HBKU Signature Research Program 1st Cycle– Project Highlight

Project Title: Explorations in Developing an HBKU Index of Social Cohesion

Research Team

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Executive Summary

The lack of social cohesion is listed among the top ten global risks and the fourth most severe risk for the coming decades (WEF, 2022). Social cohesion, and its erosion, has also been raised as an area of interest in the State of Qatar. For example, in Qatar, social cohesion is a focal component in the National Vision 2030 (GSDP, 2008; Second Pillar, on Social Development). Considering the significant role of social cohesion in today's world, this project aims to address this critical issue. While predominant in the English academic literature, the concept of social cohesion and its related theories primary represent the epistemological and ontological threads emanating from a Judeo-Christian Western foundation. As such, the conceptualizations are not representative of all contexts, nor some of the earliest theories and concepts, which trace to the works of ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah*, which was written in 1377. We will, therefore, explore the development of an HBKU Index of Social Cohesion, informed by interdisciplinary perspectives, epistemologies, theories, and methodologies that will provide an index of this multifaceted construct. The new index can significantly contribute to the current theorization of the concept leading to the promotion of HBKU.

Expected Outcome

- Review paper on social cohesion (Unpacking the current literature on Social Cohesion, Methodology, and Metrics)
- Paper 2: Review paper on social cohesion: An Islamic perspective
- Paper 3: Social Cohesion, Social Equity, and Social Contract Theory: Implications for public policy and public administration
- Social Media Dataset annotated for misinformation, polarization, and propaganda
- HBKU-Social Cohesion Index Report

Collaborating HBKU entities:

College of Humanities & Social Sciences, College of Public Policy, College of Islamic Studies, College of Law