

The Social-Economic Situation of Middle East Youth on the Eve of the Arab Spring

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Exploring the Behavioral Mechanism for the Attitudes of Youth on Democracy and Unemployment

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Exploring the Behavioral Mechanism for the Attitudes of the Youth on Democracy and Unemployment

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The Middle East region includes the largest number of youth of the world population. Approximately 30% of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) population is between the ages of 18 and 30. Given the influence of Arab Spring in the entire region, understanding youth and its needs has become a critical topic of interest. In this paper we aim to explore the political behavior of the youth in the Middle East by taking into account a number of social, economic, and political factors. Our goal is to determine the micro-foundations of young generations political attitudes and behavior with respect to democracy and unemployment. We take a comparative political behavior approach and conduct statistical analyses through a unique survey data collected by the PEW Global Attitudes Project in the eve of the Arab Spring.

We choose how youth views democracy because of several reasons. First, we believe that there is a strong relationship between economic development and democratic transition as evidenced by numerous scholarly studies in economics and political science (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Lipset 1994; Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub and Limongi 2000; Weingast 1997). Next, Arab Spring has been defined as a process of democratization in the region. From the beginning in Tunisia until the uprising and the ongoing conflict in Syria, all protests begin with the central aim of becoming more democratic and gaining more democratic rights and building democratic institutions. This concept of democratization is thought to influence the public's mind in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Bahrain, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia. In this concept we know that without a proper analysis of the youth, understanding its preferences and motivations (particularly in comparison with the older generation), the political policies would be unfruitful.

In this paper we explore the interconnectedness and the complex nature of youth bulge on democratization via two routes. First route is a direct effect of the economy on democratization of a state. There is abundant research in the literature showing the democratic transitions as well as democratic stability greatly rely on economic wealth and development (Epstein, Bates, Goldstone, Kristensen and O'Halloran 2006; Inglehart 1997; Lijphart 1999). In order for democracy to establish in a state, the economic conditions need to support this process by all means. Although this is an important factor, it is by itself insufficient. Equally important in this process is the role that youth plays as a mediator between economic conditions and democratic establishment. At this juncture, we argue that given the importance of the youth for the future of these states where Arab Spring was observed, we need to further understand how they perceive

democracy and how they are affected by the economic downturn. The other part of this evaluation is the perception of democracy for the youth in the MENA states. We ask: what does democracy mean for an 18 year old young Lebanese? What are the most important factors of democracy for the youth in the region? Are these preferences different for those above 30? Does the meaning of democracy vary from one country to another in the region? If we can control for a number of indicators and explore certain determinants the policies tailored toward the youth would be prosperous. We principally argue that the youth is critical not only to make long-term democracy plans and changes in the MENA region.

Can Youth be a Catalyst towards Democracy?

Compared to an aging population in the West, young people (between 18 and 30 years of age) represent a large portion of the population in many countries in the MENA region. Young people compose approximately 30% of the population in Egypt, Tunisia, Bahrain, Jordan, and Algeria. Many developing states in the region today encounter a massive effect of the young generation in social, political, and cultural domains. Defined as “youth bulge,” these young groups of the population carry great influence on domestic and international politics of every country in the MENA region (Dhillon and Yousef 2009; Ginges 2005; Hart, Atkins, Markey, and Youniss 2004; Urdal 2006). For any political change and uprising, one needs to understand the particular influence of demographics in each country. As experienced by the Arab Spring, large young populations can generate seismic social and political effects in any country.

The generational differences between young people and the rest of the country requires that societies reach a social contract (or coordination) that particularly satisfy the basic needs of the youth (Lijphart 1999; Weingast 1997). These differences within societies have imposed government and international organizations to read just their priorities on socio-political investments in these countries. Particularly relevant for the youth, one can count a prosperous future including employment and education opportunities. If governments fail to comprehend and adjust their positions according to the changing demographics, they would encounter tests of revolt and protest as evidenced by the Arab Spring revolts. To that end, we aim to extend the literature by exploring the micro-foundational roots of the youth’s perception and preference of democracy and evaluations on unemployment in the eve of the Arab Spring.

Hypotheses

Our analysis in this paper entails a cross-country comparison of certain structural factors such as democracy and economic performance in the eve of Arab Spring in the MENA region. Democracy is a construct whose indicators would not vary much from one country to another. Thus, the indicators that effect preferences over democracy and that determine democratic norms should not be very different. On the other hand, even that the countries of interest are similar to each other in many ways they are particularly different with respect to history, political origins, and social norms. There could be then differences across the states. So, even though this is a cross-country comparison in a region where major similarities exist, there will be differences in terms of how public perceives democracy, prefers a democratic government, and attributes responsibility with respect to unemployment.

Second, and more importantly, we aim to find a generational difference between those who are between 18 and 30 and those who are older than 30 years of age. The particular

difference would be on how they define democracy and prefer a democratic government to any other kind. In this discussion we also expect to see a difference in terms of how youth and the older generation would attribute responsibility on unemployment. Considering unemployment as a critical issue for the youth, it is possible that the way they perceive the issue is different from the older generation.

Data and Models

Data

Our data come from the PEW Global Attitudes Project conducted in 23 countries in 2011, which dataset has been recently made available to the researchers. Results for the survey are based on face-to-face interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. Survey results are based on national samples. We selected the available MENA countries in the dataset: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian Territories, and Turkey.

In Egypt, the sample design was a multi-stage cluster sample stratified by governorates (excluding Frontier governorates for security reasons — about 2% of the population) proportional to population size and urban/rural population. The fieldwork dates were from March 24 to April 7, 2011 including 1000 individuals of the ages 18 and more, representative of the adult population. In Jordan, the sample design was a multi-stage cluster sample stratified by region and Jordan's 12 governorates and proportional to population size and urban/rural population. The fieldwork dates were from March 21 to April 7, 2011 including 1000 individuals of the ages 18 and more, representative of the adult population. In Lebanon, the sample design was a multi-stage cluster sample stratified by Lebanon's seven major regions (excluding a small area in Beirut controlled by a militia group and a few villages in the south Lebanon, which border Israel and are inaccessible to outsiders) and proportional to population size and urban/rural population. The fieldwork dates were from March 21 to April 7, 2011 including 1000 individuals of the ages 18 and more, representative of the adult population. In the Palestine Territories, the sample design was a multi-stage cluster sample stratified by 17 districts in Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and proportional to population size and urban/rural population. The fieldwork dates were from March 22 to April 12, 2011 including 825 individuals of the ages 18 and more, representative of the adult population. In Turkey, the sample design was a multi-stage cluster sample in all 26 regions (based on geographical location and level of development [NUTS 2]) and proportional to population size and urban/rural population. The fieldwork dates were from March 21 to April 12, 2011 including 1000 individuals of the ages 18 and more, representative of the adult population.

Margin of sampling error in all of these samples were ± 4.0 percentage points based on all interviews conducted in that country. For results based on the full sample in a given country, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is ± 4.0 percentage points.

In all our models we will report our results individually for all five samples. In order to test our major hypothesis, we have two groups defined through the participant's age (below and above 30 years of age). Our argument is that there has been a major difference between these groups and this generational difference is influential on how one perceives democracy and weighs economic indicators.

Models

Our primary dependent variable is the ability to explain one's understanding of democracy. We propose two distinct measures of democracy. **First**, we explore whether one prefers democracy to any other kind of government. This question specifically measured if the respondent would prefer a democracy to another system. Those who selected democracy as their preferred system are those that think that democracy is the most important system of government for their country. Our models aim to explore behavioral attitudes of those who made this selection and their difference with respect to those who think that a non-democratic government is plausible in the country. **Second**, we explore how one defines democracy through a battery of items (people can openly say what they think and can criticize the government, people choose their leaders in free elections, the economy is prospering, women have the same rights as men, political stability, and people of all faiths can practice their religion freely) measuring how each is important for democracy. These factors are theoretically important for a country where the general goal is to establish democracy. Without finding these factors important, the definition of democracy would differ from theoretical norms and the outcome would not be for the benefit of the public requiring a democratic regime. Considering Arab Spring in particular, the general evaluation of these demonstrations was towards establishing democracy in the region as opposed to the reign of autocratic leaders. **Finally**, we explore how one would attribute the responsibility on unemployment. Given that unemployment is probably the most important issue for the young generation in the MENA region, it is relevant to understand whether one is responsible for his/her unemployment as opposed to the influence of outside forces.

Our primary independent variables are those that would give us more information with respect to one's perception of democracy in a given country. In the first set of items, we use two items directly related to one's understanding of democracy. The first item asks whether one prefers that the country should rely on a democratic form of government or that the country should rely on a leader with a strong hand to solve the country's problems. This is a tradeoff between democracy and leadership and an important issue considering the long reign of certain leaders in some of the countries where we have experienced Arab Spring. The second item asks whether one would prefer a good democracy or a strong economy. This would be a critical tradeoff and would indicate whether democracy is more important than economy in a MENA country.

The second set includes two items with respect to economic conditions. The first item in this set asks who is to blame (the individual him/herself or forces outside their control) for one who does not have a job. The second item in this set asks whether success in life is pretty much determined by forces outside of one's control (1=completely agree; 4=completely disagree). A third type of item asked whether one is satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in his/her country at the time of the survey. This item measures the general evaluation of how things are going in the country. The fourth set included two items with respect to the Arab Spring. These items are used to measure whether one is excited about the protests in the region and whether these protests would bring more democracy to the region.¹ The first item measured

¹ These questions were asked in all countries except Egypt. Considering the possibility that both of these questions would be strongly supported in Egypt, we believe that it would not violate our hypothesis if we exclude these items only for Egypt in our analyses.

on a scale of 1 (very excited) to 4 (not excited at all). The second item is a binary variable coded as (1) if the respondent indicated that the protests during the Arab Spring would bring more democracy to the region, otherwise coded as (0). Finally, we included four demographic variables. Three of those demographic variables are dummy variables measuring gender (Female=1; Male=0), religious sect (Sunni=1; Other=0), and unemployment (Unemployed=1; Other =0). The unemployed category includes those who reported that s/he is unemployed, or has no job, or is not employed (e.g., housewife). The fourth variable among demographics measures one's level of religious practice during the day (1=Hardly Ever; 7=Every day five times).

The key distinction that we postulate is youth versus older population, a generational impact. To that end, in all of our models we argue that the youth's perception and understanding of democracy is different than the older population in a given country. Of course, there could be systematic differences among the countries that we were able to test our hypothesis. Finally, we should also note that in all of our models we used the general population weight included in the dataset.

Results

Preferences on a Democratic Government

In this section, because we have a binary variable (preferring a democratic government or not) we conducted a logistic regression on our dependent variable controlling for the independent variables. We will discuss our results in the alphabetical order of the countries.

Egypt

For young people (between the ages of 18 and 30) in Egypt, we see that those who prefer good democracy to a strong economy, those who are satisfied with the current track of the country, and those who are unemployed are more likely to prefer democracy to any other kind of political system. The youth in Egypt prefers democracy if they believe that the political system is more important than strong economy. Equally, satisfaction about the current status of the country makes people to choose democracy to any other type of government. Considering the Arab Spring revolt in Egypt, the changes at that time could have been considered as democratic towards a better future. Additionally, for this young population we find that the more one prays during the day (up to five times), the more s/he is less likely to choose democracy to any other kind of government. Among these statistically significant findings, we see that preference on good democracy (a marginal effect of .12), satisfaction with the current status in the country (a marginal effect of .20), and unemployment (a marginal effect of .12) are the three most powerful positive effects on a young individual's probability of opting for a democratic government.

For those above 30 in Egypt, we see a similar finding for these three critical indicators. The preference of a democratic government by those who prefer good democracy (to strong economy) and by those who are satisfied with the current status in the country is reasonable. However, the interest in practice of the religion is an important point. We find that practicing religion does not differentiate between the two groups' preferences for choosing another type of government than democracy. For both groups, the more one practices religion the more s/he is likely to prefer another type of government other than democracy. For these three indicators we do not observe a difference in Egypt. On the other hand, there are two major differences between

the generations that also have substantive importance: First, unemployed individuals (older than 30) are significantly less likely to prefer democracy to any other type of government. The unemployed youth strongly prefer democracy to any other type of government. It seems that their belief in the link between democracy and economic development is implied in this finding. In contrast, those older than 30 and unemployed are significantly less likely to prefer democracy. Their belief is that democracy would not be the regime type that they would prefer and other options should be considered. Considering the importance of employment for the Egyptians, the generational difference is evident in this analysis. Young people think that their unemployment status is probably associated with the regime type as opposed to the older group. The second difference between the two generations is that females older than 30 are more likely to prefer democracy. It is interesting to find that younger females are not that enthusiastic compared to men in their generation. Females older than 30 years of age have probably experienced social norms that would be associated with their attitudes toward preferring democracy against another type of government. Analyzing the predicted probabilities we find that satisfaction with the current status in the country (a marginal effect of .16), preferring a good democracy to a strong economy (a marginal effect of .11), and being a female (a marginal effect of .12) are the three items significantly increasing one's probability (of the older group) of choosing a democratic government.

Jordan

For young people in Jordan, we find interesting contrasts compared to those who are above 30. First, for the young people we find that those who think that demonstrations held during the Arab Spring would promote further democracy in the region are more likely to prefer democracy. Similarly, those who prefer a democratic government to a strong leader would prefer a democratic system. We also find that the more one thinks that unemployment is a factor of forces outside of one's control and that the more one disagrees with the argument that success in life is determined by outside forces, the more s/he would prefer democracy. An interesting finding for both generations in Jordan (different from any other country in our analysis) is that people that prefer good democracy to a strong government is significantly less likely to choose a democratic government over another type. Compared to Egypt, for both generations those who preferred good democracy were positive about a democratic government. However, in Jordan, for both generations it seems that desire for a strong economy is negatively related with the likelihood of choosing a democratic government. Economic conditions in Jordan obviously affect one's preference over a democratic regime in the country. Comparing the marginal probability effects of these results, we see that preference on democratic government (an effect of .34), unemployment as a result of outside forces (an effect of .26), and being a Sunni (an effect of .20) all significantly increase a young Jordanian's probability of choosing a democratic government over any other type of regime.

On the other hand, we find contradictory results for those above 30 in Jordan: First, we find that the less one gets excited about the Arab Spring, the less s/he prefers democracy. This negative reaction was not found for the young people in Jordan indicating a gap in evaluations of the Arab spring. Second, one's control over unemployment is not an important factor for the older generation. This is a critical finding indicating that the youth do care about unemployment more than older Jordanians and the youth thinks that the outside forces are influential in one's ability to find a job. So, for the youth it is the system (economy, political instability, foreign

affairs or forces, etc) but not the individual *per se*. Finally, those who are Sunni (a marginal effect of .47) and who practice daily prayers (a marginal effect of .17) are significantly less likely to prefer democracy to any other type of government. These effects are the most powerful ones among all indicators and being a Sunni almost takes away half of the probability of supporting a democratic government for the older group in Jordan. We find these results quite important and note that for the younger people we did not find the effect of religion in the probability of choosing democracy over any other type of government.

Lebanon

For young people in Lebanon, we find that those who are not excited about the Arab Spring demonstrations and that those who prefer a democratic government to a strong leader would prefer a democratic system to any other governmental type. Moreover, we find that the more one thinks that unemployment is a factor of forces outside of one's control the less these young individuals would prefer democracy. This finding implies that the more things get individualistic for young Lebanese, the more they would prefer a democratic system. This is a contradictory finding against the Jordanian youth. For them, outside forces are critical in one's chances of finding a job and that it is not the individual's fault. But for the Lebanese youth this is the opposite. It seems that the Lebanese youth believes in individual responsibilities in finding a job and those who support this idea prefers a regime that could be other than democracy. The predicted probabilities are in line with these findings. Although not equal in coefficient size, opting for a democratic government generates a positive effect of .13 points whereas considering unemployment as a result of outside forces generates a negative effect of .11 points, on a 0-1 scale. In turn, these significant effects almost cancel each other out and only the reaction to Arab Spring really decrease one's likelihood of preferring a democratic government or not.

For the older group in Lebanon, our model shows that those who prefer a democratic government to a strong leader would prefer a democratic system. This is a similar finding to the Lebanese youth and probably unsurprising. Other than this effect, there seems to be no significant influences.

Palestinian Territories

For the young people in the Palestinian Territories, similar to Jordan, we see that those who think that demonstrations held during the Arab Spring would promote further democracy in the region, those who are excited about the demonstrations, and those who disagree with the argument that one's success in life is determined by forces outside his/her control are more likely to prefer democracy. These findings suggest that there is a positive evaluation of the Arab Spring in the Palestinian Territories. Interestingly, unemployed young people would not prefer democracy to any other political system, which would suggest that for the Palestinian unemployed youth a democratic government is not a priority. Considering the level of unemployment and events in the Palestinian Territories a democratic government does not seem to provide the solutions needed for the region. Moreover, young females (compared to young men) and young individuals (compared to the those above 30) who consider themselves as Sunni are more likely to prefer a democratic government to another one. The highest contribution of predicted probability (an effect of .19, almost one fifth of the scale) comes from the variable indicating whether the respondent is Sunni or not.

For those Palestinians older than 30 years of age, we see different situation. They think that having a democratic government as opposed to a strong leader is an important reason to prefer democracy, which was not a factor for the youth. However, preferring a good democracy to a strong economy is not necessarily better to prefer a democratic government (a negative marginal probability effect of .10). This finding would bolster the previous one for the Palestinian youth that economy is critically important for the Palestinians. So, it is not the evaluations about the leader, but rather preferences on a strong economy and a democratic government are principal components of a 30 years of age or older Palestinian's preference for a democratic government over any other regime type. The other significant effect was one's level of excitement as a reaction to the Arab Spring. As one's excitement increases, s/he is 10% more likely to prefer a democratic government to any other governmental type.

Turkey

Finally, for the Turkish youth, we see that those who prefer a democratic government to a strong leader would prefer a democratic system as well as those who prioritize good democracy to strong economy. These two factors seem to significantly increase the Turkish youth's interest in choosing democracy over any other type of government. If one were to choose a democratic government to a strong leader and a good democracy to a strong economy, s/he would be 40% more likely to prefer a democratic government to any other type. Also, we find that as the youth gets more satisfied with the current status of the country, they would prefer a democratic government. There is however a different result for the older generation. Even though those older than 30 years of age prefer good democracy to a strong economy (approximately a marginal effect of .20), there are two factors decreasing this probability. The more one believes that unemployment and success in life are related to factors of outside forces, the more s/he is likely to oppose a democratic government. It seems that for the older generation people take unemployment and success in life individually. As people become individualistic and find themselves responsible for not finding a job and for not being successful in life, they turn out to prefer governmental systems other than democracy. These two factors together decrease one's probability of preferring a democratic government by almost .20, one fifth of total probability.

<<< Place Table 1 about here >>>

Importance of Democratic Norms

In this part of the paper, we will delve into how the generations perceive democracy and what is most important for them with respect to democracy. The Gallup questionnaire included a number of questions with respect to how one would define democracy. Each item asked the respondent to tell how important people can openly say what they think and can criticize the government, people choose their leaders in free elections, the economy is prospering, women have the same rights as men, political stability, and people of all faiths can practice their religion freely is in a democracy. All these items seem to measure the same underlying construct of what democracy is for a person and these items scaled well together in the respective country ($\alpha_{\text{Lebanon}} = .71$; $\alpha_{\text{Palestinian Territories}} = .72$; $\alpha_{\text{Turkey}} = .84$).² So, we constructed a single

² Unfortunately these questions were not asked in Egypt. Also, these six items did not scale well together ($\alpha < .2$) in Jordan. In turn, we weren't able to create a single item measuring the underlying construct of democracy in Jordan and excluded this sample in this section.

measure taking the arithmetic mean of these seven items that includes six categories ranging from not at all important (1) to very important (4). Because multinomial logit would not be interpretable with six categories and because there is enough response variance across the countries we opted for conducting an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression.

Lebanon

For the youth in Lebanon we find that those who prefer good democracy to a strong economy indicate that democratic norms are more important for a country. In contrast, within the same group, those who are dissatisfied with how things are going in the country and who practice their religion strongly are less likely to find these norms as important in a democracy. So, it seems that attitudes on the track of the country and religion practice do have a dampening effect in finding these norms as a valid part of a democratic regime, at least for the Lebanese youth. For those older than 30 in Lebanon, we find the same results with respect to the positive effect of preferring good democracy to a strong economy and the negative effect of dissatisfaction with how things go in the country. It seems that among the youth, the religious practice has a downturn effect in the evaluation of what democratic norms really require.

Palestinian Territories

For the youth in the Palestinian Territories, we find that higher negative reactions toward the Arab Spring and the belief that the Arab Spring would lead to democracies equally and significantly decrease one's interest to find certain democratic norms as important. It seems that the more one gets excited for the Arab Spring demonstrations, the more s/he would value the seven items as important. Yet, those who believe that the Arab Spring demonstrations would lead to democratic government in the region are much less likely to find the democratic norms as important for a democracy. So, it seems that there is a different understanding of democracy for the Palestinian youth. Moreover, those who think that success in life is a result of outside forces are less likely to find the democratic norms as important. Finally, although weakly significant religious practice seems to increase one's level of importance associated with the democratic norms. We find somewhat different results for those older than 30 years of age living in the Palestinian Territories. First, those who think that success is determined by outside forces devalue the democratic norms as important. The distinct and interesting results are that those who chose a democratic government over a strong leader find the democratic norms as very important and necessary to build a democracy. This finding shows that the preference of democratic government over a leader is critical for the older generation in Palestinian public. Second, we see that those excited from the Arab Spring revolts find the democratic norms as less important. Third, unemployed individuals over 30 find the democratic norms as very important compared to the employed, holding other variables at their mean values. There is telltale evidence that the structural issues related to democracy are more important for the older generation compared to the youth.

Turkey

For the youth in Turkey we find almost a totally different result. First, as it would be expected choosing good democracy over a strong leader makes one to value the democratic norms more. Second, females and those who are Sunni are much less likely to value the same norms as important. Young female individuals do not find the democratic norms as important

even though one of the items in the battery specifically asked whether women should have the same rights as men in a democracy. So, in fact, young females (compared to young men) do not find that the six important aspects of democracy as important. Although barely statistically significant, those who are Sunni (the large majority of the Turkish public) do not think that the democratic norms are all that important. These results compared to the older generation we find a totally different situation. First, gender or evaluations over democratic government and good democracy do not have an effect. Rather, those who are less excited about the Arab Spring demonstrations and those who think that these revolts would end up in democratic regimes in the region are in fact more likely to indicate the democratic norms as important. Second, and stronger than the youth, Sunni Turks (older than 30) are much less likely to find the democratic norms as important.

Across all three countries, we see that there are major differences between the generations. The youth has different priorities and obviously a different understanding of democracy compared to the older. Also, across the countries we might argue that the understanding of democracy (defined as the importance given to six items) is in fact different from each other.

<<< Place Table 2 about here >>>

Attributing Responsibility on Unemployment

The aim for this section is to explore how young and older generations attribute responsibility for one's unemployment. The dependent variable is coded (0) if one indicates that it is mostly the individual's own fault that s/he is unemployed and (1) if one indicates that is mostly because of forces outside one's control. The important point for this item is that the question was asked for the people in our country in general who do not have a job rather than asking the employment status of the respondent. This variable is critical to understand whether there is any generational gap with respect to the determinants of unemployment between those below 30 and above 30 years of age.

Because this question is not asked in Egypt we are unable to conduct our models on unemployment. Also, in the following analyses we included an additional relevant variable on economic prospects ranging from (1) the economic conditions in the country would worsen in the next 12 months to (5) economic conditions in the country would improve a lot in the next 12 months. We believe that considering the models on unemployment, this variable could deliver interesting findings.

Jordan

For the young people in Jordan, we find a number of interesting results. First, for those who choose democratic government to a strong leader, who prefer good democracy to good economy, and who believe that success in life is out of one's control, the probability of attributing one's unemployment to outside forces is much lower. In turn, one who prefers a strong leader and a strong economy, and who believes that success in life is an individualistic phenomenon, is much more likely to attribute responsibility to his/herself rather than outside forces. These young Jordanians are much more likely to find themselves responsible for not being able to find a job. Among these young people we also see that females are less likely to

think that outside forces are influential in one's chances to be employed. The predicted probabilities show that the largest effect comes from the gender dummy. If the respondent is a female, she is .19 (almost one fifth of probability) less likely to attribute the responsibility of unemployment to outside forces. Almost at equal probabilities, those who prefer a democratic government (a marginal effect of .16) and a good democracy (a marginal effect of .13) are significantly less likely to blame attribution to outside forces.

For the older generation, we see somewhat similar findings. First, those who prefer a strong leader and a strong economy think that unemployment is an individual issue and outside forces are less likely to influence one's ability to get employed. Different from the youth, those who believe that the Arab Spring would generate democratic governments in the region are less likely to attribute responsibility to outside forces for one's unemployment. That is, belief that the social-based uprising in the region would not produce democracies relates to one's responsibility of finding a job. Second, those who are satisfied with the current conditions in Jordan and who think that the economic prospects in the country for the next 12 months are positive (both of which are systemic considerations) are more likely to attribute one's unemployment to outside forces. It seems that once a person maintains a "rosy" picture of the current economic and general track of the country, s/he would be more likely to think of the outside forces for one's unemployment. Finally, the dummy variable for the Sunni predicts a significant decrease of likelihood for attributing blame to outside forces on unemployment. Those who are Sunni in Jordan are 38% (more than one third of the scale) less likely to blame outside forces on unemployment, or to attribute responsibility to the individuals that are unemployed. In contrast, those who are satisfied with the current status of the country are 20% more likely to attribute the blame to the general system but not themselves.

Lebanon

For the Lebanese youth we find that positive reactions to the Arab Spring and preference of democratic government over a strong leader (a marginal effect of .13 points) make one to support the argument that unemployment is affected by outside forces and it is not in one's ability to solve it. This was the significant indicator for the Lebanese youth about their stand on this issue. Attribution of responsibility on unemployment for the older generation in Lebanon seems that it is one's evaluation of success and religious practice. With respect to the former matter, even if one thinks that success in life is a result of outside forces that person's attribution of responsibility on unemployment is not toward the outside forces. In contrast, the more one practices religion during the day, the more s/he is more likely to think that it is the outside forces that affects one's ability to find a job in Lebanon. But the youth who practices religion thinks differently. For the practicing youth, it is the individual who is responsible for finding a job in Lebanon.

Palestinian Territories

For the young people in the Palestinian territories, we find that preferring a good democracy to a strong leader is the single most important factor to think that one's unemployment is a result of outside forces. The marginal effect of this variable is .15 points and this variable alone significantly increases one's attribution on unemployment. For those who think that the economic prospects for the next year is positive, the attribution of responsibility of unemployment is toward the outside forces. For the older group, we find the same results with a

significant effect of the variable, 25% higher likelihood to blame the outside forces on unemployment. We in turn conclude that there are not major differences across age groups in the Palestinian Territories on the attributing responsibility on unemployment. The important finding for the Palestinian territories is that there is no attribution to individual effects for unemployment. It seems that the Palestinians are more looking at the structural effects such as the government's performance, economic prospects, embargo, and other difficulties imposed to the country rather than questioning themselves for unemployment.

Turkey

For the young people in Turkey we find that opting for a good democracy to a strong leader, believing that success in life is a result of outside forces, and satisfaction with the current conditions in the country all significantly decrease one's probability of attributing one's unemployment to outside forces. In other words, the more one opts for strong economy, thinks that success is an individual phenomenon, and is dissatisfied with the current conditions in the country, the more that person would attribute the unemployment issue to the individuals but not outside forces such as national or global economy, or any other factor. Predicted probabilities reveal that each one of these three factors approximately decrease one's likelihood of attributing blame to outside forces by 16%. In total, 48% of a young Turk's likelihood of attributing blame to individual versus outside forces on unemployment comes from these three questions.

For the older generation we find a similar result (as for the youth) with respect to the belief of success in life as a result of outside forces but not individual performance (a marginal decreasing effect of .12). More interestingly, we find that the worse the things get economically in the country in the next 12 months and the more the person chooses a strong leader to a democratic government, the lower the possibility would be for the respondent to argue that outside forces influence one's chances of getting employed in the public at large. The total effect of these two variables are on one's probability of not attributing blame to the outside forces is .24. We find similar results for the Jordanian group (older than 30) but a totally different one for the Palestinian Territories. There is one final note with respect to the older generation in Turkey. Women are much more likely to think that unemployment is a result of outside forces than males. This is the only indicator that increases one's likelihood (by .22 points, the largest among all indicators in the model) of attributing responsibility to outside forces for one's unemployment. There is no easy answer as to why women would be more likely to do so, but it could be probably due to the disadvantages that women face in the work force. They are probably under the social and perhaps religious forces that would make it more difficult for them to obtain a job.

<<< Place Table 3 about here >>>

These results are quite interesting and supportive of our basic intuition that there would be generational differences in the perception of democracy and blame attribution with respect to unemployment. It is clear that the youth want democracy more so than the older generation, which would make them more active and politically involved. We believe that this would be a confirmation of the "youth bulge" hypothesis. Besides, there are major differences with respect to the expectations from the government across the generations and the countries in the region.

An important note: Endogeneity

Our analysis in this paper does not predict a causal association among the variables of interest. Our goal is to depict the indicators of critical concepts of democracy and economic responsibility in some of the MENA countries. Both of these concepts are constructs that should be more or less equal across the states so a general analysis is valid. That is, the definition of democracy shall not vary too much from country to country, particularly with respect to human rights, freedom of the media, roles of the government, and so forth. However, our evaluation does not aim to make any causal inferences among the variables. In particular, we only aim to show associations between our variables. Moreover, the statistical models (OLS and logistic regression) that we use cannot make any causal associations and they are rather correlations. We are therefore able to show that as an independent variable's value changes from one level to another we can predict a unit of change (or a change of the probability) in the dependent variable. But this inference is not causal and only associational.

Conclusion

We have a number of conclusions for this paper: First, albeit common history, religion, social understandings, and more-or-less political norms, we do find clear differences across the countries that we analyze in this paper. For each one of the five countries that we analyze, we find different indicators of why one prefers a democratic government, how one defines democratic norms, and how one attributes responsibility with respect to unemployment.

Second, we find clear differences between the two groups, those below and above 30 years of age. Depending on the nature of interest, we see that the youth thinks and behaves different from those older than 30. For instance preferring a democratic government to any other type, we see some similarities between the two groups. However, there are also clear differences particularly with respect to the understanding of structural issues. It seems that the older group finds major tradeoffs (between economy and democracy or leader and government) important for them. Yet, the youth has a personification process and takes other factors that define themselves. These differences are much clearer in defining the importance of democratic rights and norms. Also, the reaction to Arab Spring demonstrations are influential in the older generation's attitudes but not for the youth. For the youth, religious practice and good democracy (as opposed to a strong economy) are influential in their decisions. For attributing responsibility on unemployment, we see that the youth takes it personally and questions him/herself when it comes to finding a job, particularly in Jordan and Turkey.

Finally, our goal of exploring the behavioral underpinnings of the youth with respect to democracy and unemployment has revealed a number of interesting results. Although the dataset is not the best one can find to delve into detailed analysis of why one makes certain decisions, we certainly can depict a portion of the associations amongst the indicators. In that respect, the micro-foundations of why youth perceives democracy and economy differently should be further analyzed in future research.

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Table 1: Predicting Preferences on Democracy

<i>Variables</i>	Egypt		Jordan		Lebanon		Palestinian Territories		Turkey	
	18-30	30+	18-30	30+	18-30	30+	18-30	30+	18-30	30+
Years of Age										
Reaction to Arab Spring (1-4)	-	-	-.11 (.23)	-.55*** (.15)	.79*** (.28)	-.19 (.31)	-.72*** (.24)	-.46** (.20)	-.15 (.20)	.04 (.16)
Arab Spring leading democracies (0-1)	-	-	.96** (.45)	-.54 (.36)	.49 (.96)	-1.00 (.79)	.58** (.24)	.39 (.35)	-.26 (.42)	.23 (.28)
Strong Leader (0) vs. Democratic Government (1)	.18 (.29)	.20 (.24)	1.75*** (.45)	.77*** (.29)	1.36*** (.37)	1.00*** (.37)	.47 (.30)	.59** (.28)	1.15*** (.37)	.10 (.30)
Strong Economy (0) vs. Good Democracy (1)	.66** (.28)	.64*** (.21)	-.92** (.40)	-.59** (.29)	.32 (.45)	.43 (.37)	.03 (.18)	-.48** (.23)	1.25*** (.31)	1.00*** (.32)
Unemployment as a result of Outside Forces (0-1)	-	-	1.33*** (.40)	.28 (.29)	-1.21** (.60)	-.03 (.47)	-.18 (.28)	-.37 (.47)	-.58 (.45)	-.72** (.30)
Success as a result of Outside Forces (0-1)	.02 (.13)	.13 (.09)	.48*** (.17)	.62*** (.13)	-.08 (.17)	.06 (.14)	.20** (.09)	-.03 (.19)	-.36 (.21)	-.27* (.16)
Satisfaction with the current status of the country (0-1)	1.09*** (.28)	.93*** (.23)	.34 (.39)	-.07 (.29)	-.58 (.71)	-.54 (.60)	.06 (.47)	-.26 (.27)	.66* (.35)	-.11 (.31)
Female	.12 (.34)	.70** (.30)	.11 (.35)	-.17 (.34)	-.19 (.37)	.57 (.48)	.44* (.21)	.25 (.29)	-.21 (.47)	.07 (.41)
Sunni	-.50 (.39)	-.18 (.39)	1.01 (.76)	-2.38** (1.09)	.29 (.38)	.68 (.45)	.85* (.48)	.47 (.47)	1.54 (1.20)	dropped
Religious Practice (1-7)	-.24*** (.08)	-.33*** (.08)	.12 (.10)	-.86*** (.24)	.01 (.12)	.05 (.11)	.02 (.07)	-.06 (.07)	.07 (.08)	.01 (.06)
Unemployed	.66** (.34)	-.63** (.30)	-.35 (.40)	.01 (.35)	-.42 (.45)	-.47 (.42)	-.70*** (.19)	-.12 (.26)	-.00 (.45)	.35 (.34)
Constant	1.27* (.68)	1.86 (.61)	-3.91*** (1.54)	8.62*** (2.09)	.90 (1.47)	1.27 (1.35)	.08 (.54)	1.41** (.67)	-.61 (1.57)	1.16 (.65)
N	317	529	210	363	210	234	361	312	225	321
F-value	49.50	59.14	40.66	80.61	160.81	1.37	30.07	3.24	3.95	1.71
Prob> F	.000	.000	.000	.000	.061	.29	.000	.01	.000	.08

Note: Standard errors are reported in parentheses. * stands for $p < .1$, ** stands for $p < .05$, *** stands for $p < .01$

Table 2: Indicators of Democratic Norms

<i>Variables</i>	Lebanon		Palestinian Territories		Turkey	
	18-30	30+	18-30	30+	18-30	30+
Years of Age						
Reaction to Arab Spring (1-4)	-.02 (.04)	-.09 (.08)	-.09** (.04)	1.12** (.06)	-.03 (.03)	.09*** (.02)
Arab Spring leading democracies (0-1)	.11 (.09)	-.05 (.16)	-.16* (.08)	-.04 (.08)	.05 (.06)	.19*** (.06)
Strong Leader (0) vs. Democratic Government (1)	.05 (.03)	.01 (.05)	.07 (.05)	.16** (.07)	.10 (.07)	.01 (.05)
Strong Economy (0) vs. Good Democracy (1)	.08*** (.02)	.13*** (.05)	-.02 (.08)	.03 (.06)	.10* (.05)	.09 (.07)
Unemployment as a result of Outside Forces (0-1)	-.07 (.04)	.07 (.07)	0.02 (.07)	.08 (.08)	-.04 (.07)	-.04 (.05)
Success as a result of Outside Forces (0-1)	-.00 (.02)	-.03 (.03)	-.05** (.02)	-.04* (.02)	.01 (.04)	-.02 (.03)
Satisfaction with the current status of the country (0-1)	-.09* (.05)	-.35*** (.09)	.04 (.09)	-.04 (.08)	.02 (.04)	-.02 (.05)
Female	.03 (.03)	.06 (.06)	-.01 (.06)	-.04 (.08)	-.18*** (.07)	-.07 (.08)
Sunni	.03 (.02)	.08 (.09)	.01 (.06)	-.06 (.09)	-.15* (.08)	-.39*** (.07)
Religious Practice (1-7)	-.02*** (.00)	.01 (.01)	.03* (.01)	.02 (.01)	.02 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Unemployed	.04 (.04)	-.10 (.09)	.04 (.05)	.23*** (.07)	.06 (.16)	.05 (.06)
Constant	3.87*** (.13)	3.91*** (.28)	3.65*** (.19)	3.66*** (.15)	3.62*** (.16)	3.69*** (.13)
N	214	235	365	320	230	342
F-value	12.35	4.14	4.46	5.48	3.27	5.47
Prob> F	.218	.010	.056	.000	.000	.000

Note: Standard errors are reported in parentheses. * stands for $p < .1$, ** stands for $p < .05$, *** stands for $p < .01$

Table 3: Attributing Responsibility on Unemployment

<i>Variables</i>	Jordan		Lebanon		Palestinian Territories		Turkey	
	18-30	30+	18-30	30+	18-30	30+	18-30	30+
Years of Age								
Reaction to Arab Spring	-.15 (.25)	.15 (.16)	.35* (.18)	.31 (.23)	.14 (.13)	.18 (.26)	-.06 (.19)	.00 (.14)
Arab Spring leading democracies	-.69 (.48)	-86*** (.36)	.16 (.95)	.30 (.38)	.18 (.19)	.43 (.44)	-.62 (.38)	.07 (.26)
Economic Prospects for the next 12 months	-.04 (.16)	.25** (.12)	-.26 (.16)	-.15 (.15)	.20* (.11)	.20* (.10)	-.10 (.16)	-.39*** (.13)
Strong Leader vs. Democratic Government	-.77** (.39)	-.94*** (.27)	.89* (.43)	-.09 (.39)	.11 (.26)	.32 (.35)	-.59 (.39)	-.72*** (.28)
Strong Economy vs. Good Democracy	-.64* (.36)	-.66*** (.26)	-.15 (.17)	.20 (.34)	1.04** (.47)	1.47*** (.38)	-.84** (.35)	.28 (.30)
Success as a result of Outside Forces	-.35** (.17)	-.13 (.12)	.35 (.20)	-.29* (.17)	-.11 (.15)	.00 (.14)	-.78*** (.21)	-.56*** (.16)
Satisfaction with the current status of the country	.06 (.42)	.97*** (.28)	.05 (.62)	-.66 (.70)	-.59 (.47)	-.22 (.39)	-.75** (.36)	.29 (.31)
Female	-.92** (.37)	-.46 (.34)	.09 (.39)	-.16 (.30)	.13 (.30)	.43 (.37)	-.26 (.47)	.74*** (.27)
Sunni	dropped	-1.74** (.78)	.19 (.29)	-.73* (.39)	.19 (.70)	.37 (.57)	1.72 (1.71)	1.07 (.74)
Religious Practice	.09 (.10)	-.09 (.13)	-.10* (.05)	.18*** (.07)	.01 (.09)	.04 (.06)	-.04 (.09)	-.01 (.06)
Unemployed	-.36 (.40)	.15 (.35)	-.02 (.37)	.31 (.32)	.17 (.17)	.58 (.39)	.26 (.43)	-.00 (.27)
Constant	3.39*** (1.11)	3.42*** (1.32)	.59 (.87)	.91 (.94)	.06 (1.18)	-1.70 (1.07)	2.62 (1.65)	1.82 (.98)
N	194	364	211	234	359	317	223	326
F-value	30.65	92.13	5.74	3.04	10.90	8.12	3.11	4.21
Prob> F	.000	.000	.315	.034	.008	.000	.001	.000

Note: Standard errors are reported in parentheses. * stands for $p < .1$, ** stands for $p < .05$, *** stands for $p < .01$