Nowadays, Turkey, as a home country, plays a critical role in the political climate of the HM schools with its political pressure and persecution. Similarly, countries where the HM schools operate also play vital roles for the success and development of the HM schools by providing supportive political environments as host countries. Since the public in these countries supports the movement, their governments approve their citizens' support of this movement. As a result, the movement gains the approval of the society in these countries.

Due to a political battle in Turkey, the Turkish government has initiated an international campaign against the HM and its schools. It has requested countries to shut down HM schools and extradite school administrators and teachers to Turkey. However, according to a BBC Report (2016), the Turkish governments' efforts to close down the HM

schools have not been successful due to the opposition of the host countries. Instead of taking Turkish government's accusations seriously, they actually encouraged Hizmet volunteers to continue and multiply the services they have been doing for years. It has proven to be challenging for the Turkish government to force host countries to shut down the schools.

The HM was able to open schools using private entrepreneurship approaches according to free-market principles, and these schools emerged where political climates were permissive and open to starting business in education. The HM schools applied several adjustment strategies such as attractiveness, inclusiveness, and harmonization in order to strengthen their positions in the host country. At the beginning, permissive political climates assisted the HM schools in proving their academic success in the eyes of the people in the host country. The success of students from the HM schools at the national and international levels then created positive credit for the HM schools. Especially, when the Turkish government started to wage a negative campaign against HM schools, their earned credit and the schools' reputation prevented their being shut down by the host countries.

Amidst all of this political turmoil, as one community leader in Nigeria from my interviews points out, the biggest proof that the HM has no business in and has nothing to do with violence and terror is the answer given by the movement and its participants. He cites as proof the movement's response to its host country's (the Turkish government) mobilizing and systematic attempts to eradicate and oppress them in both Turkey and all over the world, through any means possible whether cruel, unjust, or violent. Normally, masses like the HM that are subjected to persecution consistently follow a certain resistance

pattern. Even though a group that is accused of being a terrorist organization tends to naturally resist and react to violence with violence in defense, the Hizmet Movement participants have still never resorted to any act of violence, extreme protest, or unlawful measure despite facing constant unlawful and inhumane oppression. In spite of all the provocations, cruelties and injustices made towards the movement, the lack of any violent or illegal action taken in response by the movement and its participants and instead, their attempts to speak out, protest, and stand up against these actions only within a legal and peaceful frame, makes it very clear that they are innocent and have nothing to do with whatever they're being accused of. The Hizmet Movement has always stood against terror and violence. From the acts, deeds, statements, speeches, and documents of the HM, and the graduates and associates of their schools and institutions, the movement has proven and shown itself to be an enemy of terror and violence. It has become an effective answer and antidote that can be given to the terror, extremism, and violence of this century, as a global movement that takes its values from the foundations of Islam. The organizational actions and control behind the Hizmet Movement's nonviolent approach in the world offer lessons for contemporary social movements.

As far as I have studied, under the intense political and economic pressure from the Turkish government, I have noticed that some governments have started conducting special inspections of Hizmet schools. However, even though the Turkish government's efforts to close down HM schools seem to be unsuccessful globally, it still shows some success one-step at a time. This bitter relationship between the Turkish government and the HM will affect the HM schools negatively and globally. Current pressure from Turkey against the HM and HMS also creates problems for the HMS, and affects its global

presence and performance. Similarly, political support and pressure from host countries are also critical for the performance of the HMS, since host countries provide them the educational environment and legitimacy in the eyes of the people living in the country. The attitude of host countries where the HM schools operate will play significant roles in the future of HM schools.

Starting this kind of global education initiative has forced the HM to prioritize its financial and human resources by assessing the political environment in each country regarding the feasibility of opening a school and its later sustainability. In order to minimize these costs, while the HM depended on its participants for financial and human resources, it sought the support of the host country to provide land for its schools to initiate its school projects. The HM school administrators and teachers acknowledge that they could not open schools and could not be successful without permission from the host country and support from the local community. It seems the biggest assistance from host countries to start HM schools is to provide land to construct a school on. The spread and success of this movement are tied to the support of the local communities in these countries. This relationship can lead to failure in case either side (HM and government/community) loses the support or interest of the other. It is obvious that the HM schools are under extreme pressure from the Turkish government in the global arena. The main problem right now, is that Hizmet schools and institutions are severely influenced and affected by a political climate only in host countries where the notion of democracy is still very underdeveloped: where there is a one-man dictatorial regime or a lot of corruption, where there is no system of checks and balances, the rule of law or freedom of the media. Most host countries that have closed down, investigated, or intervened in the HMS under the



influence of the Turkish government were either antidemocratic or had mutual financial interests with Turkey. Bozkurt (2017) points out that the Erdogan regime has been pressuring countries around the world to close or hand over control of Hizmet Movement schools by using the Maarif Foundation as a tool. Sometimes by offering money, aid, trade and investment and other times with outright threats, Erdoğan has strong-armed some weak governments in Africa such as Somalia to seize and hand over Gülen schools. Most governments, however, balked at the idea and rebuffed the blatant interference into their own internal affairs. Other than that, the HM has not experienced any serious problems or been affected by the political climate whether in Turkey, the country it was founded in or in the countries where it has become engaged. So far in the countries that I studied, which are Cambodia, Georgia and Nigeria only one HM school in Georgia was closed down by the Erdogan regime.

It seems the efforts of the Turkish governments to close down HM schools actually have created counterproductive results. Even though host countries have increased their inspection and reviewed the schools' role in their country, these efforts helped HM schools prove their innocence and increased their legitimacy in the society. Since the HM is supported by the public in these countries, their governments approve their citizens' support of this movement. It seems the movement gained the approval of the society and community in these countries, and this support helped them survive in such a politically pressing situation. Ironically, this campaign against the HM has in turn unintentionally aroused a global curiosity for this global movement. It has piqued outside interest and brought about widespread publicity for the movement. This political campaign against it and its further growth because of it have fully unraveled and presented the potential of the

HM on the world stage. The Hizmet Movement has a stance of being a non-violent social movement, refraining from any type of violence in any circumstance. It is also firmly resolute in its cause and principles, being careful not to and refusing to exchange its values and beliefs for any economic or political gain, which was the source of the problem and conflict between the ruling Turkish Justice and Development Party (AKP) and the HM. If they (the HM) had bowed down to the AKP in exchange for political gain, they would have been enjoying many benefits from the Turkish government and not been suffering from their current cruel and harmful campaign against them. However, it seems that the HM would rather suffer than give up what they believe in, for they realize that otherwise all they have done and are doing would be meaningless and have been in vain. Prospective social movements can be successful not only locally but globally if they adopt similar goals and values as the ones the HM adopted. On the contrary, social movements, which only prioritize political gain and use violence as a tool for change, will most probably face failure, as stated previously.

The Hizmet Movement schools, which are seen as the biggest export commodity of Turkey in the last decades, have become the victims of a political battle between the Turkish government and the HM. As a result, Turkey has, for now, lost its most precious resource and opportunity of having "volunteer ambassadors" in each country around the globe where the HM schools successfully have continued to represent Turkey and Turkish culture.

Not only in Turkey but also all over the world, the Erdogan regime has been conducting a global campaign against the Hizmet Movement participants and any associated with the movement. A project director Nate Schenkkan (2018) at Freedom House points

out that using a globalized world to his advantage, Erdogan has been cancelling the passports of many fleeing refugees and requesting extraditions of those who escaped from Turkey to other countries using resources like Interpol and the UN. Using many different global, national and technological resources and tools, he has been transnationally surveilling and monitoring the movement, exiles and other perceived dissidents to his regime, all over the globe. Using international law mechanisms, utilizing transnational networks and collaborating with other security services in other countries, he has been pursuing, detaining, kidnapping and extraditing many of the Hizmet movement's participants in other countries. He has been able to make deals with other authoritarian governments and countries that have people from the HM living in them, getting these states to unlawfully send those people back to Turkey and hand them over by force to the Turkish government. This global purge has huge implications, the main one being that globalization has not only given so much power, influence and opportunity to civil society movements but also to nation-states including authoritarian ones (Schenkkan,2018).

Now, after all these events, one cannot help but ask: Will this movement that has been rooted out of its home soil like a tree shrivel and die out or will it grow out its branches and take root everywhere else, becoming globalized even further and having a home in every corner of the earth? I recommend finding this answer out for future researchers. As far as I have obtained from my study, I have learned that: having distanced itself from Turkey, the Hizmet Movement with the language that it uses, the adjustment strategies that it employs and the themes that it conveys is going through a new phase of transformation and development. It is becoming more of a global movement.

When we take into account the HM from a global governance perspective and as a global social movement, it is necessary to assess its successes, failures and point out if it can be a sample for future similar social movement organizations. With discussions included above, it can be said that movements that embrace the same messages, ideals, goals, values, strategies, actions, and projects as the HM does, would have a significant impact on global governance and the social order.

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## APPENDIX A

### Semi-Structured Interview Questions for School Administrations

1. Please tell me about yourself
  - a. Country
  - b. Job
  - c. Education
  - d. Teaching Experience
  - e. Age
  - f. Affiliation (tribe, ethnicity...)
  - g. Religion
  - h. Position at the school
2. How long have you been working at the school? Did you work in other Hizmet schools before that school?
3. How many teachers do you have currently? How many of them are Turkish?
4. In general, tell us about the ethnicity socio-economic, religious and status of your students.
5. What is your motivation to be here? How did you spiritually motivate or guide or lead? Could you tell about your history in the Hizmet Movement?
6. Describe how your school is different from other schools in the country? How would you characterize your school's education? Provide some examples of practices. Have your goals changed over time?
7. When did the school open? Can you tell us about some of the obstacles that you establishing this school? Who helped to establish the school? What was the role of the country's government?
8. What was the impetus for starting this school? In your opinion, what are the important factors that motivate you and your teachers?
9. What aspects do parents like the most about you?
10. Can you tell me about what makes your school special? What about in terms of

these:

- a- Diversity & Multiculturalism
- b- Secular education
- c- Academic success

11. How are the schools, ‘dialogue in practice?’
12. How is your school perceived by local people? Can you give us some examples that can reflect their perceptions? Would you like to share any memory or story you have about that made a big impact or impression on you?
13. What is the role of political climate in the performance of the HM Schools? Does the government or the public support your school? If yes, what is the motivation behind them to support the Hizmet Movement Schools, although there is political pressure from the Turkish government to shut them down? How do they perceive these issues?
14. What do you think about these school’s perspective and response to the violent extremism?
15. How do you acquire your financial resources? Your human resources?
16. How do you adjust yourself in this country’s culture? Did you get any orientation training at the beginning of your job? What else? How does the HM Schools adjust themselves in different cultures?
17. What else would you like to say about this topic?

**Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Community Leaders (intellectuals, government officials, opinion leaders, national leaders)**

1. Please tell me about yourself.
  1. Country
  2. Job
  3. Education
  4. Position
  5. Affiliation (tribe, ethnicity...)
  6. Religion



2. When did you first hear about the Hizmet Movement? How did you meet with the movement? In the first place, what were your impressions of the Hizmet Movement? Have your thoughts about the movement changed over time?
3. What do you think the most important characteristics of the administration and teachers have at these schools? What factors do you think motivate them?
4. Can you tell me about what makes the Hizmet Movement Schools special? What about in terms of these:
  - d- Diversity & Multiculturalism
  - e- Secular education
  - f- Academic success
5. One of the goals of Turkish schools is dialogue and the ability to live together in the world. What do you think about this goal-philosophy?
6. How do Hizmet Movement' schools mobilize their resources to be successful in your country?
7. What do these schools mean for your country's future? How do you perceive these schools?
8. Do you support the Hizmet Movement's activities in your country? And if so, which activities do you support?
9. Does the government or the public support these schools? If yes, what is the motivation behind them to support the Hizmet Movement Schools, although there is political pressure from the Turkish government to shut them down?
10. What surprised or impressed you the most about the Hizmet Movement? (Good or bad). Would you like to share any memory or story you have about that made a big impact or impression on you?
11. What do you think about the Hizmet Movement's or these school's perspective and response to the violent extremism?
12. What criticisms have these schools attracted and why?
13. How do Hizmet Movement' schools mobilize their resources to be successful in your country?

14. What else would you like to say about this topic?

### **Semi-Structured Interview Questions for School Parents**

1. Please tell me about yourself.

1. Country
2. Job
3. Education
4. Age
5. Income
6. Affiliation (tribe, ethnicity...)
7. Religion

2. Have you ever had any idea regarding this school before you enrolled your child? When did you first hear about this school? How many years has your child attended this school, including the current year?

3. Were there other schools that you were considering? Why did you choose this school over those other choices? What surprised you the most about your current school?

4. What do you think, are the most important characteristics of the administration and teachers at these schools? What factors do you think motivate them at these schools?

5. What kind of changes have you observed in your child since he or she began attending this school and what is the role did the school have? Please respond with not important, somewhat important, important, or very important. What about in terms of these:

- a. Academic Success, study habits or goals
- b. Respect for parents
- c. Respect for other cultures
- d. Respect for the religious beliefs of others
- e. Love of his/her own country
- f. Love and tolerance of others
- g. Moral compass
- h. Integrity

6. One of the goals of Turkish schools is dialogue and the ability to live together in the world. What do you think about this goal-philosophy?

7. How do you observe your child's ideas about your own values (such as religion, culture, tradition, customs etc.) after attending this school?

8. Have your thoughts about this school changed after your child attended this school?
9. Are you satisfied with the values conveyed to the children by the current school?
10. Do you support your school's activities? And if so, which activities do you support? What do these schools mean for your country's future?
11. What do you think about this school's perspective and response to the violent extremism?
12. Would you like to share any memory or story you or child has about this school that has made a big impact or impression on you? (Good or bad)
13. What criticisms has your current school attracted and why?
14. What else would you like to say about this topic?

### **Semi-Structured Interview Questions for School Teachers**

1. Please tell me about yourself
  - a. Country
  - b. Job
  - c. Education
  - d. Teaching Experience
  - e. Age
  - f. Affiliation (tribe, ethnicity...)
  - g. Religion
  - h. Position at the school
2. How long have you been working at the school? Did you work in other Hizmet schools before that school?
3. What are your school's greatest achievements?
4. What is your motivation to be here? Could you tell about your history in the Hizmet Movement?
5. Describe how your school is different from other schools in the country? How

would you characterize your school's education? Provide some examples of practices. Have your goals changed over time?

6. When did the school open? Can you tell us about some of the obstacles that you faced in establishing this school? Who helped to establish the school? What was the role of the country's government?

7. What was the impetus for starting this school? In your opinion, what are the important factors that motivate you and your teachers?

8. What aspects do parents like the most about you? Can you tell me about what makes your school special? What about in terms of these:

- g- Diversity & Multiculturalism
- h- Secular education
- i- Academic success

9. How are the schools, 'dialogue in practice?'

10. How is your school perceived by local people? Can you give us some examples that can reflect their perceptions? Would you like to share any memory or story you have about that made a big impact or impression on you?

11. What is the role of political climate in the performance of the HM Schools? Does the government or the public support your school? If yes, what is the motivation behind them to support the Hizmet Movement Schools, although there is political pressure from the Turkish government to shut them down? How do they perceive these issues?

12. What do you think about these school's perspective and response to the violent extremism?

13. How do you acquire your financial resources? Your human resources?

14. How do you adjust yourself in this country's culture? Do you get any orientation training at the beginning of your job? What else?

15. What else would you like to say about this topic?

### **Semi-Structured Interview Questions for School Students**

1. Please tell me about yourself.

- 8. Country
- 9. School and grade
- 10. Affiliation (tribe, ethnicity...)
- 11. Religion

- 2 Have you ever had any idea regarding this school before you enrolled? When did you first hear about this school? How many years have you attended this school, including the current year?
- 3 Were there other schools that you were considering? Why did you choose this school over those other choices? What surprised you the most about your current school?
- 4 What do you think, are the most important characteristics of the administration and teachers at these schools? What factors do you think motivate them at these schools?
- 5 What kind of changes have you observed in yourself since you began attending this school and what role did the school have in it? Please respond with not important, somewhat important, important, or very important. What about in terms of these:
  - b. Academic Success, study habits or goals
  - c. Respect for parents
  - d. Respect for other cultures
  - e. Respect for the religious beliefs of others
  - f. Love of his/her own country
  - g. Love and tolerance of others
  - h. Moral compass
  - i. Integrity
- 6. One of the goals of Turkish schools is to help the student learn how to live with people of different backgrounds—ethnic, cultural, religious, economic, etc. Has your school helped you in this way? How so?
- 7. Have your thoughts about this school changed after you attended this school?
- 8. Are you satisfied with the values conveyed to you by the current school?
- 9. What do you think about this school's perspective and what do these schools mean for your country's future?

10. Would you like to share any memory or story you have about this school that made a big impact or impression on you? (Good or bad)
11. What else would you like to say about this topic?