

Education and Democracy in the Middle East and North Africa:  
A Case-study Comparison of Five Nations

An Honors Thesis for the Department of International Relations

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### **Abstract**

The region of the Middle East and North Africa has long been noted for its relatively low rates of democracy. Many scholars have suggested reasons for this, including the presence of oil, imperial legacies, and security concerns. My research is an attempt to understand the role education might play in transitioning to and maintaining democracy in the region. Various scholars have found links between education and democracy worldwide, associating high literacy rates, high cognition, and equal access with higher rates of democracy. I conducted case studies of five countries in the region: Turkey, Lebanon, Tunisia, Egypt and Syria. I examined their varying levels of democracy, as well as data on access to education, quality and cognition, and freedom of expression. I also examined the countries' respective constitutions and statements made by their ministries of education. I have focused especially on Tunisia, where I conducted research with Tufts New Initiative for Middle East Peace.

There was not a great deal of variation among the case study countries in the basic indicators of education. They did vary in terms of their levels of democracy, however. I was also able to find qualitative differences in education between them. Factors such as nationalist civic education, teaching style, and conceptions of citizenship appeared to play a part in the relationship between democracy and education. While the quantitative data do not show conclusively that more educated countries in the MENA region are more democratic, the quality and content of education can tell us a fair amount about this complex relationship.

## 1. Introduction

### Research Question

Public education has long been considered an important component of democratic societies. It plays a role in economic development and equality and is the institution through which citizenship is fostered. Many nations, however, have educational institutions but are not considered democratic. The region known as the Middle East and North Africa (hereafter referred to as MENA) is frequently noted for its “exceptionalism,” or exceptional lack of democracy (Bellin, 2004). There is a great deal of research on factors that may affect democracy in the region, such as the role of foreign actors, the presence of oil (Ross, 2001), and culturalist accounts (Kedourie, 1994). One area that has remained under-researched, however, is education. Because there are varying degrees of democracy within the MENA region, I have chosen to explore how these variations are related to differing approaches to education.

I have explored the nature of the relationship between education and democracy in the MENA region and in order to determine whether these findings can be applied to countries emerging from the Arab Spring. I address the following questions:

- Are there specific features of educational systems associated with openness and democracy?
- What approaches to education have democratic societies in the Middle East taken?
- How can these findings be applied to nations emerging from revolutions of the Arab Spring?

My research question is based on the theoretical assumption that a nation’s approach to education possesses characteristics that are also found in a democracy. Characteristics that indicate openness include freedom from censorship, equal rights, and openness to debate. These

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are also characteristics found in open educational institutions. I examined existing literature to determine if these were indeed indicators of open societies and to examine existing documentation of the specific links between education and democracies.

While it has not been possible to prove that education is a determinant of openness and democracy in a society, it was possible to observe similarities in the features underlying open approaches to education and a country's openness to democracy. Furthermore, I argue that while education may not be the sole determining factor of democracy, it may exist as a precondition for successful democracy.

### **Previous Research in the Field**

There has been a fair amount of research already conducted on education in MENA. There is, however, less MENA-specific research directly relating education and democracy. In the past year, one author who made this attempt was Muhammad Faour, who wrote "Education for Citizenship in the Arab World: Key to the Future." In this article, Faour calls for improving the education systems in MENA and for enriching citizenship education. The article, though enriching, is relatively short. My research expands on his ideas and supplements them with some of my own.

Most research, unlike Faour's, focuses on education and its role in economic development. UNESCO has also published a great deal of research on education throughout the world (UNESCO, 2000-2011). They regularly collect data on various measures such as literacy rates and gender ratios. This research is conducted primarily as a means to increasing education access, which is both an end unto itself as well as an important element in economic development. The World Bank has also conducted substantial research on education and has

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published a report specific to the MENA region. Again, this research is done in light of economic development.

Although most of the research on education in the MENA region is geared toward development, there is a great deal of research that has been conducted on the links between education and democracy in other areas of the world. These are discussed in my literature review, as they provide the rationale for my study.

### **Methodology**

This study examines both quantitative and qualitative data that is publicly available. I did not conduct any formal statistical analysis; rather, I examined the data to see what patterns were initially present. In order to determine what data to collect, I examined past literature to establish the critical links between democracy and education. I used the literature to determine which data to collect.

The quantitative data I have examined includes two sets of data. The first set of data consists of democratic measures. The second set of data includes data on school enrollment, completion, accessibility, literacy rates, gender ratios, and information access. The qualitative data I examined includes constitutions, curricula, mission statements, and other secondary sources on education. I examined the qualitative data to determine what is taught, how it is taught, and whether it is effective in forming democratic citizens.

### **Sample Countries**

I researched five countries in the MENA region. The two countries I selected as the more democratic countries are Turkey and Lebanon. I compared these with countries emerging from the Arab Spring, including Egypt, Syria, and Tunisia. Tunisia is a special case, as I was able to

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conduct a series of interviews there with various students, professors, and officials involved in education.

By conducting this research, I hope to shed light on an important institution of democracy that has otherwise been under-researched. In a region that has historically had very little democracy, and is now at an important crossroads in history, it is important to examine all institutions of civil society that shape these nations in their transitions.

### **2. Literature Review**

As this study examines the nature of the relationship between education and democracy in MENA, this chapter will provide the rationale and justification for my selected measures of education and democracy. I will discuss previous research that has been conducted concerning the relationship of democracy and education, including theoretical as well as empirical studies. I will also give a brief overview of previous research on education in the MENA region.

Given the nature of the revolutions in the Arab world last year, education is a particularly important topic to study. Emblematic of trends in the region is the young Tunisian man Mohamed Bouazizi, whose self-immolation initiated a wave of protests throughout the region. Bouazizi was a young man who had to drop out of school early to provide for his family. He made his living as a fruit vendor and worked to put his siblings through school. When an official confiscated his scale and he was unable to pay a bribe to retrieve it, Bouazizi demonstrated in front of the municipality office by lighting himself on fire, after he was refused a meeting with a municipal official (Ryan, 2001). Bouazizi's story highlights the importance of education in this string of protests called the "Arab Spring." Not only were many of the protestors young, but they were highly educated, underemployed, and dissatisfied with the status quo. Their unrest was often motivated by economic dissatisfaction but also encompassed dissatisfaction with the political situation. In this context, it is especially interesting to examine the nature of the role of education of youth at this critical juncture for this relatively undemocratic region.

#### **Definitions**

Since there are many and varied definitions of democracy, I will take some time here to distinguish general definitions of democracy from my working definition of democracy. The Oxford Dictionary definition holds that (modern) democracy "refers to political systems in which



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large numbers of voters select representatives and officials for leading legislative, executive, and sometimes judicial offices, either directly or indirectly...in which conditions permit some open competition..." (Stearns 1).

Many of the studies I use either refer to Polity IV as a data source (and, consequently, its definition of democracy) or use the general definition that democracy is when free and fair elections for government are conducted. The Polity IV index, a widely used measure of democracy, determines democracy based on three characteristics: executive recruitment, constraints on executive authority, and political competition. It recognizes that each country can simultaneously have elements of autocracy as well as democracy, so it gives it a score for each and adds the autocracy score as a negative number to acquire a score between -10 and 10, where -10 is most autocratic and 10 is most democratic.

I would like to note, however, that while this is the working definition of democracy, there are other characteristics of democracy that I assume in this paper. For instance, studies by Barro et. al. correlate education with democratic *practices*, such as subscribing to an organization or participating in voting. In some places, I will use a broader definition of democracy, in which "a democratic political system is one in which the ordinary citizen participates in political decisions. A democratic political culture should consist of a set of beliefs, attitudes, norms, perceptions and the like, that support participation" (Academic Regis 1). Student Anna Rulska describes characteristics of a democratic citizen as an "...inclusive attitude toward other human beings; a capacity for sharing values with others; a multi-valued rather than a single-valued orientation; trust and confidence in the human environment; and relative freedom from anxiety" (Rulska, 2005, p. 1-2). I will note these places where my definition of democracy is not the Polity IV definition.

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The next term to define is education. In the context of this paper, education refers to the formal process of teaching and learning conducted in schools. It will be used mostly with regards to primary and secondary education, or grades K-12. I am mainly interested in the education that takes place before university education, since it represents education of the citizenry. I will include public as well as private education; however, when possible, these will be identified. While other forms of education will be discussed, such as secondary education and informal education, these terms will be identified as they arise.

The last terms to clarify are “civic education” and “citizenship education.” I will provide a detailed description of citizenship education later in the literature review. Essentially, civic education is education that serves the state (it teaches laws, tax-paying, patriotism and loyalty), while citizenship education serves society (it teaches civic engagement, social justice, volunteerism etc.). While civic education can take the form of citizenship education, the recent rise of the term “citizenship education” has given the two terms distinct meanings. I speak of civic education broadly, including both meanings of the term, but in exploring the nature of civic education, I address whether or not it includes citizenship education.

### **Theoretical Links Between Education and Democracy**

#### **Access and Equality.**

Equality is a theme throughout much of the literature linking education and democracy. Equality is seen as a democratic value, for true democracy assumes participation of all citizens. Education enables this equal participation, but in order for it to effectively do so, all citizens must have equal access to education.

One way to increase equal participation in society is simply to make education accessible to everyone. One of UNESCO’s Millenium Development Goals is to achieve universal

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education. They state that, "...education has the potential to transform societies and to fully realize human capabilities, to prepare workers to participate in the global economy, and to provide citizens with the tools for full engagement in public life..." (Birdsall, 2005, p. iii). In its assessment of access to education, UNESCO recognizes that it is important to consider physical access to schools as well as financial resources. The ideal is for both of these to be fulfilled so that neither geography nor money prevents any citizen from accessing an education that might make him or her a more active participant in society (Birdsall, 2005, p. 23). With these basic barriers to access eliminated, education has the potential of "...reducing inequality, diminishing discrimination, and creating more cohesion..." (Birdsall, 2005, p. 27)

Once access to education is widespread, power can also be distributed more equally. The UNESCO report describes how education can lead to personal economic improvement. The report cites Birdsall and Londono, saying that education differs from material goods (such as land or money) in that it cannot be taken away from a person. If the skills of communication and knowledge acquisition are equally accessible via education in a society, it is less likely that economic and political power will end up concentrated in the hands of a few (Birdsall, 2005, p. 25).

Equal access to education can empower citizens who might otherwise be disempowered. Seymour Martin Lipset writes that education can be used as a means of combating passive mindsets in an authoritarian regime. Theorizing about people on the lower strata, namely "slum area children," Lipset predicted that these people were constrained by thinking only in simple, concrete, immediate terms of the present. They also have difficulty extracting important information. These limitations prevent lower classes from thinking about the future. While problematic in its assumption of a simple categorization of the lower class, Lipset does bring out

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an important point, which is that enforced simple-mindedness can be used as a tool by authoritarian governments (Lipset, 1960, p. 115). By extension, then, the way to combat simple-mindedness, and thus authoritarian governments, would be through education to liberate people from such constrained thinking

Education can also help create a more egalitarian society that appreciates diversity. Teaching techniques can directly address issues of diversity and equality, but they can also come about as a side effect of teaching other subjects. John Dewey writes that teachers can teach students to consider any issue from multiple viewpoints, which will in turn help them if they try to see issues from different citizens' points of view (Dewey, 1916, p. 87). It is for this reason, among others, that teaching debate is important to foster democratic education, as it forces students to consider other perspectives (Birdsall, 2005, p. 25). Through this education, students can gain an appreciation for diverse perspectives.

### **Socialization.**

Another interesting point Dewey makes is that all groups are considered some form of "society," and all societies involve some variety of education in the form of socialization. Not all societies, however, are good, and education is often just a reproduction of society. The best type of society is one in which members share common interests, and the society as a whole has the freedom to interact with other societies (Dewey, 1916, p. 83). He holds the democratic ideal as a state in which groups can see beyond their groups' common interests and understand how they fit in with other groups' interests. This is achieved through education (Dewey, 1916, p. 86).

### **Development and Conflict Mitigation.**

Education can also be important for democracy development because it fosters development in other sectors. Lipset writes that education leads to a stable society that can be

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more conducive to democracy. It does so through economic development, for education enables employment, which leads to fiscal stability. Lipset takes as an example the state of the Middle East at the time (interestingly, not radically different from today), noting that Lebanon and Turkey were relatively democratic compared to Syria, Egypt and Jordan. He attributed this difference to the conflict-prone countries in the latter group, noting that the instability of conflict kept those countries from developing economically, and consequently from forming stable democracies (Lipset, 1960, p. 58-59).

UNESCO has published a report with similar findings, titled, “The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education” that describes how conflict disrupts education. This is especially relevant to the countries of the Arab Spring, as protestors found themselves in unstable situations as a consequence of unemployment, which sometimes was a result of poor education. Stable societies are conducive both to democracy and education.

The Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) are another example of how education leads to development which leads to democracy. There are eight MDGS, one of which directly addresses education (Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education). The other seven range from achieving gender equality to ensuring environmental stability and achieving better health. The article “Eight reasons why education is important to the MDGs” argues that education is not only an end to itself but also helps accomplish the other seven goals. For instance, education helps people “grow and develop,” which in turn helps Goal 1, to “eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.” This is a very cyclical process, then, in which knowledgeable children can rise above poverty, and non-impooverished children are freer to attend school, where they have learned or will learn to rise above poverty. Education also helps address other goals like working together (applicable to Goal 8, to develop global partnerships) and learning about health (Goal 6:

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“combat...diseases”). In these ways, education can lead to development that fosters democratic development (UNESCO Eight).

### **Quality and Curriculum.**

The content and pedagogy of education is also extremely important in developing democracy. Quality as a factor of cognition is an important determinant of democracy (as we will see in the empirical evidence). The UNESCO report therefore stresses quality over quantity of schools or textbooks (Birdsall, 2005, p. 25).

Dewey describes how a varied curriculum is important to democracy, where every subject develops a particular way of thinking. Some of the major subjects Dewey discusses include geography, history, and the sciences. He stresses that geography and history can teach people to see the bigger global picture and understand their role in it. It also facilitates a smooth transition from the educational world to the real world (Dewey, 1916, p. 217-218). Sciences, on the other hand, are important subjects because they teach people to test truths. The study of testing can help people overcome ingrained habits and preconceptions. He also sees it as the “...organ of general social progress” (Dewey, 1916, p. 230).

Lipset’s focus on pedagogy highlights the importance of teaching liberal values. He refers to James Bryce for the explanation of the links between these and democracy. Bryce conducted a study that found education broadened outlooks, taught norms of tolerance, moderated extremism, and caused people to make rational decisions (Lipset, 1960, p. 56). Lipset also references CH Smith’s study, “Liberalism and Levels of Information,” which found that education affected people’s attitudes toward multipolarism and minorities. The higher the education level, the more “democratic” were these attitudes (Lipset, 1960, p. 115). Notably, Smith found this true for the individual but not for the nation. That is, individuals could have

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“democratic” attitudes independently of the nation’s state of democracy.<sup>1</sup> Lipset further theorizes that in order to accept norms, one must have sophisticated reasoning to understand the rationale behind these norms (Lipset, 1960, p. 115). In these ways, Lipset shows how education can help citizens develop modes of thinking which are conducive to democracy.

### **Civic Education and Citizenship Education.**

Finally, education can affect democracy more directly through civic education. While civic education can certainly result in positive attitudes towards and practices of democracy, there remains the threat that the government will use civic education simply to promote its ruling ideology. Dewey is one author who considers the role of the government in relation to education. While he believes in the importance of providing public education, he also notes that, if the state provides education, there is an inherent conflict between the state’s needs and those of greater society (Dewey, 1916, p. 97). This leads to an even more fundamental conflict, which is that the state is conducting education, but that knowledge should be for the global good. There is then the threat of a narrow worldview in each society (Dewey, 1916, p. 98).

An alternative to civic education is something called “citizenship education.” Citizenship education is education that teaches how to be a productive citizen. It is oriented toward society, rather than the state. A governmental advisory group on citizenship in London published a report that details these ideas. The group quotes the Citizenship Foundation as saying that citizenship education not only introduces young people into participation in public life, but should also “...foster respect for law, justice, democracy and nurture common good at the same time as encouraging independence of thought. It should develop skills of reflection, enquiry and debate” (Crick, 1998, p. 11). The advisory group breaks down citizenship education into three

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<sup>1</sup> The notable outliers at the time were Germany and France (which are, today, quite democratic, suggesting something perhaps about the long-term impacts of education).

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central ideas. One, citizenship education includes the development of social and moral responsibility. In the classroom, this manifests itself in group work and communication. Morals and respect for authority can also be formally taught. Two, citizenship education teaches community involvement through service and voluntary associations. Three, it teaches political literacy, which gives citizens the skills they need to participate effectively in the political world, both by teaching about the legal system and by teaching problem solving skills.

We see, then, among the theoretical thinkers, a firmly developed relationship between education and democracy. Equal access to education leads to a more egalitarian society where more citizens are empowered to participate. It can also help students develop cognitive skills, socialization, and morals and that help them participate more effectively in society, and that help them understand their role in society. While civic education is better for the state, citizenship education seems to be better for society.

### **Empirical Studies of Education and Democracy**

While the theoretical link between education and democracy is widely accepted, there is also a great deal of empirical research supporting this claim. Studies show that school attendance, quality of education, socialization, and gender equality all positively affect democracy. It has also been shown that wealth is an important but not essential intermediary factor. I discuss here the empirical studies that support these claims.

#### **School Attendance and Democracy Correlations.**

In their research, “Why Does Democracy Need Education?”, Glaeser, Ponzetto, and Shleifer found positive links between school attendance and democracy. When comparing a selection of 91 countries’ Polity IV democracy score with average years of schooling (for adults over the age of 25), they found a 0.74 correlation. They also evaluated less democratic countries



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over a period of 40 years (between 1960 and 2000) and found that these countries became more democratic at a rate of 66% in relation to increased education levels over time (Glaeser, 2006, p. 79-80). Glaeser et. al. also conducted research comparing years of schooling with civic participation. Civic participation was measured by membership in at least one organization. Here, again, they found a positive correlation (Glaeser, 2006, p. 83). Glaeser et al. used data from the Needham Lifestyles Surveys (conducted in Needham, Massachusetts) and found that other forms of democratic practices also increase with school attendance. These practices included attending church, involvement in community projects, writing letters to public officials, and registering to vote. The survey data were taken from annual mail surveys in the U.S. between 1975 and 1999 and are controlled for demographics including age, race, and gender, as well as income (Glaeser, 2006, p. 83-84). Glaeser also reports that Milligan, Moretti, and Oreopoulous found that when an increase in school attendance was mandated in the United States, more people also turned out to vote. They concluded that low education presented a barrier to voter registration, which demonstrates a direct relationship (Glaeser, 2006, p. 85).

### **Cognitive Ability.**

School attendance alone is not the only important associated factor in democracies. In his study titled “Relevance of education and intelligence for the political development of nations,” Heiner Rindermann found that cognitive ability and rule of law were also critical factors. Rindermann conducted a series of studies testing the correlation between educational factors and political factors. He measured cognitive ability with IQ scores and standardized tests and found a positive correlation with democracy (Rindermann, 2008, p. 312, citing himself in 2006 and 2007). His measure of democracy came from an index from Vanhanen in 1997, which measured competition and participation, and also from a democracy index by Marshal and

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Jagers, which determined the existence of democratic institutions. His measure on the rule of law came from Gwartney and Lawson, and Knack and Keefer. Political freedom data were taken from Freedom House measures (Rindermann, 2008, p. 312).

Rindermann reports that cognitive ability is even more important to democracy development than years of school (Rindermann, 2008, p. 319). He proposes theoretical explanations for the linkages between the two. He reports that Piaget and Kohlberg theorize that cognitive development leads to moral judgment (Rindermann, 2008, p. 308). Rindermann also reports that say that democracy, freedom, and rule of law all require perspective and recognition and respect for rights and interests of others. These skills, in turn, require cognitive ability (Rindermann, 2008, p. 308). Besides teaching skills and values, democracy can also be effected more directly if it is taught (Glaeser, 2006, p. 82).

### **Socialization.**

Another indirect effect of education is socialization, which is an important process in democracies that helps citizens take part in group action. Students can be seen as what Glaeser calls “social capital.” This social capital is developed when teachers teach interaction. Social activities require coordination and communication, which are skills learned in school. Glaeser’s empirical findings support his theory that, in a dictatorship, the benefits of opposition are low. In such a society, however, education can lower the cost of opposition and raise the benefits. This is because democracies rely on a broad base of supporters, while autocracies depend on a small base of supporters. In an autocracy, few people are rewarded. But, if many of the (unrewarded) people are educated to participate in society, the cost of acting together decreases, and the rewards of success increase (since in a democratic regime, more people benefit) (Glaeser, 2006, p. 94). Because education makes people become more socialized and politically involved,

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education facilitates this transition and makes the outcome of success more likely, and the cost of participating lower. Glaeser says student activism socialization can come about in a variety of ways. For example, peer pressure can cause others to participate, and it also gives people the skills to persuade others to participate. Importantly, “socialization” skills do not necessarily have to be formally taught; rather, they are informally (and automatically) learned via the teachers’ classroom management (Glaeser, 2006, p. 78). Consequently, socialization can occur in non-democratic societies as well as democratic countries, simply by having students in classrooms with teachers.

### **Equal Access for Females and Males.**

Another important empirical study that supports the connection between education and democracy finds that equal access for genders is important in a democracy. We saw this in the theoretical studies as well. Robert J. Barro in “Determinants of Democracy,” found that the smaller the gender gap in education, the greater the democracy. His proposed mechanism for this was that gender equality can, as Alexis de Tocqueville mused, indicate a country’s receptivity to democracy.

### **Wealth.**

Wealth also plays an important role in education in relation to democracy. Rindermann’s study found that it was an intermediary factor between education and cognitive ability. Although the relationship was weaker when wealth was taken out, there was still a positive correlation of education and cognitive ability (Rindermann, 2008, p. 320). Barro found that wealth was an important factor in sustaining democracy, as low wealth countries tended to not sustain democracy (Barro, 1999, p. 163). Barro also noted that it was via wealth that secondary

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education impacted democracy, because secondary education increases a country's GDP.

Otherwise, however, primary education had a stronger effect on education (Barro, 1999, p. 170).

### **The Reverse Effect: Democracy's Impact on Education.**

As a closing remark, there are also studies exploring whether democracy in turn leads to education. Rindermann finds that there is no empirical evidence to suggest this is the case. He also finds that democracy does not lead to more intelligence or knowledge, except by way of wealth (Rindermann, 2008, p. 320).

Another study, however, conducted by Daniel Stasavage, finds that multiparty elections have a marked impact on the government's provision of public services—specifically public education. He theorizes that multiparty elections give politicians incentive to deliver on their promises. Stasavage's study was conducted in African countries between the 1960s and the 1990s (Stasavage, 2005, p. 345). His work is relevant to my research because, like many of those African states, some of the case studies are newly emerging democracies. If democracy leads to better provision of primary schooling, and primary schooling leads to democracy, then these two institutions can be mutually reinforcing.

### **Previous Research on Education in MENA**

The existing literature on education in MENA shows an assumption that education is good for society in some way. With the exception of Muhammad Faour's work, however, it fails to specify exactly how it is pertinent to democracy. In those few instances in which an association is assumed between democracy and education, scholars have overemphasized the importance of civic education, while not acknowledging the inherent value of education. Extant literature also fails to look in depth at the curricula of the various countries to see what is being

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learned and taught. As Egypt, Syria, and Tunisia continue to transform, it will be interesting to analyze education in those societies in the context of democratization.

Past scholarship has also largely focused on the role of education in economic development. That is, education is a means to the end of employment, and creating a skilled labor force for the state. Less research focuses on the role of education in the region in relation to democracy. There are three major works I will highlight here that do address these issues: “Education for Citizenship in the Arab World: Key to the Future,” “Education Reform in the Middle East: The Road Not Traveled,” and “Education and Society: multiple benefits, unrealized potential.” These pieces were published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, The World Bank, and UNESCO, respectively.

The Carnegie Melon article looks at the state of education in the wake of the Arab Spring. In “Education for Citizenship in the Arab World,” Muhammad Faour and Marwan Muasher (2011) highlight the importance of citizenship education in the Arab World. They note that, in the wake of early Arab independence (after the end of colonial rule and mandates in the 20<sup>th</sup> century), many of the countries pushed for an “Arabized” education. While this is still an important component in many Middle Eastern education systems, there is heightened emphasis on loyalty to the regime in power (p. 3). Faour argues that certain values need to be installed in the curriculum, including acceptance, respect for differences, understanding of the relativity of truth, and allowance for dissent (Faour, 2011, p. 1). Faour examined the various systems to see whether they taught about citizenship, multiple perspectives, questioning, participation, communication, working with others, freedom, equality, and human rights. He concluded that these subjects were not sufficiently addressed (Faour, 2011, p. 3). He examined quality of education (based on literacy rates and test scores) and found that it was low. He also found little

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improvement in Tunisia and Egypt, despite the fact that both countries had recently undertaken educational reforms (Faour, 2011, p. 5-6).

The World Bank report is a more comprehensive examination of educational reforms that have and have not been made in the Middle East and North Africa, and compares how these reforms have differed among countries within the region. While the report finds that some reforms have been made in recent times, there has been far greater focus on what they call “engineering systems” rather than “incentives and public accountability” (World Bank, 2008, p. 137). By engineering systems, they mean the systems and physical structures of education—those things that make its existence possible. They also acknowledge, however, that there are other elements that affect quality of education, specifically what they call “incentives and public accountability,” which are lacking. The report brings out some other interesting points. As Faour notes, the newly independent states in the Middle East in the 40s placed great emphasis on the Arabization of the curriculum in response to the recently vacated imperial powers (World Bank, 2008, p. 138). They also discuss a growing reliance on private sector education (World Bank, 2008, p. 203). They note that, if rich families can turn to private schools or private education to make up lost ground in public education, the rich will have a distinct advantage of completing their education (especially in countries where completion depends on exit exams). These findings suggest that education systems in the Middle East are not lacking in the physical or structural sense, but that the quality could be improved by addressing autonomy and pedagogy.

While much of this research has explored the nature of the relationship between education and democracy in general, very little research has been done regarding this relationship in the MENA region specifically. I hope to accomplish this in my research, and understand how education contributes to the complex picture of the region. There will

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undoubtedly be features specific to the region that affect education, such as the development of nationalism, the role of religion, and particular systems of education that have been imported from other countries.

### **3. Methodology**

My objective in this study was to analyze the nature of the relationship between education and democracy in the MENA region by examining five nations. I sorted these five nations into two groups and compared them. One group was considered more democratic, and the other group consisted of countries in transition after the Arab Spring. I determined these groups by using their Polity IV ratings. Those with high democratic ratings, Lebanon and Turkey, I considered my open group. Those with lower democratic ratings, which include Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria, made up the transition group.

In conducting my research, I examined quantitative data as well as qualitative data. Most of my data came from the UNESCO databases on education, while other data came directly from the websites of the case study countries. I also used some secondary literature to get a clearer understanding of things like textbook content. By compiling this data and comparing the open countries to the transition countries, I attempted to see what patterns existed for each group and whether some of the patterns in the open group were echoed in the transition group.

#### **Rationale for Focus on MENA**

It is important to delineate the region loosely referred to as MENA, or the Middle East and North Africa. These nations are meant to include those stretching from Morocco in the west to Iran in the east, and Turkey in the north, including all the nations in the Gulf.

These nations are increasingly seen as a common collection of nations. Previously, the “Middle East” was a region defined as the Muslim empire east of Britain and midway between it and the Far East. Today, the region is grouped together because it has common ethno-religious and linguistic elements, as well as similar natural resources, and a common colonial history under the Ottoman Empire and then indirect European rule until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. While this is



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indeed a diverse region and few countries have the exact same characteristics, there are enough similarities that it makes sense to consider the region in whole. It is also notable that many transnational organizations have arisen from within the region, thereby categorizing itself as a whole—for instance, the Gulf Cooperation Council, which unites the Gulf states under economic interests, or the Arab League. I note that, in some of the literature, the MENA region is defined differently. In these cases, I will identify the new parameters. In most cases, though, regional trends will be considered only for defining the scope; the more important focus will be on the individual case studies, simply considered in the same region (Adelson, 1995, p. 22-26).

### **Indicators of Democracy and Education**

The first statistic I examined was access to education, measured by the percentage of children in primary and secondary schools. I looked at both gross enrollment rates and net enrollment rates. Enrollment rates are defined by UNESCO as the rate of school-aged children who enroll in the first year of primary school (typically at age five or six). Gross enrollment rates measure the number of children enrolled in the first year of school as a percentage of all children in the nation who are the appropriate age for school entry. Net enrollment rates are defined by the number of children who are the appropriate age for school entry as a percentage of that same group in the nation. Gross enrollment rates tend to be higher, as they may include children who start early or late, or who are held back for the first year. I chose to examine access because of UNESCO's and Dewey's assumption that access to school indicates inclusiveness, and can also act as an equalizer by alleviating people from poverty. It is also based on the theory that education leads to socialization (even, notably, in an authoritarian regime), which makes participation in society more beneficial. The number of years in school is also shown by Glaeser to have a strong correlation with civic participation.

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I also examined equality of enrollment between genders as an indicator of access. I used UNESCO measures of female enrollment as a percentage of total enrollment at both primary and secondary levels. Gender can be used as a form of social stratification, and Dewey and Lipset hypothesize that such stratification can be overcome by education. A more egalitarian society is better for democracy. Barro found gender equality and democracy closely correlated. UNESCO has also found that educated women are more likely to send their kids to school, which helps reinforce the cycle of education. Education equality between genders, then, is important for democracy as well as the perpetuation of education.

The next set of data I examined were those measuring cognitive achievement. I analyzed literacy rates as well as TIMSS scores. I found literacy rates at UNESCO. TIMSS stands for “Trends for International Math and Science Study.” The test is conducted internationally and is intended for the participating countries to assess their role in a global context and discover which areas need improvement in math and science instruction. As Rindermann has theorized, cognitive achievement is closely correlated with democratic institutions and the rule of law. Less formally, Lipset has theorized that cognitive achievement is important in developing the “sophistication” to make judgments. The TIMSS scores benchmarks are as follows: a score of 625 and above is considered advanced, 550 and above is high, 500 is the global average, 475 and above is intermediate, and 400 is considered low (TIMSS, 2007, p. 69). While I recognize that these measures give us a limited view of cognitive achievement, I used them because they are internationally standardized. I have made an effort to evaluate quality as well, though, by looking at other measurements in secondary literature.

### **Characteristics of Educational Systems**

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Once the quantitative assessment was complete, I turned to qualitative measures about the quality and content of education in the case studies. My main sources for these were the respective countries' Ministries of Education and constitutions. Specifically, I searched for information on the curricula and whether they varied in the way Dewey thought best for democracy—including science, history, the arts, and geography. I also examined the existence and nature of civic education. This is loosely based on Glaeser's findings that civic education positively impacted education, but with recognition that the quality of such education is particularly important.

These documents, while informative, should be examined carefully. Through my research it became clear that just because the constitution or Ministry issued a statement does not mean that statement was carried out. One example of this can be seen in the various nations' education reform plans, which are collected by UNESCO. After reading several, it became clear that they were following a similar formula, and I reconsidered their merit since individuals gave me quite a different picture. These documents were still important for though, because they showed the extent to which a government understood the importance of at least giving *provisions* for things like free and compulsory education that is free from censorship. I have attempted to create a more complete picture of how fully constitutional and ministerial statements were carried out by looking at other evidence (such as access rates and personal anecdotes). In the cases where constitutions had unpopular provisions (for example, Turkey explicitly prioritizes constitutional loyalty over academic freedom), those governments' priorities were clearer.

Another important set of data I inspected were those on information access. I did this for three reasons. First, freedom of information (or free speech) is an inherently democratic value. Secondly, freedom of information can tell us how much a country values academic integrity

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versus security. Thirdly, because of the role of information and Internet access in the Arab spring, Internet access was a consideration for the “transition group’s” ability to organize and protest. It is critical to note, however, that censorship can exist along an entire spectrum. For example, censorship exists here in the United States, but it differs from the censorship that exists in Turkey. That is, while it is not unheard of for an American teacher to lose his or her job over when exercising overly free speech, it is rare that that individual is imprisoned. In Turkey, however, journalists are frequently imprisoned. Furthermore, in the U.S. there are firmly established legal institutions through which individuals can pursue their constitutional rights (such as free speech), but this practice exists on a much smaller scale in Turkey. It is not enough, then, to say that a country does or does not have censorship; it is important to understand the degree of censorship that exists. Where specific examples were available, I have provided further information on the nature of censorship in these countries; however, I was unable to find an international measure of academic freedom and censorship. The information I provide is thus only a partial picture.

### **Analytical Approach**

The nature of my analysis is qualitative and comparative. I examine and compare the data of the open group with the transition group. In the context of the Middle East and North Africa, Turkey and Lebanon are generally considered more democratic, by the Polity IV index, and freer by the Freedom House assessment. The transition group countries include Tunisia, Syria, and Egypt—countries that I have selected based on their distinct characteristics among the countries that partook in protests during the Arab Spring. Tunisia is notable for its high literacy levels and a relatively peaceful transition process. It is also considered the country whose first protest sparked the revolutions that began in December 2010. Egypt is considered the figurative

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leader of the Arab Spring and is somewhat similar to Tunisia, but the military has played a more major role in the transition. Syria, on the other hand, is experiencing an incredibly violent transition that is marked by state repression of its citizens. In this way I have attempted to choose a sampling of countries in the region, since time and space constrain me to a few countries.

Because of the relevance of the recent Arab Spring and the ongoing state of transition, the time of data collection is particularly important. I have marked what year the data was collected. In some cases, however, especially regarding data collection on the Ministries of Education websites, there was no available publishing date, so it is unclear whether such information took place before or after the revolutions.

I would also like to note here that in many cases, the original text of the documents I researched were not in English. As I speak limited Turkish and no Arabic or French, I had to rely on translations. While there may have been some differences in the sentence structure and phrasing, I was mostly looking for key words (for instance, in Syria, I used a translated version of the curriculum which listed the subjects, so I only needed words like “Math” and “Languages”).

Toward the end of my research, I analyzed the data across the entire region.<sup>2</sup> I took the Polity IV rating and found the correlation coefficients for primary gross enrollment, primary net enrollment, primary graduation rates, lower secondary graduation rates, percentage of females in primary schools, percentage of females in secondary schools, youth literacy rates, adult literacy rates, and TIMSS scores.

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<sup>2</sup> I intentionally excluded Israel and Palestine, for while UNESCO provides data for Palestine’s educational indicators, Polity IV does not consider it as a nation and therefore does not give it a democratic rating. I consider this problematic, especially as Israel is given a highly democratic rating, despite its occupation of Palestinian territories. So while these areas are clearly important to consider in the region, it was not possible to do so with the Polity IV ratings.

### **Data Collection in Tunisia**

The case of Tunisia is distinct as I was able to carry out data collection in the country itself. In January 2012, I traveled to Tunisia as part of a research group with the Tufts New Initiative for Middle East Peace (NIMEP). We spent most of the time in Tunis but also conducted interviews in the cities of Sousse and Sfax. The group was composed of eight researchers and one photographer. Each researcher had his/her own research topic, but we met with almost all of the same people. The data I collected was based on personal interviews and anecdotal evidence. Most of the interviews were conducted formally, and I was able to take notes while speaking with the subjects. In a few cases, interviews were more casual—over coffee, for instance—and I had to record notes after the fact. The people we interviewed included students, teachers, politicians, civil society members, businesspeople, and expatriates from the U.S. We met with roughly 30 people over the course of the trip.

### 4. Results

My results here are organized by country. I begin with the open group, first Turkey and then Lebanon. Next, I give an in-depth analysis of my findings in Tunisia. I then discuss the other countries in the transition group, first Egypt and finishing with Syria. Within each of the countries, I start with a summary of the numerical data that can be found in the charts in the Appendix. I supplement this analysis with relevant qualitative data. For instance, the first section covers access, which includes numerical data on enrollment rates and female attendance, but also includes secondary information that may have been available on access. After access I discuss quality indicators, which include TIMSS scores and literacy rates, as well as other information I was able to find in the literature on quality and cognition. The next section reports information access as a function of Internet access. I also discuss other issues in the countries that may affect freedom of information. Finally, I discuss the form of civic education in the case studies. The structure I just described forms the basic skeleton of each of the case studies. I then include information that I found that were particular to each of the case studies. For instance, in Lebanon, citizenship education is highlighted, while in Egypt, religious influence in schools is highlighted.

#### **Turkey**

The first country I will discuss is Turkey. Turkey is unique because it did not partake in any sort of revolution, and also because it is not Arab in character. It also does not share the European colonial history of the other countries. Along with Lebanon, it is one of the more democratic countries. We would expect, then, to see higher levels of education (e.g., higher literacy rates, enrollment rates, test scores). We would also expect to see an open approach to

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education, both in the curriculum and in the free flow of information. Neither the numerical nor the qualitative data support this view, however.

### **Democracy Ratings.**

Turkey is often seen as an example of democracy in the Middle East, and the numbers support this claim (see Chart 1). Polity IV gives it a rating of 7, with 8 points for democracy and 1 for autocracy (Polity IV, 2010). Freedom House gives it a “somewhat free” ranking at 3, with 3 points each for civil and political liberties (Freedom House, 2011)<sup>3</sup>. Democratic principles are also at high levels, with nearly 85% voter turnout for the last election in 2011. Citizens take part in frequent demonstrations in Istanbul, and protestors can be seen nearly every week in the city’s center. While these are often monitored by armed police, and while they are sometimes protesting against undemocratic practices, it is clear that citizens are exercising their rights to democratic activities. Democracy thus exists in some semblance in Turkey.

### **Access.**

The constitution shows a basic commitment to education. Article 42 of section two is devoted to the “Right and Duty of Training and Education,” which affirms the right to free and universal education, but “The scope of the right to education shall be defined and regulated by law” (Turkey Const. Article 42). Legally speaking, then, Turkey upholds the ideals of equality access to education. We should be able to say that the government is committed to equal access in education, and if that is the case, perhaps such equity is reflected in its democratic practices as well. As UNESCO states, it should also enable the creation of a more egalitarian society with better power distribution.

Access to education in Turkey is by no means prohibitory, but it is also somewhat inequitable. Gross enrollment rates are low among the case study countries (unfortunately, net

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<sup>3</sup> The Freedom House scale is from 1-7, where 1 is most free and 7 is least free.



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enrollment rates were not available), but they are still quite high at 98% (see Chart 2). Female enrollment in primary schools was highest in Turkey at 48.58%, but lowest in secondary schools at 46.93%. An interesting story here, though, is the head-scarf issue, for which Turkey is infamous. In 1984, the staunchly secular Turkish government banned females from attending school if they wore headscarves. The so-called “headscarf girls” came to be seen as political symbols for the AKP (the mildly Islamist Justice and Development Party). The secular assumption was that AKP members forced their girls to wear headscarves, which was seen by the secularists as anti-feminist. By banning head-scarf-wearers, though, the government succeeded only at marginalizing this group of females. They also transgressed the basic tenet of democracy of freedom of religious expression.

There are other legal provisions that show some concern for equitable access, such as increased education for the disabled population. This project, highlighted in Turkey’s National Education Plan in 2001, was an initiative to expand education to disabled populations. This project was promoted by the first lady who used scholarships to improve access (Bostancıoğlu, 2002), although I do not have evidence of the success of this program.

Another consideration for access in Turkey is the urban–rural divide. Turkey has a sizable rural population at 30.9%. Notable among this percentage is the underserved Kurdish population in the southeast.

### **Cognition and Quality.**

The measures of cognition and quality were fairly high in Turkey (see Chart 3). Turkey had the highest literacy rates among adults, and the second highest literacy rates among youth (UNESCO Turkey, 2007). It also had the highest TIMSS science score.

### **Freedom of Information.**

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The next area I examined in Turkey was the free flow of information. The purpose of this was twofold: One, to gauge Turkey's openness to the democratic principle of free speech. Two, to better understand the citizens' access to true information, and to understand whether they can use this information to partake in democratic practices. (For example, whether or not they can use Facebook to organize demonstrations, or whether or not they have a transparent view of their government.) Overall, Turkey's legal documents and practices showed that information is fairly free and uncensored; however, in some cases, the government limits this free flow and prioritizes security over freedom.

The constitution contains articles regarding academic freedom, but they are somewhat inconsistent with each other. In one place (Article 27), it positively affirms the freedom of arts and sciences. Elsewhere, however, it explicitly limits academic freedom, saying that the "The freedom of training and education does not relieve the individual from loyalty to the Constitution" (Article 42). It is unclear in what cases the constitution would supercede educational freedom; however, it might be for cases of national security.

Although the focus of this thesis is on primary and secondary education, it is necessary here to point out rules regarding higher education because it indicates the government's attitude toward education in general. At universities, students' involvement in politics is controlled by law (Turkey Const. Article 130). The constitution thus shows that while the government values education, academic freedom is not a high priority.

Freedom House has also noted the limits on academic freedom in Turkey, stating, "The government does not regularly restrict academic freedom, but self-censorship on sensitive topics is common" (Freedom House, 2011). They also noted the series of arrests of many vocal figures, including academics, since 2008. These figures are supposedly tied to an ultranationalist group

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that is trying to overthrow the government.<sup>4</sup> When I studied in Turkey, I had one professor at the university who forbade us to record his lectures for fear of government spying. On the other hand, I also had a professor who openly admitted that although the government mandated he teach modern Turkish history (essentially the history of the Republic since its founding by Ataturk), he refused to teach this history and instead focused on the late Ottoman Empire, as he disagreed with the policies of the Young Turks<sup>5</sup>. This particular professor frequently referred to the Turkish “schoolboy history” that glossed over the more unpleasant parts of history, but that is taught in most Turkish primary and secondary schools.

The government did set out a plan to increase access to ICTs (information and communication technologies), but there have been instances of censorship as well. Their ICT plan in 2001 sought to expand access to new technologies, and specifically, to provide a computer for every 15 students in school. During times of social unrest, however, some websites are blocked. For instance, in the wake of the Arab Spring, the government blocked many popular blogging websites (personal experience). More recently, the AKP put forth a censorship proposal, in which everyone must select a level of Internet censorship: either family, children, domestic, or standard (Pollak, 2011). There were widespread protests in response to this, however, signaling vibrant democratic practices—even if they were in response to undemocratic practices.

The government has other ways of limiting free information that often abrogate the interests of the minority. The constitution stipulates that only Turkish may be taught as a mother language, which precludes Kurdish language speaking in the southeast, as well as Armenian and Greek to some extent throughout the rest of the country. This law was created in the wake of a

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<sup>4</sup> This claim is widely believed false

<sup>5</sup> The Young Turks were a group of nationalist revolutionaries who helped establish the First Republic of Turkey

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highly nationalistic military coup in 1982. Constanze Letsch wrote in *The Guardian* that many students in the Kurdish region failed in primary school simply because they could not understand the language of instruction, and even though teachers spoke Kurdish they were not allowed to use it in the classroom.

The government's actions outside of its official statements can also speak to its (un)democratic approach to education. I was able to speak with a number of students who attend a small school called "Zographyon." This is a school founded by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate for the handful of Greeks who remained in Istanbul after the 1923 population exchange and subsequent pogroms. Two students and one teacher there told me that it was mandated that their history and geography teachers be ethnic Turks, and consequently, they learned nothing about Greek history or the history of Greeks in Turkey. They were also required to have a Turkish headmaster in addition to their Greek headmaster<sup>6</sup>.

### **Structure of Education System.**

The power structure of the ministry reinforces top-down rule. At the very top is the Minister of Education. Directly under him are the higher education board, the national education council, the undersecretary, the board of inspectors, the ministry consultant, and the vocational education board. The power structure ends with each of these groups beneath the minister, giving the minister a great deal of power. As I saw in the article "The Performance of Decentralized School Systems: Evidence from Fe y Alegria in Venezuela," cited by The World Bank, decentralized education tends to effect higher quality education (World Bank, 2008, p. 289).

### **Government goals.**

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<sup>6</sup> In both cases these are Turkish citizens: the requirement is based on ethnic identity

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The Turkish government further reveals its goals by outlining them in its national education plans. The latest available education plan in English is from the year 2002. While the political scene in Turkey has transformed greatly since that time, it is still illuminating to read the report. The report outlines the reasons for and importance of education. The report addresses education as it serves the individual as well as society. The reasons for the individual include psychological importance and improving problem solving and “guessing” skills. They also seek to teach students to learn. The importance for society is in teaching citizens about secular and democratic values, and to think about “peace, freedom, social justice...democratic awareness...”. In the same line, it is also written that they are “committed to Ataturk’s nationalism and Ataturk’s principles and revolutions.” They also promote openness and personal responsibility to protect the Republic. The same report emphasizes the importance of nationalistic principles and promotes a unitary national identity by which citizens “have assimilated national culture and can interpret different cultures.” Elsewhere, the education plan addresses dropouts and states their intent to provide for them “an education that serves to protect, develop, provide, and assimilate the values of our national culture...” They also sought out “adaptation to the EU” (Bostancıoğlu, 2002).

In conclusion, Turkey’s quantitative data shows similar correlations to that which we have seen in the literature, with high democracy scores correlated with high access and high cognitive scores. This is especially true for the cognition and quality measures. As Turkey and Lebanon are the most democratic countries, they should have the highest cognition measures (literacy at TIMSS). Turkey does indeed have high cognition measures. Access, on the other hand, is slightly lower, with the lowest gross enrollment rate and lowest percentage of females enrolled in secondary school.

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Surprisingly, although Turkey is considered democratic, its approaches to education indicate that it values the security of the state over the liberty of the citizen. The constitution promotes justice and equality, but also emphasizes cultural assimilation and loyalty to the state. Furthermore, there were many examples in which security was apparently more important than free speech. Finally, it was evident that non ethnically-Turkish citizens faced some discrimination in schools and had worse access. These qualitative findings suggest that while Turkey may have a high Polity IV score, it still lacks some democratic principles, such as egalitarianism and free speech. It is, nonetheless, a fairly democratic state, and also fairly well educated, according to my measures.

### **Lebanon**

Lebanon and Turkey, while very different in the nature of their democracies, have similar democratic ratings. While relatively democratic in the region, Lebanon is still considered neither fully democratic nor fully free, probably in large part due to sectarian strife and the unstable political situation.

#### **Democracy Ratings.**

Lebanon has fairly high Polity IV and Freedom House ratings (see Chart 1). From Polity IV it has a rating of democracy, at a score of 7. It got 8 points for democracy, and -1 for autocracy. Freedom House gives it a “partly free” rating at 4, with a civil liberties score of 3 and political liberties score of 5. Voter turnout is fairly high, as 52% turned out for elections in June 2009 (BBC Lebanon, 2009). This democratic practice, then, seems firmly established.

#### **Access.**

Initial access to education in Lebanon is fairly high, with a gross intake rate for primary schools at 102%, and the net intake rate for primary schools at 71% in 2009 (see Chart 2).

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Completion rates for primary school, however, are lowest among those reported in the case studies at 82% in 2009. In Lebanon, there are more students in private than there are in public schools. Among secondary school students, 53.2% are in private schools and 44.3% in public schools (Masri, 2009). Female access to education is among the highest of the case studies. Females as a percentage of the total enrollment were second highest in Lebanon for primary schools, and the highest (at 52%) in secondary schools. The rural population is also significantly lower than the other countries at 12.92 % in 2009. The World Bank report notes that access to education was more equitable in Lebanon than in other MENA countries (World Bank, 2007, p. 165).

### **Quality.**

Cognition and quality indicators are quite high as well. Literacy rates among youth are highest among the case studies, at 98.71% (see Chart 3). Adult literacy rates are second highest only to Turkey. TIMSS scores fall in the same range of slightly below average. It is interesting to note here that while Lebanon had the highest math scores among the five countries at 449, its science scores were second lowest to Egypt—414. The World Bank notes that indicators for engineering, incentives and accountability were better in Lebanon than most MENA countries, and that the quality of education was generally higher here as well (World Bank, 2007, p.165). Their pedagogical approach also got a high ranking (World Bank, 2007, p. 182). In fact, along with Tunisia, the approach to student-based pedagogy is among the better ones in the region (World Bank, 2007, p.182). Interestingly, however, the report noted lower quality teachers in secondary education here than in other countries. (World Bank, 2007, p. 186).

### **Freedom of Information.**

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In terms of information access, Internet access was not reported for Lebanon. Censorship does not seem to be a major problem, however. Freedom house notes that “Academic freedom is firmly established.”

### **Civic Education and Citizenship Education.**

The most interesting feature of Lebanon’s education system is its approach to civic education. Lebanon not only has a clear program for civic education, but also emphasizes citizenship education. Bassel Akar reports that citizenship education was compulsory since 1946 with the goal of “social cohesion.” (This was probably due to the highly diverse makeup of Lebanon’s population, with many different religions.) Akar writes that Lebanon is unique in the way that it prepares its citizens to become politically active (Akar 2007, p. 1). Akar supposes that after gaining independence in 1943, Lebanon had to recreate its identity and sought to emphasize the Lebanese and Arab identity in reaction to the French mandate. It was for this purpose that “citizenship education” was established (Akar 2007, p. 3). Akar writes that today, while national education (or what we might call civic education) exists in the form of teaching laws, national identity, and legal procedures, peace and justice are also a priority. In fact, in the 1997 National Curriculum, the nine reported aims included teaching humanism, spirit for work, world development, and peace and justice. It also sought to teach free participation in political and civil life, regardless of gender, religion, race, etc. (Akar 2007, p. 4). It is still important to note, however, that the Ministry of Education publishes the civics text (Akar 2007, p. 4). While the above curriculum would suggest the Ministry is not using its publishing power to promote the interests of the state, it is important to consider that this possibility exists simply by merit of being under state control.

### **Government Attitude.**



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The Lebanese government's approach to education suggests it values education as well as the principles of academic freedom. The constitution states that, "Education is free so long as it does not disturb the public order, does not violate morals and does not touch the dignity of any religion or creed. The rights of communities to establish their own private schools cannot be abridged, subject to the condition that they comply with the general requirements laid down by the State with respect to public education." While it is possible that terms such as "disturb the public order" or "violate morals" may be seen as safeguards for the government to extend its power, the general idea seems to favor freedom of the educational system. The constitution also allows for "freedom of religious education" (Lebanon Const. Article IX). Of all the countries, Lebanon stresses academic freedom most explicitly in its legal documents. It is important to ask why such freedom is not as visible in society.

### **Ministry Structure.**

Lebanon's Ministry of Education is organized as follows. There are four directorates, including one for general education, one for vocational education, one for higher education, and one for common administration. That of general education includes the directorates of primary and secondary education, the directorate of direction and guidance and the department of special education. The duties of the directorate of primary education are to monitor and provide teacher training, provide tools and audio-visual equipment, conduct research on education, provide supplies and teaching aids, and supervise and implement the curriculum. The World Bank reports an even greater grip on educational policy, stating that the central ministry essentially controls everything except for the supervision of teachers, which is split between the central ministry and the local school. (World Bank, 2007, p. 195) Meanwhile, private schools are even

more tightly controlled. The central ministry places technical regulations on private education, and sets the course for curriculum, graduation, and registration (World Bank, 2007, p. 194).

The duties of the directorate of primary education are of interest as they are potentially helpful but also potentially heavy-handed. On the one hand, their duties seem to be quite beneficial to the quality of education, as they conduct research on education and provide technical support. On the other hand, however, they “supervise and implement the curriculum,” which gives the government access to control the curriculum. According to the study reported by the World Bank (2008, p. 289), such centralization does not favor high quality education. Considering its higher educational quality indicators, this may not necessarily apply to Lebanon.

### **Other Complicating Factors.**

One of the challenges unique to Lebanon among our case studies is the ongoing state of war, starting with the civil war in 1975 that lasted until 1990, and then the 2006 Hezbollah war with Israel. The World Bank report notes that, despite this state of war, Lebanon managed to maintain its quality of education (World Bank, 2007, p. 186). The report also noted that these aspects of education, including engineering, incentives, and accountability have nonetheless been affected by the conflict (World Bank, 2007, p.165).

In conclusion, Turkey and Lebanon, the two democratic examples, have comparable democratic ratings. Lebanon has high access rates as well as high cognitive measurements. Qualitatively, Lebanon stands out most in its legal approach to education, as well as its approach to citizenship education. Compared to Turkey, which stresses nationalism in its curriculum and society, Lebanon has greater focus on the idea of “citizenship education.” Nevertheless, Turkey is still considered slightly more free. There are a couple reasons why this discrepancy exists. For one thing, the democracy ratings do not measure what I call “democratic values.” Freedom

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House examines these ideals, however, and Lebanon still has a lower rating from them. Another possible explanation for the discrepancy is that Lebanon has a more diverse society. Turkey has sizable minority groups, but they are conveniently cordoned off in regions like the Kurdish southeast, and political trends often fall along regional lines. Lebanon, on the other hand, has a great diversity of religions in a much smaller space. It is likely that this diversity necessitated the development of “citizenship education,” but also creates a less stable social environment that complicates the development of democracy. Perhaps, then, some measure of security is more important to democracies than citizenship education. Alternatively, it may just be a while until we see the effects of citizenship education.

### **Tunisia**

Tunisia is a country that has become iconic of the Arab Spring. With the desperate self-immolation of the fruit seller Mohamed Boazizi, images emerge of the overeducated and underemployed youth. One of the remarkable facets of the Arab Spring was the role the youth played driving the protests. Tunisia, known for a well-educated populace, is an especially interesting case study for democracy and education in the Arab Spring—or, as some Tunisians like to call it, the Tunisian Revolution, or Revolution of Dignity. Before exploring current educational data and presenting the information from interviewees, I will provide a brief history of education in Tunisia.

#### **History.**

##### ***Education Under Habib Bourguiba, 1957-1987.***

After the French Protectorate ended and Tunisia established its independence, Habib Bourguiba, the nation’s first president, pushed for many positive education reforms. For Bourguiba, education was a priority. He saw education as critical to development as well as a

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tool of social progress. (Allman, 1979, p. 60). In fact, his logic directly reflects the thinking of Dewey. Bourguiba, as did Dewey, saw education as one way by which citizens could learn to see their place within greater society. Bourguiba also saw primary education as something that could unify citizens in the new state. More specifically, he believed schools should teach respect for the party's anti-colonial struggle, and for Bourguiba's role as "Father of the country." (Allman, 1979, p. 60)

Consequently, Bourguiba's 1958 Education Reform Act contained goals meant to unify the people and educate them for the nation's needs. In the wake of the French departure, Bourguiba's reforms had very tangible effects. Between 1956 and 1965, primary education enrollment nearly quadrupled. Gender equality in education improved significantly. Female enrollment increased from 30% in 1958 to 40% in 1975. Bourguiba's government also recognized that there was disparity in education between urban and rural areas. Consequently, they tried to make education more accessible in rural areas, an effort that continues today. Another problem they recognized was that, while primary and secondary education were widely accessed, higher education tended to be limited by class, and only those in the upper echelons made it this far. In this way, education was not as equalizing as they hoped (Allman, 1979, 60).

### ***Education Under Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, 1987-2011.***

Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, the dictator of Tunisia who was deposed in January of 2011, had a reign marked by oppression throughout society and in academia. As Larbi Sadiki argues in "Ben Ali's Tunisia: Democracy by Non-Democratic Means," the state held up the façade of democratic rule, when in fact it tightly controlled many aspects of society. At the time when the article was written in 2002, Sadiki noted that Tunisian society lacked associations, the government did not abide by the rule of law, and the press was far from free (Sadiki, 2002, p.

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58). Despite the fact that the regime continued to hold elections and there was officially an opposition party (as decreed by law since 1994), the state remained authoritarian. Sadiki argues that when Ben Ali came to power, he took over from the waning regime of Bourguiba and promised many democratizing reforms. By 2002, these reforms had failed to materialize. Reforms were largely economic and did not include social or political reforms (Sadiki, 2002, p. 58-59).

Ben Ali's government limited freedoms and demanded loyalty to the state. Non-governmental actors had little place in governance. Criticism was not welcomed, as seen in the case of Muhammad Muwa'adah, who was arrested after writing about human rights abuses by the state (Sadiki, 2002, p. 62-64). Eventually, the state took control of much of the media, and most reliable information on the country could only be obtained from foreign coverage (Sadiki, 2002, p. 71). There are numerous examples of academic oppression as well—such as the October 2009 arrest of 17 students of UGET (General Union for Tunisian Students) at Manouba University during a peaceful protest (Union, 2010, p. 2). Another example took place when Moncef Marzouki (current interim President of Tunisia) was fired from the University of Sousse in July of 2000. When his colleagues protested, the police assaulted one of them, Mohammed Bechri (Trial, 2000). In this way, state oppression extended to the academic world.

During Ben Ali's rule, there was certainly displeasure in the universities regarding the extent of state control. Notably, however, the basic tenets of democratic education remained in primary education, and education remained a national priority. This was not the case in higher education, however. In an interview in January 2011 with Hamed Ben Dhia, the vice-chancellor of Sfax University, we see optimism about improvement of academic freedom in the new Tunisia. He was also, however, disappointed with Ben Ali's failure at reform. He notes that

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governance of the universities had been implemented from the top down, and that universities were expected to carry out all governmental decisions. The government closely monitored academics' activities, and even controlled student elections so that the RDC (Constitutional Democratic Rally) won all the seats. There were also reported incidents of bribery. One man noted that the one thing barring him from becoming a teacher was his inability to pay the bribe for education. This runs counter to the idea that the state supports teachers and that education can be an equalizer (Declan, 2001).

The importance of education in spite of (we may even say in *light of*) the revolutions is evident in Tunisia's persistence in maintaining educational systems throughout the revolution. One particular organization, Madrassati, run through Tunisia's Trait d'Union, exemplifies the way in which education has remained a priority. The organization was formed under the idea of raising money to rehabilitate schools damaged by the revolutions (as well as schools that needed repairs before). Madrassati's mission statement recognizes that education is a national priority. This holds great promise for the future of education and its continued support.

### **Structure of the Ministry of Education.**

The structure of Tunisia's Ministry of Education is fairly straightforward. The Ministry is nationally controlled, but regional organizations have control over some aspects of education. The central ministry controls all human resource management, including teacher hiring and training. It also maintains control over pedagogy (World Bank, 2008, p. 195). The government creates statutes that govern education via the constitutional council (Tunisia Const. Ch. IX, Article 72). It is also reported that central ministries control infrastructure norms, resource allocation, selection of primary and secondary school directors, teacher recruitment, curriculum and textbook content, and exam standards. Regional administration shares some control with the

central ministry in the creation and closure of primary schools, and managing inservice and pre-service training. Regional ministries also maintain full supervision of teachers. The central ministry also maintains control over private education (World Bank, 2008, p. 195). As we saw earlier, highly centralized control of schools has been associated with lower quality.

### **Recent Education Reforms.**

In 2008, the Ministry of Education published a report on reforms taken from 2004-2008. These reforms were broad and addressed all levels of education with special emphasis on the quality of education. The report claimed to have improved pedagogical supervision through monitoring and training. The ministry also improved their inspection methods, and published their reports on these. Initial teacher training was also said to be improved. Curricular changes were also made, such as adding more Arabic, more English, and more technological training. Finally, they claimed to have improved their systems of evaluation, exams, and grades (Republic, 2008 p. 10).

Some of these supposed reforms may have had a direct impact on teaching democratic values. The 2<sup>nd</sup> diennial plan adopted principles that would prepare kids for making decisions, and that would work toward non-discrimination (Republic, 2008 p. 8). Among these changes included improved communication facilitation, more clubs and associations, career advisors, environmental consideration, community-integrated clubs, and even class council elections (Republic, 2008 p. 22). It is clear that all of these would directly foster democratic systems at a micro level that has the potential to be echoed on a larger lever.

While these reforms were described in great detail in the report, very few students in Tunisia had any idea that such reforms had been undertaken. They saw no positive improvement from these supposed changes. As many countries published similar reports on the state of

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education for UNESCO, they may have been largely for show. Otherwise, it may just be that the reforms were too slight to be noticed by students.

### **State of Democracy.**

While Tunisia is today is a relatively free and democratic country, this was not the case just over a year ago, as discussed above. Its Polity IV rating left it as an “autocracy” prior to the revolution, and an “open anacroy” in 2011 (see Chart 1). Freedom House ranked Tunisia as “not free” before the revolution and upgraded it to “partly free” in 2012. In the last year Tunisia has taken incredible strides toward democracy. The press is growing (although still not fully free), civil society is thriving, and voter turnout in the last election was beyond 90%.<sup>7</sup> In order to determine the nature of democracy’s success in relation to education, it is necessary to examine the education system in-depth.

### **Access.**

Today, enrollment rates are very high (see Chart 2). The net intake rate for primary schools in 2009 was the highest among the case studies at 91.67%. Students stayed in school, as evident by the gross primary graduation rate in 2009 at 91% (UNESCO, 2009). Males and females had fairly equal access. In primary schools, females composed nearly 48% of all students, and in secondary schools, they were at 50.49%. While girls clearly are present in schools, one Tunisian student in Sousse by the name of Houda Rjab informed us that in the southern regions, boys and girls were often separated for activities, such as eating (Houda, personal interview, January 2012).

The southern regions, which are more rural than the coastal cities, possess other barriers to education. Although UNESCO reports the rural population was only at 33.9% in 2007, they

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<sup>7</sup> It should be noted, however, that only 55% of the estimated voter-age population registered to vote (Carter, 2011, p. 15)



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still compose an important part of the populace. Some of the challenges are as basic as infrastructure: the buildings are dilapidated, there are too few teachers, or they do not have access to Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) (American Corner, personal interview, Jan. 2012). Staff members of the online news source Tunisia Live also claimed that teaching standards are lower in the interior. Nonetheless, there are an increasing number of programs that seek to address this disparity in the rural interior. For example, the aforementioned organization Madrassiti has undertaken a fundraising campaign solely to refurbish schools. In higher education programs, private universities such as the Mediterranean School of Business (MSB) are beginning to understand the importance of attracting students from all segments of society. MSB in particular is pushing to recruit from more rural areas and trying to offer more scholarships (Panel, personal interview, Jan. 2012). It is possible that this will have a cyclical effect and encourage students to return to their hometowns and encourage education at the primary and secondary levels, as well. One interesting project was explained by a human rights lawyer, Marwan Maalouf, called the Citizen School Project. The plan is to take a group of 25 youth, train them on citizenship for 16 months, and then bring them back to rural communities to pass on their education. In this way, the very instruments of democracy are brought by the people to the people, and to the people who need such education the most.

The Ministry approached the goals of access with priorities of equity and an appreciation for differences (Republic, 2008, p. 19-20)<sup>8</sup>. They did this by addressing differences created by things like disabilities (Republic, 2008 p. 4), and also acknowledged the rural–urban gap in education (Republic, 2008 p. 8). They claimed to have combated some of these challenges by mentoring struggling students, providing better school equipment, and providing more teachers

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<sup>8</sup> Note that this is the same report mentioned earlier, when I noted some Tunisians were not aware of any such reforms. I could not affirm the effectiveness of these reforms, but I include them as discussion points.

in struggling areas to make smaller class sizes. They also created spaces for students to express their concerns. Finally, they said they created incentives for both teachers and students to attend school. For teachers, they provided housing in rural areas, and for students, they provided food during the day (Republic, 2008 p. 10).

### **Quality.**

#### ***Literacy and TIMSS***

While Tunisia's access is remarkably high, anecdotal evidence suggests that the quality of teaching is somewhat low (see Chart 3). It is not so low that basic reading skills are lacking; however, critical thinking and debate are rarely taught. By the numbers, Tunisia is not doing so poorly. Education is certainly succeeding at teaching reading: literacy rates were 96.8% among youth, and 77.56% among adults (UNESCO). TIMSS scores were below average, as were all of the case studies' scores. In 2007, the average score was 420 in math, and 445 in science.

#### ***Basic Education System.***

The Tunisian education system is generally based on the French system, which stresses rote memorization. In 2007, Tunisia adopted the LMD system, which stands for Lycee, Master, Doctor (Melki, 2011). Many people found that this change had negative effects. One girl even claimed that when the system had been proven to fail in France, they thought they would try it again in Tunisia to see if it fared any better as a means to combat unemployment (which, reportedly, it did not) (American Corner, personal interview, Jan. 2012) (T. Abdessalem, personal interview, Jan. 2012). Many Tunisians felt education was getting worse in other ways as well. One representative from the political party En-Nahda, Aref Maalej, claimed that each generation of education was getting worse. Others claimed that Bourguiba's system had been

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much more successful, and that students today emerge from hours of schooling with no useful skills (C. Ghazouani, personal interview, Jan. 2012) (K. Ghiloufi, personal interview, Jan. 2012).

Students in Tunisia take far more subjects than students in the United States. In university, for example, students said they took 13 subjects, and engineers at the University of Sfax said they were in class 38 hours a week (A. Besbes, personal interview, Jan. 2012). Andrea Calabretta, who was teaching marketing and English on a Fulbright scholarship in Sfax, noted that the high number of subjects meant that each subject only got a couple of hours each week—for example, one hour of lecture and one hour of discussion with an assistant.

The curriculum in Tunisia is broad and varied and contains many of the subjects one might hope to find in any standard course of study. Some of the subjects include sciences, philosophy, computing, education, technology, math, physics, Arabic, English, French, civic education, management, body awareness, and Islamic thinking. Interestingly, in the Ministry of Education's report, Islamic education is also referred to as "socialization." It is interesting to take this view of religious education as a form of socialization, rather than simple indoctrination. According to Dewey as well as the empirical findings of Barro, socialization is one of the critical elements in education that contribute to democracy.

### ***Structural Barriers.***

Some of the reasons for the poor quality are basic structural problems; others are more content based. Houda reported that many classes did not have enough chairs for students. She said they would have 60-70 person lectures and people would be writing with their papers on their knees. Other reasons for the poor quality, however, can be found in the method and content of teaching. Houda said they rarely received assignments and would read as few as two books each semester.

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Another student, Ahmed Medien, said he had difficulty with the subject material because it was poorly explained and used textbooks from the UK that used case studies from the west with which he was not familiar. They also used unfamiliar terms, and he ended up spending most of his study time doing background research on these terms and case studies.

### *Type of Instruction.*

Besides these barriers to quality education, there is a lack of debating and critical thinking in the classroom. Houda, Ahmed, and students at the American Corner<sup>9</sup> agreed that debate did not occur. One student at the American Corner added that teachers do not ask for students' opinions and even take offence at students who challenge them. On the other hand, a woman who had been educated during Bourguiba's rule said they had debated frequently—but were never asked to debate from a point of view with which they did not agree (R. Sioua, personal interview, Jan. 2012). The student Houda said debating was something with which she struggled when she studied abroad in the United States. There are, however, promising steps in the direction of debate. Gabriella Borovsky from the National Democratic Institute (NDI) said they would love to see the formation of an extracurricular debate society. There is also a new program started by Tim Sebastian called the "New Arab Debates," which holds periodic debates on a variety of political topics (Median, 2011). It was also evident that students were excited to exercise their debating skills. We witnessed various discussions and formal debates where students took time to formulate arguments and respond to others. While in Sfax, a group of students held two formal debates—one with the trade union, and one with our research group about the future of Tunisia. These students also debated frequently over meals and coffee.

### *Teachers.*

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<sup>9</sup> The American Corner is run by the U.S. Embassy and Amideast. It is a cultural center with a small American library. When we visited, there were roughly 40 students with whom we were able to speak.

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Another barrier to quality education is in teaching. The unions in Tunisia are very strong, especially the teachers' union (UGTT, personal interview, Jan. 2012). Once admitted to the union, it is difficult to fire a teacher. Under Ben Ali, admission to the teacher's union was very difficult, and even if the teacher performed well on the entrance test, they would often have to pay a bribe (Declan, 2001). There is now a new exam and the UGTT, the umbrella trade union, said that since the revolution, all teachers were automatically in the union. Despite the high number of educated Tunisians, it has proven difficult to fill all the teaching positions that are available, and those teachers who do teach are not always of the highest quality (although Houda did mention that she had a few great teachers). The former Minister of Education, Hatem Ben Salem, also mentioned the difficulty of attracting good teachers to public schools, as they preferred private schools. One professor, Tahar Abdessalem at the Ecole de Polytechnique, mentioned this problem and said that for a while they had sought to recruit teachers from abroad, only to meet with demands to hire only Tunisian professors.

### ***Private Schools vs. Public Schools.***

While the focus of this paper is primarily on public education, it is also important to mention the state of private education in Tunisia, if only for comparison. The particular focus here is on the Mediterranean School of Business (MSB), but some general trends will be noted as well. Many people noted that, while public schools used to be far superior to private schools in Tunisia (some claimed people only attended private schools if they were not smart enough to go to public schools and had to pay to get in), there is now a shift, and some of the best schools are private. In the case of MSB, they attribute their higher-quality education to using "North American pedagogy," and having great teacher-student interaction (MSB Professors, personal

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interview, Jan. 2012). The success of MSB shows the promise of decentralizing educational control from the government.

### **Democratic Values.**

We turn now from general questions of quality to the presence of democratic practices in the curriculum and in society that might be addressed by education. These practices include teaching human rights, developing a “democratic mindset,” patience, tolerance, and associational practices.

Human rights under Ben Ali were a particularly neglected area for fairly obvious reasons. The Ben Salem had even served temporarily as the “General Coordinator for Human Rights,” but he told us that this job was nothing but a title and an office. He had no support staff, and everything he did had to be reviewed by people higher in the administration. Human rights education existed very little in the curriculum, but most people seemed to recognize the need for these things, including Marwan from the General Legal Council Against Torture. Professors at MSB also saw the importance of establishing their school as a place of “global education.” Basma Azizi and Sofiane at AIC noted that an awareness of human rights was growing via younger generations and NGOs geared toward human rights.

An interesting theme that came up throughout the interviews in Tunisia was that Tunisians felt their people lacked a “democratic mindset.” This was expressed by students, as well as Basma and Sofianne, and was also confirmed in focus groups conducted by the National Democratic Institute (NDI). Sofianne and Basma elaborated on this idea, saying that freedom was a new notion to which Tunisians were adjusting. Basma and Ben Salem both believed that there was almost an *excess* of freedom since the revolution. They argued that there was a need for some rules. Many people noted that what began as street protests for rights had devolved into

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pointless strikes, and no one was working, which hampered productivity, which did not help the employment situation, and was ultimately counter-productive to democracy. Potentially, this is a “mindset” that can be taught in schools, but Sofianne thought it was a “natural metamorphosis” that would happen with time.

Another interesting theme was that Tunisians felt their fellow citizens lacked basic skills that would be beneficial in a democracy. For example, many people stated that patience was a value that was lacking. Tunisians want democracy and they want it now. This sentiment was echoed by Houda. Marwan noted that this could potentially be a good thing, because it meant the people would hold their policymakers accountable and keep them from spending too much time drafting the constitution (and thus consolidating power). Marwan said that impatient groups included the jobless, those unpaid by the government, and those whose family members had been killed by the government. On the other hand, patience is needed for democratic practices to take place, and people need to understand that democratic practices take longer to effect action than an authoritarian government. Another basic skill that came up was the ability to admit when one is wrong. One of MSB’s founding goals was to teach the principle of self-critique. Gabriella also mentioned that political parties would have benefited from learning to form and express opinions more clearly, and to respect other platforms (G. Borovsky, personal interview, Jan. 2012). While patience is probably not something to be taught in schools, the ability to admit when one is wrong can be taught in schools. Academic rigor teaches us how to think critically and question our biases and misperceptions.

One quality that did not seem to be lacking was the principle of tolerance. People often reiterated the fact that the Tunisian mentality was one of openness and tolerance (H. Ben Salem and C. Ghazouani, Jan. 2012). NDI refused to even work with other parties unless they were

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open to democratic values and practices. MSB noted that education reform was critically important to teach values such as tolerance.

Besides these qualities, there are also a number of democratic practices that do or should take place in schools. NDI reported that there were various skills they thought could be learned in schools that would help parties campaign more effectively. The skills they mentioned were team-building, creativity, organizing events, and forming student unions and campus groups. Regarding clubs, a number of students at the American Corner noted that clubs and extracurricular activities were difficult to fit into their course-heavy schedule. If they wanted to come to these sorts of activities (or ISEC trainings) they had to “escape” school. Nonetheless there was a vibrant club culture in Sfax University, whose English Fan Club and Tunisian Cultures Club hosted us for two days and whose members were clearly comfortable discussing politics. Prior to the revolution, however, students at the American Corner noted that while they had many frustrations to discuss, very few of them actually vented them. They only occasionally chatted in coffee shops (American Corner, personal interview 2012).

### **Civic Education.**

These democratic practices occurred separately from a formal civic education. Students seemed to have varying degrees of civic education, but it was clear that there was not a hugely biased state-sponsored civic education. Houda, for instance had no civic education. Ahmed, on the other hand, did. He said in 8<sup>th</sup> grade they learned about Islam coming to Tunisia, and this lesson was repeated in high school. This is particularly interesting considering Ben Ali’s regime did its best to promote secularism over Islam. Ahmed also noted the emphasis on women’s rights and said that while Tunisia’s section in the history book was often at the end (and not always reached by the end of the term), its history was not biased. It did not especially



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emphasize the goodness of Ben Ali or Bourguiba, and his teachers were fair-minded. Students at the American Corner had studied the constitution and its amendments in school but agreed there was no particular bias.

People generally seemed to agree on the need for a new type of civic education that taught about human rights and other principles. Marwan said he believed the people's first goal in the new democracy ought to be building political awareness. This was being done by various organizations through workshops and conferences that sought to simplify notions of citizenship and democracy. Houda stated that most citizens are less aware of their rights and duties. The polling company IFES (International Foundation for Electoral Systems) agreed that civic education ought to be addressed. Marwan made a distinction between civic education and citizenship education. He believed citizenship education should be taught, particularly saying that Tunisians can be Arab and Muslim, although they could also be other ethnicities and religions. He believed the constitution should be made up of general principles, not specifications for ethnicity and religion. NDI noted that Tunisians had a very vibrant civil society, but that it was neither professional nor institutionalized in the educative process. One interesting initiative that a student mentioned was the Young Women's Initiative for Leadership, which had invited people who had experienced democratic change (for example, in eastern Europe) to share their experiences about democratic transition. It is evident, then, that while citizenship education is not yet in place at schools, it does exist in less formal structures throughout society. The one benefit extending this education to formal schools is that it would reach a much wider segment of society, especially those that might otherwise be cut off from it because of their removal from urban centers.

### **Citizenship and Identity.**

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The Tunisians with whom we spoke seemed to have varying concepts of what a citizen, or even a Tunisian, was. Many seemed reluctant to discuss the concept at all, saying Tunisia had no identity problem, while others claimed that their patchwork history necessitated discussion of a diverse society. One person stated that even after 60 years of independence Tunisia still had an identity problem. In any case, whenever the word “identity” was mentioned, a long debate ensued. There was also a lot of debate over the first two amendments in the constitution, which stated that Tunisians are Arab and Muslim. Many people thought it was good to leave these clauses in because a vast majority of the country *is* Arab and Muslim. Furthermore, since their history is marked by the French protectorate, Tunisians may have been denied these basic claims to identity, or made to think they were inferior to the colonizer’s identity. Various students at the American Corner described Tunisians as multinational, global citizens, unsure of their ethnic origins, and multicultural. They also noted that Tunisians were very tolerant and could coexist. The trade union claimed that Tunisian culture is about happiness. One student in Sfax noted that at the end of the day, identity was a universal question, but in terms of politics, the important question was what the government should do to address or accommodate identity. There did not seem to be a consensus that citizenship identity should to be taught in schools.

Besides religious and ethnic identities, regional and socio-economic identities seemed to be a bigger issue for Tunisians. Some students in Sfax stated that while identity was an issue, economic concerns should to be addressed first. They also noted the great regional disparities in the country, and there seemed to be a clear sense of regional identity between the various cities and provinces. For example, Sfaxian students were very aware of who was a native Sfaxian, and who spoke in the Sfaxian dialect.

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The regional disparities are closely linked with socio-economic disparities. Our research group only traveled for one day into the interior of the country, and then it was to a tourist destination. We therefore had to rely on what people told us about the interior compared to the relatively well-to-do capital and coastal areas. Students at the American Corner noted that there were many real problems in the interior that people ignore. The UGTT trade union was very vocal about the economic disparities they saw, which they claimed were a result of the ex-regime, under which laborers did not always have an opportunity to work or acquire benefits (UGTT, personal interview, Jan. 2012).

### **Free Flow of Information.**

Another interesting aspect to examine in Tunisia's academic system is the freedom of academic expression, or more generally, the free flow of information. Prior to the revolution, a fair amount of censorship existed. Organizations as diverse as the UGTT trade union (which is reported to have links with the regime) to families to professors and lawyers expressed their experiences with limited information access. This is especially interesting considering the critical role of social media in the revolution, suggesting that some degree of freedom must have existed in order for Internet access to have been effective.

Even in 2009, Internet access was relatively high among the case study countries, with a rating of 4.3 on the seven-point scale (Global Competitiveness Report, 2009). The government had informal as well as formal ways of enforcing censorship. At the informal level, students, professors and family members were wary of what they said within the classroom, as they feared the presence of spies. Ahmed said this was especially true around the revolution, when teachers would tentatively broach the subject but were still careful about what they said. Members of the UGTT felt that classroom discussions could be open, but there was less freedom to speak in

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public forums (UGTT, personal interview, Jan. 2012). One student from Sfax University reported that he had a teacher who was suspended for speaking too freely about the government in the classroom; however, he took the case to court and ultimately won (UGTT, personal interview, Jan. 2012). This is an interesting manifestation of what Rindermann theorized as the link between cognition and rule of law: that citizens who can reason well and interpret the law are more capable of pursuing the law to suit their freedoms.

In the more formal sense, the government had a system of licenses that academics and lawyers had to obtain before traveling or researching. Marwan reported that as a lawyer, he had to obtain a permit, fill out a card, and register members so that their activity could be monitored. Their group did not obtain a permit, however, which limited their ability to practice law, and they had to exist more as an awareness-raising organization regarding human rights. He reported that obtaining the permit was very difficult, and usually required a close link with the regime, or else paying a bribe. The government monitored academic freedom. Research had to be approved by the state, and if someone went abroad to an academic conference, that individual would have to get approval by a special government body (T. Abelsalem, personal interview, Jan. 2012).

Despite these limitations, it is clear that ICT access was a fairly important priority for Tunisians prior to the revolution. The Ministry of Education's website shows that technology is valued and well utilized. From the website, one can connect to Edunet.com. Edunet.com has everything from training for pedagogy to a virtual school that has different language labs. It is a one-stop site where one can find information about exams, school calendars, and news from the ministry. This is an incredible asset to students as well as teachers and education administrators. Compared to standard public school websites in the United States, Tunisia's is far superior. It does, however, indicate the centralized nature of the ministry, since everything comes from a

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single source. The website also has options for feedback and comments, though, which shows it is open to pluralistic discussion. While many governments surely see ICT access as an important avenue to global competition, it also has the unintended side effect of allowing greater flow of information. The former Minister of Education reported that he took to initiative to connect students with technology in the classrooms. He even created a center for ICTs called “New Technologies and Education.” He did not make any claims, of course, about implementing such projects so that citizens would have tools to organize revolts.

Institutions also make ICTs a priority, as was the case at MSB. MSB noted that private schools had greater ICT access than public schools. Professor Abdessalem confirmed this by noting that his university (Ecole de Polytechnique Tunisie) officially had campus-wide wireless access, but it did not work correctly. Another example of ICT utilization for democracy is the website Aswat.com, which Gabriella reported allowed users to blog anonymously.

Interviewees had mixed opinions on the current and future state of free information. One person made the point that media from the private sector (ie not government-sponsored) dominates, which will ensure free information. Ben Salem was also positive about the current state of free speech and thought. Marwan, however, was less positive. He mentioned the tightly-controlled state TV channel, Tunis1. Aref Maalej, the representative from En-Nahda, was of two minds. On the one hand, he hoped that there would be no censorship under En-Nahda, since they had suffered from censorship under Ben Ali. On the other hand, however, he noted that parliament has the right to determine censorship. Later on, however, he also expressed that freedom should have limits if it is in conflict with the majority.

### **Religion.**

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The conflict in the above statements by Aref signifies a larger debate of the role of religion in government. In Tunis especially, there seemed to be a stark and growing polarization between secularists and Islamists. Bourguiba left a strong secular legacy in Tunisia. Many Tunisians feel that there should be a strict separation between religion and government. Ben Salem was especially wary of the presence of Islamists in the government. He believed Islam had taken too great of a role, and that it had become less tolerant. He believed that mosques, which had previously just been a place of prayer, had become political and were places of “brainwashing.” He mentioned one girl he knew who, prior to the revolution, felt she could speak freely among her family members, but now, because of Islamism combined with family pressure, she felt more constrained.

Some of these fears seemed justified after speaking with Aref Maalej, the En-Nahda representative, who stated that freedom should exist, but that 1% of the population could not impose their beliefs on the majority. He was likely basing these numbers on the religious makeup of the country, which is 98% Muslim (CIA World Factbook, 2012). It should be noted, however, that while En-Nahda won a plurality with 37% of the votes (and the combined secularist parties got a combined total of 22% of the vote), they did not win a majority. Their plurality win is indicative of the fact that En-Nahda was a unified front for the religious representation, while the secularist parties were far more splintered<sup>10</sup> (Bradley, 2011). Aref did not want Tunisia following what he saw as a path of moral degradation taken by Western nations. He thought freedoms should be limited in cultural regards, and that legislation should be in place controlling sexuality (especially homosexuality) and drugs.

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<sup>10</sup> There were many non-major parties that ran in these elections. 1.29 million Tunisians voted for parties that did not gain representation at the Constituent Assembly.

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Interviewees also disagreed on the role religion should play in education. Members at the American Islamic Congress noted that Islam strongly encourages education. They also noted that many values of Islam overlapped with democratic or peaceful principles, such as the idea of offering oneself for God or for others, or values like respect. Sofianne at the AIC thought religion could be a subject that was studied, but academically—just like any other subject. Aref on the other hand believed education should stress and teach Islamic values and an Islamic way of thinking, but still leave the individual to choose whether or not to believe. Besides these basic issues, the use of the *niqab* (face veil) in schools has generated a great deal of debate. In most schools it is banned, and students or teachers wearing it are prohibited from entering the building. Houda noted that the ban was for pedagogical reasons, for it is difficult to teach students whose faces and reactions cannot be seen. She also said it had the potential to scare little kids.

### **Family.**

While religion is one strand of informal democratic education, families also seemed to be a highly salient factor in political education. Families seemed to be involved in education as well as democracy at varying degrees. Students at the American Corner noted that there was a body similar to a PTA (Parent Teacher Association) and that some parents were highly involved in primary and secondary education. Many students expressed that parents were involved only to the extent that they wished their children to do their best and succeed. Some students reported that parents were more satisfied with their education under Bourguiba, which was a sentiment echoed by Rim Sioua, a finance manager at Fidelity Management and Research.

Family spaces also varied in their discussion of and involvement in politics. Some students at the American Corner reported that they only discussed politics after the revolution,

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because they were afraid to do so before. Other students said their families openly discussed these ideas before the revolution as well. One student at the American Corner said that he depended on information from his uncle who lived in France. Since information in Tunisia was limited or sometimes one-sided, he liked to get an international perspective. Houda's family did not debate before the revolution, but now debates all the time, and discussed very openly how they were going to vote. She also noted that religion, which was formerly a personal matter, now became a more public matter within her family. Gabriella at the NDI observed that election days were a family affair, and that whole families went together to polling stations. Ahmed differed in this however, because his father did not vote, while he himself was active in voting as well as reporting. He said his father was financially well off and the revolution did not mean as much to him. Kais Ghiloufi, a facilities manager at Fidelity, reported that his whole family necessarily got involved in the revolution because he and his neighbors gathered together to defend their homes from the rioters and police. He said that the men would guard, and their wives would bring them couscous during their watch. These reports matched with what our research group was able to observe on 14 January, the anniversary celebration of the departure of Ben Ali. People took to the streets, including young children with their families. Parents were carrying their children on their shoulders, and kids were proudly waving Tunisian flags.

### **Conclusions on Tunisia.**

While we see that there are still some barriers to access, such as regional location and financial means, Tunisia clearly values equal access. The inclusion of females at schools reflects the importance Tunisians place on gender equality in schools and in society since Bourguiba was in power. Even more important than its current state, Tunisians are concerned with the future of education, and, especially after the revolution, are undertaking many reforms to make education



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more accessible to all. Not only does this reflect attitudes of egalitarianism, it also empowers all people to become active citizens.

While there are many barriers to quality education in Tunisia, citizens are aware of the challenges and seem ready and hopeful for reform. Challenges range from basic structural problems to teaching methods and teachers. Debate skills and critical thinking are neglected in most classrooms, but as students move forward and become more active in this transitional country, they seem aware of the need to develop these skills in order to become effective citizens.

Tunisians are aware of the need to develop skills that can be beneficial to a democracy. Most notably they spoke about developing a “democratic mindset,” but also thought it important to maintain their already tolerant attitude, to develop patience, to be able to admit wrongs, to learn about human rights, and to participate in civil society. It is already apparent that civil society is developing and that students are taking many opportunities to get involved outside the classroom. These practices began before and helped form the revolution, and continue to thrive after it. It is unclear whether formal schooling can help develop things like patience for democracy or a democratic mindset, but the school can serve as an instrument of civic society where clubs form and students meet. Furthermore, some other democratic values, such as critical thinking, tolerance, and human rights could certainly be taught in schools.

It is difficult to say what role identity has or should have in Tunisian culture. One thing we can say is that it seems to be a new question that will undergo thorough examination in the future. Because of the homogenous nature of Tunisian society, it will hopefully avoid the civil strife seen in Lebanon. We can further hope that the concept of the citizen that emerges is not based solely on ethnicity and religion.

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It appears that Tunisians were barred from various kinds of information prior to the revolution; however, enough information was available in order to make a revolution possible. Internet access undoubtedly played a great role in this, and it also points to a state whose security apparatus is not strong enough to fully squash out revolution-inducing information.

Islamism in Tunisia is a powerful force, and also a polarizing one. While I do not dismiss the possibility of an Islamist democratic government, our interviewees raised a few concerns about it. One major consideration going forward will be the extent to which the government uses religion and values to limit information access. Nevertheless, Tunisian religious identity is important to many citizens, and especially after being suppressed for years under Ben Ali, one would hope the freedom of religious belief and practice will overcome value-based censorship. It would be interesting to see if an education could take place in which overlapping Islamic and democratic ideas are taught.

In sum, Tunisia clearly values education. While the numbers do not vary greatly from the other countries in these case studies, various interviews with students, professors, and politicians reveal a more nuanced picture of the leading country in these revolutions. While there seems to be fairly high access to education throughout Tunisia that is distributed evenly between boys and girls, quality seems to be lower than desired. Regarding the content of the curriculum, students seemed to have varied experiences, especially when it came to civic education. There was also confusion about the idea of citizenship, and what comprises a citizen or a Tunisian. Academic freedom was mostly maintained (prior to the revolution), but students and teachers did not always speak freely. This is especially important when considering the role of the Internet in the Arab Spring. While education did not seem to have a very great *direct* impact on people's

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decision to revolt, other factors of informal education, such as religion and family, did seem to have an impact.

### **Egypt**

Of the five case studies, Egypt is most similar to Tunisia, both in its measure in democracy as well as the path it has taken since the Arab Spring. Unlike Tunisia, Lebanon, and Syria, however, it was not a French protectorate. Egypt is more similar to Syria and Lebanon in that it has a diverse citizenry, including the Coptic Christian minority. This makes the issue of citizenship as well as its education more pressing.

#### **Democracy Ratings.**

In terms of democracy, Egypt and Tunisia held very similar rankings, with Egypt rated slightly less autocratic and Tunisia slightly more free. Egypt's Polity IV score was at -3, with 4 points for autocracy and 1 for democracy (Polity IV, 2010) (see Chart 1). Freedom House gave Egypt a status of "not free," with an overall score of 5.5—six points for political rights and 5 for civil liberties (Freedom House, 2010-2012). A reported 62% of voters turned out for the elections last December in the post-Mubarak regime (BBC Egypt, 2011). The previous election, in 2005, had varying reports on turnout, the official count at 22%, while NGOs held it at 12%, and this was among allegations of vote-rigging and bribes (Daily, 2010).

#### **Access.**

Education access in Egypt appears relatively high at the outset, but upon further examination it becomes clear that there are other barriers to access. Initial gross intake rate for primary schools was quite high at 104% in 2009 (see Chart 2). Gender disparity was greater in Egypt. Percentage of female students was lowest for primary education at 47.8%, while secondary education was second lowest at 48.4%. It is also important to note that Egypt's rural

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population is at 45.5%, which is by far the highest of all the case studies (UNESCO Egypt, 2009). Charlotte Neill notes that access to education for girls is especially low in the southern region (Neill 487). The World Bank reports that private education also creates access issues. Many students attend private schools since public schools are generally considered poor. Rich students also pay for tutoring outside the classroom to make up for poor instruction so they are able to pass the rigorous standardized examinations (Neill, 2006, p. 492).

### **Quality.**

Egypt is also at extremes in the case of cognition and quality. Its reported literacy rates for youth were at 84.9% in 2006, and as low as 66.4% for adults (see Chart 3). Students also scored fairly low on the TIMSS assessments, at 391 in math and 408 in science. This math score was the lowest score among the case studies.

Nonetheless, the World Bank report noted that while teaching capacity was low, teacher qualification were, along with Syria, generally higher than the other case studies (World Bank, 2007, p. 186). Charlotte Neill, however, claims that there is no teacher certification system in public schools (Neill, 2006, p. 485). The World Bank report also noted that the country had undertaken grand pedagogical reforms that refocused the curriculum to target competencies and incorporated problem solving skills and encouraged lifelong learning (World Bank, 2007, p. 184, as cited of Zaferakou 2006). Neill noted there was a lack of critical thinking in the schools, and she states that USAID targeted this by focusing on access, decentralization, and teacher training (Neill, 2006, p. 489).

Another local educational body of note is the ICEA (International-Curricula Educator's Association), which was legalized by the Ministry of Social Solidarity in 2008. Their main goals are education for national citizenship, global citizenship, and sustainability. In order to

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accomplish these goals, they provide teacher training, consulting for schools scientific research, networking, and tutoring. They also lobby for textbook and curricula reform to include sustainability and local issues (ICEA, 2012).

### **Information Access.**

Censorship and Internet access are especially hot topics in Egypt, where social media played an integral part in the revolution. The World Bank report claims that the country attempted to incorporate IT into its curriculum more fully in 2006 (World Bank, 2007 p. 184). In 2009, Internet access was rated at 2.9 on the 7-point scale. This was far lower than the score of 3.9 it had in 2003. During this interval, precursors to the 2011 revolutions appeared in other restive forms, such as the labor protests of 2007 (Ali, 2012, p. 19). It is significant to note, however, that information may seem more accessible than it actually is. For instance, the website of the ministry of education is currently down. There is another website, called the “Schools in Egypt” website. This site allegedly has great amounts of information and educational materials and even an “interactive space,” but upon clicking many of these links are said to be “coming soon.” Additionally, the site seeks advertisers, which suggests their interest may be pecuniary and slightly less than partial.

### **Governmental Approach.**

The Egyptian constitution is unique in that it has no specific mandates for education. Education is recognized as an important part of “man’s dignity,” which is the “cornerstone in the edifice of the homeland” (Egypt Const. Article IV). The only other mention of education comes in the affirmation of the necessity of religious education to maintaining morals in society (Egypt Const. Article XII).

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Despite the fact that education is not as explicitly in the constitution, the ministry of education maintains a great deal of control over most of the educational activities. Freedom House reports that the government appoints top university administrators, and that they monitor the curriculum as well as discussion within the classroom. Furthermore, university appointments are said to be affected by security services (Freedom House Egypt, 2011). The central ministries control policy, human resource management, and pedagogy. There is slightly more regional control over exams and planning, however (World Bank, 2007, p. 195). Private schools exist, and they are heavily used. The government regulates private schools to some extent, especially with fees rules, which the World Bank report claims shows a “concern for equity.” (World Bank, 2007, p. 193).

### **Religion and Nationalism.**

Religious education in Egypt is a somewhat tense subject because of the divisions between Coptic Christians and Muslims. Charlotte Neill characterizes it as divided between religious and nationalistic goals. In her article “Islam in Egyptian Education: Grades K-12,” Neill evaluated the role of religious education in an historical context. Neill also conducted various interviews with students to understand the state of religious education. Neill found that in primary school, there were three hours of mandatory religious education per week, and two hours in secondary school. For the most part, Muslim teachers were paid, while Christian teachers volunteered. There are two systems: the Al-Azhar system, which is Islamic, and the state system, which is secular (Neill, 2006, p. 485). The secularist view, articulated by the now-deposed president Mubarak, was that modern education “. . . is our medium to prepare the coming generations and rebuilding the society in the spirit of the future.” Education was ultimately meant for “national development” (Neill, 2006, p. 486). Neill reported that this conflict of ideals

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was apparent in certain instances in which teachers would teach Islamic songs instead of the Egyptian National Anthem or substitute their own religious curriculum (Neill, 2006, p. 486).

The precise nature of the nationalist curriculum can be seen in the textbooks that Neill evaluated. First were the ethics textbooks, which are part of the mandatory ethics classes in primary school (Neill, 2006, p. 488). She evaluated textbooks that were available for Ramses College, a Christian institution. These texts listed among the important values cleanliness, love and caring, manners, diligence for the environment, obedience, nutrition, cooperation, sharing, and patriotism. The last of these was especially stressed to the point that love for one's family was equated with an ideal love for Egypt (Neill, 2006, p. 493). The Arabic language texts on the other hand, stress loyalty first to God, and the values of forgiveness, kindness and unity in *umma* (Neill, 2006, p. 489). Social studies textbooks, meanwhile, start with Pharonic history, and include Islamic history and Ottoman history. There is no mention of Christians, and the textbooks are against Jewish self-determination. The textbooks also fail to mention much about the rest of world history (Neill, 2006, p. 498). Neill notes that there is potential for Islam to be used as an instrument of "tolerance, peace, and justice" (Neill 2006, p. 498), but for that to happen it would have to be released from the hold of the binary educational arrangement.

Egypt stands out among the case studies for its lower cognitive measures. Literacy rates as well as TIMSS scores are very low. The constitution affirms the importance of education in the view of the "homeland." Information access, meanwhile, had become significantly more limited in recent years, although there have been attempts to better integrate ICTs. Civic education under Mubarak existed and was highly geared toward nation-building. A polarized debate has developed within the schools with patriotic education being opposed by religious education. After overthrowing Mubarak, Egypt has struggled to establish a viable civilian

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government, and the military (which is currently in power) is hanging on to power as long as it can. As in Lebanon and Turkey, it is evident that security concerns here trump the ideals of small government and democracy. While Egypt indeed has low quality and access indicators, they do not seem to be strictly correlated with levels of democracy. As I will show below, Syria actually has higher levels of education (by my rubric), yet is undergoing a far more violent transition.

### **Syria**

Of all the countries of the Arab Spring, Syria is at this point in the most precarious of situations. Even prior to Bashar al-Assad's crackdown, Syria had the least free and most autocratic rating by Freedom House and Polity IV. Indicators of access, cognition, and Internet access do not, however, vary wildly from the other case studies. The constitution and Ministry of Education do have more blatant nationalistic statements, but even these are not drastically different from those of Turkey.

#### **Democratic ratings.**

As of spring 2012, Syria is far from anything resembling a democracy. President Bashar al-Assad's regime has reacted to protestors with a brutal crackdown and continues to fire on innocent civilians despite international calls for ceasefire. Even in 2009, however, it had a polity IV rating of -7 (Polity IV, 2010) (see Chart 1). These points were all for autocracy, and they had no counteractive positive democracy score. Freedom House gave it a "not free" ranking (Freedom House, 2010). Interestingly, in the latest vote on the constitution in February of this year, there was reportedly 42% voter turnout, which indicates relatively high levels of democratic practices. Notably, the international community saw this vote as a "farce."

#### **Access.**



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Access to education in Syria is not apparently prohibitive. The gross intake rate for primary schools was 112% in 2009, although the net intake rate was only 51%, which is the lowest of all the case studies that reported net intake rates (see Chart 2). Nevertheless Syria had the highest gross intake rate for primary schools of all the case study countries. Completion rates were relatively high for primary school, at 91%. This was the highest along with Tunisia, although only three countries had reported these statistics. For lower secondary school, however, graduation rates were much lower, at 55%, which was comparable to the other reported completion rates. Female enrollment rates at primary school were at 47.9%, while enrollment at secondary school was slightly higher at 48.7%. Roughly half of Syria's population lives in rural areas. The World Bank report did note that gini coefficients for equality were highest (among the case studies) in Syria (World Bank, 2007, p.171). The most outstanding number here is the extremely low net enrollment rate; however, without knowing more about the discrepancy between that and the gross enrollment rates (is it because students started at a different age? Or because they were held back?), it is hard to know what portion of the population accesses school.

### **Quality.**

The indicators for cognition and quality are unremarkable. Literacy among youth is quite high at 94.4%, while among adults it is 84.2% (see Chart 3). On the 2007 TIMSS test, eighth graders scored 395 for math and 452 for science. While these TIMSS scores are considered low, they are at neither extreme among the case study countries. The World Bank notes that teaching qualification is highest among the case studies in Syria and Egypt, and Syria is the only country with somewhat sustainable teaching capacity (World Bank, 2007, p.186). On the other hand, the marks given for "pedagogy" were quite low (World Bank, 2007, p.182). The report also noted that there was no practice of evaluation, monitoring or reward, which hurt the quality of the

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curriculum (World Bank, 2007, p.197). Another barrier to quality was insufficient funding, which led to larger class sizes (EIU, 2008).

We cannot know from this data the quality or efficiency of the education system; however, it is clear that the Ministry of Education took steps to improve it (or took steps to convince international agencies that they were trying). As Syrianed.org reports, the New Curriculum plan by Syria, its 11<sup>th</sup> five-year plan (perhaps the sheer number says something about previous improvement plans) outlined four objectives to improve the curriculum. The first of these objectives was to increase access to the entire population by increasing spending on education. The second objective was to educate for knowledge and engage the private sector better. The third objective was to teach to the market so that graduates would be better suited to high demand jobs. Finally, the last (and most fascinating) objective was to “activate democratic education.” It is unclear both both what this mean how this would be achieved.

### **Civic Education.**

Civic education in Syria is clearly state-driven and serves the interest of the state. The constitution states that, “The educational and cultural system aims at creating a socialist nationalist Arab generation which is scientifically minded and attached to its history and land, proud of its heritage, and fill her with the spirit and struggle to achieve its nations objectives of unity, freedom and socialism, and to serve humanity and its progress....” (Syria Const.). Starting in seventh grade, all students are required to take a class on national education. Private schools were only allowed beginning in 2001 (EIU, 2008).

One especially interesting article on Syrian education was written by Willis N. Potter in 1961 titled “Modern Education in Syria,” which has an optimistic view of the future of education in the new nationalist socialist system. The article was written shortly after the formation of the

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United Arab Republic (UAR, a union between Egypt and Syria which no longer exists). At the time, the ministry of education became even more centralized, so that the central Minister of Education was in Cairo, and one executive minister resided in each country. The goals of the UAR were fourfold, including democracy, economic and social equality, “strengthening national solidarity and Arab nationalism,” and maintenance of world peace through “positive neutralism” (Potter 1961, p. 2). To this end, the author reported students were learning about nationalism, democracy citizenship, and solidarity (Potter 1961, p. 4). There was an effort to improve education in the beginning stages of the UAR. For example, the government made an effort to focus on assistance rather than “policing” or “criticism”. They also made an effort to move away from rote memorization, and Potter noted that there had been a slight improvement in this regard (Potter, 1961, p. 2). Even then, lack of qualified teachers proved to be a challenge (Potter, 1961, p. 4). Private schools, however, had a better chance of succeeding, although the author noted a great variance among them (Potter 1961, p. 4). The effort to build up national solidarity and Arab nationalism is evident in the curriculum requirements, which held that students in secondary school were required to do two hours of military training per week (among 13 other subjects). It is interesting to consider this historical context when looking at the way al-Assad has exploited nationalism and trampled any supposed values of democracy and social equality.

It is interesting to note that the government sees education as a tool of moral instruction. In the constitution they note that education is not only meant to build a socialist society and encourage academic disciplines, but it ought to teach moral values as well. As [syriaed.org](http://syriaed.org) says, the goal is toward, “instilling moral values to suit the goals and values of society and to accustom students to the various forms of human communication in a positive spirit”.

### **Information Access.**

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Information access in Syria was the lowest among the Arab Spring countries, with a score of two on the seven-point scale. In light of the recent revolutions, access was clearly not limited enough to prohibit the spread of information, and citizens have found other ways to access information, especially through mobile phones. According to Freedom house, academic freedom does not exist on a large scale, although there is greater variation of freedoms among private universities. Freedom House also noted that many university professors had been dismissed (Freedom House Egypt, 2011).

### **Curriculum.**

The curriculum in Syria is fairly centralized, according to EIU wires, which stated in July of 2008, despite that Syrianed.org outlined the intent to improve education by decentralizing control of the education system. EIU Wires also reported that there was “Strong ideological supervision of courses.” (EIU, 2008).

As in the case of Tunisia, the Ministry of Education prescribes a broad range of subjects to be studied. In primary school students learn about Islam, Christianity, Arabic, science, math, and art. Starting in third grade, they start to learn music, as well. Starting in seventh grade, these subjects are taught in addition to biology, earth science, French, geography, fine arts, music, national education, history, English and physics. In 10<sup>th</sup> grade, the curriculum includes religion, algebra, engineering, Arabic and literature, neighborhoods and environment, chemistry, history, physics, French, philosophy, fine arts, and geography. At this point, each subject is taught for two to three hours a week. If Tunisia is any indication, this high number of courses potentially decreases the quality of each.

In summary, as Syria is clearly the least democratic and least free of the five case studies, we would expect to see the lowest access rates and quality indicators. This, however, is not the

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case. It is more similar to Tunisia in its numbers, which are higher than those in Egypt. Syria does stand out for its emphasis on nationalism and loyalty to the state. These look a lot like they do in Turkey; however, they are more extreme in Syria, and fail to mention ideals such as human rights and justice. It is important to note that it was quite difficult to find information on Syria. Even finding accurate news reports from Syria is a current challenge. It is likely that this reflects the fact that Syria is less open with its information.

One way to approach this analysis is through Barro's theory of socialization in which education raises the benefits of protesting in a society. As al-Assad's policies in the past favored a minority (the religious minority of Alawites), we can take this to be the "narrow" support base that the autocratic regime supports strongly. The wider base of support, which chafes under Al-Assad's rule, has much to be gained by becoming a democratic society, and education theoretically makes them more capable of organizing and protesting successfully. Sadly, it has been a year of brutal crack-down, but it would seem the people still see the potential outcome as overcoming the cost of revolting, in a very crude cost-benefit analysis. Further complicating the picture is the role of foreign powers, which skew the balance of power and has so far prevented the international community from effectively intervening. In this case, it is clear that security trumps education in determining the outcome of democracy.

### **Conclusions Across the Five Case Studies**

In this study, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions from the numbers. While access to and quality of education are generally higher in the open group (Turkey and Lebanon), there are no observable patterns within the transition group (Tunisia, Egypt and Syria). The reasons for this could be various. One consideration is the fact that this was a very small sample size of countries, and it would be difficult in any situation to say anything conclusive from five

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countries. While many scholars have suggested alternate reasons for the undemocratic nature of MENA, I will touch only on a few here as they relate to education.

First there is the issue of oil in the region, and the rentier effect it enables. The rentier effect is when a government with lots of rents (from oil, for example) can essentially pay off its citizens to keep them from demanding too much freedom. While none of the case studies in question have significant oil wealth, many states (notably the Gulf States) in the Middle East do have significant oil wealth. I mention this because during the Arab Spring, there were limited protests in the oil-rich states, including Saudi Arabia, Oman, the UAE, Bahrain, Yemen, and Kuwait. In a rentier state, the state's provision of services and funds is supposed to keep citizens from caring about their liberty. As we see, however, this was not the case. I will mention Kuwait here as an example. Kenneth Katzman writes that protesters in Kuwait have included "intellectuals [and] well-educated youth" (2012, p. 1). This suggests that education as an appeasement technique may not be effective (although, Katzman does point out that oppression and monetary gifts have helped quiet the opposition). While there were no major revolutions in any of the rich oil states, some protests did result in concessions in the form of civil liberties, which is significant. It would be interesting to conduct a study to see whether education has the potential to empower citizens to effectively overcome the rentier effect.

A second point that bears mention is the importation of education systems in MENA. The presence of foreign actors in the region has traditionally been an extremely contentious issue, for it skews regional balances of power and exacerbates tensions in the area. Notably, many of the countries in question imported their education systems from abroad. This was convenient, particularly as many of the countries had to reestablish educational systems after gaining their independence. Ahmed's experience in Tunisia, however (where he spent the bulk

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of his studying time looking up foreign terms and companies), raises a question about the identity of education. Perhaps a more domestically-motivated curriculum and texts would be able to address concerns better than foreign texts could.

Another important consideration is the state of security, for instance in Lebanon, which may make for an unstable environment that cannot be combated by education alone, nor in which education can thrive. Palestinian refugees are another example of this, for their education is constantly under threat in refugee camps abroad, or even within Israel. Palestine also represents another challenge, which is that of definition. Israel is given a democracy score of ten by Polity IV, yet Palestine has no corollary ranking, given that they do not have an autonomous state. Nevertheless, Palestinian education is remarkably high according to UNESCO. The picture is further complicated because the Israel-Palestine conflict also affects the security and stability of many states in the region, and can influence their education as well.

Despite the weak evidence for the quantitative relationship between education and democracy in MENA, the qualitative data reveals a great deal about the respective countries' attitudes toward democracy. In Turkey and Syria, and to some extent Egypt, national security is valued to the extent that it sometimes overrides democratic liberties. This is directly stated in Turkey's constitution. In Turkey, Syria and Egypt, we see this attitude reflected in the curriculums and textbooks, which emphasize nationalism, cultural assimilation, and loyalty to the state.

Meanwhile, Lebanon is the only country with an established curriculum for "citizenship education." It is notable that Lebanon does not have higher democratic ratings than Turkey. There is thus no observable relationship in Lebanon between citizenship and education compared to Turkey. It would be interesting, however, to see whether that changes over time. Given the

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diverse makeup of Egyptian and Syrian (and to some extent, Turkish) society, citizenship education could be a critical element in future democracies in those countries.

There are other qualitative considerations besides civic education, including the basic quality of education. In Tunisia quality was found to be quite low, according to students, and in other case studies, it was reported that rote memorization was the predominant teaching method. It will be interesting to see going forward whether improved quality has a tangible effect on democracy; or, whether increased democracy has a tangible effect on the quality of education.

While this study primarily sought to address concerns of democracy, the process of democratization is equally compelling and deserves mention. It is clear the ICTs played an important role in the Arab Spring revolutions, as social media outlets like blogs and Facebook were major sites of discussion and planning. I found it fascinating that these sites came to prominence as an effort by the governments to make their nations more economically competitive. This was the case in Turkey, Syria and Tunisia especially.

Of the three countries in the transition group, all have high literacy rates, and access is fairly widespread (although female enrollment is still slightly lower, and some segments of society are neglected). TIMSS scores are slightly low. Moving forward, I think it is important to maintain and improve these components of education. It is important to address quality so as to incorporate more debate, creativity, and critical thinking. It is also important to maintain ICT access, training, and freedom. Academic freedom should also be prioritized if education is to be effective. Finally, if civic education is to exist, it seems it would be best if it were oriented to citizenship education. While the direct effect of citizenship education in Lebanon has not been clearly proven to positively affect democracy, the conceptual research backing it seems strong, and is certainly better than a state that uses civic education to indoctrinate its citizens. While I



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recognize that these changes alone are not the magic bullet for democracy, it is clear that they have some measurable impact on democracy, and should be considered alongside political and economic reforms. If this is coupled with Stasavage's findings that democracy can positively affect education, perhaps the two will work to reinforce each other.

### **Conclusions Across the MENA Region**

In order to gain a clearer picture of the relationship between education and democracy throughout the region, I found correlations between various data and the Polity IV scores (see Charts 6 and 7). The findings were surprising, as there was no clear positive relationship between education indicators and democracy scores. The strongest correlations were between gross lower secondary graduation rates (a negative correlation at .59) and math test scores (a positive correlation at .58). There were also somewhat strong negative correlations for female primary enrollment (at -.32), as well as gross primary enrollment (-.36). There were weaker negative correlations for female secondary enrollment (-.16), and both youth and adult literacy rates (-.17).

Of these findings, we see only three that support the positive link between education and democracy: net enrollment rates, math scores, and science scores. These are very interesting findings. First, I will examine the discrepancy between the net and gross enrollments. While gross enrollment has a negative correlation of .36, net enrollment has a positive correlation of .35. More basically, we can interpret this as saying net enrollment rates have some positive effect on democracy, while gross enrollment rates have a negative effect. We should recall that the difference between net and gross rates is that both are a percentage of children who are the correct age for the first year of primary school. While the net enrollment rate is the percentage of that same amount, gross enrollment rates include children who are not the appropriate age for

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school entrance. Consequently, it could include children who start school early or late, or who are held back. One explanation for the discrepancy in this correlation, then, is that nations whose classrooms include these extra students are not as democratic. Perhaps this is an indication of quality, for it may mean that high gross enrollment rates result in more crowded classrooms, which could result in lower quality of education. As we saw in the literature, quality has been correlated (on a global scale) with democracy. Another possible interpretation is that high net enrollment rates indicate may a government that prioritizes putting children in school at the correct age and making sure they do not repeat the grade. Potentially this may say something about the government's concern for social services, which would presumably be higher in a democracy. Without further data, however, it is difficult to know.

The next component to examine is female enrollment, which has a very weak negative correlation at the secondary level, and a stronger negative correlation at the primary level. Both of these findings are surprising, as Barro's study found that more equal female/male enrollment was associated with democracies. A notable outlier here is Yemen, which has female percentages at 37% for secondary school. If we leave out Yemen and Iraq, the range for secondary school is between 45% and 52%, which is not a huge range. The range is even smaller in primary schools, which fall between 47% and 49% when we exclude Yemen and Iraq. Notably, rates in primary schools never exceed 50% for females. I cannot think of possible explanations for this, other than to say that education fails to break down gender stratifications that might otherwise lead to higher rates of democracy.

Literacy rates also have very weak negative correlations with democracy, at .13 for adults and .17 for youth. This is again surprising, as past studies found strong correlations between literacy rates and democracy. While the relationship appears to not exist in the MENA region, it

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is interesting that of the countries with the lowest adult literacy rates (Yemen, Egypt, Iraq, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco), three (Yemen, Egypt, and Tunisia) sustained revolutions for multiple months. Perhaps this says more about a governments' provision of social services. One logical extension is that without a quality education (that would teach reading and writing), citizens cannot gain employment as easily. Unemployed people are wont to revolt, as we saw particularly in the Arab Spring. The countries with lowest literacy rates for youth also included the countries of Egypt and Yemen (as well as Morocco). There was a much smaller gap between youth literacy rates, however.

Finally, we see positive correlations between math and science TIMSS scores and democracy, with quite a high correlation for math at .58. This indicates that quality and effectiveness of teaching (which presumably results in higher test scores) matter more than access indicators in MENA. There are two possible reasons for this: one, higher cognitive development makes people more capable of taking part in democratic practices. Two, citizens with better math and science abilities can gain employment and accrue wealth, which we have seen is an important intermediary factor in the education-democracy equation. I am inclined to dismiss the first explanation, since literacy rates (another cognitive measure) had such a weak correlation. It would be interesting, then, to see to what degree wealth affects democracy in MENA—particularly since the wealthiest states, the oil states, actually have the *lowest* rates of democracy. Another possible explanation, suggested by Professor Mazaheri, is that these results may show a tendency for the more democratic states to favor sciences and math, while the less democratic states favor humanities—including religion. I was unable to find data regarding regional preferences for particular subjects, however, it would certainly be interesting to explore this relationship in future research.

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In this MENA regional examination, it is clear that the expected positive relationship between education and democracy does *not* exist. Positive correlations for math and science scores, as well as net enrollment, indicate that perhaps quality of instruction matters more than equal access to education. We have also seen that this data may indicate more about a government's concern with social services, which is presumably higher in a democracy (and has been proven to be in Africa by Stasavage).

### 5. Discussion

Previously, research on the region has covered democracy and education, but has largely neglected an intersection of these two ideas. My research has explored this relationship in the MENA region with special emphasis on three countries in transition after the Arab Spring. I was able to compile statistical data as well as qualitative data from the five case studies and present a cross-national comparison of five different countries. By keeping the comparison based in the region, I was able to draw on similarities in the region while at the same time recognizing their unique attributes. Finally, the opportunity to conduct research in Tunisia just a year after the revolution gave me a unique opportunity and insight into a nation at crossroads whose citizens are only recently being allowed to express opinions and hopes for the future. It is my own hope that this research will not only contribute to the existing literature, but also spark questions for future scholars.

Over the course of my research, I found that my questions were changing. Initially I was simply looking for patterns of democracy and education in Turkey and applying them to Syria, Tunisia, and Egypt. My findings helped me reframe my questions so that I came up with the following questions:

1. By examining a nation's approach to education, what can we learn about its approach to democracy?
2. What skills are learned in a classroom that are needed in a democracy? How does quality of education affect democracy?
3. What is the nature of civic education? Can it say anything about a country's governance?
4. Can we learn any lessons from the democratic nations in MENA about what does and does not work in democratic education?

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Some of these questions I was able to answer; others I could only answer partially, if at all. First, I will address the question about what we can learn about a nation's approach to democracy from examining its approach to education. In this case, the clearest indicators of approaches were in civic education and information access. Although I was unable to find an appropriate cross-comparative measure of information freedom for the case studies, some cases, like Turkey, proved that limited academic freedom in the classroom (as articulated by professors) reflected limited freedom of expression in greater society (by journalists, for example). Similarly, we saw limited freedom of expression in classrooms and society alike in Tunisia before the revolution. After the revolution, however, freedom of expression within and without the classroom improved side by side. In this way, governmental approaches to education can reflect their approach to democratic (or non-democratic) governance. Other approaches did not show such a close association, however, as was the case with access. Many non-democratic as well as democratic nations had similar access throughout the population and between genders. The one positive correlation we did see was with net enrollment, which was a stronger positive correlation than was gross enrollment. Perhaps net enrollment can be seen as an indicator of democratic approaches to society (one that indicates a government that values social services and prioritizes starting education at the appropriate age).

The second question to address is twofold regarding the quality of instruction. The first part asks what skills are taught in the classroom contribute to democracy. There was limited evidence to answer this question, although students in Tunisia expressed the need for more debate and creativity in the classroom, as well as the need to develop a "democratic mindset." The second part addresses the actual quality of teaching in classrooms. There seems to be some indication that this is more important than access in society, for higher TIMSS scores were

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correlated with higher democracy scores. On the other hand, low literacy rates were associated with countries that took part in protests during the Arab Spring, suggesting that poor quality can also motivate a population to revolt, if it is not satisfied with the services its government provides. Both of these questions bear much closer examination. They are probably the most difficult to measure, however, as quality can vary so much from classroom to classroom.

The third question addresses the nature of civic education. There seemed to be a clear relationship between civic education and the civic mindset in society. In countries that stress nationalism, patriotism and loyalty to the state (Egypt, Turkey, and Syria), civic education was also nationalistic. We saw this in the textbooks of Egypt, the curriculum goals in Syria, and the National Education Plan in Turkey. In contrast, Lebanon stressed the importance of citizenship education. As Lebanon is still not fully democratic, it is questionable whether citizenship education has a clear and positive impact on democracy. Ideally, unified national identity would be based on concepts of citizenship, and not on ethnic origin or loyalty to the state's ideology. It would be interesting to see whether there is a nation in MENA that exemplifies this ideal. Of the case studies, Tunisia probably comes the closest, as the population is not divided by religious or ethnic disparities (although it may be, if it had a more diverse populations).

This brings us to the final question: can we learn lessons from the democratic nations in MENA about what does and does not work in democratic education? Simply, the answer is yes. From Turkey, we see that a curriculum that emphasizes nationalism and patriotism is associated with a society that values the same things. In Lebanon, these nationalist leanings are not as strong. We also see positive associations of academic freedom and freedom of expression in greater society. Finally, there seems to be correlations between math and science test scores and democracy, although we do not know the precise mechanism that links these two. While we can

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draw limited lessons from the democratic nations' experiences, a far more comprehensive study is needed to determine the precise nature of a "democratic education." Which skills and what knowledge are best suited for democracy? What power structures should exist in the classroom? Is quality or content of instruction more important?

### **Other Factors**

Because of the negative correlations I found, it is clear that there are other factors at work in the democracy question in MENA. While I anticipated this, I did not consider that these other concerns may be overriding—for instance, security concerns are likely an overriding factor in the case of Lebanon (preventing stable democracy) while they are also an overriding factor in Turkey (preventing full freedom). There are myriad other factors in this equation that I was not able to address, but I will suggest a few. The first is oil, which, as we saw earlier, makes for a rentier state that can appease its population with jobs and social services that allow a non-democratic form of government. Another important consideration is that of wealth and poverty. While some of my interviewees in Tunisia claimed the regional wealth disparity was of great import in Tunisia, my research did not look specifically at region to region differences in education, and how this might affect democracy and revolutions that are often urban-based (although it started in the rural area of Tunisia). Finally, a critical question to address is diversity, and how it plays out in the MENA region. Does diversity make for a more or less democratic nation? What does it mean that Tunisia does not have to grapple with these issues in the way that Lebanon does?

### **Other Questions**

While these smaller questions and answers emerged within this study, the study has also left me with many other questions about the nature of education in a democratic society. One



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topic that my colleague Madeleine Lavender has explored in her thesis is the effectiveness of teaching what she calls “peace and justice education” in the classroom, and whether it has a measurable effect on the behavior of the students in the classroom. It would be fascinating to apply this same rubric to democratic education by identifying overlapping values in democracy and peace and justice. Then it might be possible to observe the practice of democratic values in the classroom.

At the same time, these questions would beg bigger questions about the nature of education. For instance, what exactly is the role of education in a society? While it has positive effects on economic and democratic development, should these be taught directly, or should they be left as a side effect of education? Should primary and secondary education rather be purely academic in focus, teaching students how to think logically and scientifically, develop creative skills, and learn to question? Or is it equally important to teach values as well, and who will determine these values? Finally, if ever an ideal educational model were achieved, whose job is it to implement it? Most research seems to point to the idea that decentralized educational models are best, so it may be detrimental to have such a model imposed from the top down; on the other hand, how else would equal access to quality education be insured?

### **The Research Process**

Writing this thesis has been a tremendous learning experience for me. When I set out to find a question to answer, I wanted to answer an important question, and consequently asked a very big question. I realize now that I took this approach with great hubris. I thought I would be able to solve one giant piece of the MENA democracy puzzle with a 90-page paper. I am only just beginning to grasp what a complex question this is, and how many interactive layers are

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involved. It is frankly overwhelming to consider how these layers might ever be unpacked and fully explored.

As my research draws to a close, I recognize the importance of asking small questions, which can be answered more thoroughly. As I was combing back through my literature review, I realized how experienced scholars approach these questions with great specificity and purpose. In future research, I would hope to emulate this approach.

Overall, I found the experience extremely rewarding. Although my primary advisor warned me to approach my research without bias and to remain open to the distinct possibility that my hypothesis would be wrong, I was still astounded to find as little correlation as I did. Initially I dismissed this by saying we could learn nothing from the results since they were not positive. My second reader, however, pushed me to understand the implications of these negative findings. From these preliminary conclusions, I can see a whole host of more specific questions to explore: why are gross enrollment rates associated with higher democracy rates? Why is math/science education better in democratic countries in MENA?

Besides this general research, I also found my research in Tunisia to be fascinating. I was able to get such an immensely clearer picture there in two weeks than I could in a semester of secondary research. Speaking with people who had real experiences was so helpful. The process was similar to an investigation which is an extremely satisfying way of learning.

The Tunisia research also opened my eyes to the practical limitations of this study. Had I more time, it would be very beneficial to get a more thorough understanding of the nature of education in these countries. This study was also limited in part by language, as I do not speak Arabic, and could not therefore evaluate some primary sources like textbooks. I was also unable to travel to either Syria or Egypt, and while I did travel to Turkey and Lebanon, Tunisia was the

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only country in which I was able to conduct formal research. With more time and resources, and ideal study would include in-depth research in each of the countries with methodical surveys distributed throughout the regions.

## **6. Conclusion**

In conclusion, this study has been a small piece in an incredibly complex picture of the nature of democracy in MENA. I have viewed it through the lens of education and determined no numerical correlations, but can say that the qualitative data shows educational approaches to be indicative of a country's approach to government. I have determined that civic education can be approached in different ways, and that citizenship education seems to be a reasonable idea that bears further investigation. Moving forward, it will be important for citizens of the Arab Spring countries to keep in mind educational reforms alongside political and economic reforms.

Appendix

Chart 1: Polity IV and Freedom House Ratings

	Polity IV 2010	Freedom House '10	Freedom House '11	Freedom House '12
Syria	-7	7	7	7
Tunisia	-4	6	6	4
Egypt	-3	6	6	6
Lebanon	7	4	4	N/A
Turkey	7	3	3	N/A

Chart 2: Net Enrollment and Female Ratios in Order of Polity IV Rank

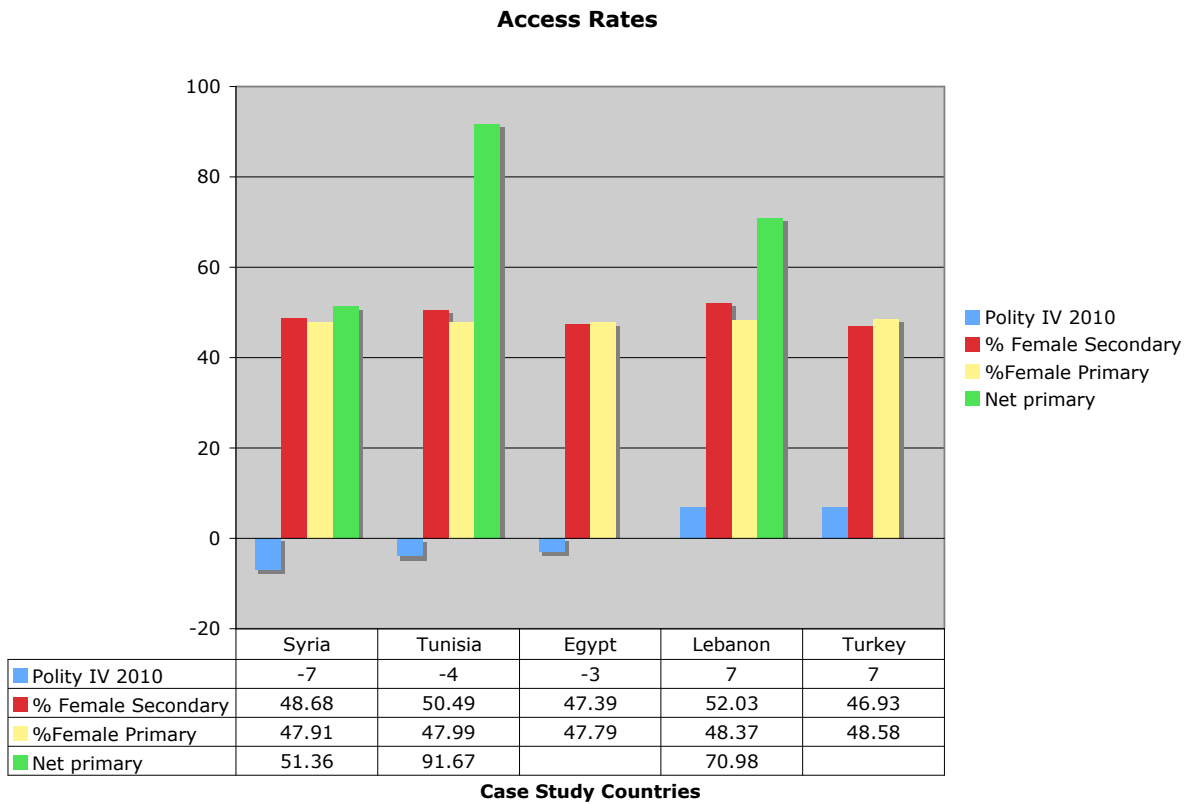
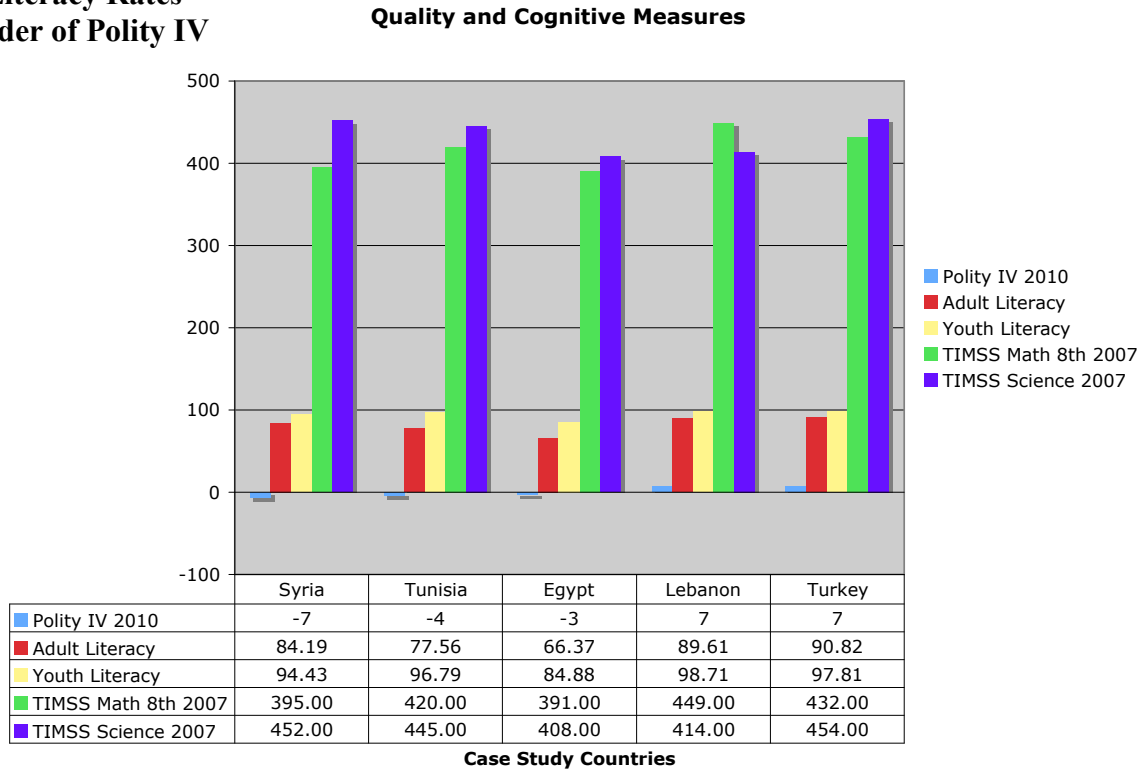


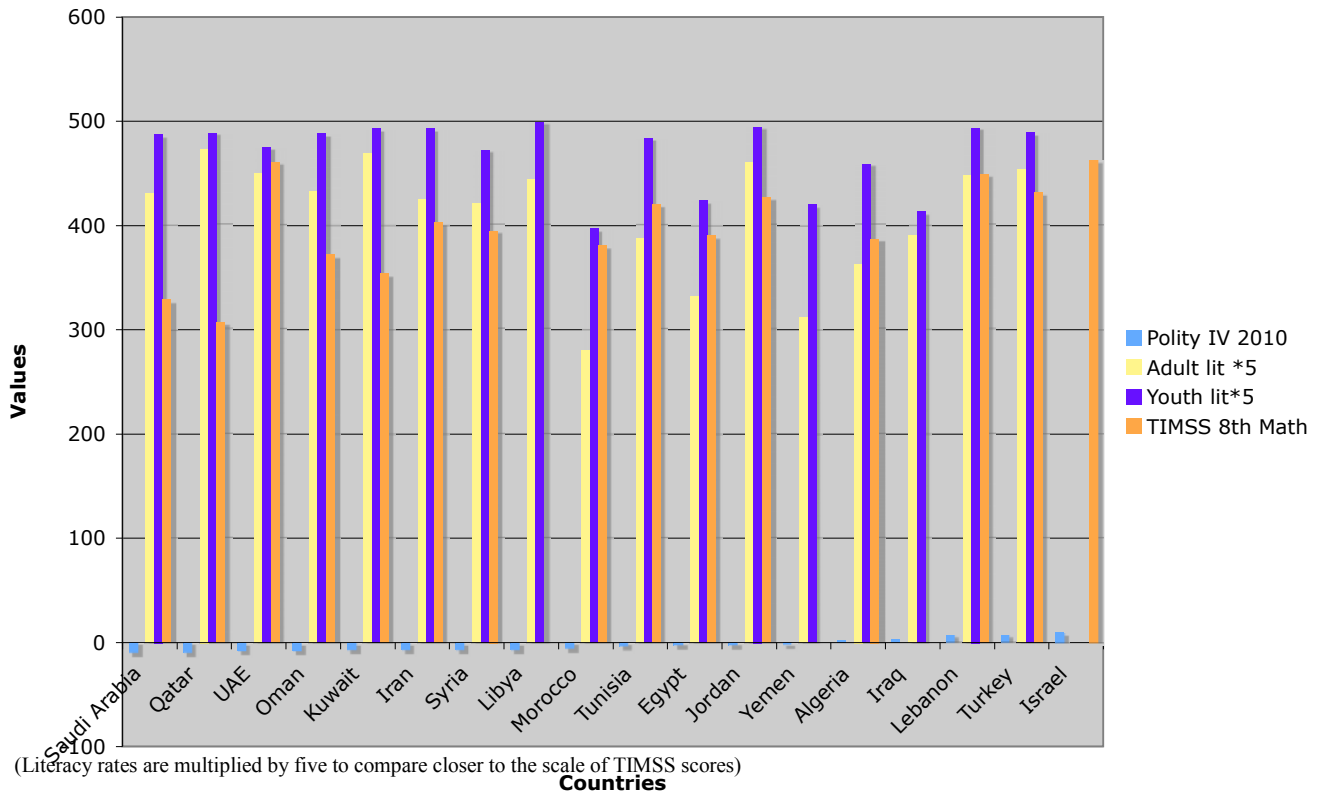
Chart 2

**Chart 3: TIMSS Scores and Literacy Rates in Order of Polity IV**

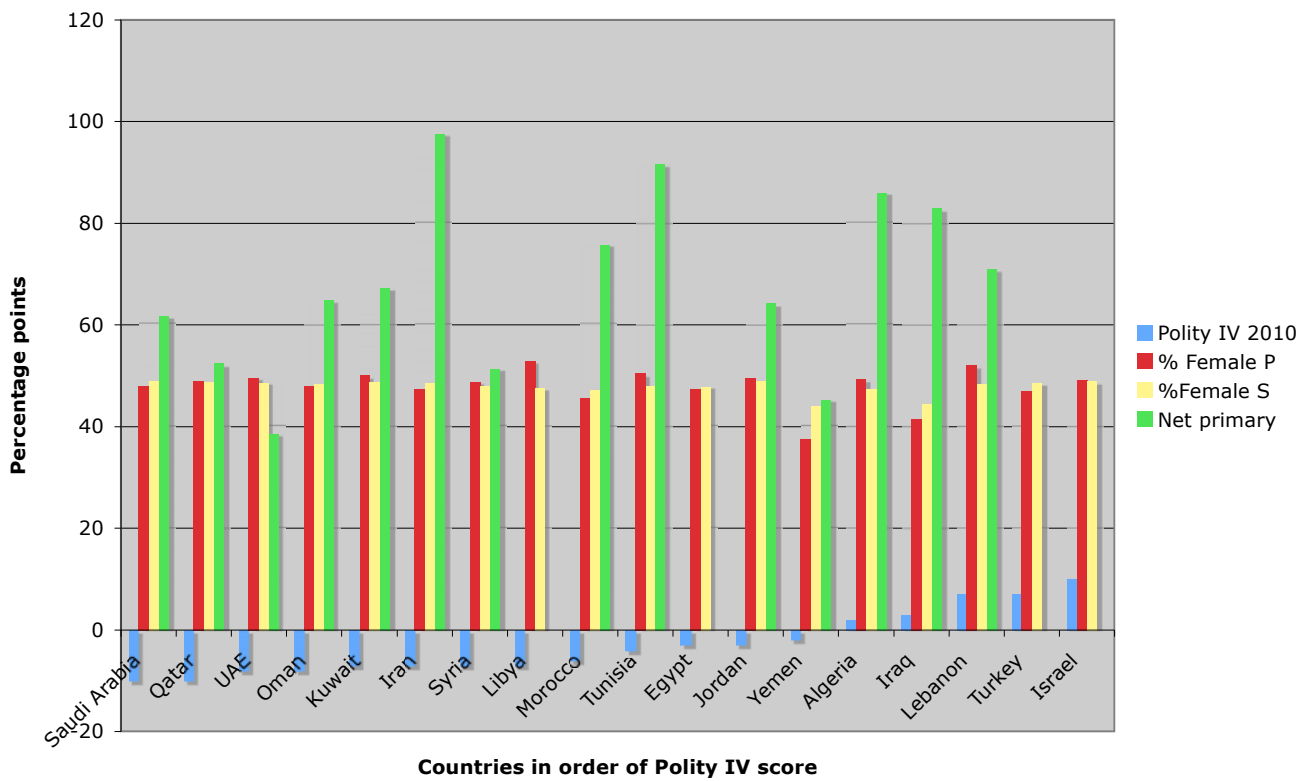


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**Chart 4** Literacy Rates and Test Scores in MENA



**Chart 5** Access to Education in MENA



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**Chart 6\***

Polity IV	% Female Secondary	% Female Primary	Gross intake Primary	Net intake Primary	Gross Primary Graduation Rates	Gross Lower Secondary Graduation Rates	Adult Literacy	Youth Literacy	TIMSS Math '07 8th grade	TIMSS Science '07 8th grade
		49.0	105.	61.7				97.8		
-10	47.91	8	31	1	98.61	X	86.55	2	329	403
		48.7	107.			105.		96.8		
-10	49.06	6	06	52.4	92.67	06	96.28	2	307	319
		48.5	103.	38.6				95.0		
-8	49.51	9	95	4	94.51		90.03	1	461	489
			105.	64.9		104.		97.6		
-8	48	48.3	56	9	104.8	36	86.62	2	372	423
		48.8	101.	67.3	101.2			98.6		
-7	50.02	4	9	7	5	X	93.91	4	354	418
			107.	97.5		80.0		98.6		
-7	47.3	48.5	49	5	95	6	85.02	6	403	459
		47.9	116.	103.		83.4		94.9		
-7	48.67	1	65	63	51.98	4	83.44	4	395	452
		47.6						99.8		
-7	52.9	5	X	X	X	X	89.2	7		
		47.4	109.	77.1		46.6		79.4		
-6	45.52	2	58	5	82.71	4	56.08	7	381	402
		47.9	105.	91.6		55.2		96.7		
-4	50.49	9	95	7	90.99	6	77.56	9	420	445
		47.7	103.					87.5		
-3	47.39	9	79	X	X	X	72.05	1	391	408
			97.9	64.2		78.5		98.7		
-3	49.63	49	4	6		5	92.55	6	427	482
		43.9	102.	45.1				85.2		
-2	37.46	8	57	9	55.37	32.3	63.91	2		
		47.3	105.	88.9				91.7		
2	49.35	4	75	9	80.77	X	72.65	8	387	408
		44.3	104.	82.9				82.5		
3	41.45	5	33	5	76.41	X	78.17	7		
		48.3	107.	70.9		55.0		98.7		
7	52.03	7	03	8	84.21	9	89.61	1	449	414
		48.5	97.7					97.8		
7	46.93	8	7	x	x	x	90.82	1	432	454

\*All figures are taken from the most recent available data since the year 2000, and was almost always after the year 2005



**Chart 7**

**Correlations from Chart 6 between Polity IV Ratings and Education indicators**

Female secondary enrollment	-0.16
Female primary enrollment	-0.32
Gross enrollment	-0.34
Net enrollment	0.35
Gross primary enrollment	-0.36
Gross lower secondary graduation	-0.59
Adult literacy	-0.13
Youth literacy	-0.17
TIMSS math	0.58
TIMSS science	0.17

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