

# IDENTIFYING CROSS-CUTTING NON-COGNITIVE SKILLS FOR POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

## FINAL REPORT

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The first cohort of grantees addressing cross-cutting skills are developing and delivering a research approach to capture a representative snapshot of what cross-cutting skills youth value most in areas such as employability, school achievement, and positive sexual and reproductive health behaviors.

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## Executive Summary

### Introduction

Regardless of employer demand and training supply of soft skills<sup>1</sup>, it is youth who must understand the nuances of their future employers' demand, uncover the essence of these skills from within training and education systems that are sometimes led by individuals who themselves do not exhibit such skills, and unpack these skills through intellectual understanding and practice in their own lives. The task is a large one, and thus far, too little research has focused on understanding youth's perspectives of soft skills.

Grounded in Child Trends' *Key 'Soft' Skills that Foster Youth Workforce Success*<sup>2</sup> as well as Youth Power's *Key Soft Skills for Cross-Sectoral Success*<sup>3</sup>, this study uses the Big Five Factor model (see Figure A) of soft skills to uncover youth's perspectives of which skills are important for positive outcomes in education and employment.

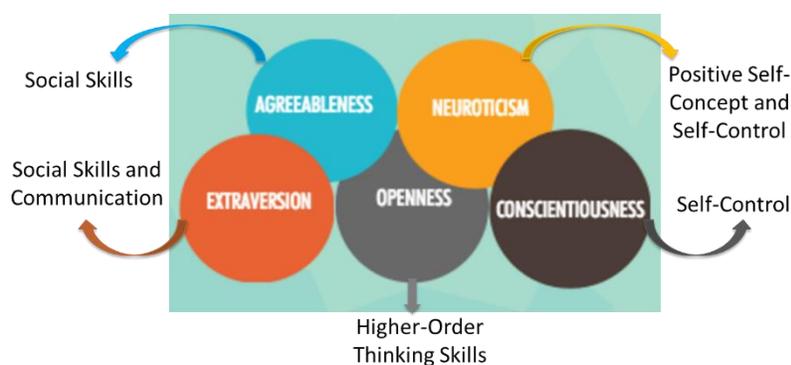


Figure A: The Big Five Factor Model skills Mapped to Child Trends' Key Soft Skills

### Methodology

This study was designed to gain a deep understanding of the skills that youth, employers, and educators think are important for education and employment. The study answers two central research questions:

*Which soft skills do youth think are most important for education and employment?*

*What is the type and extent of the gap between the skills that youth, educators, and employers value?*

By implementing this study with youth, educators, and employers, the researchers planned to uncover which skills (type of gap) were more or less valued by youth, employers and educators, as well how different (extent of gap) those soft skill values were.

Implementing the study in three contexts—Honduras, the Philippines, and Rwanda—allowed the researchers to make cross-cultural comparisons to answer the following questions:

<sup>1</sup> Non-cognitive or soft skills are also commonly referred to as transferable skills, life skills, work readiness skills, etc. Throughout this report, they will be referred to as soft skills, since this is the phrasing used with employers, educators, and youth throughout the course of this study.

<sup>2</sup> Lippman, Laura H., Ryberg, Renee, Carney, Rachel, Moore, Kristin A. (2015) *Key 'Soft Skills' that Foster Youth Workforce Success: Toward a Consensus across Fields*. Child Trends. Publication #2015-24.

<sup>3</sup> Gates, Sarah, Lippman, Laura, Shadowen, Noel, Burke, Holly, Diener, Obed, and Malkin, Morrisa. (October 2016). *YouthPower Action. Key Soft Skills for Cross-Sectoral Youth Outcomes*. FHI 360.

*When designing soft skill interventions, does the context affect which soft skills should be targeted?*

*Are different soft skills valued for education and the workforce in each context?*

*What is the distance between youths' and stakeholders' soft-skill values and how does this differ from context to context?*

*Are different soft skills for males and females valued within and across contexts?*

*Does the relationship between soft skills and life satisfaction change from culture to culture?*

*And, if so, what does this tell us about delivering soft skills programming in each of these contexts?*

To answer these research questions, three data collection activities were implemented with almost 700 youth, over 100 educators, and just under 100 employers participating in some or all of these data collection activities:

- **Soft Skill Assessment (The Anchored Big Five Inventory-44 or A-BFI)**
  - Youth assessed their own skills, the skills of the “ideal employee” in the economic sector in which they worked or wanted to work, and the skills of the “ideal student” in the subject they were studying or wanted to study.
  - Educators assessed the skills of their “ideal student.”
  - Employers assessed the skills of their “ideal employee.”
- **Photography Activity**
  - Youth, after taking a brief training on soft skills and on photography, took photos of youth in their communities exhibiting soft skills.
- **Focus Group Discussions**
  - Using the photographs captured during the photography activity, youth explained their perspective of soft skills and reacted to findings from the soft skill assessment data collection activity.

While comparisons of youth’s soft skill assessment data to employers’ and educators’ data allowed the research team to answer the study’s key research questions (see Figure B), the photography activity and focus group discussions gave priority to youth’s voices in understanding and interpreting data.

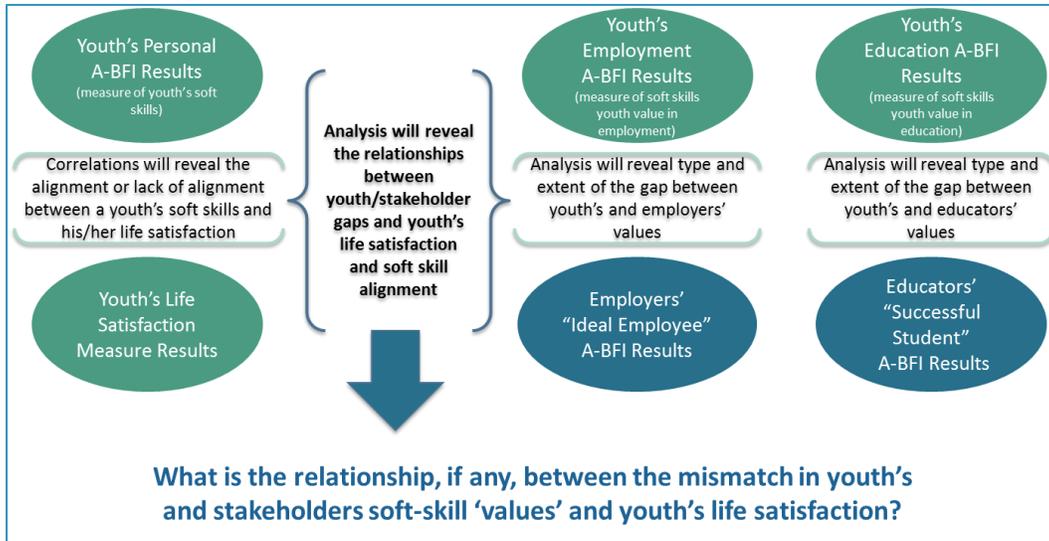


Figure B: Research Questions

## Findings

This study yielded several key findings in answer to the research questions above.

### Youth's Ideals May be Derived from Their Own Personalities

High correlations between youth's ideal employee and ideal student ratings suggest that **youth do not differentiate some skills as being more important for work or education**. Instead, the high correlation between youth's self-ratings and ideal ratings suggest that **youth may base their ideals on their own personalities**. As Figure C<sup>4</sup> displays, youth self-ratings closely track their ideal employee and ideal student ratings.

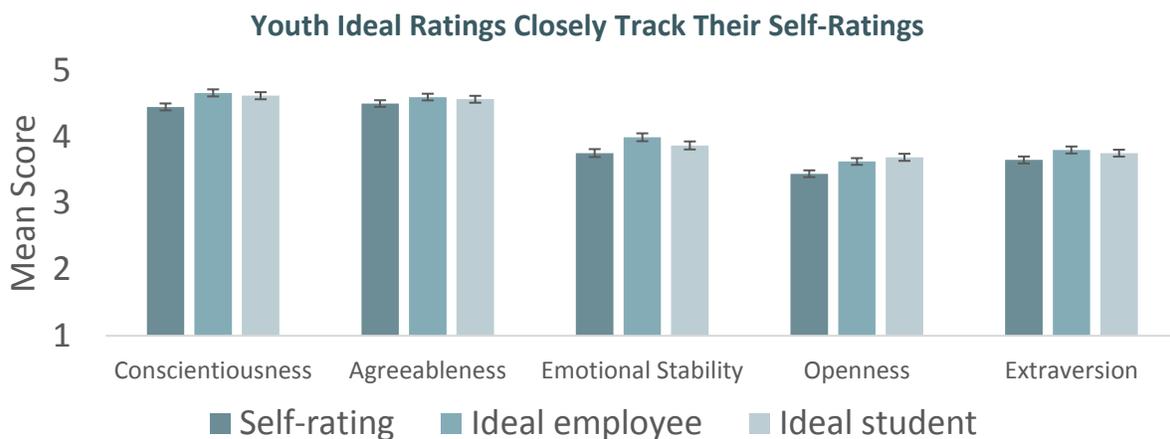


Figure C: Youth's Self-Ratings and Ideals

<sup>4</sup> Note that A-BFI results use a 7-point scale. In Figure C and all following figures, a truncated 5-point scale is depicted in order to make graphs easier to see and interpret.

Youth Underestimate the Importance of Key Skills for Employment and for Education  
 Given that youth’s ideals seem to depend on their own traits and that youth do not seem to differentiate ideal traits for employment from ideal traits for education, it is unsurprising that youth **consistently underestimate the extent to which employers and educators value most skills for employment and education, respectively**. Figure D below depicts these gaps between youth ideals and employer and educator ideals for each skill.

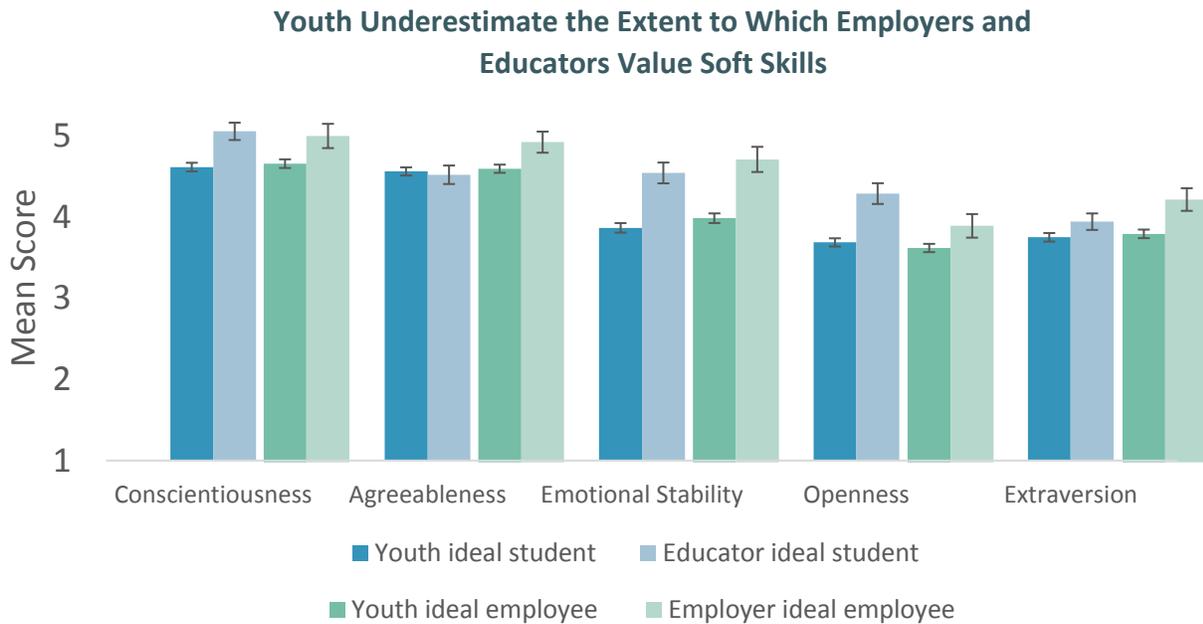


Figure D: Soft Skill Ideals for Youth, Educators, and Employers

Youth, when asked about this systematic undervaluing of skills for employment and education, attribute the difference to employers and educators having more maturity and experience than they have. As Figure E shows (where larger bubbles represent more responses), across all three countries, youth most often mentioned that a lack of maturity or a difference in experience level influenced the different ideals held by educators and employers when compared to youth. Most youth, however, believed that improving their ability to express different soft skills would improve their lives. Most also felt that improving their expression of soft skills was feasible.

#### Skill Demand Varies by Work Field, but Not by Education Type

Disaggregating youth and employer ratings into one of three sectors (production, direct services, and business) reveals **that different soft skills are demanded and to different extents for different sectors**. Employers who work in production-oriented fields consistently rate their ideal employee as having lower levels of soft skills than do employers in business and direct services-oriented fields. In contrast, youth self and ideal employee ratings reveal a systematic (across all five soft skills) belief that more soft skills are needed for business than for direct services than for production.

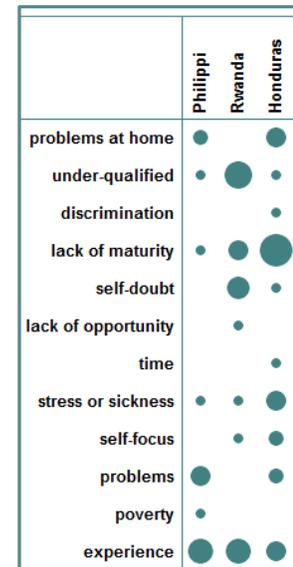


Figure E: Youth's Reasons for Differences in Ideals between Youth and Educators/Employers

When youth and educator ratings are disaggregated by general secondary school and technical vocational school, ideals and self-ratings were systematically higher amongst youth who were in or wanted to study in general school compared to technical school. However, this systematic preference for more skills in general secondary school was not found amongst educators, who required similar levels of soft skills for both technical and general secondary school.

### Youth’s Life Satisfaction Does Not Always Align with Their Level or Perception of Soft Skills

The rationale behind including life satisfaction questions in this research stemmed from previous research in which negative correlations were found in Rwanda between soft skills and life satisfaction. In this study, youth from the Philippines and Rwanda<sup>5</sup> were asked five questions—from Diener’s Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)<sup>6</sup>—to measure their life satisfaction so that researchers could uncover any relationships between life satisfaction, skills, and skill gaps between youth and educators/employers.

For some skills, **youth whose self-assessment and ideal ratings were closer to educators’ and employers’ ratings were less satisfied with life.** In other words, life satisfaction scores were lower as the gap between youth ratings and employer or educator ideals decreased. Again this effect is only significant in Rwanda, with the exception of emotional stability, which is significant for the Philippines as well.

### Youth Do Have Gendered Expectations of Who Needs Which Soft Skills

Gender differences that were apparent from the A-BFI between youth self-ratings and ideals were very small (see Figure F, where differences between males’ and females’ self-ratings are hardly observable). Further, no gendered gaps between youth’s and employers’ ideals could be found in the quantitative data. However, qualitative data presents a more nuanced picture.

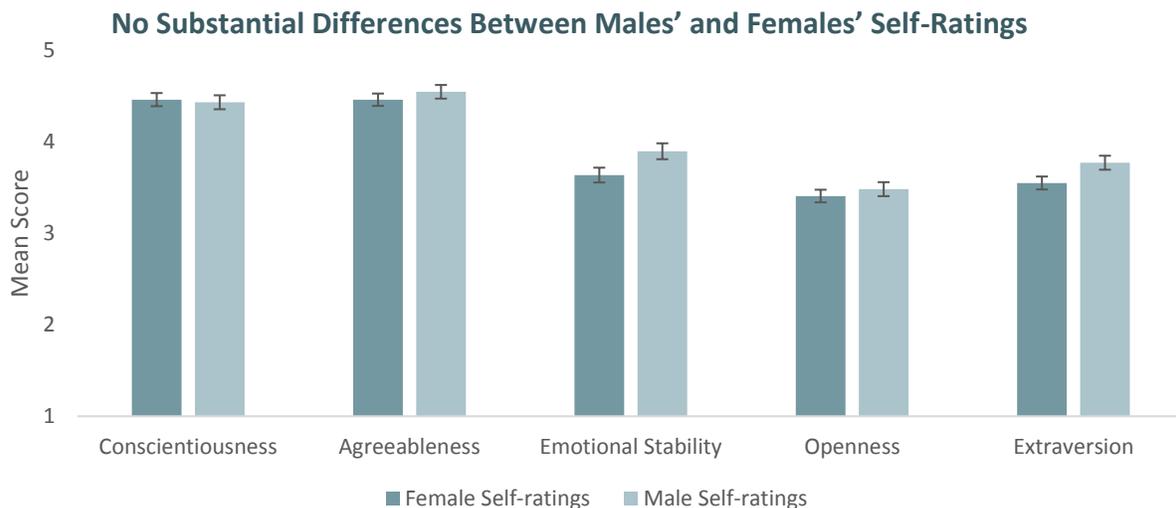


Figure F: Youth’s Self-Ratings and Ideals by Gender

<sup>5</sup> Youth in Honduras took the A-BFI before SWLS questions were added due to program timing constraints.

<sup>6</sup> Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R.J., & Griffin, S. The Satisfaction with Life Scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 49, 71-75.

Youth were first asked to examine photos, which they took, of only males, after which they were asked to examine photos of only females. For each round of photos, youth were asked if the skills expressed in those photos were important only for males or females. Interestingly, after examining photos of only males (see an example in Figure G), the majority of both male and female respondents agreed that all soft skills were equally important for males and females, even though they acknowledged that men or women, in their experience, tended to express certain skills more than others. However, when asked to look at photos of females and to comment on whether the skills represented in those photos were important for both men and women, youth's reactions were quite different. In contrast to the gender neutral beliefs they expressed when looking at photos of males, when looking at photos of females, more youth expressed that certain soft skills were more important for women.

#### Country Context *May* Influence the Skills Demanded

Though small sample sizes when the data is disaggregated by country require caution in drawing conclusions, some conclusions can be made. Employers from different countries—though employers sampled do not represent the same work sectors from country to country—value different soft skills and to different extents. Similarly, educators from different countries—though again educators in each country were not comprised of the same mix of technical vocational and general secondary school instructors—also value different skills to different extents.



Figure G: A Filipino Youth's Soft Skills for Employment

## Conclusions and Recommendations

This study examined which soft skills are valued and to what extent by youth, employers, and educators in three countries. Several key conclusions—and accompanying recommendations—emerge:

- *Youth seem to base their ideal soft skills for work and education on the skills that they, themselves, possess.*
  - *Recommendation: Work-readiness training programs should assess youth’s soft skills at the beginning of training in order to provide better-targeted training to individual youth.*
- *Youth underestimate the extent to which these skills are required by educators and employers.*
  - *Recommendation: Work-readiness training programs should inform youth not only of which skills employers and educators demand, but how much of those skills they demand.*
- *Employers in different sectors demand different soft skills to be expressed and to different extents, though this does not align with youth expectations of ideal employees in these sectors.*
  - *Recommendation: Work-readiness training programs should educate youth on the extent to which different skills are valued by different sectors so that youth can prepare themselves for the sector they want to enter.*
- *While educators who teach general secondary school subjects or technical vocational school subjects do not differently value soft skills, youth believe a higher level of soft skills is necessary for success in general secondary school.*
  - *Recommendation: Programs that include success in education as a meaningful outcome of the project should educate youth that high levels of soft skills are necessary for success at both technical vocational and general secondary school.*
- *Youth whose self-assessment and ideal ratings were closer to educators’ and employers’ ratings were less satisfied with life.*
  - *Recommendation: Youth-focused implementing and research organizations should begin to explore youth’s satisfaction—both in the near term and the long term—as a meaningful outcome of our work.*
- *While quantitative data did not return any differential results by youth’s sex, qualitative data revealed a much more nuanced view of the soft skills necessary and typical of males and females, respectively.*
  - *Recommendation: Evaluators and researchers should use both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, prizing qualitative data collection to present a rich, nuanced understanding of gendered perspectives of soft skills.*

**This study on the soft skills that youth value suggests that a positive youth development approach—in which youth are fully informed of their skills and the market and are partners in their own development—is ideal for implementing work-readiness programming when youth’s ideals and skills are mis-aligned with what is demanded in school and at work.** While work-readiness programming cannot be implemented well without the needs assessments and market analyses that inform implementers of market qualities and education systems, studies such as this one highlight that work-readiness programming also needs to consider youth’s perspectives.

## Introduction

Non-cognitive, or soft, skills<sup>7</sup> are now commonly incorporated into youth workforce training programs, frequently verbalized by employers as valuable, and increasingly integrated into public school curricula across both the developed and developing world. Employers demand soft skills, and training and education systems have committed to supplying them, a formula that works in a classic, adult-oriented view of how school and employment interact. However, such a formula omits a key voice: youth. Regardless of employer demand and training supply of soft skills, it is youth who must understand the nuances of their future employers' demand, uncover the essence of these skills from within training and education systems that are sometimes led by individuals who themselves do not exhibit such skills, and unpack these skills through intellectual understanding and practice in their own lives. The task is a large one, and thus far, too little research has focused on understanding youth's perspectives of soft skills.

Much research has focused on employer-demanded soft skills, operationalized in these studies as the traits possessed by employed youth. The U.S. Agency for International Development has funded several thoughtful studies and white papers investigating which skills are linked to such workforce success. Namely, Child Trends' 2015 review<sup>8</sup> of over 380 studies of the connection between soft skills and positive workforce outcomes amongst youth recommended five key skills as most important for work:

- Higher-order Thinking
- Social Skills
- Communication
- Self-Control
- Positive Self-Concept

Having harvested these five key skills from hundreds of studies that used various conceptual frameworks or theories of personality as the basis for research, Child Trends cross-walked these five skills to commonly known frameworks, including the well-known Big Five Factor Model of personality. The Big Five Factor Model understands the human personality as constructed of five elements, including:

- Conscientiousness
- Agreeableness
- Neuroticism/Emotional Stability
- Openness
- Extraversion

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<sup>7</sup> Non-cognitive or soft skills are also commonly referred to as transferable skills, life skills, work readiness skills, etc. Throughout this report, they will be referred to as soft skills, since this is the phrasing used with employers, educators, and youth throughout the course of this study.

<sup>8</sup> Lippman, Laura H., Ryberg, Renee, Carney, Rachel, Moore, Kristin A. (2015) *Key 'Soft Skills' that Foster Youth Workforce Success: Toward a Consensus across Fields*. Child Trends. Publication #2015-24.

These Big Five personality traits or skills were mapped to Child Trends’ five key skills, which provides the Child Trends skills with a model of soft skills rooted not just in positive employment outcomes, but in personality theory as well (see Figure 1).

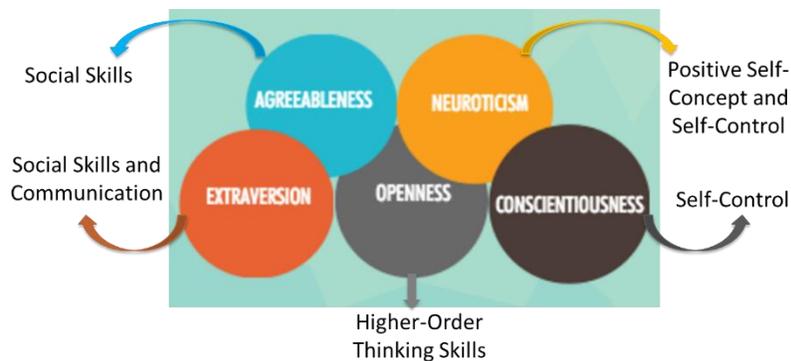


Figure 1: The Big Five Factor Model Mapped to Child Trends' Key Soft Skills

A growing recognition that soft skills are important for positive outcomes beyond employment served as the foundation for Youth Power Action, led by FHI360, to examine which skills were important across three sectors<sup>9</sup>: employment, sexual and reproductive health, and violence prevention. Three cross-cutting skills emerged from the previous list of five work-readiness skills:

- Higher-Order Thinking
- Self-Control
- Positive Self-Concept

Such research has contributed much to the field in terms of highlighting which skills training programs should target for specific sector or cross-sectoral improved outcomes in youth. Additionally, these white papers make space for further work to be done in regards to understanding youth’s perspectives of soft skills and the usefulness of these skills for positive outcomes across different sectors.

This study begins at the foundation laid by the white papers and research mentioned above. Focused on the two sectors—education and employment—that construct a traditional view of skill supply and demand, this study also includes youth’s voices in order to understand which skills are valued by youth, their educators, and their potential employers.

## Methodology

This study was designed to gain a deep understanding of the skills that youth, employers, and educators think are important for education and employment. The study answers two central research questions:

*Which soft skills do youth think are most important for education and employment?*

*What is the type and extent of the gap between the skills that youth, educators, and employers value?*

<sup>9</sup> Gates, Sarah, Lippman, Laura, Shadowen, Noel, Burke, Holly, Diener, Obed, and Malkin, Morrisa. (October 2016). *YouthPower Action Key Soft Skills for Cross-Sectoral Youth Outcomes*. FHI 360.

By implementing this study with youth, educators, and employers, the researchers planned to uncover which skills (type of gap) were more or less valued by youth, employers and educators, as well how different (extent of gap) those soft skill values were.

Further, implementing in three contexts (see Figure 2)—Honduras, the Philippines, and Rwanda—allowed the researchers to make cross-cultural comparisons to answer the following questions:

*When designing soft skill interventions, does the context affect which soft skills should be targeted?*

*Are different soft skills valued for education and the workforce in each context?*

*What is the distance between youths' and stakeholders' soft-skill values and how does this differ from context to context?*

*Are different soft skills for males and females valued within and across contexts?*

The three countries in this study were chosen because they were all conflict-affected. Youth in urban Honduras face gang violence and violent crime; these youth are not only at risk of becoming victims of this violence, but of being drawn into perpetrating such violence. Similarly, youth in the southern region of Mindanao in the Philippines are at risk of both being victimized by and drawn into perpetrating violence, not as part of gangs, but as participants in violent extremist groups, lawless banditry, or family feuds. Youth in Rwanda, though not currently living in a violent environment, live in a post-conflict country where the trauma of the 1994 genocide and the threat of instability in neighboring countries create an environment rife with memories of past violence.

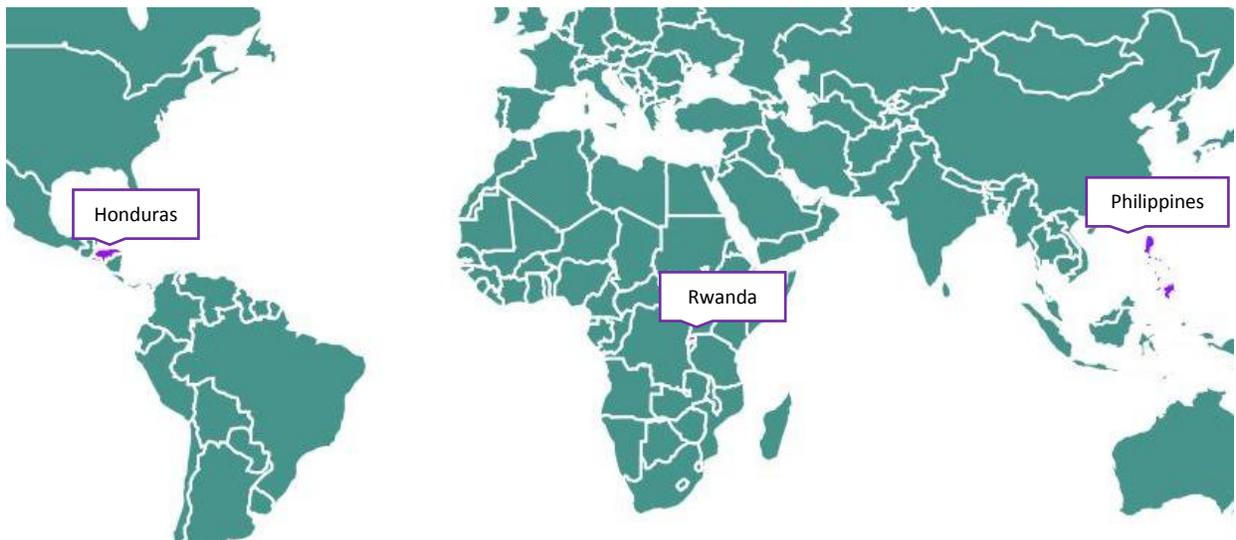


Figure 2: Geographic Span of Study

In addition to answering the research questions above regarding soft skills in context, the researchers planned to investigate the relationship between these soft skills and youth's level of life satisfaction. Previous research led by EDC found an interesting relationship between youth's life satisfaction and

their level of soft skills in Rwanda: life satisfaction and soft skills were negatively correlated for Rwandan youth, a finding counter to the literature and only replicated in Iran.<sup>10</sup> The research team theorized that this finding may be a result of the post-conflict context of Rwanda, where high levels of skills and motivation might not yield positive employment outcomes as the country's economy rebounded, leading to lower levels of life satisfaction amongst the more highly skilled. To investigate if this finding was systematic across conflict-affected contexts, life satisfaction was studied in the current study in the Philippines as well as in Rwanda<sup>11</sup> to answer the following questions:

*Does the relationship between soft skills and life satisfaction change from culture to culture?*

*And, if so, what does this tell us about delivering soft skills programming in each of these contexts?*

## Research Design and Data Collection

To answer the research questions, three data collection activities were implemented with youth, educators, and employers participating in some or all of these data collection activities:

- **Soft Skill Assessment (The Anchored Big Five Inventory-44 or A-BFI)**
  - Youth assessed their own skills, the skills of the “ideal employee” in the economic sector in which they worked or wanted to work, and the skills of the “ideal student” in the subject they were studying or wanted to study.
  - Educators assessed the skills of their “ideal student”.
  - Employers assessed the skills of their “ideal employee”.
- **Photography Activity**
  - Youth, after taking a brief training on soft skills and on photography, took photos of youth in their communities exhibiting soft skills. (see Appendix D for some of their photos).
- **Focus Group Discussions**
  - Using the photographs captured during the photography activity, youth explained their perspective of soft skills and reacted to findings from the soft skills assessment data collection activity.
  - Four focus groups were implemented in Honduras and Rwanda—2 with females and 2 with males—with two mixed sex focus groups implemented in the Philippines due to attrition at two different sites.

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<sup>10</sup> Pagel, R.P., Weiss, S., Olaru, G., & Roberts, R. D., (2016). Measuring Youth's Soft Skills Across Cultures: Evidence from the Philippines and Rwanda. Washington, DC: Education Development Center, Professional Examination Services (ProExam), and the Akilah Institute for Women. Published through the Workforce Connections project managed by FHI 360 and funded by USAID.

<sup>11</sup> Note that the life satisfaction element of the study could not be implemented in Honduras due to project constraints.

While comparisons of youth’s soft skill assessment data to employers’ and educators’ data allowed the research team to answer the study’s key research questions (see Figure 3), the photography activity and focus group discussions gave priority to youth’s voices in understanding and interpreting data.

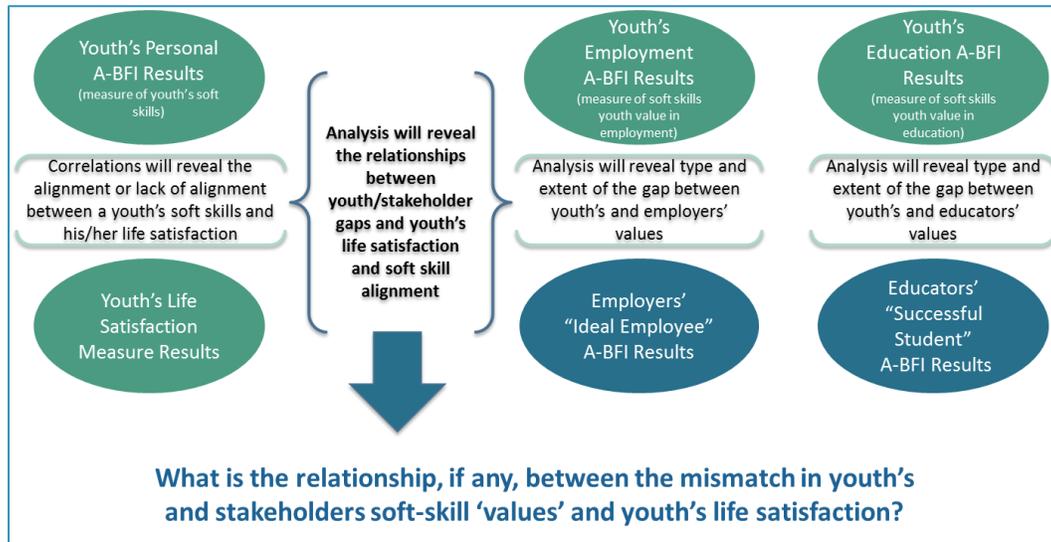


Figure 3: Research Questions and Soft Skill Assessment (A-BFI) Data

## Sample

For the soft skill assessment data collection activity, almost 700 youth, almost 100 employers, and over 100 educators participated across the three countries. The youth sample across the three contexts included both in-school and out-of-school youth, all of whom were current or graduating participants in EDC’s work-readiness programs. A small percentage—11.7%—of the youth sample was currently working, and just over half (55.2%) were female (see Figure 4). This gender parity was a condition of the sample design.



Figure 4: Aggregated Sample of Youth, Employers, and Educators

For the photography and focus group discussion activities, a sub-sample of youth who participated in the soft skills assessment participated. These included roughly 40 youth in each country who were

available and willing to continue participating in the study, given that the sample was divided as equally as possible between males and females. In each country, four focus group discussions (FGDs) were planned to be led by trained project staff. Two FGDs were implemented with females and led by female data collectors, and two FGDs were implemented with males and led by male data collectors. FGDs were audio recorded and translated transcripts were used for analysis. While this plan was implemented in Honduras and Rwanda, only two mixed-sex FGDs were implemented in Philippines due to attrition from the sample that required delivering mixed-sex FGDs in order to have enough youth in each focus group.

While the study first examines the sample in aggregate across all three contexts, key programmatic and contextual differences by country also necessitate country-level understanding of the sample and disaggregation of findings.

**Honduras.** Youth from Honduras had just graduated from EDC’s METAS project, which provided work-readiness training and internship linkages to youth who were in formal school or out-of-school. The average age of youth was 21 years, and the sample was slightly more female than male (see Figure 5). Almost half (44.7%) of youth were currently studying and 17% were currently working.

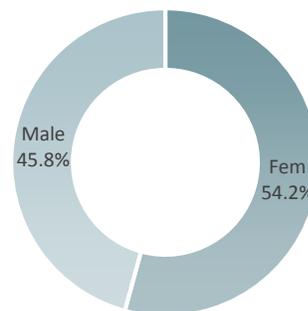


Figure 5: Percent of Male and Female Youth in Honduras Sample

Employers (a sample of 23) included companies that tend to employ METAS youth, so the sample was largely composed of multi-national corporations such as fast-food restaurants and small businesses such as local clothing retailers. Thus, when categorized into three sectors—production, direct services, and business<sup>12</sup>—employers mostly represented companies in the service sector: 65% were in the direct services sector, 12% were in the business sector, 4% were in the production sector, and the remaining 19% fell outside of this three-sector categorization. 38% of responding employers were female, and their companies employed, on average, 6 employees each, though the smallest company employed 2 employees total and the largest company employed 8.

Educators (a sample of 31) included instructors who teach subjects taught in general secondary schools as well as subjects taught in technical vocational schools.<sup>13</sup> In Honduras, 2/3 of the sample taught general secondary school subjects with the remaining 1/3 teaching technical vocational school subjects. The majority (61.3%) of them were male, and while their years of teaching experience at their current level ranged from 1 to 36 years, the average years of experience was 14.7 years.

<sup>12</sup> See section on [Work Field](#) for an explanation of how companies were divided into the three sectors mentioned here.

<sup>13</sup> See section on [Education Type](#) for an explanation of how school subjects were divided into the two school types mentioned here.

**The Philippines.** Participating youth from the Philippines were current participants in EDC’s Mindanao Youth for Development (MYDev) project. Youth had all completed their foundational work-readiness training, but had not yet completed their technical skills training or graduated from the program. No

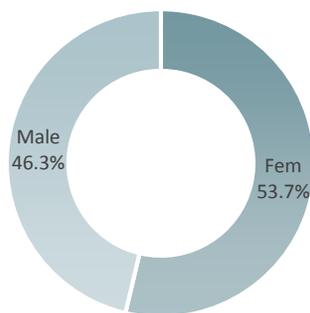


Figure 6: Percent of Male and Female Youth in Philippines Sample

youth were currently in formal schooling, though many (38.8%) were taking their skills training courses and considered that a form of study. Fewer than 10% were currently working. Similar to Honduras, the sample was slightly more female than male (see Figure 6), and the average age was 20 years.

Employers (a sample of 35) included both multi-national and local businesses that employ MYDev youth. While 40% of these employers were in production, 11% were in direct services, and 6% were in business, the remaining employers did not fit into this three sector categorization. The majority (60%) of employers were male, and, on average, their companies employed 5 employees at their businesses, though the smallest company employed 2 employees total and the largest company employed 8.

Educators (a sample of 45) included trainers and instructors who teach out-of-school youth work readiness and technical skills as well as skills taught in general secondary school. Most of them (62%) taught subjects taught in general secondary school, with the remaining teaching subjects taught in vocational school. The majority (75%) of educators in the Philippines were female; these educators had an average of 5.2 years of experience teaching at the level they were currently teaching.

**Rwanda.** Youth in Rwanda were current participants in EDC’s Akazi Kanoze II project. The majority (97.8%) of Rwandan youth were enrolled in formal schools and had completed the work-readiness portion of the Akazi Kanoze II project, though they had not yet graduated from the program at the time of their participation in the study. A few (7%) were currently working. A slight majority (58.6%) of the sample were female (see Figure 7), and the average age was 19 years old.

Employers (a sample of 32) from Rwanda included local, private-sector companies as well as local government offices. 28% of employers worked in the direct services sector, 16% worked in the production sector, 9% worked in business, with the remaining defying this three sector categorization. 37.5% of responding employers were female, and the average employer had almost 4 employees, though companies sampled ranged from having between 2 to 7 employees in total.

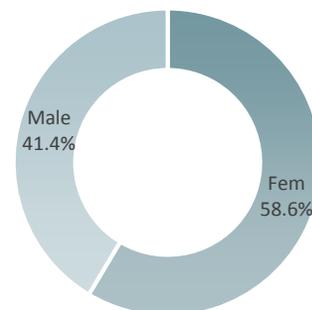


Figure 7: Percent of Male and Female Youth from Rwanda

Educators included mostly general secondary school educators (94% of the sample of 35 educators). Most (60%) educators were male, with between fewer than 1 and 20 years of experience teaching at their current level, though the average years of experience was 4.4 years.

## Tools

Two tools were used to collect data: the Anchored Big Five Inventory 44 (A-BFI) was used to collect soft skills assessment data, and a focus group discussion protocol was used to collect qualitative data.

## Anchored Big Five Inventory (A-BFI)

EDC developed a culturally-adaptable soft skills test, the Anchored Big Five Inventory or A-BFI that uses the Big Five Inventory-44 self-report test in conjunction with anchoring vignette questions.<sup>14</sup> Built off the Big Five Factor Model and using the BFI-44 as a component, the A-BFI measures the Big Five soft skills: conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, openness, and extraversion.

### Big Five Inventory (BFI)

The “Big Five Inventory” (BFI) is a relatively brief 44-item self-report assessment. Its popularity is based on its psychometric qualities and the small amount of time required to complete the questionnaire (approximately 5 minutes). The average reliability of the scales is approximately  $\alpha = .80$  and the BFI has proven to be stable over time with a retest reliability of around .85. Items consist of short phrases, starting with “I see myself as someone who...” and ending with a prototypical Big Five trait marker (e.g. “is relaxed, handles stress well”). Every factor is measured by 8 to 10 items. Responses are given on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (“disagree strongly”) to 5 (“agree strongly”).

The A-BFI’s addition of anchoring vignettes allow for the BFI-44 to be re-scored to correct for cultural reference bias, making it useful for drawing cross-cultural comparisons.<sup>15</sup> Recent research in Rwanda and the Philippines showed the anchoring vignettes to improve the reliability of the BFI-44 in both contexts.<sup>16</sup>

While the A-BFI is normally used as a self-assessment where individuals rate themselves by stating how much they agree or disagree with several statements about their personality (I see myself as someone who...), in this study, the A-BFI was implemented as a self-assessment only with youth. In addition, youth and employers also rated the “ideal employee” (“The ideal employee is someone who...”) in their current or desired work field; youth and educators rated the “ideal student” (“The ideal student is someone who...”) in their current or desired school subject.

Before implementation, the A-BFI was translated and back-translated into Spanish (it had been translated and back-translated into Kinyarwanda and Tagalog as part of a previous study), and then cognitively tested with youth in each context. Revisions were made to translated versions after cognitive testing (see Annex B for an English-language version of the A-BFI).

## Focus Group Discussion Protocol

Following collection and analysis of A-BFI data, focus group discussions were implemented with roughly 40 youth in each country. The FGD protocol was built to achieve three goals:

- To give youth a chance to share and discuss their photographs from the photography activity
- To present findings from the A-BFI activity to the youth and hear their reactions
- To learn if youth perceive different soft skills to be more or less valuable for youth of different sexes

An English-language version of the FGD protocol can be found in Annex C.

<sup>14</sup> for an overview of the Big Five model of personality, see Roberts, Richard D., Martin, Jonathan, and Olaru, Gabriel. (2014). *The Big Five Personality Factors at the Rosetta Stone for Understanding, Assessing, and Enhancing Noncognitive Skills in K-12 Education Worldwide*.

<sup>15</sup> King, G., Murray, C. J., Salomon, J. A., & Tandon, A. (2004). Enhancing the Validity and Cross-Cultural Comparability of Measurement in Survey Research. *American Political Science Review*, 98(1), 191-207.

<sup>16</sup> Pagel, R.P., Weiss, S., Olaru, G., & Roberts, R. D., (2016). *Measuring Youth’s Soft Skills Across Cultures: Evidence from the Philippines and Rwanda*. Washington, DC: Education Development Center, Professional Examination Services (ProExam), and the Akilah Institute for Women. Published through the Workforce Connections project managed by FHI 360 and funded by USAID.

## Findings: Aggregated Analysis

In addition to answering key research questions, the research team undertook analysis of the psychometric qualities of the A-BFI to ensure its reliability with the samples studied across the three country contexts. Thus, this section begins with an exploration of the reliability of the A-BFI.

Having established the reliability of the A-BFI, this section then examines the ideal employee and ideal student skills espoused by youth, employers, and educators. Next, the report takes a deeper dive into ideals for education and employment, exploring if and how ideal skills change depending on employment sector or education type. The section then examines youth’s perspectives as obtained through qualitative data and closes with an investigation of how life satisfaction and gender may affect soft skill ideals and traits. The next section continues with a deep dive into country-level analysis.

### The Anchored BFI Is a Reliable Measure of Soft Skills Across Contexts

While the A-BFI had been previously developed and tested, psychometric testing of the A-BFI was undertaken again in this study to ensure that anchoring vignettes continued to improve measurement properties. Descriptive statistics of the A-BFI taken by youth are presented in Table 1. Reliability—the test’s ability to measure consistently from person to person—as indicated by Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  was good to excellent ( $\alpha > .80$ ) for all scales in all three A-BFI forms: youth’s self-ratings, youth’s ideal employee ratings, and youth’s ideal student ratings. In contrast to the unadjusted scores, A-BFI scores covered the entire possible score range (from 1 to 7), thus potentially improving the test’s discrimination between participants.

CRONBACH’S A SHOWS THAT THE A-BFI MEASURES SOFT SKILLS RELIABLY ACROSS CULTURES								
		N	Number of Items	Mean Score	SD	Min	Max	$\alpha$
Youth Self-Ratings	Conscientiousness	692	9	4.44	1.38	1	7	.91
	Agreeableness	692	9	4.50	1.32	1	7	.90
	Emotional Stability	692	8	3.75	1.56	1	7	.90
	Openness	692	10	3.44	1.35	1	7	.91
	Extraversion	692	8	3.65	1.37	1	7	.85
Youth Ideal Employee Ratings	Conscientiousness	692	9	4.66	1.40	1	7	.91
	Agreeableness	692	9	4.59	1.32	1	7	.90
	Emotional Stability	692	8	3.99	1.55	1	7	.89
	Openness	692	10	3.62	1.33	1	7	.90
	Extraversion	692	8	3.80	1.38	1	7	.84
Youth Ideal Student Ratings	Conscientiousness	692	9	4.61	1.40	1	7	.92
	Agreeableness	692	9	4.56	1.36	1	7	.91
	Emotional Stability	692	8	3.87	1.58	1	7	.90
	Openness	692	10	3.69	1.40	1	7	.92
	Extraversion	692	8	3.75	1.36	1	7	.84

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the A-BFI scores<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Min/Max = Minimal/Maximal values scored (numbers in parenthesis are the absolute minimum/maximum possible on the scale).  $\alpha$  = Cronbach’s Alpha measure of reliability (Alpha > .70 is acceptable).

Table 2 presents model fit and reliability indicators for the three A-BFI versions before and after adjustment. Model fit as shown by the CFI and RMSEA values increased after the adjustment, indicating that the five factor structure is more clearly represented in the A-BFI scores in comparison to the unadjusted BFI. Reliability as indicated by McDonald’s  $\omega$  increased from generally unacceptable (acceptable:  $\omega > .70$ ) on the unadjusted BFI to good levels ( $\omega > .80$ ) on the A-BFI. In addition, the anchoring reduced the differences between measurements in the three different cultural contexts. Overall, **the anchoring procedure applied in the A-BFI continued to reduce differences between the scores in different cultural contexts and increased the reliability of the soft skill measurement.**

THE BIG FIVE STRUCTURE FACTOR IS REFLECTED BY A-BFI SCORES								
	Model Fit			Reliability $\omega$				
	CFI	RMSEA	$\chi^2$	C	A	ES	O	E
<b>BFI Before Adjustment with Anchoring Vignettes</b>								
Self	.62	.08	4470	0.73	0.59	0.59	0.75	0.50
Ideal Employee	.59	.08	4437	0.75	0.57	0.68	0.67	0.55
Ideal Student	.61	.08	4990	0.76	0.67	0.75	0.75	0.57
<b>Anchored BFI (BFI after Adjustment with Anchoring Vignettes)</b>								
Self	.82	.07	4260	0.91	0.91	0.90	0.92	0.85
Ideal Employee	.84	.07	3665	0.92	0.90	0.89	0.90	0.85
Ideal Student	.83	.07	4249	0.92	0.92	0.90	0.92	0.84

Table 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Unadjusted and Adjusted BFI<sup>18</sup>

## Youth, Employer, and Educator Ideals

### Youth’s Ideals May Be Derived from Their Own Personalities

While one might expect youth to have a common sense of the skills possessed by the ‘ideal student’ or the ‘ideal employee,’ a higher variance in responses amongst youth—one that is similarly high as the variance in youth’s ratings of their own skills—**suggests that youth in our sample do not agree on a set of skills common to successful students and employees, respectively.** In addition, high correlations between youth’s ideal employee and ideal student ratings suggest that **youth do not differentiate some skills as being more important for work or education.** Instead, the high correlation between youth’s self-ratings and ideal ratings suggest that **youth may base their ideals on their own personalities.** Table 3 below displays these high correlations.

Youth’s Self-Ratings and Ideal Ratings are Highly Correlated			
	Self ↔ Ideal employee	Self ↔ Ideal student	Ideal employee ↔ Ideal student
<b>CONSCIENTIOUSNESS</b>	.86	.88	.91
<b>AGREEABLENESS</b>	.87	.89	.90
<b>EMOTIONAL STABILITY</b>	.87	.88	.91
<b>OPENNESS</b>	.88	.88	.93
<b>EXTRAVERSION</b>	.86	.85	.91

Table 3: Correlations Between Youth’s Self-ratings and Ideals

<sup>18</sup> CFI = Comparative Fit Index. RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.  $\chi^2$  = Chi-square. Reliability  $\omega$  = McDonald’s Omega Measure of Reliability. Higher CFI, lower RMSEA and lower  $\chi^2$ -values indicate better model fit. Higher values of Omega indicate lower unexplained variance and hence decreasing measurement error.

Further, the small differences between youth’s self-ratings and ideals corroborate: effect sizes, which provide an estimate of the size of difference between youth’s self-ratings and ideals, are small, ranging from 0.10 to 0.20. While Figure 8’s non-overlapping error bars—which represent the window in which the true population values are likely to lie—between self-ratings and ideals for all skills except agreeableness suggest that observed differences are significant, differences are still quite small.<sup>19</sup>

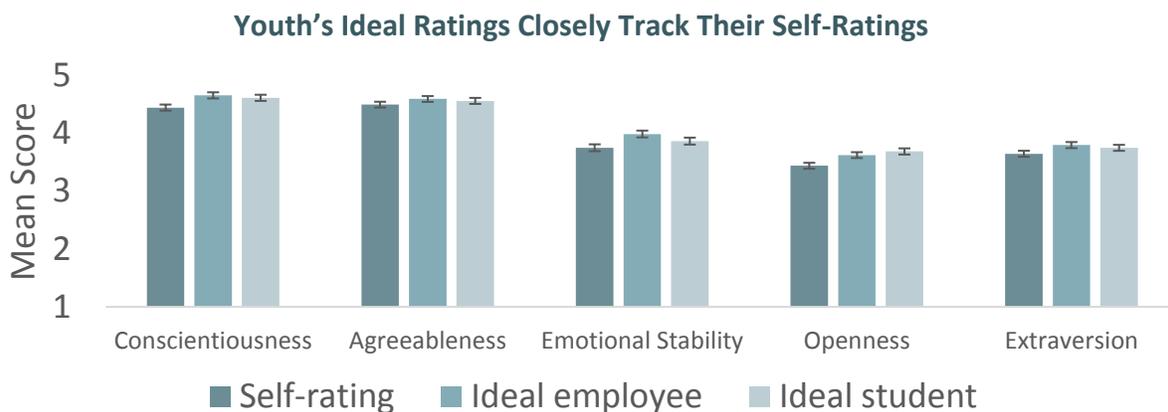


Figure 8: Youth's Self-Ratings and Ideals

The order of the test—which prompted youth to rate their ideals before assessing themselves<sup>20</sup>—may have biased youth’s self-assessments to reflect their ideals more closely than they do in reality. However, these similar self and ideal ratings may also be explained by the theory of implicit trait policy, which suggests that the traits an individual possesses—and therefore understands the benefits of—affect his or her judgment about which traits are important.<sup>21</sup> For example, a good communicator may be frequently rewarded in the workplace for her good communication skills: she may more often have the information she needs to successfully complete projects, and she may receive assistance when she needs it as a result of communicating her needs to her colleagues and employers. Consequently, she may correctly associate good communication skills with being a high performing employee. At the same time, if she has poor teamwork skills, she may not know how beneficial they can be: she may not ever experience that working with others can improve the quality of a product or increase the speed at which it is completed. As a result, while she would correctly associate good communication skills with being a successful employee, she might incorrectly *not* associate good teamwork skills with being a successful employee.

This finding, emerging from youth who have taken the same soft skills training program albeit in three different contexts, suggest that one’s own set of soft skills may still have an influence on the ideal to

<sup>19</sup> Note that A-BFI results use a 7-point scale. In Figure 8 and all following figures, a truncated scale is depicted in order to make graphs easier to see and interpret.

<sup>20</sup> This choice was made since the research questions prioritized understanding youth’s values over their own expression of soft skills and any order was likely to bias the results of the ratings that came last.

<sup>21</sup> Motowidlo, Hooper, and Jackson. (2006). Implicit Polices About Relations Between Personality Traits and Behavioral Effectiveness in Situational Judgment Items. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91, 749-761.

which one aspires even after participating in external trainings.<sup>22</sup> When the theory of implicit trait policy is used to unpack this finding, it appears that a deeper understanding of the benefits of the traits one has influences the skills that a youth believes are ideal. This particular finding begins to build a case for trainings that are more specifically targeted to building not just the skills that a youth may already have and value, but the set of skills that he or she may not have ever experienced as valuable.

### Employers’ and Educators’ Ideals Align with Literature on the Big Five Factor Model

**A comparison of educators’ and employers’ ideals reveals that their preferences for the ideal student and employee, respectively, align with the literature on the Big Five Factor model.** The literature points to openness as important for positive education outcomes<sup>23</sup>, to emotional stability as important for positive employment outcomes<sup>24</sup>, and conscientiousness as key for both. While agreeableness is not directly related to work performance, it is the most relevant skill for teamwork. The impact of extraversion on work related outcomes is dependent on the work field. For instance, the performance of sales professionals benefits from high levels of extraversion. As Figure 9 depicts, employers in this study value agreeableness and extraversion more than educators (purple circles), educators in this study value openness more than employers (blue circle), and both similarly value conscientiousness. Surprisingly, like youth, both employers’ and educators’ ratings have large standard deviations, suggesting that the employers and educators in this sample may not agree on which skills characterize the ideal employee or the ideal student, respectively. Unlike youth, however, employers and educators value different skills for employment and education.

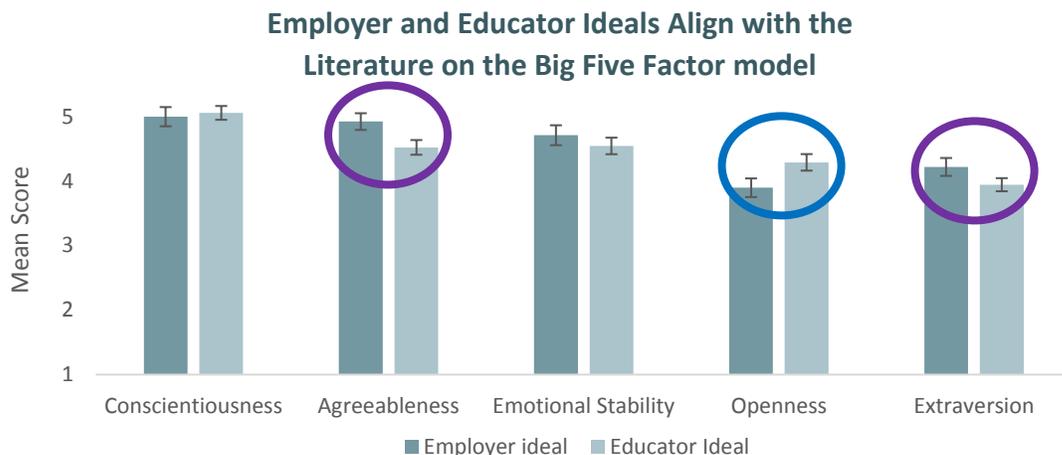


Figure 9: Employers’ Ideals Compared to Educators’ Ideals

<sup>22</sup> Since youth from different countries were at different points in their training—Honduran youth were furthest along, followed by Rwandan and then Filipino youth—an analysis of the size of the gap between ideals and one’s self by country was undertaken. This analysis showed smaller gaps for the youth who had taken more of EDC’s work readiness program, though the difference in gaps based on tenure in a work readiness program were very small. Thus, more research—likely involving pre and post-tests—needs to be undertaken before a conclusion as to what influences one’s soft skill ideals can be made.

<sup>23</sup> Poropat, A.E. (2009). A Meta-Analysis of the Five-Factor Model of Personality and Academic Performance. *Psychological Bulletin*, 135, 322-38.

<sup>24</sup> Sackett, P. R., & Walmsley, P. T. (2014). Which Personality Attributes are Most Important in the Workplace? *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 9, 538-551. and Barrick, M. R., Mount, M. K., & Judge, T. A. (2001). Personality and Performance at the Beginning of the New Millennium: What do we know and where do we go next? *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 9, 9-30.

### Youth Underestimate the Importance of Key Skills for Employment

Given that youth’s ideals seem to depend on their own traits and that youth do not seem to differentiate ideal traits for employment from ideal traits for education while employers and educators do, it is unsurprising that youth **consistently underestimate the extent to which employers value each skill for employment**. As Figure 10 displays, youth’s ideal employee ratings are consistently lower than employers’ ideal employee ratings.

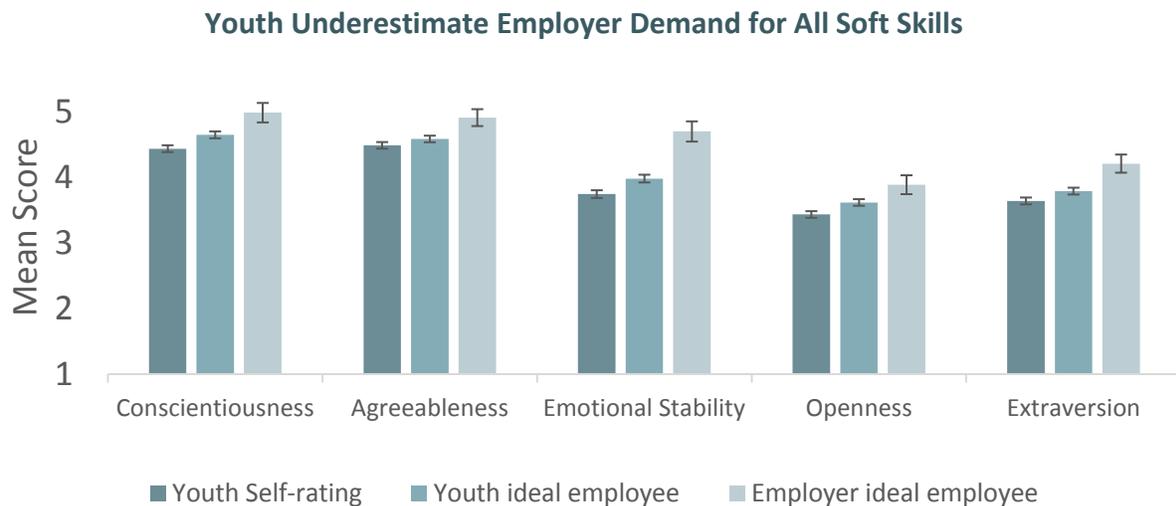


Figure 10: Youth and Employers’ Ideal Employee Ratings

### Skill Demand Varies by Work Field

Participating youth—both across and within the three countries of study—work and aspire to work in a range of sectors, some of which may require different soft skills from others. When asked to rate the “ideal employee,” individuals aspiring to work in different sectors might have different or even opposing “ideals” in mind. To investigate if ideal soft skills are dependent on the work field, youth and employers were asked to indicate the field in which they worked, or—if not currently working—the field in which they desired to work. The researchers then bucketed the 18 fields noted by youth and employers into four broad sectors: production, direct services, business, and ‘other’ (see Table 4). Since the ‘other’ category contained such different work fields—spanning government work to arts and entertainment—the researchers did not feel they shared enough similarities to be analyzed as a group. Hence analysis proceeded focusing on production, direct service, and business sectors alone.

WORK FIELD	Sector			
	Production	Direct Service	Business	Other
Agriculture	X			
ICT/Telecommunications			X	
Arts/Entertainment				X
Hospitality and Services		X		
Construction	X			
Automobile Mechanics/Electronics Repair	X			
Driving		X		
Beauty and Health Care		X		
Commerce		X		
Accounting/Finance			X	
Food processing/Packaging	X			
Garments Production	X			
Domestic work (cooking, cleaning for someone)		X		
NGO work				X
Janitorial Work		X		
Government				X
Education				X
Security <sup>25</sup>				X

Table 4: Work Fields by Sector

Disaggregating youth and employer ratings by sector reveals **that different soft skills are demanded and to different extents for different sectors**. Employers who work in production-oriented fields consistently rate their ideal employee as having lower levels of soft skills than do employers in business and direct services-oriented fields. The most meaningful differences seem to appear in the sectoral rankings for conscientiousness and agreeableness (see Figure 11), where employers in direct services and business value these soft skills much more than do employers in production fields. In addition, employers in the direct service field value emotional stability and extraversion more than employers in production and business. While it makes sense that employers whose employees interface directly with clients would value extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability more, surprising is the fact that youth in the direct services group do not seem to understand the value of these skills to their employers: the size of the gap between youth’s ideal ratings and employers’ ideal ratings in the direct

<sup>25</sup> “Security” work was categorized as “other” and not as “direct service” because it does not always require interfacing directly with customers.

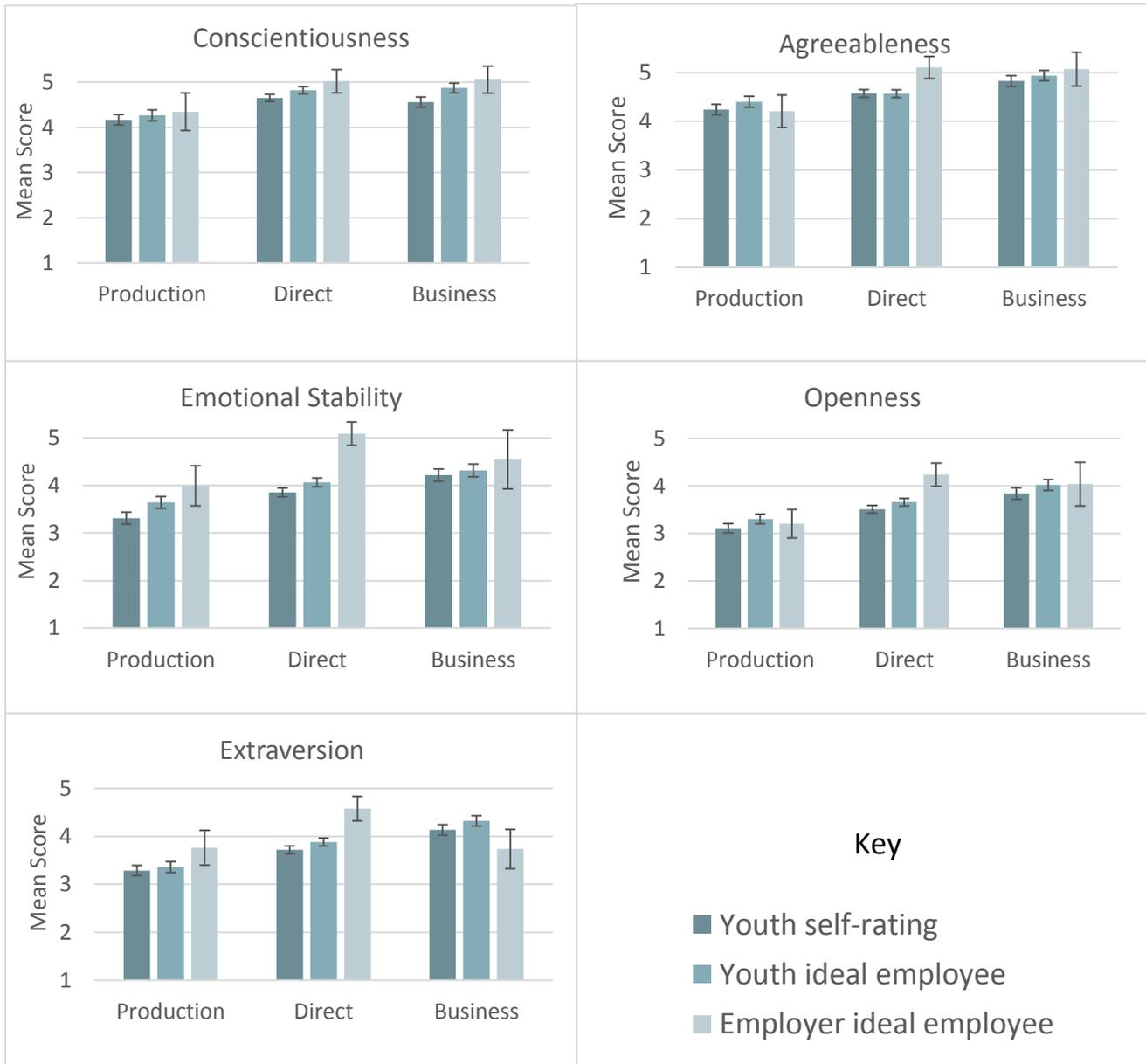


Figure 11: Youth and Employee Ratings by Sector

service field is particularly large for these three skills. In comparison, the gaps in the production and business fields were much smaller between youth’s and employers’ ideal ratings.

Youth’s rankings of the ideal employee match employers’ in that youth also rate the ideal employee in a production-related field as needing the lowest level of soft skills. In fact, **youth self and ideal employee ratings reveal a systematic (across all five soft skills) belief that more soft skills are needed for business than for direct services than for production** (see Figure 12). **Employers do not systematically agree.** Why youth rate the three sectors so systematically needs to be further explored. Do youth associate certain status with particular job fields or sectors? And do youth implicitly conflate job status with the amount of soft skills necessary for success?



Figure 12: Youth's View of Extent of Skills Needed by Sector

### Youth Underestimate the Importance of Key Skills for Education

As the two youth ideal profiles are very similar, there is no clear adaptation to requirements in education. Given that educators value openness more than employers, the gap between youth and educator ideals in openness is one of the largest found in this study (effect size  $d = 0.43$ ). However, youth show desired levels of agreeableness and also rated conscientiousness as the most important trait for an ideal student (see Figure 13). However, **youth underestimate the extent to which educators value conscientiousness and in particular openness and emotional stability.**

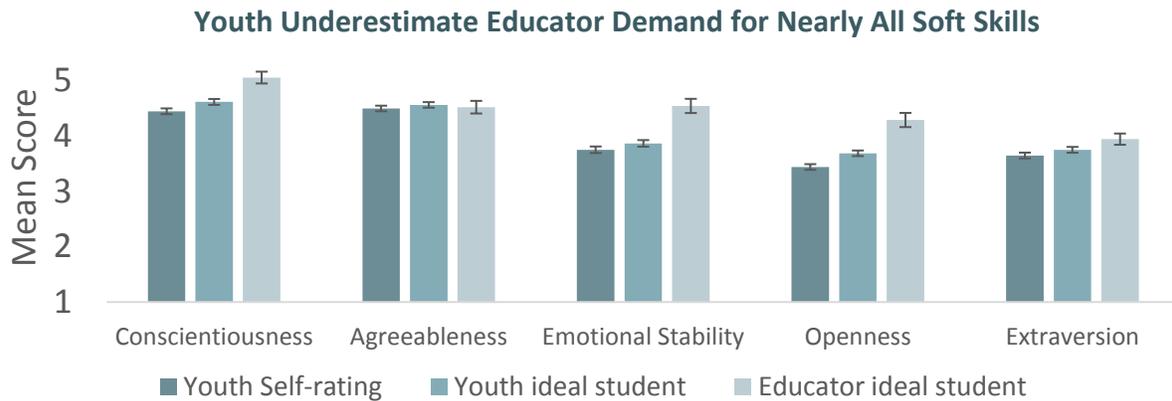


Figure 13: Youth and Educator Ideal Student Ratings

### Skill Demand does not Vary Across Technical and Non-Technical School Educators

On their way into work life, youth follow different types of educational paths. To investigate if soft skills and ideals differ by school type, ratings were compared based on the type of subject youth were studying – or desired to study if they were currently not studying. Subject fields were grouped into two types of schools: technical vocational and general school (see Table 5).

STUDY SUBJECT	School type	
	Technical	General
Agriculture		X
ICT/Telecommunications	X	
Arts/Entertainment	X	
Hospitality and Services	X	
Construction	X	
Automobile Mechanics/Electronics Repair	X	
Driving	X	

Beauty and Health Care	X	
Commerce		X
Accounting/Finance		X
Food processing/Packaging		X
Garments Production	X	
Domestic work (cooking, cleaning for someone)	X	
NGO work		X
Janitorial Work	X	
Government		X
Education		X
Security	X	

Table 5: Study Field by General or Secondary School

Disaggregating educator ratings by school type shows that, while there are slight differences in the educator-demanded soft skills between school types in emotional stability and openness, none of these differences are statistically significant (see Figure 14, where overlapping error bars between educator ideals suggest that any differences may be due to chance). Significant, though, were differences in skills between general secondary school and technical secondary school in *youth* ratings. **Ideals and self-ratings were systematically higher amongst youth who were in or wanted to study in general school compared to technical school.** Since educators do not share this preference for systematically higher levels of skills in general secondary school, ratings from youth in general school might be influenced by external factors not included in this study. For example, is there a social stigma surrounding entering vocational school that might cause youth to believe that fewer skills are necessary to succeed there? Do youth view general secondary school as more elite and so associate higher levels of soft skills with studying there? More research is necessary to answer these questions.

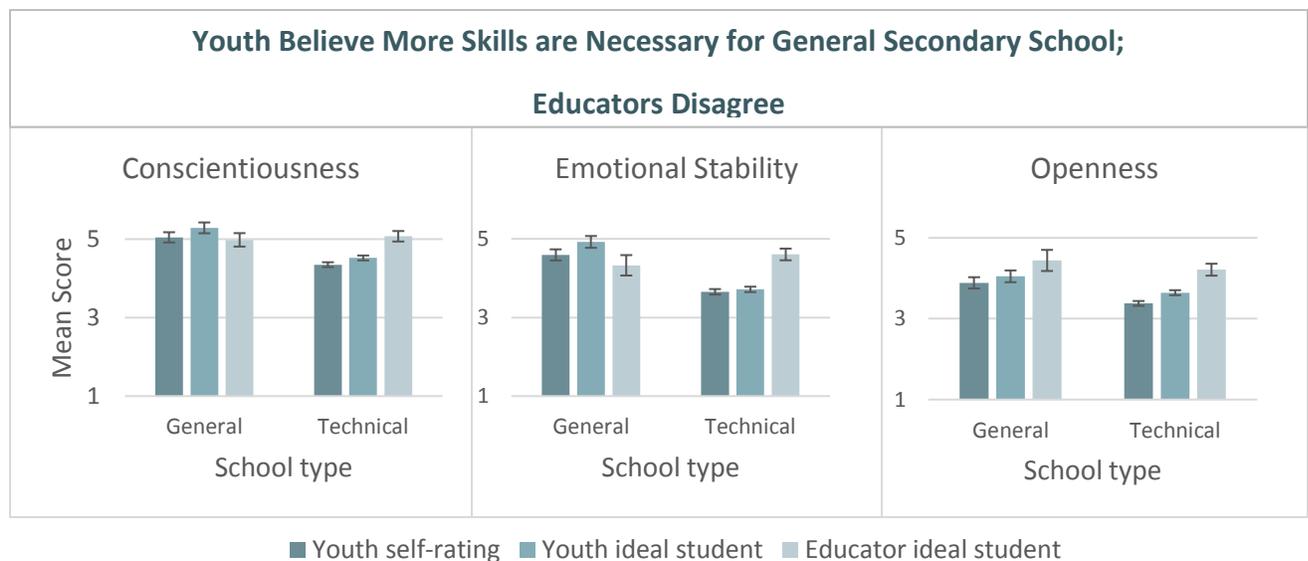


Figure 14: Educator and Youth Ideal Student Ratings:

### Youth Attribute Differences in Ideals to Differences in Maturity and Experience

It is clear now that—with the exception of agreeableness for the ideal student, where youth’s ratings were similar to educators’ ratings—youth underestimate the extent to which employers and educators value these skills for the ideal employee and the ideal student.

When asked about this phenomenon in FGDs, youth across countries pointed to some common key challenges to performing soft skills: a lack of maturity or foresight and a lack of experience. As Figure 15 shows (where larger bubbles represent more responses), across all three countries, youth most often mentioned that a lack of maturity or a difference in experience level influenced the different ideals held by educators and employers when compared to youth. In discussing the gap in ratings between youth and educators/employers for specific skills, however, youth revealed a much more nuanced understanding of their ability to express soft skills.

*Conscientiousness.* Youth suggested that their ideal level of conscientiousness might be lower than employers’ and educators’ because educators and employers have the experience to know what skills are necessary for success. As one Honduran female stated, employers and educators have “already passed these stages and see it differently.” Another youth clarified that, “teachers and employers are more experienced and have already gone through what students and employees are going through so they set higher standards because they can see far ahead and know what is needed” (Rwandan male). Another youth connected this experience to professionalism, stating that “they are professionals and they act as professionals. [...] They are also careful and disciplined and organized because they are professionals [and] because they are trained to be so and they have more experience” (Filipino).

*Emotional Stability.* As with conscientiousness, many youth pointed to a difference in experience as the cause of youth underestimating the amount of emotional stability skills demanded by employers and educators. At the same time, they highlighted that this lack of experience reduced their foresight. Whereas they believed their educators and employers “look far ahead,” some expressed that “youth use the understanding they have at their age, they don’t consider the long run” (Rwandan male).

Yet beyond this not unexpected understanding of how experience affects one’s ability to manage emotions was a deeper questioning of the differences between youth’s and adults’ ability to manage emotions. Some youth believed that the effects of a teacher’s emotional instability would be much worse than the effects of a youth’s or that employers had more stressors, requiring them to manage their emotions better, “while the youth have no worries” (Filipino). At the same time, many youth



Figure 15: Youth’s Reasons for Differences in Ideals between Youth and Educators/Employers

discussed the challenge of letting go of their problems. One out-of-school youth expressed that “employers and teachers can easily forget their problems [...] unlike the out-of-school youth” (Filipino). Another, in-school youth commented that youth “sometimes mix personal problems with those from school or work” (Honduran female). These perspectives of adult problems and youth problems reflect youth’s understanding of the difficulty of managing their emotions and the belief that doing so becomes easier with experience.

While many youth saw the value of increased emotional stability to improving their lives, this skill more than any struck them as very influenced by external factors. Most youth thought their lives would be different if they were better able to manage their emotions, but many also suggested that a youth’s inability to manage emotions might be caused by an employer who does “not know how to treat people well” (Honduran male) or by co-workers who mistreat one. One youth stated, “I have self-control, I accept that I don’t do this or that, but I am not going to be in a place where they discriminate against me for doing this. That I’m blamed for things I do not do [...] I control myself sometimes, but there are many times that one manages to explode because the situation gives him rage” (Honduran male). Another youth, from the Philippines, highlighted a similar challenge to managing one’s emotions, but one which came from parents: “if my parents knew about my problems, they will make it worse rather than make it better.”

Youth’s responses, taken together, certainly nod to the importance of having more experience in order to better manage one’s emotions, but they also point to the influence of situation and context. Youth understand what employers and educators want in terms of emotional stability, but they also recognize that attaining that level can be highly context-dependent. While this does not mean that they disregard the benefits of perfectly managing one’s emotions, it does reveal their awareness of their sometimes powerless position relative to the adults who have the authority to pass or fail them and hire or fire them.

*Openness.* While youth again mentioned experience as a key reason why adults valued openness in the ideal student more than youth did, in both Rwanda and Honduras, youth cited an interesting theory as to why educators value openness so much: it makes their job as educators easier. Students who are open to new experiences learn quickly, which saves teachers time and effort. However, other youth saw



Figure 16: A Filipino Youth displays Conscientiousness at Work

the value of openness in terms of the flexibility and creativity it represents, which gives a youth an advantage both in the short-term in school but also in the long-term in terms of finding employment.

Perhaps more than any other skill area, youth were overwhelmingly positive that being more open would improve their lives. Youth felt that if they were more open, they would better take advantage of new opportunities. Interestingly, youth associated the ability to be open with several key aspects of emotional stability such as being unafraid, adaptable, and flexible enough to try new things and seek out new opportunities. Thus, it seems that youth do understand that emotional stability is about more than just suppressing anger, but that being able to manage emotions such as stress, anxiety, or fear can be instrumental in being able to experience openness to new opportunities.

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*There are many people who are afraid of the unknown, and [they] don't take advantage of new things. Do not be afraid to learn something different every day. (Female from Honduras)*

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*Agreeableness.* Youth understood why employers valued agreeableness, which many youth conflated with extraversion, so much. While youth in focus groups did not directly discuss the different skills necessary for different sectors of work, 60% of the focus groups discussed the importance of agreeableness for *service-oriented work* in which employees interface with clients. Given the results of quantitative analysis of employment by sector above, where youth underestimated the amount of soft skills necessary for service-oriented work, this finding suggests that youth are thinking about and aware of the importance of agreeableness for direct service work. Others recognized that being agreeable can “increase productivity and [produce a] smooth working environment” (Rwandan male) and that it improves inter-personal relationships, which are important for a positive working environment.

Overall, youth understand that their lack of experience—and sometimes even immaturity or lack of foresight—influence the level of skills they express in school or at work. However, youth also revealed a mistrust of the expectations of educators and employers, with some suggesting that youth soft skills work for the personal gain of employers and educators, who do not always hold themselves to the same level of soft skills to which they hold youth. Despite this, youth seemed to align with employers and educators in suggesting that their lives would be better if they had a higher level of each of the skills.

## Life Satisfaction

The rationale behind including life satisfaction questions in this research stemmed from previous research in which negative correlations were found in Rwanda between soft skills and life satisfaction. In this study, youth from the Philippines and Rwanda<sup>26</sup> were asked five questions—from Diener’s Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)<sup>27</sup>—to measure their life satisfaction (see Figure 17) so that researchers could uncover any relationships between life satisfaction, skills, and skill gaps between youth and educators/employers.

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<sup>26</sup> Youth in Honduras took the A-BFI before SWLS questions were added due to program timing constraints.

<sup>27</sup> Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R.J., & Griffin, S. The Satisfaction with Life Scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 49, 71-75.

First, the relationship between youth’s self-ratings and life satisfaction again returned some negative relationships. Typically, correlations between the Big Five Factors and life satisfaction are positive, but the negative relationship continued for some skills for both Rwanda and the Philippines, though these relationships were not systematic between the two countries (see Table 6). In the Philippines, youth with more emotional stability were, on average, less satisfied with their lives. In Rwanda, youth with more of every skill except emotional stability were less satisfied with their lives, though these correlations

### Diener’s Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)

HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS?

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
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1. In most ways, my life is close to my ideal.
2. The conditions of my life are excellent.
3. I am satisfied with life.
4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.
5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

Figure 17: Diener's Satisfaction with Life Scale

were largely driven by youth’s responses to Question 5: “If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing,” where Rwandan youth also scored significantly lower than Filipino youth.

NO SYSTEMATIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN POSSESSING SOFT SKILLS AND LIFE SATISFACTION							
		LS1	LS2	LS3	LS4	LS5	Total Score
<b>CONSCIENTIOUSNESS</b>	Philippines	.01	.03	.01	-.09	-.09	-.04
	Rwanda	-.04	-.05	-.02	-.12	<b>-.25</b>	<b>-.15</b>
<b>AGREEABLENESS</b>	Philippines	.05	.03	.03	-.01	.05	-.01
	Rwanda	-.11	-.09	.03	<b>-.16</b>	<b>-.16</b>	<b>-.15</b>
<b>EMOTIONAL STABILITY</b>	Philippines	-.11	-.10	<b>-.14</b>	<b>-.14</b>	-.11	<b>-.17</b>
	Rwanda	.02	.05	.01	-.09	-.13	-.05
<b>OPENNESS</b>	Philippines	-.11	.03	-.08	-.07	-.02	-.07
	Rwanda	<b>-.20</b>	<b>-.17</b>	-.04	-.01	<b>-.21</b>	<b>-.17</b>
<b>EXTRAVERSION</b>	Philippines	-.07	-.02	-.11	-.07	-.10	-.11
	Rwanda	-.12	-.02	-.06	<b>-.17</b>	<b>-.21</b>	<b>-.17</b>

Table 6: Correlations between Youth's Self-Ratings and Life Satisfaction by Skill (significant correlations in bold)

Next, for some skills, **youth whose self-assessment and ideal ratings were closer to educators’ and employers’ ratings were less satisfied with life.** In other words, life satisfaction scores were lower as the gap between youth ratings and employer or educator ideals decreased (see Table 7). Again this effect is only significant in Rwanda, with the exception of emotional stability. While there is no significant

correlation between Rwandan youth’s life satisfaction and the gap between their and employer/educator ratings for emotional stability (unlike all other skills), in the Philippines, youth who rate themselves as further from educators’ ideals for emotional stability also say they are more satisfied with life.

YOUTH WHOSE SELF-RATINGS AND IDEALS ARE CLOSER TO EMPLOYER AND EDUCATOR IDEALS ARE LESS SATISFIED WITH LIFE					
Gap between youth self-ratings/ideals and:					
		Youth ideal employee	Youth ideal student	Employer ideal employee	Educator ideal student
<b>CONSCIENTIOUSNESS</b>	Philippines	-.02	-.01	.04/.05	.04/.05
	Rwanda	-.09	-.08	<b>.15/.18</b>	<b>.15/.17</b>
<b>AGREEABLENESS</b>	Philippines	-.14	-.05	.01/.10	.01/.04
	Rwanda	.01	-.09	<b>.15/.14</b>	<b>.15/.18</b>
<b>EMOTIONAL STABILITY</b>	Philippines	.06	.10	<b>.17/.13</b>	<b>.17/.12</b>
	Rwanda	<b>-.17</b>	-.10	.05/.12	.05/.09
<b>OPENNESS</b>	Philippines	-.02	-.08	.07/.08	.07/.11
	Rwanda	-.03	-.05	<b>.17/.19</b>	<b>.17/.19</b>
<b>EXTRAVERSION</b>	Philippines	.06	.03	.11/.07	.11/.09
	Rwanda	-.10	-.08	<b>.17/.19</b>	<b>.17/.19</b>

Table 7: Correlation between Life Satisfaction and Youth vs. Employer/Educator Gaps (significant correlations in bold)

The causes for these unexpected relationships between possessing employer and educator-demanded soft skills and feeling less satisfied with life need to be further explored. While this finding is less systematic in the Philippines, the finding in Rwanda that not only youth with more skills, but youth whose self-ratings are closer to employer and educator demanded skills, are less satisfied with life is concerning for any stakeholder—employer, educator, or NGO—that works with Rwandan youth. Do these youth expect that their soft skills will provide them with better lives than they achieve? Is the economy such that competition is too great for even soft skills to make the difference? Or is the economy such that, even with the right skills, youth—the first group to suffer from the absence of job growth—struggle to find work? These questions need to be further explored.

## Gender

Gender differences that were apparent from the A-BFI between the youth self-ratings and ideals were very small (see Figure 18, where differences between males’ and females’ self-ratings are hardly observable). Participating males showed slightly higher levels in emotional stability and extraversion than participating females, but effects were so small that a further disaggregation by gender in the analysis was not necessary.

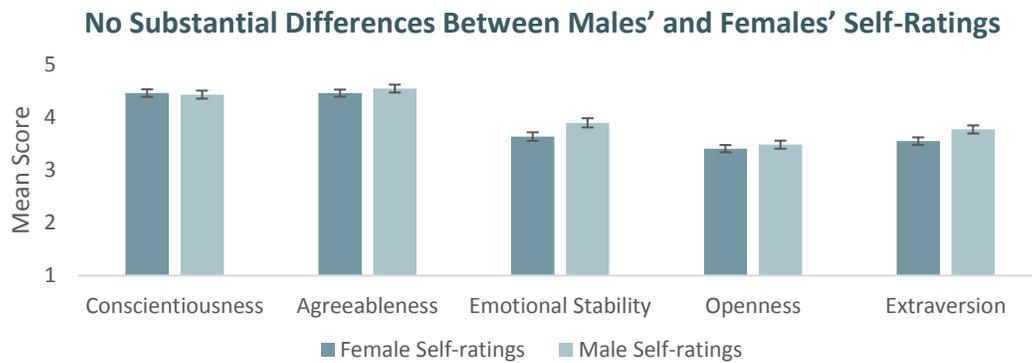


Figure 18: Youth's Self Ratings and Ideals by Gender

However, when youth were asked if they believed that different skills were ideal for males and females through FGDs, their responses did not exactly corroborate their test data. Youth were first asked to examine photos, which they took, of only males, after which they were asked to examine photos of only females. For each round of photos, youth were asked if the skills expressed in those photos were important only for males or females. Interestingly, after examining photos of only males, the majority of both male and female respondents agreed that all soft skills were equally important for males and females, even though they acknowledged that men or women, in their experience, tended to express certain skills more than others. While some mentioned that other (non-soft) skills—those involving physical strength or hard skills—were more important for men, most—with the exception of Rwandan males who diverged only in believing that leadership skills were more important for men in order to serve as a head of a family—felt that all soft skills were important for both males and females.



Figure 19: A Photo of Males Only, Taken by a Rwandan Male

However, when asked to look at photos of females and to comment on whether the skills represented in those photos were important for both men and women, youth's reactions were quite different. In contrast to the gender neutral beliefs they expressed when looking at photos of males, when looking at photos of females, more youth expressed that certain soft skills were more important for women. Here, underlying assumptions about the role of women versus men were revealed. Two groups—Honduras females and Rwandan males—expressed that women need more soft skills—like emotional stability, agreeableness and communication—for the purposes of managing a home and raising children, though Honduran females also suggested that women needed more skills in order to combat traditional stereotypes and “demonstrate that we can do the same tasks”. While Filipino youth did not link the soft skills of females to their homes and children, Filipino youth did suggest that women have higher levels of each of the Big Five skills.



*Figure 20: Photo of a Female Only, Taken by a Filipino Female*

While these different responses to males and females needing the same and equal levels of soft skills suggests that youth perceive different skills as being important for different genders, it also reveals that they recognize that these gendered views are a response to cultural and contextual norms and expectations. Both males and females—when nodding to an area in which their gender was expected to have fewer skills or expected to exercise those skills only in a certain setting, such as the home—mentioned changing expectations of men and women. One Rwanda female stated that “slowly people get to understand that [self-confidence] is important for women as well,” and another that the expectation that women are more agreeable than men “is a prejudice.” Similarly, a Honduran male stated that, “although women have more development in some areas, men also have the right.”

## Findings: Country Level Analysis

### The Influence of Country Context

The A-BFI, through the use of anchoring vignettes, corrects for cultural reference bias, or the possibility that the ideal expression of a skill may look different from cultural context to cultural context. With cultural reference bias corrected, the study was able to examine how context affects which skills are valued more or less in the three cultures of study, though small sample sizes require caution in interpretation. Several key findings emerged in response to key questions:

*When designing soft skill interventions, does the context affect which soft skills should be targeted?*

*Are different soft skills valued for education and the workforce in each context?*

While our employer and educator samples are, for many of the soft skill comparisons, too small to be disaggregated by country, some significant differences in employer and educator values do emerge, though inferences about differences in context should be made with caution given the differences in the employer and educator samples by country. In Honduras, where employers are mostly from the direct services sector, employers seem to value agreeableness and extraversion more than employers in the other two contexts. Filipino employers, mostly from the production sector, value emotional stability, openness, and extraversion less than the other two countries, while Rwandan employers, mostly from the direct services sector, value openness much more (see Figure 21). Given that this finding is based on very small sample sizes, **it suggests that further research, and even baseline market analyses, could explore which skills are demanded to what extent by the project’s target employers.**

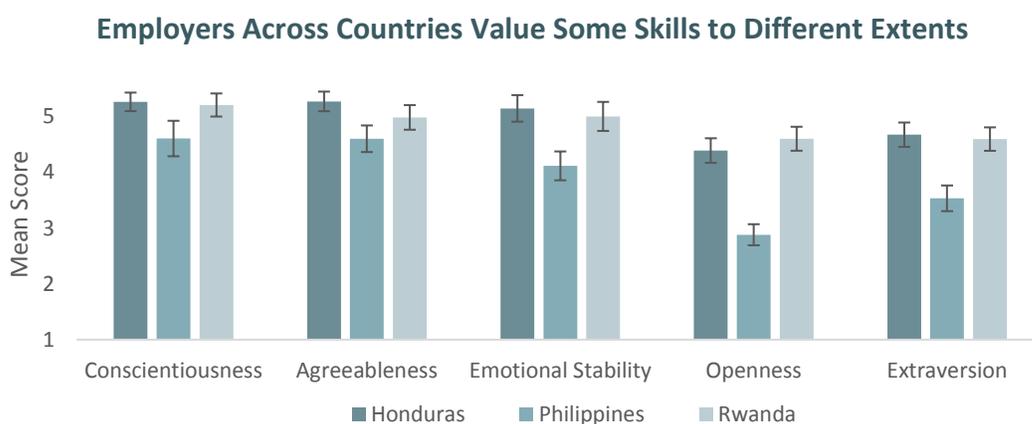


Figure 21: Employer Ideals by Country

Some differences in educator’s values by country emerge as well, though again, these differences may be due to the different and very small educator samples in each country. Namely, educators in the Philippines—62% of whom taught general secondary school subjects—valued conscientiousness more than educators in other contexts but valued openness less. Educators in Rwanda—the large majority of whom taught general secondary school subjects—valued agreeableness much more than educators in the Philippines and Honduras. Finally, educators in Honduras—2/3 of whom taught general secondary school subjects—valued agreeableness much less than did educators in the other two countries (see Figure 22).

## Educators Across Countries Value Some Skills to Different Extents

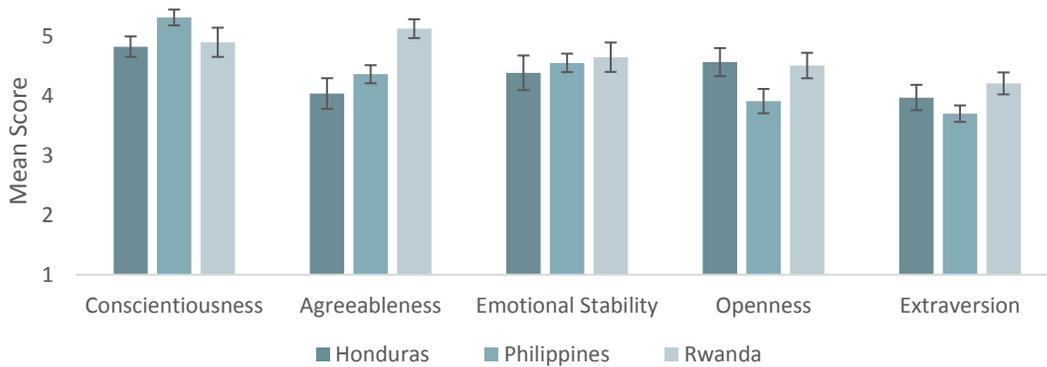


Figure 22: Educator Ideals by Country

*What is the distance between youths' and stakeholders' soft-skill values and how does this differ from context to context?*

While in all countries, youth's ideals were mis-aligned to employers' and educators' ideals, gaps differed in skill type and direction between countries, though again, differences in educator and employer characteristics by country may be influencing these results:

- While Honduran and Rwandan youth underestimated the extent of skills demanded by employers on almost every skill, Filipino youth underestimated the extent of skills demanded only for emotional stability and extraversion. However, lower requirements by Filipino employers relative to employers in other countries explain this phenomenon more than do Filipino youth's ideal ratings.
- While Filipino youth's ideals for education are again closer to educator ideals than in Rwanda and Honduras, there the comparison between Rwanda and Honduras ends. While Rwandan youth underestimate the extent of agreeableness, openness, and extraversion required by educators, Honduran youth underestimate the amount of openness required but overestimate the amount of agreeableness required.

*Are different soft skills for males and females valued within and across contexts?*

While males' and females' A-BFI ratings do not suggest different values by males and females either within or across contexts—though females in Rwanda rate themselves as less extraverted than males—qualitative data suggests a more nuanced view. Females in Honduras are viewed by both males and females as having and needing more soft skills. Filipino youth turned the conversation away from soft skills when gender was introduced, indicating that the skill difference between males and females was not in soft skills, but in hard skills and most importantly related to physical strength. While Rwandan males thought leadership—an extraversion skill—was more important for males, females insisted all soft skills were important for both males and females but still felt that men display soft skills less often than women.

### *Does the relationship between soft skills and life satisfaction change from culture to culture?*

While youth in the Philippines are less satisfied with their lives the more emotionally stable they are, the other skills correlate negatively with life satisfaction in Rwanda. Rwandan youth are less satisfied the more conscientious, agreeable, open, and extraverted they are. These disparate findings—which go against the expectation that the more skills one has, the more satisfied with life one will be—suggest that care should be taken when promoting soft skill trainings and their effects on outcomes to youth. It may be that other factors—environmental, social, etc.—influence life satisfaction; thus, more research, and especially qualitative research, is needed to provide a more nuanced understanding of this finding.

## Honduras

### Youth Self-Ratings and Ideals

Youth in Honduras rated themselves, overall, as having slightly higher levels of soft skills than youth in Rwanda and in the Philippines. While youth’s self-ratings and ideas were highly correlated, Honduran youth thought the ideal student had slightly more openness than they rated themselves as having, though this difference is still small, with an effect size of .21. In general, Honduran youth did not value different skills for employment than for education.

### Employers’ and Educators’ Ideals

A total sample of 23 employers and 31 educators were surveyed in Honduras, so caution with conclusions must be taken due to the small sample size. Employers and educators, in contrast to youth in Honduras, did value different skills for employment and education. **Employers valued agreeableness and extraversion significantly more than did educators** (see Figure 23).

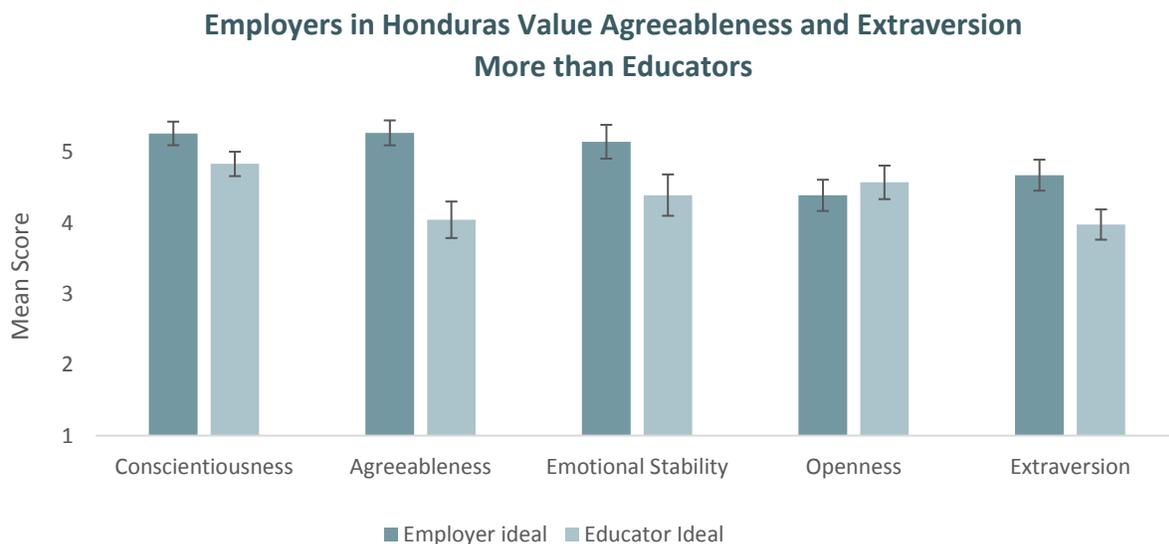


Figure 23: Educator and Employer Ideals in Honduras

## Employment

**Youth in Honduras rated both themselves and the ideal employee as having significantly less soft skills than Honduran employers felt were valuable** (see Figure 24). Specifically, youth rated themselves as having *lower* levels of conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, and extraversion than employers thought were ideal. While it may look like youth also rated themselves much lower on openness, this difference—perhaps owing to a small sample size—is not statistically significant.

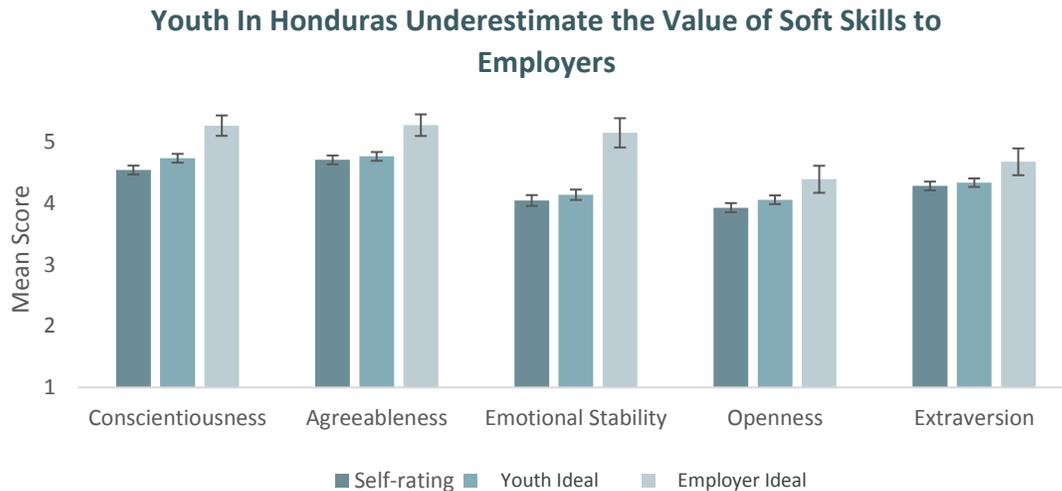


Figure 24: Youth Self-Ratings, Youth Ideals, and Employer Ideals in Honduras

Youth’s understanding of which skills were ideal for employment came slightly closer to employers’ ideals than did their self-ratings, though youth still underestimated the importance of conscientiousness, agreeableness, and emotional stability.

When discussing these gaps, focus group discussion participants emphasized employers’ high expectations for youth at work, with one female youth stating that, “now employers look for more expectations; it’s not like before when you had an opportunity just for graduating from high school.” Youth linked these high expectations to employers’ understanding that youth who are more conscientious, emotionally stable, agreeable, and extraverted contribute both to company reputation and to a company’s bottom line.

Youth recognized that employers want youth who are conscientious because it contributes to the image and profits of the company. In the words of one youth, “[if] I will deliver [the work] a little late, poorly done, dirty, then I will not meet the expectations of the company” (male). Another suggested that “the employer hires good and efficient people to create more profits” (male).

Further, youth recognized the importance of managing one’s emotions when faced with problems at work. One female youth recognized that employers want youth who “can face the different situations and are not intimidated by circumstances.” Another youth pointed to the importance of self-control when dealing with customers: “no matter how much the customer is shouting at you or venting to you because they came home angry for whatever reason, the employee has to try to stay neutral, not get angry with the person and try to reassure him/her” (male). At the same time, youth recognized the influence of non-work problems on their emotional lives, as well as how this negatively affects their work. One female defined emotional stability itself as “the ability [...] to not mix personal issues with

work.” Another (male) youth pointed to the fact that mixing personal problems with work hurts the company: “because [...] he/she will not work the same, because the employee is going to be totally misplaced; he/she will not do things the way they should.”

Youth recognized that an agreeable and extraverted employee would be viewed as an asset particularly in customer-oriented work. One male youth stated that, “if the seller is outgoing, when you go to buy something at the store and you see the salesperson is dynamic, and if you need something and he asks you what you need, you are going to feel good.” Another female youth linked this to a company’s profits: “if [an employer] has a person who doesn’t handle something well, there is the possibility that the customer will leave and the business will not have any profits.” Beyond this customer-orientation, youth also recognized the importance of agreeableness for working in a good work environment. One female youth summed it up when she said, “being more pleasant and more extraverted makes the environment more feasible to do a job. And if a young person does not present these two skills, the work becomes tense, tired.”

### Education

While Honduran youth’s ideal employee and self-ratings were consistently lower than employers’ ideal ratings, the same cannot be said of youth’s ideal student and self-ratings relative to educator ideal ratings (see Figure 25). While students rated themselves as having less openness than educators believed to be ideal, they rated themselves and the ideal student as having more agreeableness than educators valued.

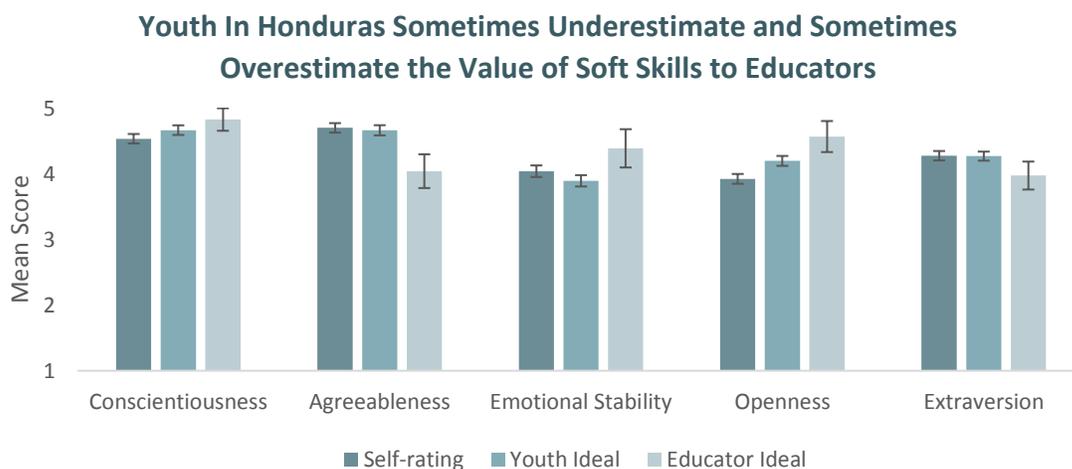


Figure 25: Youth Self-Ratings, Ideals, and Educator Ideals in Honduras

When youth discussed these gaps in focus group discussions, several of them first clarified that discussing conscientiousness for education was a different thing than discussing conscientiousness for employment. Many youth—all of them male—mentioned that a student “simply goes to school because he is forced to,” while another suggested that “there are people who go to school only to get it out of the way directly.” Yet these youth also saw a link between being conscientious at school and positive outcomes in work. One male student stated that “if he [a student] is not organized, he will not be able to achieve his goals, which are to exceed his goals in his studies, to get his career, to go to university. And in order to do that you have to be conscientious.” A female student similarly stated that “you also

have to be conscientious for school and organized because from high school one should be conscientious and organized in order to be able to be neat at work.”

Youth’s comments regarding emotional stability, where youth felt a lower level of skill was necessary than did their educators, revealed inner emotional lives hidden from the view of adults, especially amongst females, who felt that teachers underestimated the complexity of their emotional lives. Females suggested that teachers assume that “since [students] are young they do not get bothered or stressed,” though, in the words of another, “sometimes we mix personal problems with those from school or work, or we are two faced and say that we are fine when we are really not.”

Males in Honduras discussed emotional stability for education differently. While males discussed emotional stability for work in much the way females discussed emotional stability for school and work—in terms of managing one’s emotions given a range of external factors--males discussed emotional stability for school mostly in terms of acting on one’s impulses to have fun. One male stated, “we make decisions motivated by the emotion that we are currently feeling. For example, I like football and there were occasions when I skipped classes to play.” Another offered an example from his experience: “I was in school and as I was an artist too, when there were trips, I preferred to go on trips than to go to school.”

Both males and females were in agreement as to why educators might value openness more than they: all clearly saw the links between being open to new information and success at school and, eventually work. One male noted that youth who are more open can “see other ways to grasp a topic,” while a female similarly noted that “because a teacher doesn’t know everything, if a student is curious, he/she investigates and shares with everyone else.” Youth also recognized that this kind of openness as exhibited in school would be beneficial in transitioning to work, as it makes one “adapted more easily to any environment: a person coming out of school knows that in school it was a different situation than a job. [...] A person who changes his thinking from one situation to another as fast as he can” (male).

## Gender

While few gendered differences can be found amongst Honduran youth’s A-BFI data, there are some small gendered effects when youth’s self-ratings are compared to employer and educator ideals. In Figure 26 below, mean scores represent the average size of the gap between youth self-ratings and employer ideal ratings. Gaps show by how much youth fall short of particular skills relative to employers’ ideals. **Female youth are further from employer’s ideals than males when it comes to emotional stability** (effect size of .17), though this difference is not statistically significant.

### Female Honduran Youth Are Further From Employers' Ideal for Emotional Stability Compared to Males

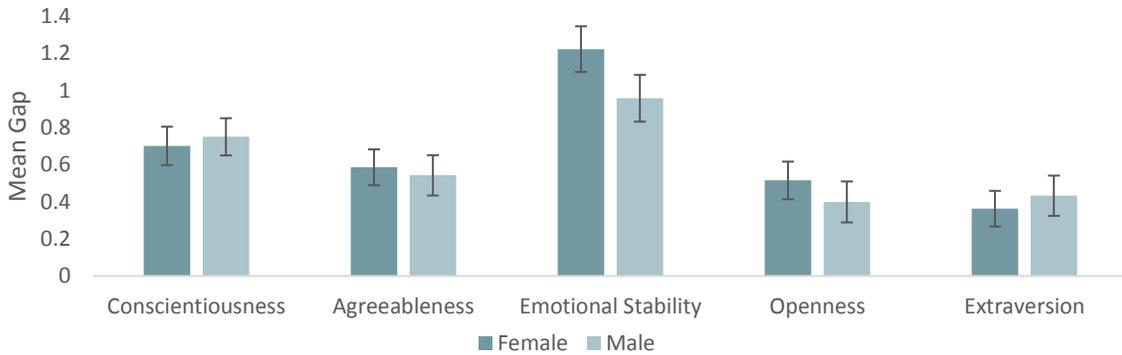


Figure 26: Gaps Between Youth Self-ratings and Employer Ideals in Honduras, by Sex

When gaps between youth’s self-ratings and educators’ ideals are examined by sex, again, **females are further from educators’ ideals than males for emotional stability for education**, though this difference, with an effect size of .17, is again not statistically significant (see Figure 27).

### Female Honduran Youth Are Further From Educators' Ideal for Emotional Stability Compared to Males

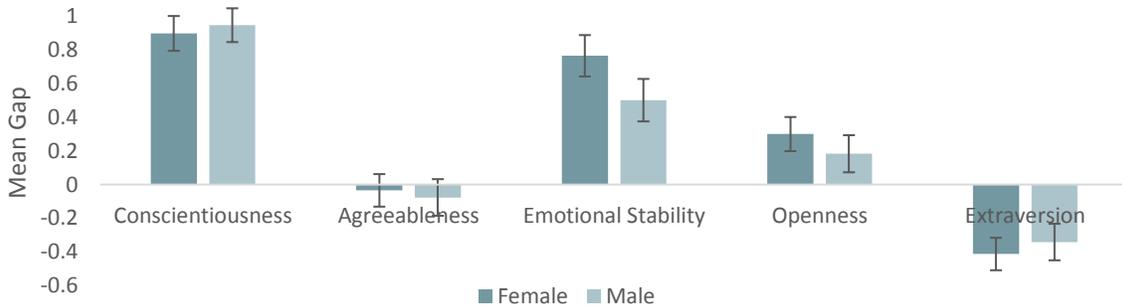


Figure 27: Gaps Between Youth Self-ratings and Educator Ideals in Honduras, by Sex

Males and females’ very different discussions about emotional stability for education in particular corroborate A-BFI findings that males and females may approach managing emotions from different perspectives.

To gain more insight into these different ideals between males and females, youth were asked to discuss the skills expressed in photos they took of males only and of females only. Regardless of whether they were looking at a photo of a male or a female, Honduran males agreed that soft skills were important for both males and females. Honduran females seemed to agree that, ideally, all skills were important for both men and women, but that in reality, females were required to express more skills. Honduran females commented that women need more emotional stability “because they tend to take on more of the husband’s things, children’s grades, expenses of food.” At the same time, these young women recognized that females need to express a high level of soft skills in order to “demonstrate that we can

do the same tasks” since “now there are few instances when women only engage in housework.” While Honduran females’ responses seem to reflect their understanding of what their context and reality requires for women, they also revealed a bias towards women having more skills. One commented that “men should be more conscientious because women see the future but men see only the present,” while another felt that “women are more organized than men.” Even one Honduran male mentioned that “women have more development in some areas.”

## Philippines

### Youth Self-Ratings and Ideals

Filipino youth rated themselves lower on all soft skills than youth in Rwanda and Honduras by a small to moderate degree. This difference to the two other samples decreases slightly when looking at youth ideals. However, youth ideal ratings in the Philippines are still significantly lower than in Rwanda and Honduras on all skills except for conscientiousness. Filipino youth rated the ideal employee to be more emotionally stable than the ideal student. Ratings on the other skills were similar across the two ideals.

### Employers’ and Educators’ Ideals

Educators in the Philippines rated traits similarly to employers. A total sample of 35 employers and 45 educators were surveyed in the Philippines. As with Honduras, caution with conclusions must be taken due to the small sample size. A comparison of the ideals of employers and educators in the Philippines shows two significant differences (see Figure 28). First, **the difference between employer and educator ideals for openness is large**. Filipino educators highly valued openness, which is a trend seen in the other countries, too. There was a significant difference between employers and educators on conscientiousness. **Educators scored conscientiousness considerably higher than employers**, which is not a difference seen in Honduras or Rwanda.

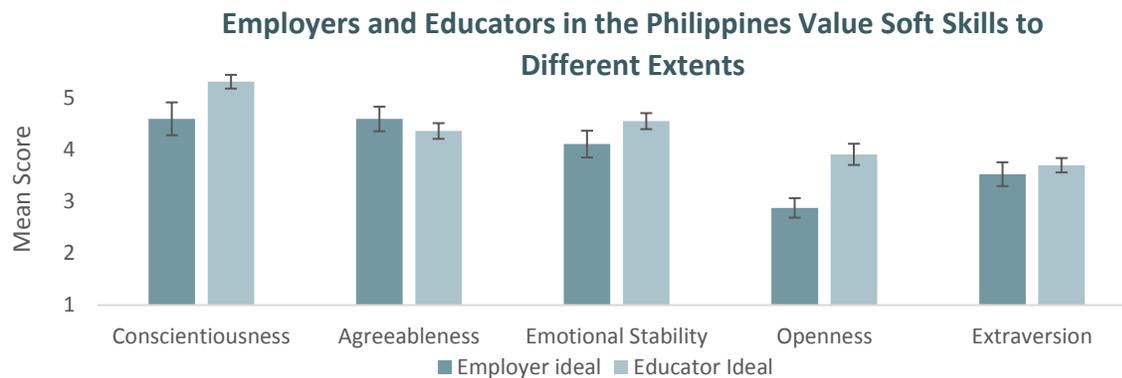


Figure 28: Educator and Employer Ideals in the Philippines

### Employment

Filipino youth followed the same pattern as Honduran youth with gaps between employer expectations and young persons’ self-ratings and ideals. Youth self-ratings were significantly lower than employer ideals on emotional stability and extraversion with medium effect sizes (see Figure 29). With a smaller effect size, youth scored the ideal employee significantly lower than employers only on emotional

stability, which signals a closeness in employee and employer expectations that was not found in the other countries.

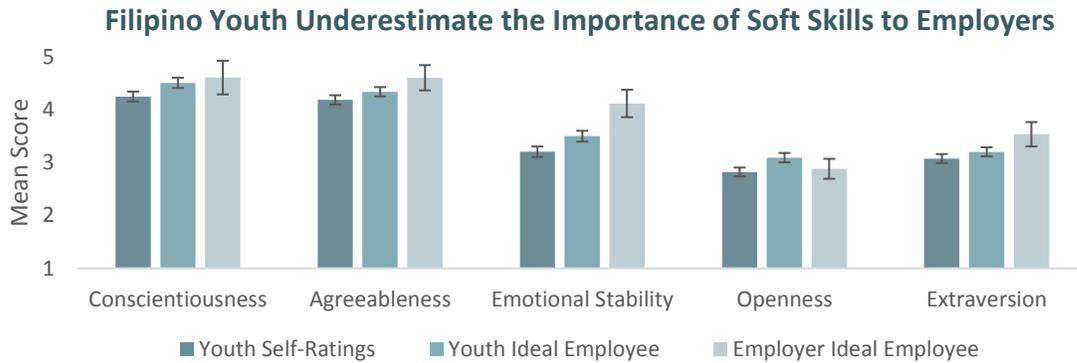


Figure 29: Youth Self-Ratings, Ideals, and Employee Ideals in the Philippines

In general, focus group discussion participants pointed to more life experience and level of responsibility among employers to explain the gap between youth and employer expectations for emotional stability.

“They already have big responsibilities in their lives,” explained one out-of-school youth. There were disparate opinions regarding how employers and youth respond to stress-inducing worries. One side believed that out-of-school youth do not have worries and employers have much larger responsibilities with families and work. The other side explained that both adults (employers and teachers) and youth have worries, but that employers can leave their problems at home and focus on work, whereas youth “always bring [their worries] and so they always have a heavy heart.” This group of youth continued to explain that this difference may come down to money. “Having money solves their problems,” commented one FGD participant.

Another interesting explanation of the difference stems from problems at home. One youth explained it in this way: “If my parents know about my problems, they will make it worse rather than better. They help through yelling at us, sometimes beat us...I prefer to keep it to myself...” This sense of being alone with their emotions may be part of the reason why youth cannot control their emotions at work. Without a place to express their worries, the youth may lose control at work, or take solace in what they find fun in place of working hard.



Figure 30: A Filipino Male's Depiction of Emotional Stability—through Perseverance—at Work

## Education

More so than in the other countries, Filipino youth ratings, both self and ideals, were considerably lower than educator ideals. Youth self-ratings were significantly lower than educator ideals on all traits except for agreeableness (see Figure 31). The largest difference was on emotional stability with a large effect size of 0.91. The other large effect sizes were on openness and conscientiousness.

Similarly, differences between youth ideals and educator ideals in the Philippines were greater than in the other countries. Just as with the self-ratings, youth ideals were significantly lower than educator ideals on all traits except for agreeableness (again, see Figure 31). The effect sizes were smaller than with the youth self-ratings since youth ideals were higher than self-scores. Again, the largest difference was on emotional stability. The second largest differences were on openness and conscientiousness. The pattern of statistical significance is the same as youth self-ratings compared to educator ideals. Whether it be self-ratings or youth ideals, there were considerable differences with educator ideals in the Philippines.

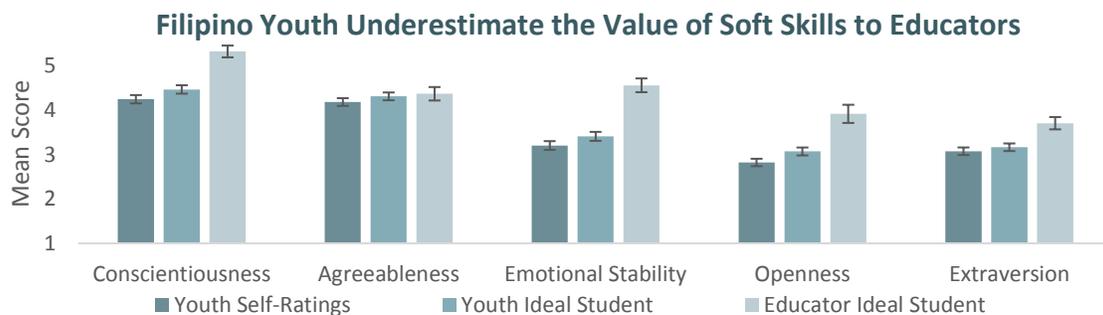


Figure 31: Youth Self-Ratings, Ideals, and Educator Ideals in the Philippines

Focus group discussion participants largely attributed the difference in conscientiousness to the lack of experience and organization of youth. “They are professionals and they act as professionals that is why their conscientiousness level is high,” explained one male youth of educators. Youth discussed the knowledge gap between themselves and teachers, which affects how seriously educators take their work. Conscientiousness is not correlated with education, they agreed, but can be honed at an early age. The hardships in their lives have pushed them to grow up quickly and be hardworking to rise out of poverty. Overall, they warned that negative peer pressure is still an obstacle, but that their reality oftentimes necessitate work and determination.

Although Filipino educators rated openness lower than educators in the other countries, youth reasoned that teacher expectations were higher because they want students to learn quickly. One youth noted that people learn at different speeds and that a teacher should not force all students to be like their ideal student. Alternatively, other youth saw the high expectations as a positive thing. “Maybe



Figure 32: A Filipino Male's Depiction of Soft Skills for Education

because if you are a teacher, you can learn from me and I can learn from you. In other words, they share knowledge. Even if they are open, the teacher helps them right away on the proper things to do. They are the key for us to learn other things. They are our second parents. If what we learn in our home is not enough, our teachers are there to help us learn other things,” extrapolated one male participant.

### Gender

When youth self-report and share their ideals, the differences in skills between genders in the Philippines is close to zero. There are no significant differences. Even when the size of the gap between youth’s self-ratings and educator/employer ideals is examined, no significant differences appear (see Figures 33 and 34), though a small difference (with an effect size of 0.23) is apparent for extraversion, with females rating themselves as further from educator and employer ideals compared to males.

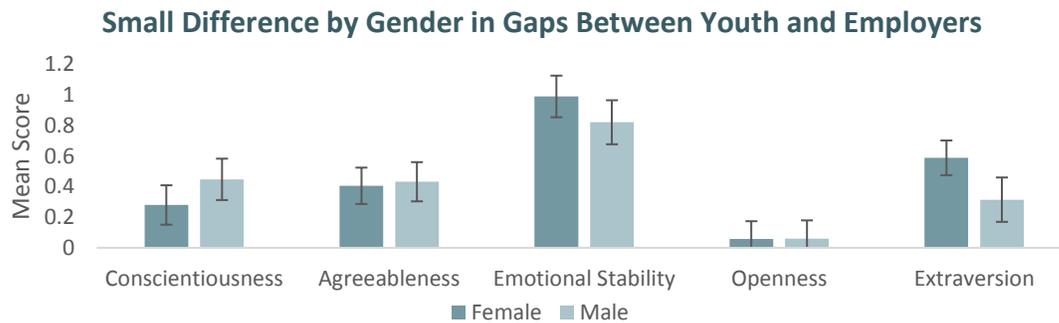


Figure 33: Gaps Between Youth Self-Ratings and Employer Ideal Employee in the Philippines, by Sex

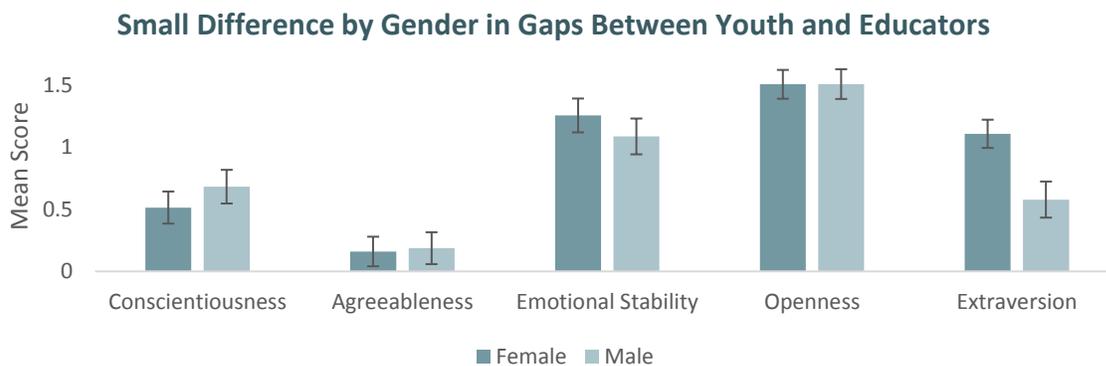


Figure 34: Gaps Between Youth Self-Ratings and Educator Ideal Student in the Philippines, by Sex

The topic of differences in hard skills and physical strength was woven into the focus group discussion when asked if certain soft skills are more important for men or women. There was consensus that men are often physically stronger than women and will be hired more easily for jobs such as truck driver, construction worker, or butcher. “There are jobs that only men can handle...but some women force themselves to do these jobs because they really need the money,” explained one female youth. When discussing the jobs that women are preferred for, the FGD participants mentioned office workers because women are “careful, gentle, kind and feminine.” A few youth mentioned current changes in

gender stereotypes for jobs, but admitted that Filipino men sometimes prefer work that needs “masculinity,” which makes them more sensitive than women to the type of job they are willing to do.

Some youth agreed that soft skills do not vary by gender. “Hard skills can be separated for men and women, but soft skills...we all have it,” explained a participant. On the other hand, several youth mentioned agreeableness as being more important for women. “When it comes to work, [women] cannot stop themselves from helping others compared to men, who prefer to escape than help,” commented a male youth. Several youth mentioned that women have better customer service and are thus preferred for restaurant and retail jobs.

Overall, when asked about important soft skills for men, physical strength was actually mentioned more than soft skills. One youth pointed out that men have lower levels of emotional stability and lose their temper over money.

The focus on hard skills and physical strength as a difference as opposed to soft skills makes the Filipino discussion of gender different from that of Honduras or Rwanda. One male youth in Honduras mentioned men’s physical strength as an attribute, but both female and male FGD participants in the Philippines talked about what “only men can handle” and what “women can do” as fundamental societal constructs.

## Rwanda

### Youth Self-Ratings and Ideals

Rwandan youth overall rated themselves slightly higher than Filipino youth and slightly lower than Honduran youth. As with the other two countries, the correlations between self-ratings and ideals in the youth sample were high: the higher youth rated themselves on a trait, the higher they rated the ideal employee or ideal student in that trait. However, youth rated the ideal employee and the ideal student as having significantly more of certain soft skills than they have themselves. Specifically, youth rated the ideal employee and ideal student significantly higher in emotional stability than they rated themselves. They also rated the ideal employee and student significantly higher on extraversion than their self-ratings.

### Employment vs. Education

In Rwanda, 35 educators and 32 employers were surveyed and their scores compared. As with the other countries, caution must be taken when making conclusions due to the small sample size. A comparison of the ideals of employers and educators in Rwanda shows two significant differences between employer and educator ideals (see Figure 35). First, **the difference between employer and educator ideals for openness are large** (effect size= 1.09). Rwandan educators overall highly valued openness, which is in line with global trends. There was a moderate difference in mean scores on extraversion (effect size=0.51), with **educators valuing extraversion more highly than employers**. Youth self-ratings and ideals were closer to employer ideals than to educators’.

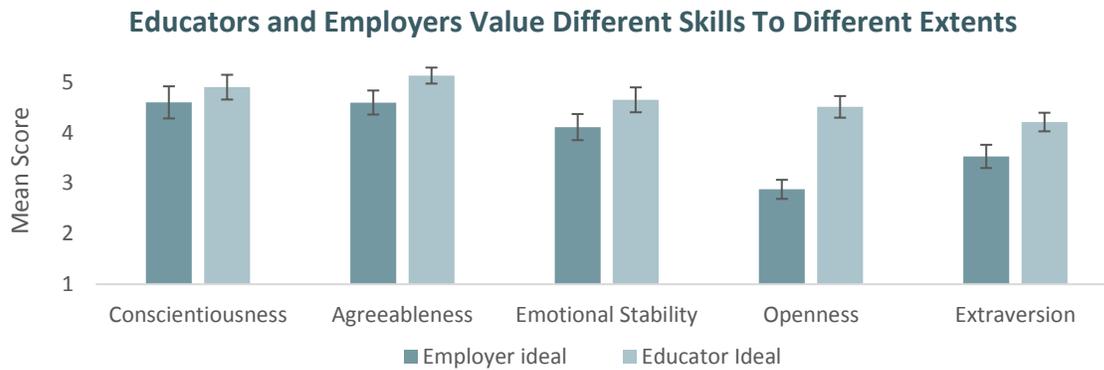


Figure 35: Educator and Employer Ideals for Rwanda

### Employment

In general, the differences between Rwandan youth ratings and employer ratings were much higher than the differences between youth and their own ideals. This was a pattern found across countries that displays the gap between employer expectations and young persons’ self-ratings and ideas of an ideal employee. Despite a similar pattern in ratings, **Rwandan youth self-ratings and ideals for all traits were lower than employer ideals** (see Figure 36). Compared to youth self-ratings, there was a very large effect size for the difference for both openness ( $d=.90$ ) and extraversion ( $d=.95$ ), and a medium effect size for emotional stability ( $d=.66$ ). Youth ideals were also significantly lower than those of employers. Gaps in conscientiousness, agreeableness and extraversion had a small effect size, but differences between youth and employer ideals for openness and emotional stability were larger.

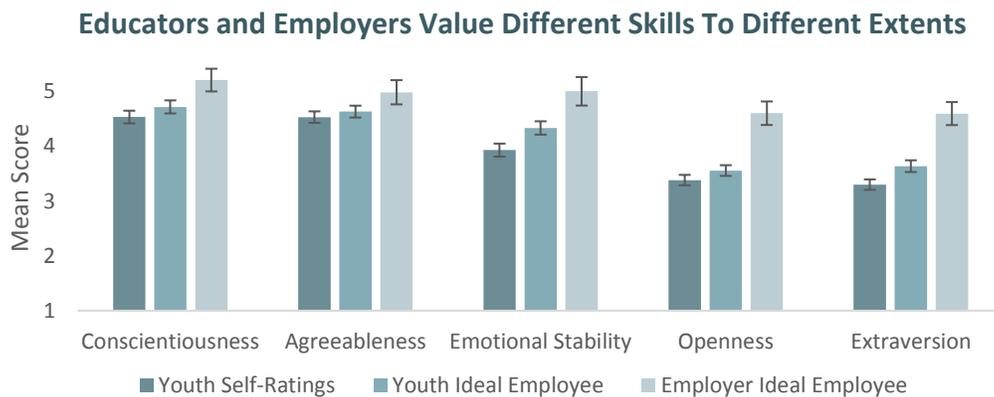


Figure 36: Youth Self-Ratings, Ideals, and Employer Ideals for Rwanda

Youth FGD participants explained the difference in expectations for emotional stability by citing a lack of life experience and resilience that one achieves as one gets older. “Most of the time, students are not grown up enough to be able to handle stress. They easily give up, yet perseverance is important for the future,” explained several youth. One male participant thought that the expectations from employers were sometimes too high and caused health problems in return for higher profits. Overall, FGD participants thought that having higher emotional stability would benefit their lives by making them more stable at work, despite the one youth who saw employer expectations as unhealthy.

When asked about the reason for the gap between youth ratings and employer ideals in extraversion, female youth mentioned differences in the ways that boys and girls are raised. “Boys are supposed to be leaders, but not girls, which makes boys have more confidence to speak up than girls,” explained one female student in secondary school. One male youth in technical school stated that employers want employees to be more agreeable and extraverted to increase productivity and produce a smooth working environment. It was a general theme for Rwandan youth to cite the lack of experience as the reason for the gap between youth ratings and employer ideals. “Employers know more about their business objectives and what they want from their employees and sometimes [we] don’t know about them,” summarized one female FGD participant.



Figure 37: Soft Skills for Work in Rwanda

### Education

The secondary school educators surveyed in Rwanda rated agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability the highest, respectively. There are several statistically significant differences between youth self-ratings and educator ideals. Since youth self-ratings were lower than youth ideals, it is not a surprise that there are larger differences between self-ratings and educators’ scores (see Figure 38). The biggest difference was on openness with a large effect size ( $d=.83$ ).

As was the case with the difference between youth and employer ideals, the same was true of that between youth and educator ideals. In Rwanda overall, youth scored the ideal employee very similarly to the ideal student. Youth student ideals followed a similar pattern as teachers with agreeableness, conscientiousness and emotional stability rated the top three traits.

Although youth and teacher ideal ratings followed the same pattern, educator ratings for openness and extraversion were significantly higher than youth scores with a medium-large effect size (again, see Figure 38). This shows that although students in Rwanda value openness and rate it highly, educators value it even more. Because youth rated extraversion the lowest for ideal student, the difference between youth and educator ideals were statistically significant. Additionally, educators rated agreeableness higher, but the effect size was small ( $d=.31$ ).

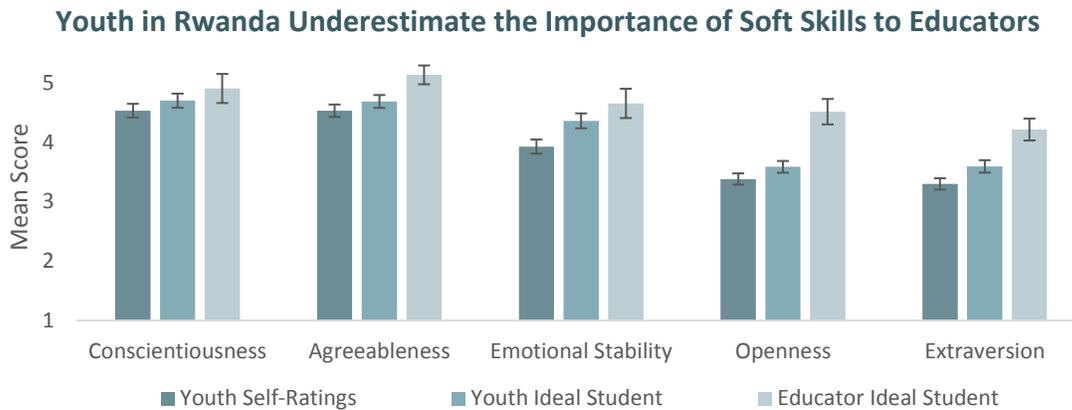


Figure 38: Youth Self-Ratings, Ideals, and Educator Ideals in Rwanda

In general, when asked in FGDs about reasons for the difference between youth and educator ideals for openness, both male and female participants cited high expectations from teachers based on their more extensive life experience. “Teachers have great experience. They want us to work harder, be curious, and do research so we can improve our knowledge,” explained one male youth. Diving into the details for the gap in expectations, several youth mentioned teachers’ desire for students to ask questions and to keep an open mind in order to learn faster and make the teachers’ job easier. “These kinds of students learn easier and quickly and can help other students to learn new things. This helps the teacher,” pragmatically explained several female students. Another train of thought focused on the creativity and innovation that comes with having a growth mindset. One male student contemplated that if teachers have too high of expectations, this could cause unnecessary stress in students. Overall, there were varying explanations for the gap between youth and educator ideals for openness in Rwanda.

### Gender

The gaps in gender in Rwanda followed the same pattern as in the other countries. While males and females rated themselves similarly, there were differences by gender between the size of the gap between their self-ratings and employer and educator ideals. Females rated themselves significantly further away from employer ideals for extraversion than did males (see Figure 39). Similarly, female self-ratings on extraversion were considerably lower compared to educator ideals, too (see Figure 40).

### Rwandan Females are Further from Employer Ideals than Are Males

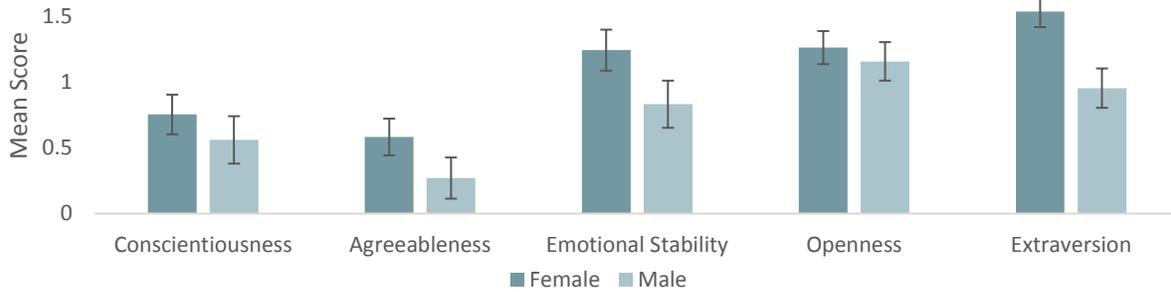


Figure 39: Gaps between Youth Self-Ratings and Employer Ideals in Rwanda, by Sex

### Rwandan Females are Further from Educator Ideals than Are Males

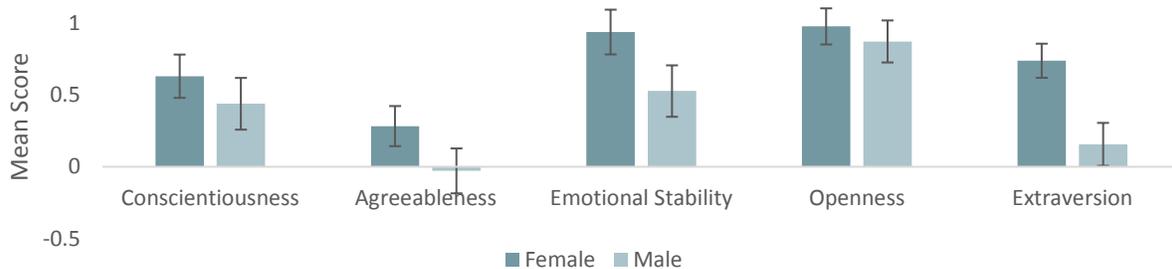


Figure 40: Gaps Between Youth Self-Ratings and Educator Ideals in Rwanda, by Sex

When asked if certain soft skills are more important for men or women, the answers varied by gender. The male FGD participants believed that leadership, which is under extraversion, is more important for men when running businesses and taking care of their families. “Leadership and responsibility are more important for men than women to keep a family together, to improve the livelihoods of a family and to stand as the head of a family,” explained one male student. In contrast, the female students agreed that all soft skills are important for both men and women. One female general secondary school student commented, “These skills are important for both men and women as they can help all of them improve their lives.” A few young women discussed society’s view that leadership and self-confidence are more important for men, but noted that this is changing slowly with the realization that women can be leaders too.

The young women went further to comment that the “bad soft skills” they observed when taking photos were mostly from men. “Emotional stability is more important for men since they are the ones to fight and get angry quickly,” explained one female FGD participant.

Both the female and male participants agreed that agreeableness, especially communication, was more important for women. An interesting difference is in their reasoning, though. The young men had concrete reasons such as communication’s importance in motherhood and counseling others. On the other hand, the young women talked in general about why “people think” communication is more

important for women. They did not cite their own reasons, but commented on society’s broader view of their gender.



Figure 41: A Rwandan Female Working in a Non-Traditional Job for Women

## Conclusions

This study examined which soft skills are valued and to what extent by youth, employers, and educators in three countries. Several key conclusions—and some accompanying recommendations—emerge from this study:

- *Youth seem to base their ideal soft skills for work and education on the skills that they, themselves, possess.*

While it makes sense that youth value the skills they possess—one understands better and experiences more the positive outcomes associated with skills one possesses than with skills one does not possess but can only observe in others—this finding is also important for work-readiness programs. It suggests that youth enrolled in work readiness programs may need to first understand their own proclivity to value and perform the skills they already possess, and then receive training that allows them to develop the skills they do not have.

- *Recommendation: Work-readiness training programs should assess youth’s soft skills at the beginning of training in order to provide better-targeted training to individual youth.*

- Perhaps owing to this grounding of their soft-skill values in their own personalities, youth underestimate the extent to which skills are required by educators and employers.*

While educators' and employers' ideals reveal that their preferences for the ideal student and employee, respectively, align with the literature on the Big Five Factor model, youth's preferences or values most often fall short of employer and educator ideals.

  - Recommendation: Work-readiness training programs should inform youth not only of which skills employers and educators demand, but how much of those skills they demand.*
- Employers in different sectors demand different soft skills to be expressed and to different extents for different sectors, though these demands do not align with youth expectations of ideal employees in these sectors.*

Youth systematically believe that more soft skills are needed for business than for direct services than for production, but employers do not seem to agree. Employer requirements vary by work field and soft skill. This may suggest that youth ideals are formed by something other than the skills that employers demand and may need to be educated more as to what this demand—by sector—actually is.

  - Recommendation: Work-readiness training programs should educate youth on the extent to which different skills are valued by different sectors so that youth can prepare themselves for the sector they want to enter.*
- While educators who teach general secondary school subjects or technical vocational school subjects do not differently value soft skills, youth believe a higher level of soft skills is necessary for success in general secondary school.*

Whether social stigma or perceptions of socio-economic class influence youth's perceptions is beyond the scope of this study, but it is clear that youth's perceptions differ from educators' and that they underestimate the extent of skills necessary for technical school. Training programs that include return to school or success at school as an outcome may do well to consider this perception of youth in order to help youth build enough skills for success at whichever school type they attend.

  - Recommendation: Programs that include success in education as a meaningful outcome of the project should educate youth that high levels of soft skills are necessary for success at both technical vocational and general secondary school.*
- Youth whose self-assessment and ideal ratings were closer to educators' and employers' ratings were less satisfied with life.*

This finding seems counter-intuitive, and may be due to a variety of factors not explored in this study. Thus, this finding begs for research focused directly on understanding how youth understand and define life satisfaction and how within reach they believe it to be. Our field needs to understand life satisfaction outcomes so that we can help youth manage expectations and obtain a level of satisfaction both in the immediate future and in the distant future.

  - Recommendation: Youth-focused implementing and research organizations should begin to explore youth's satisfaction—both in the near term and the long term—as a meaningful outcome of our work.*

- *While quantitative data did not return any differential results by youth’s sex, qualitative data revealed a much more nuanced view of the soft skills necessary and typical of males and females, respectively.*

While results are highly context specific and do not lend themselves to generalization across countries, the different results returned by qualitative and quantitative data suggests that researchers—while prizing both methods—should not overlook qualitative data collection when designing studies that assess gendered understandings.

- *Recommendation: Evaluators and researchers should use both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, prizing qualitative data collection to present a rich, nuanced understanding of gendered perspectives of soft skills.*

The focus of the above recommendations is largely on one of two elements: educating and informing youth, and how and which outcomes we examine through evaluation and research. **This study on the soft skills that youth value suggests that a positive youth development approach—in which youth are fully informed of their skills and the market and are partners in their own development—is ideal for implementing work-readiness programming when youth’s ideals and skills are mis-aligned with what is demanded in school and at work.** Further, this study suggests that an exploration of some different outcomes—beyond economic, employment, or even skill gains outcomes—using some different methods—ones that prize youth voice—could be included in evaluation and research related to work-readiness programming.

Work-readiness programming cannot be implemented well without a clear understanding of the market and education system—that much our field understands well and reacts to consistently through needs and market assessments. However, studies such as these highlight that work-readiness programming also needs to understand youth perspectives in order to deliver targeted training to youth to prepare them well for work and school.

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# The Anchored BFI

**This assessment was produced by the Education Development Center. In addition to items developed in collaboration with Professional Examination Services (ProExam), it contains the open source tool *The Big Five Inventory-44 (BFI-44)*<sup>28</sup>.**

In this survey you will find questions about:

- About you
- Your family and home
- Hypothetical situations and how you would react to them
- Statements about how you view other people
- How you are in general

Please read each question carefully and answer as accurately as you can. For most questions, put a check in the corresponding box. Some questions will require you to write in your answer.

PAPER INSTRUCTIONS: If you make a mistake when checking a box, cross out your error and check the correct box. If you make an error when writing an answer, simply cross it out and write the correct answer next to it.

**In this questionnaire, there are no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers. Your answers should be the ones that are ‘right’ for you. Every person is different, so everyone’s answers will be different.**

This survey is not a test and you will not be graded or judged. If you do not want to participate, you do not have to take this survey. Once you begin, if you do not want to continue the survey you do not have to. You can stop at any time. If you choose not to take this survey, this will not affect your participation in the project. If the questions are not clear, let one of the administrators know and we’ll be glad to explain them until they are clear.

**Your answers will be combined with others to make totals and averages in which no individual can be identified. All your answers will be kept confidential.**

Do you agree to participate in this survey?     Yes     No

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<sup>28</sup> John, O. P., Donahue, E. M., & Kentle, R. L. (1991). The Big Five Inventory--Versions 4a and 54. Berkeley, CA: University of California, Berkeley, Institute of Personality and Social Research.

**SECTION A: ABOUT YOU**

**A1** Today's date: Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

**A2** What's your name?

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

**A3** What's your age? \_\_\_\_\_

**A4** Are you female or male?  Female  Male

**SECTION E.1: HOW EMPLOYEES SHOULD BE IN GENERAL**

E1. Are you currently working?

- Yes
- No

E2. (If yes to E1) Which of the following describes the main field in which you work?

- Agri-business, agriculture, or fishing
- ICT and Telecommunication related
- Arts/entertainment (dancer, artists, media)
- Hospitality and services (hotels, restaurants, tourism)
- Construction related (carpenters, masons, electricians)
- Automobile mechanics/Electronics repair
- Driving (taxi, moto, bicycle taxi drivers)
- Beauty and health care (Hair dressing/cutting or pedicure and manicure/beauty salon services)
- Commerce (sales clerk, cashiering, retail selling)
- Accounting/finance
- Food Processing/Packaging (cookie making, canned sardines, etc.)
- Garments Production (dressmaking, tailoring, etc.)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

E3. (If yes to E2) What type of employment is your main job?

- Permanent/contract
- Casual/temporary/substitution
- Internship/apprenticeship
- I have my own business

E4. (If yes to E1) How much do you like or dislike your work situation?

- I dislike my work a lot.
- I dislike my work a little.
- I like my work a little.
- I like my work a lot.

E5. Which of the following describes the field of work in which you would like to be working right now?

- Agri-business, agriculture, or fishing
- ICT and Telecommunication related
- Arts/entertainment (dancer, artists, media)
- Hospitality and services (hotels, restaurants, tourism)
- Construction related (carpenters, masons, electricians)
- Automobile mechanics/Electronics repair
- Driving (taxi, moto, bicycle taxi drivers)
- Beauty and health care (Hair dressing/cutting or pedicure and manicure/beauty salon services)
- Commerce (sales clerk, cashiering, retail selling)
- Accounting/finance
- Food Processing/Packaging (cookie making, canned sardines, etc.)
- Garments Production (dressmaking, tailoring, etc.)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Here are a number of characteristics of an employee. For each statement, please indicate the extent to which **you agree or disagree with that statement** in regard to how well it describes **the ideal employee**.

BFI#	An <u>ideal employee</u> in (answer to E2 or E5 above) is someone who ...	Disagree Strongly	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree strongly
1	Is talkative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Tends to find fault with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Does a thorough job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Is depressed, blue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Is original, comes up with new ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Is reserved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Is helpful and unselfish with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Can be somewhat careless	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Is relaxed, handles stress well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>BFI#</b>	<b>An ideal employee in (answer to E2 or E5 above) is someone who ...</b>	<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Agree strongly</b>
10	Is curious about many different things	0	0	0	0	0
11	Is full of energy	0	0	0	0	0
12	Starts quarrels with others	0	0	0	0	0
13	Is a reliable worker	0	0	0	0	0
14	Can be tense	0	0	0	0	0
15	Is ingenious, a deep thinker	0	0	0	0	0
16	Generates a lot of enthusiasm	0	0	0	0	0
17	Has a forgiving nature	0	0	0	0	0
18	Tends to be disorganized	0	0	0	0	0
19	Worries a lot	0	0	0	0	0
20	Has an active imagination	0	0	0	0	0
21	Tends to be quiet	0	0	0	0	0
22	Is generally trusting	0	0	0	0	0
23	Tends to be lazy	0	0	0	0	0
24	Is emotionally stable, not easily upset	0	0	0	0	0
25	Is inventive	0	0	0	0	0
26	Has an assertive personality	0	0	0	0	0
27	Can be cold and aloof	0	0	0	0	0
28	Perseveres until the task is finished	0	0	0	0	0
29	Can be moody	0	0	0	0	0
30	Values artistic, aesthetic experiences	0	0	0	0	0
31	Is sometimes shy, inhibited	0	0	0	0	0
32	Is considerate and kind to almost everyone	0	0	0	0	0
33	Does things efficiently	0	0	0	0	0

BFI#	An ideal employee in (answer to E2 or E5 above) is someone who ...	Disagree Strongly	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree strongly
34	Remains calm in tense situations	0	0	0	0	0
35	Prefers work that is routine	0	0	0	0	0
36	Is outgoing, sociable	0	0	0	0	0
37	Is sometimes rude to others	0	0	0	0	0
38	Makes plans and follows through with them	0	0	0	0	0
39	Gets nervous easily	0	0	0	0	0
40	Likes to reflect, play with ideas	0	0	0	0	0
41	Has few artistic interests	0	0	0	0	0
42	Likes to cooperate with others	0	0	0	0	0
43	Is easily distracted	0	0	0	0	0
44	Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature	0	0	0	0	0

<b>SECTION E.2: HOW STUDENTS SHOULD BE IN GENERAL</b>
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E5. Are you currently in secondary school, TVET, or university?

- Yes
- No

E6. (If yes to E5) What are you currently studying?

- Agri-business, agriculture, or fishing
- ICT and Telecommunication related
- Arts/entertainment (dancer, artists, media)
- Hospitality and services (hotels, restaurants, tourism)
- Construction related (carpenters, masons, electricians)
- Automobile mechanics/Electronics repair
- Driving (taxi, moto, bicycle taxi drivers)
- Beauty and health care (Hair dressing/cutting or pedicure and manicure/beauty salon services)
- Commerce (sales clerk, cashiering, retail selling)
- Accounting/finance
- Food processing/packaging (cookie making, canned sardines, etc.)
- Garments Production (dressmaking, tailoring, etc.)
- Basic Labor Competencies

- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

E7. (If no to E5) If you had the opportunity to go to school, what would you like to study?

- Agri-business, agriculture, or fishing
- ICT and Telecommunication related
- Arts/entertainment (dancer, artists, media)
- Hospitality and services (hotels, restaurants, tourism)
- Construction related (carpenters, masons, electricians)
- Automobile mechanics/Electronics repair
- Driving (taxi, moto, bicycle taxi drivers)
- Beauty and health care (Hair dressing/cutting or pedicure and manicure/beauty salon services)
- Commerce (sales clerk, cashiering, retail selling)
- Accounting/finance
- Food processing/packaging (cookie making, canned sardines, etc.)
- Garments Production (dressmaking, tailoring, etc.)
- Basic Labor Competencies
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Here are a number of characteristics of a student. For each statement, please indicate the extent to which **you agree or disagree with that statement** in regard to how well it describes **the ideal student**.

BFI#	An <b>ideal student</b> in (answer to E6 or E7) is someone who ...	Disagree Strongly	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree strongly
1	Is talkative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Tends to find fault with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Does a thorough job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Is depressed, blue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Is original, comes up with new ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Is reserved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Is helpful and unselfish with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Can be somewhat careless	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Is relaxed, handles stress well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	Is curious about many different things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	Is full of energy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	Starts quarrels with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>BFI#</b>	<b>An ideal student in (answer to E6 or E7) is someone who ...</b>	<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Agree strongly</b>
13	Is a reliable worker	0	0	0	0	0
14	Can be tense	0	0	0	0	0
15	Is ingenious, a deep thinker	0	0	0	0	0
16	Generates a lot of enthusiasm	0	0	0	0	0
17	Has a forgiving nature	0	0	0	0	0
18	Tends to be disorganized	0	0	0	0	0
19	Worries a lot	0	0	0	0	0
20	Has an active imagination	0	0	0	0	0
21	Tends to be quiet	0	0	0	0	0
22	Is generally trusting	0	0	0	0	0
23	Tends to be lazy	0	0	0	0	0
24	Is emotionally stable, not easily upset	0	0	0	0	0
25	Is inventive	0	0	0	0	0
26	Has an assertive personality	0	0	0	0	0
27	Can be cold and aloof	0	0	0	0	0
28	Perseveres until the task is finished	0	0	0	0	0
29	Can be moody	0	0	0	0	0
30	Values artistic, aesthetic experiences	0	0	0	0	0
31	Is sometimes shy, inhibited	0	0	0	0	0
32	Is considerate and kind to almost everyone	0	0	0	0	0
33	Does things efficiently	0	0	0	0	0
34	Remains calm in tense situations	0	0	0	0	0
35	Prefers work that is routine	0	0	0	0	0
36	Is outgoing, sociable	0	0	0	0	0
37	Is sometimes rude to others	0	0	0	0	0

BFI#	An ideal student in (answer to E6 or E7) is someone who ...	Disagree Strongly	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree strongly
38	Makes plans and follows through with them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
39	Gets nervous easily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
40	Likes to reflect, play with ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
41	Has few artistic interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
42	Likes to cooperate with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
43	Is easily distracted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
44	Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**SECTION C.1: SITUATIONS YOU MAY FIND YOURSELF IN**

In this section, you will find a number of paragraphs describing various situations. You will be asked what you would do in this situation. Please read each paragraph carefully before choosing your response. Don't spend too long deciding on each answer. Please answer all of the statements even if you're not entirely sure of your answer. There are no right or wrong answers.

**SCENARIO 1:**

**You are given an assignment in one of your classes in which you have to give a speech to your fellow students in class. You have written down the entire speech and you feel like it does not need any additional editing. The speech is in two days and your teacher suggests that you practice the speech at least twice before giving it.**

What are you likely to do?	<u>Very unlikely to do this</u>	<u>Somewhat unlikely to do this</u>	<u>May or may not do this</u>	<u>Somewhat likely to do this</u>	<u>Very likely to do this</u>
1.A. Practice the speech once. You are confident in what you have written and in your ability to present to the class. Once should be enough.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.B. Practice the speech twice. Your teacher is very experienced and knows how to succeed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

1.C. Practice the speech three times. Although your teacher is very knowledgeable, she may be overconfident in your ability to give a good speech.	<input type="radio"/>				
1.D. Practice the speech more than three times. More practice is almost always better.	<input type="radio"/>				
1.E. Do not practice the speech. Practicing will lead you to be too nervous.	<input type="radio"/>				

**SCENARIO 3:**

**You are keeping track of the finances for the motorcycle store where you work. This means that you have to look at how much money the store has taken in through sales and subtract how much money the store has spent for normal operations. You tried calculating three times, and keep getting different answers.**

<b>What are you likely to do?</b>	<u>Very unlikely to do this</u>	<u>Somewhat unlikely to do this</u>	<u>May or may not do this</u>	<u>Somewhat likely to do this</u>	<u>Very likely to do this</u>
3.A. Stop trying and tell your manager the calculation that you feel most confident in.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.B. Stop trying and ask your manager to help you.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.C. Try 1 more time and ask your manager for help if you cannot figure it out.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.D. Tell your manager that you cannot figure it out and that someone else should do the task.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.E. Try 3 or 4 more times and ask your manager for help if you still cannot figure it out.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>SECTION D: HOW YOU RATE OTHER PEOPLE</b>

**Instructions:** In this section, some people are described to you. After you read each description, indicate how much you agree or disagree with a statement about that person by selecting the rating.

How much do you agree with this statement?	Disagree Strongly	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree strongly
D.1. Tony tends to be somewhat careless. Other workers comment also that he is lazy. Tony often also appears disorganized. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement “Tony is conscientious/ hard-working”?	○	○	○	○	○
D.2. Peter is a reliable worker and does all work with great efficiency. But he is easily distracted. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement “Peter is conscientious/hard-working”?	○	○	○	○	○
D.3. Alice always does a thorough job. She perseveres until all tasks are finished. Alice also makes plans and follows through with them. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement “Alice is conscientious/hard-working”?	○	○	○	○	○
D.4. Jean tends to disagree with others, and as a result often starts quarrels. Indeed, many people consider Jean quite rude. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement “Jean is an agreeable person”?	○	○	○	○	○
D.5. Even though Nicole is helpful and unselfish with others, some people find her cold and unfriendly. This does not matter so much, as she has a forgiving nature. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement “Nicole is an agreeable person”?	○	○	○	○	○

How much do you agree with this statement?	Disagree Strongly	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree strongly
D.6. Claude is considerate and kind to almost everyone. He is very trusting, and finds it easy to cooperate with others. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement "Claude is an agreeable person"?	○	○	○	○	○
D.7. Carine frequently appears quite depressed to other people. She gets nervous easily. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement "Carine is emotionally stable"?	○	○	○	○	○
D.8. Although in tense situations Paul remains calm, he can be quite moody. And he tends to worry quite a lot. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement "Paul is emotionally stable"?	○	○	○	○	○
D.9. Aline always appears relaxed and to handle stress well. Indeed, she never comes across as upset. Aline remains calm in all situations. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement "Aline is emotionally stable"?	○	○	○	○	○
D.10. Emmanuel has few artistic interests, and is not especially sophisticated either in music or literature. This has led some people to observe that Emmanuel does not appear especially curious about anything. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement "Emmanuel is open-minded"?	○	○	○	○	○
D.11. Emma has an active imagination. This has led some people to calling her a deep thinker. Even so Emma prefers work that is routine. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement "Emma is open-minded"?	○	○	○	○	○

How much do you agree with this statement?	Disagree Strongly	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree strongly
D.12. Jean Bosco is original and always coming up with new ideas. This has led some people to calling him inventive. But beyond this, Jean Bosco values artistic, aesthetic experiences. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement “Jean Bosco is open-minded”?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
D.13. Claudine is very reserved. She tends to be quiet no matter what the circumstance. Indeed, people find her shy and inhibited. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement “Claudine is extraverted”?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
D.14. Emile is often talkative and generates a lot of enthusiasm in others. But on his day, Emile can be rather shy and inhibited. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement “Emile is extraverted”?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
D.15. Rosette has an assertive personality, and as a result appears outgoing and sociable. Indeed, people are always commenting on how full of energy Rosette is. Based on this information, to what extent do you agree with the statement “Rosette is extraverted”?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**SECTION C.2: SITUATIONS YOU MIGHT FIND YOURSELF IN**

In this section, you will find again a number of paragraphs describing various situations. You will be asked what you would do in this situation. Please read each scenario carefully before choosing your response. Don't spend too long deciding on each answer. Please answer all of the statements even if you're not entirely sure of your answer. There are no right or wrong answers.

**SCENARIO 5:**

You are working in a restaurant as a waiter. One of your customers starts to complain that his food is taking too long to come out. The restaurant is very busy, one of the cooks is out sick, and the other cooks are overwhelmed with work. It is not your fault that the food is taking a long time to come out of the kitchen. Still, the customer persists in complaining and says to you, “You are the worst waiter I have ever had! Why would anyone hire you?” You have never had a customer be so rude to you before.

<b>What are you likely to do?</b>	<u>Very unlikely to do this</u>	<u>Somewhat unlikely to do this</u>	<u>May or may not do this</u>	<u>Somewhat likely to do this</u>	<u>Very likely to do this</u>
5.A. Repeatedly apologize to the customer and try to explain that the cooks have a lot of work to do today and ask your supervisor if there is anything else you can do to please the customer.	○	○	○	○	○
5.B. Tell the customer that he is being very rude and that this is not your fault.	○	○	○	○	○
5.C. Tell your manager that the customer is being rude and that you are going to quit your job if she does not do anything.	○	○	○	○	○
5.D. Apologize to the customer and do your best to keep from crying.	○	○	○	○	○
5.E. Try to pretend that you do not hear the customer’s complaining and go on doing your job.	○	○	○	○	○

**SECTION E.3: HOW ARE YOU IN GENERAL**

Here are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. For each statement, please indicate the extent to which **you agree or disagree with that statement** in regard to how well it **describes you**.

<b>BFI#</b>	<b>I am someone who ...</b>	<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Agree strongly</b>
1	Is talkative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Tends to find fault with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Does a thorough job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Is depressed, blue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	Is original, comes up with new ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	Is reserved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	Is helpful and unselfish with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	Can be somewhat careless	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	Is relaxed, handles stress well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	Is curious about many different things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	Is full of energy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	Starts quarrels with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	Is a reliable worker	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	Can be tense	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	Is ingenious, a deep thinker	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16	Generates a lot of enthusiasm	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17	Has a forgiving nature	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18	Tends to be disorganized	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19	Worries a lot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>BFI#</b>	<b>I am someone who ...</b>	<b>Disagree Strongly</b>	<b>Disagree a little</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree a little</b>	<b>Agree strongly</b>
20	Has an active imagination	0	0	0	0	0
21	Tends to be quiet	0	0	0	0	0
22	Is generally trusting	0	0	0	0	0
23	Tends to be lazy	0	0	0	0	0
24	Is emotionally stable, not easily upset	0	0	0	0	0
25	Is inventive	0	0	0	0	0
26	Has an assertive personality	0	0	0	0	0
27	Can be cold and aloof	0	0	0	0	0
28	Perseveres until the task is finished	0	0	0	0	0
29	Can be moody	0	0	0	0	0
30	Values artistic, aesthetic experiences	0	0	0	0	0
31	Is sometimes shy, inhibited	0	0	0	0	0
32	Is considerate and kind to almost everyone	0	0	0	0	0
33	Does things efficiently	0	0	0	0	0
34	Remains calm in tense situations	0	0	0	0	0
35	Prefers work that is routine	0	0	0	0	0
36	Is outgoing, sociable	0	0	0	0	0
37	Is sometimes rude to others	0	0	0	0	0
38	Makes plans and follows through with them	0	0	0	0	0
39	Gets nervous easily	0	0	0	0	0
40	Likes to reflect, play with ideas	0	0	0	0	0
41	Has few artistic interests	0	0	0	0	0
42	Likes to cooperate with others	0	0	0	0	0
43	Is easily distracted	0	0	0	0	0

SECTION C.3: SITUATIONS YOU MIGHT FIND YOURSELF IN						
BFI#	I am someone who ...	Disagree Strongly	Disagree a little	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree a little	Agree strongly
44	Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In this section, you will find a number of paragraphs describing various situations. You will be asked what you would do in this situation. Please read each scenario carefully before choosing your response. Don't spend too long deciding on each answer. Please answer all of the statements even if you're not entirely sure of your answer. There are no right or wrong answers.

**SCENARIO 8:**

**You work in a store selling motorbikes. You work partly on commission, meaning that you get paid extra money for every motorbike you sell. Today, you have been talking to a father and his two sons for several minutes about one of the most expensive motorbikes in the store. They seem interested but when you ask them if they would like to purchase the motorbike, the father immediately says “no”. Still, they stay at the store and continue to look at motorbikes.**

<b>What are you likely to do?</b>	<u>Very unlikely to do this</u>	<u>Somewhat unlikely to do this</u>	<u>May or may not do this</u>	<u>Somewhat likely to do this</u>	<u>Very likely to do this</u>
8.A. Thank the family for their time and go talk to other customers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.B. Continue to walk around the store with the family and talk to them about the other motorbikes. Ask them if they would like to purchase one of the less expensive motorbikes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.C. Help the family by telling them there is a less expensive motorbike store across town they may want to look at.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8.D. Leave the family alone but tell them to come to you with any questions they may have.	<input type="radio"/>				
8.E. Go find your manager and ask her if there is any way you can sell the motorbike for less.	<input type="radio"/>				

**Section F: ABOUT YOUR LIFE**

**Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Please select the rating that best describes you. Please be open and honest in your responding.**

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Slightly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
In most ways my life is close to my ideal.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The conditions of my life are excellent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied with life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

***This is the end of the survey.***

***Thank you for participating! This will help us make improvements to better serve youth's needs in the future. Please let us know if you have any questions.***

## Annex C: The Focus Group Discussion Protocol

4 FGDs per country: 2 with males; 2 with females; 10 youth per FGD

### Section 1: Information for the FGD Leader

#### Materials

- Maximum of 16 youth's digital photos printed out on printer paper (4 photos on each paper)/all photos for those with non-digital cameras; all photos should have a unique number assigned to them
- Several scissors
- Paper for youth to paste their photos to
- Adhesive: tape, stapler, glue sticks
- PowerPoint presentation materials (either PowerPoint presentation and projector or handouts or large posters)
- flip chart and markers
- name tags
- audio recorder
- a copy of this protocol for the FGD leader and note-taker
- notebooks and writing utensils for the FGD leader and note-taker

#### Instructions to FGD Leader

- Underlined text direct you to a PowerPoint slide to share with the youth
- Italicized text is a direction for you; it should not be read to the youth
- Regular text should be read to the youth

### Section 2: Youth Photo Activity

#### Introduction

Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am working with the Education Development Center's METAS project. I also want to introduce you to \_\_\_\_\_, who will be helping by taking notes on our conversation. Thank you for joining us today.

First, I want to explain why I am here and why I have asked you all to meet with me today. Last year, you participated in a survey in which we asked you about your soft skills, and yesterday, you participated in a photography workshop where you took pictures of soft skills in action. Today, I would like to share what we learned from the survey with you and hear your thoughts on it. In addition, I would like to look at your photos with you and learn about the photos you took. Please feel free to share your opinions with me and with the group. The purpose of this discussion is not to grade or judge you; if you have a different opinion from an opinion that someone else has shared, please feel free to share it. If you hear an opinion that you disagree with, please feel free to share your opinion while being respectful of others' opinions.

As you honestly and freely share your opinions, know that nothing you say here will be shared with anyone who is not one of our staff at the Education Development Center. We will be audio recording

our conversation and taking notes as you speak, but our notes and the audio will be kept under close supervision and be made accessible to EDC staff only.

You are free to choose to participate or not participate in this discussion. Further, if any questions make you uncomfortable, you can choose to not answer them. Finally, you may leave at any time. If you choose not to participate, it will not affect your participation in any EDC programs in the future.

Would you like to participate in this discussion? (*make sure each youth responds to this question*)

- Yes
- No

### Activity

1. Present to youth overview of the day and soft skills definitions. (slides 1-4) (10 minutes)
2. Present to youth instructions for the photo presentation activity. (slide 5) (10 minutes to complete activity)
3. Present to youth an example of what their photos should look like and how to caption their photos. (slide 6)
4. Present to youth instructions for presenting and listening to others' presentations. (slide 7) (2 minutes per youth=20 minutes to present)
  - a. *You should list on a flip chart what soft skills they are mentioning so that they can all see it.*
5. **Begin the audio recording, and ask the youth to start to present their photos.** Once the presentations are completed, begin the FGDs.

### Section 3: FGDs (1.5 hours)

#### Education and Employment (30 minutes)

1. Why did you select the three soft skills in your photos?
  - a. Are they important for education, the workplace, or both?
    - i. Which ones are important for education? For the workplace? For both? (*record this on the flip chart of soft skills*)
    - ii. Why are they important?
2. In the survey you took several months ago about soft skills, you told us what soft skills you felt you had and what soft skills the ideal student and the ideal employee have. We asked employers and teachers to tell us what skills the ideal employee and the ideal student have as well. Here is what we found: present ppt. slide on "Finding from Teachers and Employers"(slide 8)

#### *Conscientiousness*

- a. Why do you think that employers and teachers think the ideal student or employee is more conscientious than youth think they are?
- b. Do you think your life would be different if you were more conscientious/hard-working? If so, how?
- c. Is it feasible for you to be more conscientious? Why or why not?

- d. Are there any obstacles that prevent you from being more conscientious? If so, what are they?

#### *Emotional Stability*

- e. Why do you think that employers and teachers think the ideal student or employee is better at managing emotions than youth think they are?
- f. Do you think your life would be different if you were better at managing your emotions? If so, how?
- g. Is it feasible for you to be better at managing your emotions? Why or why not?
- h. Are there obstacles that make managing your emotions difficult? If so, what are they?

#### Education (15 minutes)

3. Present the gaps in youth self-scores and ideals using PowerPoint slide “Education” (slide 9): In the survey you took several months ago, we asked you to tell us which soft skills you thought were important for education, and we asked teachers as well. While you and teachers both thought that openness was important for an ideal student, teachers rated these skills more highly than you did. In other words, teachers think successful students are more open to new ways of thinking and new experiences than youth think they are.
  - a. Why do you think teachers seem to value openness more than youth value it?
  - b. Do you think your life would be different if you were more open to new ideas? If so, how?
  - c. Is it feasible for you to be more open? Why or why not?

#### Employment (20 minutes)

4. Present the gaps in youth expectations of soft skills and employment using PowerPoint (slide 10): When you took the soft skills survey a few months ago, we asked you what skills you thought the ideal employee would have, and we asked employers this same question. While you and employers agreed that being, agreeable and extraverted were important, employers rated these skills more highly than you did.

#### *Agreeableness*

- a. Why do you think employers seem to value these skills more than youth value it?
- b. Do you think your life would be different if you were more agreeable? If so, how?
- c. Is it feasible for you to be more agreeable? Why or why not?

#### *Extraversion*

- d. Do you think your life would be different if you were able to act more extraverted? If so, how?
- e. Is it feasible for you to act more extraverted? Why or why not?

#### Gender and Age (25 minutes)

1. *Ask youth who have a photo of a male only to raise their photo. Discuss:*
  - a. What soft skills are these men using?
  - b. Is this a skill that you think is important only for men or for men and women? More important for men? Why or why not?
  - c. Are there different contexts in which this skill is more important for men?
2. *Ask youth who have a photo of a female only to raise their photo. Discuss:*

- a. What soft skills are these women using?
  - b. Is this a skill that you think is important only for women or for men and women? More important for women? Why or why not?
  - c. Are there different contexts in which this skill is more important for women?
3. *Ask youth who have a photo of an older (older than 25) youth to raise their photo. Discuss:*
- a. What soft skill is this older youth using?
  - b. Do younger youth need these skills?
  - c. Are some skills more important younger (15-25) or older (26-35) youth? Which ones? Why or why not?

***Thank the youth for joining and dismiss them.***

Annex D: Youth's Photos of Soft Skills

Filipino Youth's Photos of Soft Skills for Education



Filipino Youth's Photos of Soft Skills for Employment



Rwandan Youth's Soft Skills for Education



Rwandan Youth's Soft Skills for Employment

