Current Issues in Comparative Education

Volume 20, Issue 1
Fall 2017

Fall Open Issue
Fall 2017 Open Issue

3 Twenty Years of *Current Issues in Comparative Education*: An Editorial Introduction
Kevin A. Henderson

5 Teachers as Human Capital or Human Beings? USAID’s Perspective on Teachers
Mark Ginsburg

30 Unpacking Community Participation: A Gendered Perspective
Leva Rouhani

44 Educational Attainment and Egalitarian Attitudes Toward Women in the MENA Region: Insights from the Arab Barometer
Amy Auletto, Taeyeon Kim, and Rachel Marias

68 Education for International Mindedness: Life History Reflections on Schooling and the Shaping of a Cosmopolitan Outlook
Katie Wright and Emma Buchanan
CURRENT ISSUES IN COMPARATIVE EDUCATION

Volume 20, Issue 1 (Fall 2017)

Editor-in-Chief: Kevin A. Henderson
Editorial Board Secretary: Erika Kessler
Managing Senior Editor: Abbas Abbasov
Senior Editors: Sumita Ambasta, Mariel Halpern, Reaz Khan, Jungmin Kwon, Xiaoxin Lyu, Rachel McCain, Yvonne Thevenot, You Zhang
Editors: Kay Maria Colon-Motas, Cody Freeman, Julie Halterman, DooRhee Lee, Shengyuan Lu, Grace Na, Malloy Tryon
Publishing Chair: Soomin Park
Outreach co-Chairs: Douglas Ng, Tizoc Sanchez-Sanchez

Faculty Advisor: Oren Pizmony-Levy
International Advisory Board
Michael Apple, Mark Bray, Michael Cross, Suzanne Grant Lewis, Noel McGinn, Gary Natriello, Gita Steiner-Khamisi, Frances Vavrus, Andria Wisler

Copyright
Unless otherwise noted, copyrights for the texts which comprise all issues of Current Issues in Comparative Education (CICE) are held by the journal. The compilation as a whole is Copyright © by Current Issues in Comparative Education, all rights reserved. Items published by CICE may be freely shared among individuals, but they may not be republished in any medium without express written consent from the author(s) and advance notification of the CICE editorial board.

CICE holds exclusive rights in respect to electronic publication and dissemination. The journal may not be posted or in anyway mirrored on the Internet except at the official publication site at Teachers College, Columbia University. CICE reserves the right to amend or change this copyright policy. For the most current version of this copyright policy, please contact cice@tc.columbia.edu. Questions about the journal’s copyright policy should be directed to the Editorial Board.

Disclaimer
The opinions and ideas expressed in the CICE are solely those held by the authors and are not necessarily shared by the editors of the Journal. Teachers College, Columbia University (CU) as a publisher makes no warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied, for information on its CICE Web site or in any issue of CICE, which are provided on an “as is” basis. Teachers College, CU does not assume and hereby disclaim any liability to any party for any loss or damage resulting from the use of information on its CICE Web site or in any issue of CICE.
Acknowledgments
Thank you to our external reviewers for providing excellent professional reviews: Jeremy Monk, Yibing Zheng; thank you Oren for giving guidance and continued support.

Cover Design
Soomin Park and Reaz Khan
Twenty Years of *Current Issues in Comparative Education*: An Editorial Introduction

Kevin A. Henderson

*Teachers College, Columbia University*

In the twenty years since it’s founding, *Current Issues in Comparative Education* (CICE) has become a recognized and respected source for debate in the field of comparative and international education. CICE has welcomed contributions from many on the leading edge of knowledge production, and has continued to serve as unique platform, critiquing the foundations of comparative and international education, with an eye towards shifts in the field and globally.

In its inaugural issue (1998), the CICE editorial board opened with attention to the breathtaking pace of change across the globe at the close of the twentieth century. Now nearly two decades into the twenty first century, we are at the helm of a new set of shifts whose impacts are felt with increasingly seismic effect. On the technological front, within the twenty years since the creation of CICE, accelerated computing power and innovative disruption have become the norm, the effects of which have shifted established industries, created new academic fields, and dislocated established ways of living and working (Henderson, 2017; Henderson et al., 2017). The manner in which people around the world interact with state, economic, and social institutions has also vastly changed. Services, routine commercial activities, and even dissent, are increasingly mediated by technology platforms, raising new questions as to privacy expectations and surveillance overreach. [1]

Geopolitically, shifts in play since the end of the Soviet era positioned the United States as the world’s sole superpower, or, in the eyes of some, a hyperpower (Cohen, 2004; Gulddal, 2007; Gott, & Cho, 2012) [2]. However, in the period since then, the world has witnessed the economic ascendency of China, the movement of investment, economic power, and capital growth to Asia, and a gradual shift in international student global mobility as traditionally outbound nations reorient as inbound nations (Jon, Lee, & Byun, 2014) [3].

While we’ve also witnessed a shift in international awareness of climate change, and recognition of its devastating consequences, there has likewise been sustained resistance toward mitigation at a global scale. Worldwide, deaths related to climate change are believed to average over 400,000 per year, and while advances have been made (see: The Paris Agreement) the recent rise of populism, protectionism, and complacency may threaten the many gains made over the last twenty years (Orr, 2017; Roth, 2017) [4].

Amidst such dramatic change, contributors to the current issue of *Current issues in Comparative Education*, focus on several topics related to the changing conversation on comparative education worldwide, in many instances examining the role of the individual among shifting state, cultural, or educational institutions. *Mark Ginsburg*
Henderson

offers critical analysis of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and its policies with regard to education strategy. Ginsburg argues that it is USAID’s longstanding practice to identify teachers as human capital components rather than implementers with valuable contributors to educational policy.

Similarly, Leva Rouhani explores community education systems in sub-Saharan Africa, which are designed to create space for egalitarian decision-making, but in effect, often reproduce hierarchical power dynamics, at the “community-level”. Amy Auletto, Tayeon Kim, and Rachel Marias, take a wide view, examining the relationship between educational attainment and gender equity across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), arguing that education can have a quantifiable effect on the development of egalitarian attitudes within the MENA region. In closing, Katie Wright and Emma Buchanan take a longitudinal approach to what they term as “international mindedness”, exploring the effects of the International Baccalaureate (IB) on the life trajectory and outlook of participants from the 1970s to the 2010s.

This year, CICE proudly celebrates its twentieth year in publication, highlighting this milestone with a series of commemorative events and activities. We’re grateful to have reached this stage and for the extraordinary contributions of many wonderful authors throughout the years. This issue, and those preceding, would not be possible without the dedicated contributions of the editorial board, external reviewers, and volunteer staff of CICE which, year on year, allow this publication to remain as it began, a practitioner and student-led resource. Your efforts have allowed CICE to be a vital voice within the field of comparative and international education.

Kevin A. Henderson is a doctoral student in International Policy and Planning at Teachers College, Columbia University and Editor-in-Chief for Current Issues in Comparative Education.

Notes
[1] The effect of technological disruption within higher education will be explored in greater detail in the Spring 2018 Special Issue.
References


Teachers as Human Capital or Human Beings?
USAID’s Perspective on Teachers

Mark Ginsburg
University of Maryland &
Universidad de Ciencias Pedagogicas Enrique José Varona (Visiting Professor)

This article analyzes three USAID education strategy documents (1998, 2005, and 2011) as well as USAID’s requests for proposals for three projects to assess how teachers are represented. The main findings indicate that USAID education strategy documents a) treat teachers as human capital, a human resource input, rather than as human beings and b) characterize teachers as implementers of policy rather than as key stakeholders who should also be involved in dialogue and decision making about educational policy at various levels of the system. These findings are compared with those resulting from a similar analysis of World Bank education strategy documents.

Introduction
On 25 September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 17 proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They included “Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.” Associated with Goal 4 were seven indicators and three means of implementation, including “4c: By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states” (UN, 2015).

Among the many sources contributing to framing the SDGs was the document produced at the World Education Forum 2015, held in Incheon, Republic of Korea, 22-25 May 2015. This document, Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action: Towards Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Lifeline Learning for All, presents as target 4c the words that were included in the above-quoted SDG#4 means of implementation, elaborating that:

Teachers are the key to achieving all of the Education 2030 agenda ... As teachers are a fundamental condition for guaranteeing quality education, teachers and educators should be empowered, adequately recruited and remunerated, motivated, professionally qualified, and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems. (UNESCO et al., 2015, p. 21)

Moreover, Education 2030, articulates that ‘teachers and educators, and their organizations, are crucial partners in their own right and should be engaged at all stages
of policy-making, planning, implementation and monitoring” (UNESCO et al., 2015, p. 24).

This article explores what key strategy documents of the Government of the United States and, more specifically, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), focus on in terms of teacher policies. I report on a content analysis of the following documents, which present the Agencies’ core strategies in the education sector from the late 1990s:

- USAID (2005): Improving Lives through Learning: USAID Education Strategy; and

While the USAID documents analyzed in this article were published years before the SDGs were adopted in 2015, global discourses on teacher policies and teachers’ role date back at least to the 1960s (e.g., ILO & UNESCO, 1966). Thus, it seems reasonable to analyze the teacher policies identified in USAID strategy documents.

Components of Teacher Policy

As stated in the Teacher Policy Development Guide (International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All, 2015, pp. 13-14), “a holistic, national teacher policy, adequately resourced and implemented with the necessary political will and administrative skill, is the best investment in learners’ education that a country can make.” According to this Guide, a comprehensive teacher policy should address nine key dimensions:

- Recruitment and retention,
- Education (initial and continuing),
- Deployment,
- Career structures/paths,
- Employment and working conditions,
- Rewards and Remuneration,
- Standards,
- School governance, and
- Accountability. (International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All, 2015, p. 20)

In the analysis presented in this article, I regroup some of these dimensions, in part to enable a comparison with findings based on an analysis of the following World Bank documents (Ginsburg, 2012): a) Priorities and Strategies for Education: A World Bank Review (World Bank, 1995), b) Education Sector Strategy (World Bank, 1999), and c) Learning for All: Investing in People’s knowledge and Skills to Promote Development (World Bank, 2011). Thus, I categorized each reference to teacher and teaching in the three USAID documents into one of the following teacher policy-related areas:
• **Human resource for education/student learning** (input, recruitment, deployment, retention, attendance/absenteeism, student-teacher ratio, qualified in terms of possessing requisite knowledge and skills)

• **Employee** (issues of hiring/firing, salary, benefits, working conditions, career structure, standards, supervision, assessment/accountability)

• **Classroom-level actor** (i.e., engaged in instruction, lesson planning, student assessment, and other relations with students)

• **School staff member** (i.e., engaged in school governance and relations with the community)

• **Professional organization/union members** (i.e., engaged in education system governance, social/policy dialogue, collective bargaining, strike action)

• **Recipient of preservice education/training**

• **Recipient of inservice education/training**

• **Learner/Inquirer**

---

**Teachers as Human Resource Input**

The International Task Force on Teachers for Education for All (EFA) (2015, p. 13) suggests that one of the main reasons that “teachers and teaching should be at the top of policy-makers’ concerns” is because “teachers are one of the largest components of a nation’s labour force, the principal human resource in any education system, and the largest single financial component of any education authority’s budget …” Indeed, based on my analysis of World Bank education sector strategy documents (World Bank, 1995, 1999, and 2011), I found a strong emphasis on teachers as human capital (i.e., “the belief that the role of workers in production is similar to the role of machinery and other forces of production” [Johnson, 2000, p. 46; see also Becker, 1993]) or as a human resource input that is required for the process of producing student learning outcomes (Ginsburg, 2012). For instance, in the excerpt below, note how policies related to teachers are listed along with financial capital and buildings (a form of fixed capital):

> An education system has several core policy domains that … include: a) … laws, rules, and regulations that determine how teachers are recruited, deployed, paid, and managed; b) how fiscal resources are allocated and spent; and c) how schools … are established and supervised … (World Bank, 2011, p. 17, emphasis added).

Besides a general focus on teachers as a human resource input, this category includes attention to recruitment, deployment, and retention of teachers as a resource as well as the issue of whether the resource is present at or absent from work. In addition, this category gives attention to the “quality” of the human resource input, notably the qualifications or knowledge and skills that teachers possess.

**Teachers as Employees**

Closely connected to the notion of teachers as a human resource input is the idea of teachers as employees. That is, to insert this human resource into the education system
teachers have to be hired (and perhaps fired), generally be paid some salary, receive some fringe benefits, be provided with conditions of work. The employee category also includes attention to the possibility of a career structure, standards of practice, as well as supervision and assessment of their work. For instance, the International Task Force on Teachers for EFA (2015) explains that:

in addition to base pay or basic salary, which may include retirement pension and social security provisions, other financial incentives forming part of teachers’ reward packages include allowances for particular responsibilities, family benefits, housing provision or subsidies, transport subsidies and financial contributions towards further training and CPD (p. 24).

**Teachers as Classroom-Level Actors**

A primary role of teachers involves their activities undertaken in classrooms or other learning spaces in relation to students. These activities include curriculum decision-making and lesson planning, instructional materials development or selection, pedagogy or instruction, class organization or discipline, and student evaluation or assessment (Ginsburg et al., 1995). For instance, in its Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), OECD (2014, p. 28) “defines a teacher as one whose primary or major activity in the school is student instruction, involving the delivery of lessons to students.” And certainly, such classroom roles are critical. For instance, the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendations Concerning the Status of Teachers argues that the, “advance in education depends on … the human, pedagogical, and technical qualities of individual teachers” (ILO & UNESCO, 1966, p. 6; see also Craig et al., 1998; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Good et al., 2009; Leu & Ginsburg, 2011; Leu & Price-Rom, 2006; Mulkeen, 2010; OECD, 2005; Schwille & Dembélé, 2007; UNESCO, 2004; World Bank Education Team, 2011).

**Teachers as School Staff Members**

One can also identify broader, leadership functions that teachers perform in their schools. For instance, Harrison and Killion (2007, pp. 74-77) note the following ten “ways teachers can contribute to their schools’ success,” working in relation to colleagues: resource provider, instructional specialist, curriculum specialist, classroom supporter, learning facilitator, mentor, school leader, data coach, catalyst for change, and learner. And, according to OECD (2011, p. 56), “it is also important that teacher engagement occurs at the school level, with “teachers taking responsibility for local change as members of ‘learning communities.””

**Teachers as Professional Association/Union Members**

Furthermore, teachers’ roles also include functions beyond the school. To illustrate, the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendations Concerning the Status of Teachers notes, “teachers’ organizations should be recognized as a force which can contribute greatly to education advance and which therefore should be associated with the determination of educational policy” (ILO & UNESCO, 1966, ¶9). And the World Bank Education Team explains, “teacher organizations may influence not only teachers’ working conditions, but also
important education policy decisions about the curriculum, length of compulsory education, classroom sizes, school finances and organization, etc” (2011, p. 12). Additionally, according to survey research conducted in Denmark, Hong Kong, Macedonia, the Netherlands, Turkey, and the United States, teachers “indicate overwhelmingly that to have influence on the direction of policy at the level of the system is of the utmost importance” (Bangs & Frost, 2012, p. 15; see also Bangs & MacBeath, 2012; Bascia and Rottman, 2011; Bourgonje, undated; Day et al., 2007; Education International, 2007; Ginsburg, 2016; OECD, 2005 and 2011; Robertson, 2013; Williams and Cummins, 2008) [1][2]. Teachers’ involvement in policy or social dialogue is not only important because of the professional practice-based insights they can bring to the table, but also because such participation will heighten teachers’ commitment to implementing the reforms. As explained in an OECD (2005, p. 51) document, “only reforms that are successfully implemented in classrooms can be expected to be effective. Teacher engagement in the development and implementation of educational reform is therefore crucial, and school reform will not work unless it is supported from the bottom up” (see also Altinyelken and Verger, 2013; Ginsburg, 2016; International Taskforce on Teachers for Education For All, 2014).

Teachers as Recipients of Preservice and Inservice Education

Learning to be a teacher is a long-term process, which includes different stages: a) the apprenticeship of observation, b) formal preservice education, c) induction, and d) continuing professional development or inservice education. According to Schwille and Dembélé (2007):

The continuum of teacher learning begins with apprenticeship of observation … [Lortie, 1975], which refers to what teachers learn about teaching from observing their earlier teachers during their own schooling at primary, secondary or general higher education levels. … The next phase … is the formal preservice phase – the initial phase that we ordinarily think of first when we think of teacher education. … [The next phase is] induction, the formal or informal process by which beginning practicing teachers adapt to and learn about their roles as teachers. … [The last] phase of teacher learning follows and continues to the end of the teaching career. This is the phase of continuing professional development [or inservice education] (pp. 29-33). (see also Ginsburg, 2013; Hardman et al., 2011; International Taskforce on Teachers for Education For All, 2014; Leu & Ginsburg, 2011; OECD, 2005)

While the main focus of preservice and inservice teacher education programs tends to be on preparing teachers for the classroom roles, it is also possible for such programs to focus on developing teachers’ knowledge, skills, and commitment to perform roles at the school level as well as to carry out their roles as members of a professional association or union, including participating in policy or social dialogue (Ginsburg, 2016). In my analysis of USAID strategy documents in this article distinguish references to teachers receiving or needing to receive preservice versus inservice education. I did
not anticipate any references to the apprenticeship of observation stage, and I opted to categorize any references to induction processes as part of inservice teacher education.

**Teachers as Learners/Inquirers**

My analysis of World Bank education strategy documents revealed that there were very few references to teachers as learners/inquirers in the 1995 and 1999 documents and not a single reference to teachers as learners/inquirers in the 2011 strategy (see Ginsburg, 2012). This is despite the fact that the 2011 document is entitled *Learning for All* (World Bank, 2011). In my analysis of World Bank documents as well as in my analysis of USAID documents here I distinguish the category of teachers as learners/inquirers from the categories of teachers as recipients of preservice education and teachers as recipients of inservice education, even though those participating in such programs likely learn things. I coded text from documents in one of the two teacher education categories when the text referred to the need to or efforts to organize preservice or inservice programs, without any explicit attention to how teachers would engage in learning/inquiring activities. To clarify, the following is one of the few statements in a World Bank document that was categorized as identifying teachers as learners/inquirers: “Clusters of schools, sometimes called nucleos or school learning cells, facilitate professional interaction among teachers and decision-making about instruction, … [which] may be more important than decision-making authority for [teacher] motivation and learning” (World Bank, 1995, pp. 129-30).

I decided to retain the learner/inquirer category for the analysis of USAID strategy documents in part because two of these documents included “learning” in their titles: *Improving Lives through Learning* (USAID, 2005) and *Education Opportunity through Learning* (USAID, 2011). I also included the learner/inquirer category because considerable attention has been paid to such issues in the education and teacher education literature.

For example, the ideas Peter Senge presented in his book, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (Senge, 1990), caught the imagination of leaders in education as well as business and other professional fields. And Senge’s subsequent publication, *Schools that Learn: A Fifth Discipline Fieldbook* (2000), only increased the influence of his ideas on educators and teacher educators. As Westheimer (2008) recounts, Senge initially “urged corporate America to consider developing ‘learning organizations’” (p. 768) and then encouraged education reformers to “imagine a successful school-based learning community … [as] a meeting ground for learning – dedicated to the idea that all those involved with it, individually and together, will be continually enhancing and expanding their awareness and capabilities” (p. 762). Furthermore, in his chapter on “Learning among Colleagues” in the *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*, Westheimer (2008, p. 756) argues – and provides evidence to support the claim – that “teachers cannot possibly create and sustain productive learning environments for students when no such conditions exist for teachers.” And Cochran-Smith and Demers (2010) elaborate the issues in their chapter on “Research and Teacher Learning: Taking an Inquiry Stance” in *Teachers as Learners: Critical Discourse on Challenges and Opportunities*.
A central aspect of teacher learning from an inquiry stance is learning in the company of ... new and experienced teachers as well as teacher educators and other partners .... In inquiry communities, everybody is regarded as a learner and a researcher rather than some people designated as the experts with all of the knowledge and others designated as being in need of that knowledge. Inquiry communities are designed to pose questions, gather and analyze data in order to make decisions about instruction and practice (p. 34).

**USAID as the Source of Teacher Policy Ideas of the U.S. Government**

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was established by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, legislation which was passed by the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, and based on proposals by John F. Kennedy’s administration. The Act “brought together several existing foreign assistance organizations and programs. Until then, there had never been a single agency charged with foreign economic [etc.] development” (USAID, 2017). Prior to the creation of USAID, the U.S.’s international develop programs had been overseen by the Office of Inter-American Affairs, created in 1940 to “provide technical assistance across Central and South America for economic stabilization, food supply, health, and sanitation;” the Technical Cooperation Administration, established within Department of State in 1950 to “provide technical knowledge to aid the growth of underdeveloped countries around the world;” and the International Cooperation Agency was created within State Department in 1955 to “deploy foreign aid and contain communism” (USAID, 2017).

As noted on the U.S. Diplomacy (2017) website:

USAID operates programs in nearly 100 countries divided into five geographic regions: Europe and Eurasia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and the Near East. From its headquarters in Washington, D.C., USAID works with more than 3,500 American companies and over 300 U.S.-based private voluntary organizations. USAID also partners closely with indigenous organizations, universities, international agencies, other U.S. agencies, and other governments. A trend towards heavy reliance on contractors to implement programs has been reversed [since 2008, during Barak Obama’s administration] as USAID has increased the relative size of its direct-hire staff.

According to McNiff (undated, p. 1), “USAID’s creation was based on two foreign assistance discourses: first, that economic development was a necessary step to alleviate poverty, spread democracy, solve gender issues, and expand markets ..., and second, that protecting national security interests during the 1960s Cold War tensions required greater foreign assistance dollars to defeat the Soviets in a battle for the developing world ...” It is also important to note, as a former USAID administrator, Natsios (2010) explains, USAID has been challenged to pursue its overall goals in the context of
accountability within a set of federal laws and regulations, which are monitored by compliance officers:

The compliance officers often clash with the technical program specialists over attempts to measure and account for everything and avoid risk. ... In practice, this means compromising good development practices, such as local ownership, a focus on institution building, decentralized decision making and long-term program planning horizons, to assure sustainability in order to reduce risk, improve efficiency (at least as it is defined by federal administrative practice), and ensure proper recordkeeping and documentation for every transaction (p. 3).

And, with respect to “international educational development,” according to A Sector Report on Lessons Learned, USAID:

has been a major contributor ... The Agency has ... constructed schools, helped strengthen managerial capabilities, donated equipment, and introduced reforms that have profoundly changed the character of formal education in some countries. It assisted both in expanding enrollment and in solving some of the problems inadvertently created by that expansion (Warren, 1984, pp. 1-2).


The Strategic Framework for Basic Education in Africa focuses on:

a group of countries where there is good news, where we see a transition of political systems towards more pluralistic and open societies, and where economic reforms are leading to growth ... The Framework ... is [also] applicable to countries emerging from crisis – when there is a reasonable expectation that they will move into [this] group” (USAID, 1998, p. 3).

The Strategic Framework, moreover, announces that:

USAID’s mission is to promote sustainable development, which the Agency defines as ‘economic and social growth that protects the resources of a host country; respects and safeguards the economic, cultural, and natural environment; creates opportunities for enterprises and incomes to grow; is nurtured by an enabling policy environment; and builds indigenous institutions that involve and empower the citizenry’ (USAID, 1995). Implicit in this mission is the need to provide the poorest countries and their neglected majorities (women, rural inhabitants, the
disadvantaged, and the vulnerable) the opportunity to participate in the process and enjoy the benefits of sustainable development. (USAID, 1998, p. 11)

The Strategic Framework then emphasizes that:

a vital strategy to accomplish this purpose is to assist host countries to provide, sustainably and with their own resources, quality basic education that ultimately reaches all children. Increasing equitable access to quality primary education and basic education skills is the central objective of USAID’s goal for human capacity development.” (USAID, 1998, p. 11)

USAID’s (2005) Education Strategy explains that the:

spotlight on development has illuminated the critical role of education. ... USAID thus includes education and training as part of its strategic efforts to promote economic prosperity and security; improve health, education, the environment, and other conditions for the global population; advance the growth of democracy and good governance; and minimize the human costs of displacement, conflict, and natural disaster (p. 1).

Thus, USAID’s overall goal in education is to help citizens of developing and transition countries gain the skills and knowledge they need to build and live in free and prosperous societies. USAID will focus its education programs on two broad but complementary objectives:

- Promoting equitable access to quality basic education. ... Basic education will continue to represent USAID’s main priority within education, in terms of resources and program effort.
- Beyond basic education: enhancing knowledge and skills for productivity. USAID will also invest in selected areas of education beyond basic education, including focused efforts in workforce development and in higher education. (USAID, 2005, p. 7)

USAID’s (2011) Education Strategy:

is premised on the development hypothesis that education is both foundational to human development and critically linked to broad based economic growth and democratic governance. ... Education helps ensure that growth is broad based and reaches the poorest. Through its impact on economic growth, education helps catalyze transitions to democracy and helps preserve robust democratic governance. Education also helps improve health outcomes. Access to education is a crucial precondition to educational impact, but what matters most thereafter is the quality of education (p. 1).
The 2011 Education Strategy goes on to state that:

Based on projected resource availability, and on the policy principles above, USAID will pursue three global education goals:

Goal One: Improved reading skills for 100 million children in primary grades by 2015;

Goal Two: Improved ability of tertiary and workforce development programs to generate workforce skills relevant to a country’s development goals; and

Goal Three: Increased equitable access to education in crisis and conflict environments for 15 million learners by 2015. (p. 1)

Findings from the Content Analysis of Three USAID Strategy Documents

In this section, I first present the findings from the content analysis of the three USAID strategy documents (1998, 2005, 2011) and then present the findings from the content analysis of the teacher-focused objectives of three USAID programs (in Egypt, Pakistan, and Liberia).

While none of the three USAID education strategy documents mention teachers or teaching in the core statements presented above, I analyzed the full documents to see how frequently these two words were referenced and how such references could be categorized.

Table 1 presents the results of the quantitative content analysis of the three USAID documents. Overall, one notes that the words “teacher” or “teaching” appear on average approximately one time per page in the 1998 and 2005 documents (.985 and 1.16, respectively), but closer to two times per page in the 2011 document (1.85). This indicates that teachers and teaching receive an appreciable focus in all documents, but for our purposes, the question is the nature of the focus in the three documents.

Table 1 also shows that between 45.9% and 63.6% of the references to teacher and teaching in these documents focused on issues concerned with teachers as a human resource for education (mainly as an input to be recruited, deployed, and retained) or with teachers as employees (mainly in terms of supervising and assessing their practice) [5]. For example, the following excerpts were categorized as being focused on teachers as a human resource for education:

Informed expansion of the education system with teachers adequately trained, reasonable class sizes, available materials, and sufficient facilities is fundamental to an education system’s effectiveness. (USAID, 1998, p. 56)
The HIV/AIDS pandemic … has taken a horrific toll on the teaching force and educational administrators at all levels … (USAID, 2005, p. 5)

The period following natural disaster, manmade instability or outright conflict … presents critical opportunities to restore (or build for the first time) the system conditions … This often involves the restoration of educational systems and teacher cadres to enable the return of services. (USAID, 2011, p. 15)

And the following excerpts were categorized as focused on the employment status of teachers:

Improved classroom instruction requires better in-service teacher training and reinforcement by appropriate teacher terms of service, teacher support supervision, and instructional materials. (USAID, 1998, p. 22)

Various forms of petty corruption operate at the school level, including charging families for publicly provided textbooks, imposing ad-hoc fees for school attendance, and teacher absenteeism. (USAID, 2005, p. 5)

In many countries, teacher salaries absorb the great majority of education spending, leaving little for books and other learning materials. (USAID, 2005, p. 5)

Improving the quality of education requires incentivizing certain types of behaviors among policymakers, administrators, teachers, students, and parents. (USAID, 2011, p. 2)

Studies have shown that, in many developing countries, teacher absenteeism and lack of standards and assessment result in low learning outcomes. (USAID, 2011, p. 11)

As shown in Table 1, a sizeable percentage of the mentions of teacher and teaching focused on the training of teachers. Interestingly, the 1998 and 2011 documents devote more attention to in-service training (12.5% and 21.6%, respectively) compared to pre-service training (3.1% and 2.7%, respectively), while the 2005 document gives more attention to preservice training (18.2%) compared to inservice training (4.5%). The following excerpts illustrate how the documents discussed inservice and preservice training:

USAID’s support for basic education should, where appropriate, link to the country and Mission’s population, health, nutrition, and natural resources objectives through school curricula, instructional materials, and teacher training. (USAID, 1998, p. 40)

Improving instruction is a complex task that entails a wide range of interventions [including:] … supporting improved teacher training,
along with technical assistance to strengthen local teacher training institutions and in-service training options … (USAID, 2005, p. 9)

The following activities are illustrative of actions that could be taken to improve reading delivery systems at the primary level: … support professional development for teachers and administrators … (USAID, 2011, p. 11)

Furthermore, Table 1 indicates, not surprisingly, that a relatively high percentage of mentions of teachers and teaching focused on teachers’ role in the classroom, mainly concerned with instructional activities. For the 1998 and, especially, the 2011 documents, this category received the next highest percentage (15.6% and 27.0%, respectively, after human resource and employee categories, while for the 2005 document this category received the second highest percentage after the human resource and employee categories. Examples of excerpts that were categorized as focused on teachers’ classroom role include:

USAID’s support for reforming basic education systems occurs [includes:] … steps to promote community participation in school governance, changing classroom teaching methodologies to encourage pupil questioning rather than repetition, and promoting a policy dialogue process ... (USAID, 1998, p. 40)

Improving instruction is a complex task that entails a wide range of interventions [including:] … promoting the adoption of appropriate teaching methods that involve students in the learning process ... (USAID, 2005, p. 9).

There is also widespread agreement that improving learning outcomes on a national scale, particularly in reading, requires simultaneous interventions at four levels: (1) teaching and learning in the classroom ... (USAID, 2011, p. 10).

Besides the finding that none (0%) of the mentions of teacher and teaching focused attention on teachers as learners/inquirers, it is noteworthy that only the 1998 document gives much attention to teachers’ extra-classroom roles. That is, 7.8% of the mentions of teacher or teaching were categorized as focused on their role as school staff members (e.g., as part of the PTA) and 10.9% of the mentions were categorized as focusing on their role as professional organization/union members (participating as stakeholders in governance, policy dialogue, or collective action at the local authority or national level). In the 2005 document, none (0%) of the mentions were assigned to either of these categories, and in the 2011 document, only one mention (2.7%) was categorized as focusing on teachers’ role as school staff members. Relevant examples from the 1998 document focused on teachers as school staff members include:
It is within the school itself that all the components of the system come together, through the actions of the school head and teachers in their interactions with each other and the students, to determine the quality of teaching and learning. (USAID, 1998, p. 18)

School-based programs ... include one or more of the following components: ... school environmental improvement, whereby the community, in partnership with teachers and students, seeks to improve the quality of water, latrines, and school cleanliness so that the school compound conveys a message of good health and sanitation practice ... (USAID, 1998, p. 62)

Beyond parental engagement, improving reading for millions of children will also require widespread public support and engagement from communities, civil society organizations, ... including parent teacher associations ... (USAID, 2011, p. 11).

And the following excerpts represent statements that focused on teachers’ role as professional association/union member:

Within a country, the fora and mechanisms for participation, dialogue, and negotiation are often absent or deficient. The lines of communication are tenuous so that parents – and even teachers – are often not aware of education policy decisions, nor are they able to transmit their concerns and opinions back to policymakers. (USAID, 1998, p. 27)

Effective decentralization takes time, is complex, and requires significant efforts at the outset to achieve understanding and consensus from all participating parties (national and municipal governments, NGOs, teachers and teachers’ unions, parents, community groups, and civil society). (USAID, 1998, p. 61)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human resource for education/student learning (input, recruitment, deployment,</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(29.7%)</td>
<td>(40.9%)</td>
<td>(21.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Findings from Analysis of Teacher-Focused Objectives of Three USAID Programs

In order to provide additional insights about USAID’s focus on teachers, I examined the objectives or expected results of three USAID-funded programs that had major emphases on teachers and teacher education. In all three I reviewed the Program Description that the USAID Mission in the specific country developed to request proposals for implementing the program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of References</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Note: The statistics presented in this table were calculated based on the author’s content analysis of the three USAID strategy documents (USAID 1998, 2005, and 2011).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers as Human Capital or Human Beings?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>retention, attendance/absenteeism, student-teacher ratio, knowledge/skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees (issues of hiring/firing, salary, conditions/benefits, career structure, standards, selection, supervision, assessment/accountability)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(20.3%)</td>
<td>(22.7%)</td>
<td>(24.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom-level actors (instruction, lesson planning, student assessment, relations with students)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(15.6%)</td>
<td>(13.6%)</td>
<td>(27.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School staff members (governance, decision making, relating to community)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(7.8%)</td>
<td>(0.0%)</td>
<td>(2.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional organization/union members (participation in system governance, engagement in social/policy dialogue, collective bargaining, strike action)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(10.9%)</td>
<td>(0.0%)</td>
<td>(0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipients of pre-service education/training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3.1%)</td>
<td>(18.2%)</td>
<td>(2.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipients of in-service education/training</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(12.5%)</td>
<td>(4.5%)</td>
<td>(21.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners/inquirers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.0%)</td>
<td>(0.0%)</td>
<td>(0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL references to teacher or teaching (Number of references per page)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.985)</td>
<td>(1.16)</td>
<td>(1.85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL pages analyzed in document</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Note.** The statistics presented in this table were calculated based on the author’s content analysis of the three USAID strategy documents (USAID 1998, 2005, and 2011).
1. In 2003 USAID/Egypt released its Program Description for the *Education Reform Program* (ERP). Included in this program were two major activities focusing on teachers: a) the Integrated English Language Program-III (later renamed Education System Support) and b) the Faculties of Education Reform (USAID/Egypt, 2003). The program was implemented between 2004 and 2009.

2. In 2008 USAID/Pakistan released its Program Description for the *Preservice Teacher Education Program* (Pre-STEP) (USAID/Pakistan, 2008). The program was implemented between 2008 and 2013.

3. In 2010 USAID/Liberia released its Program Description for the second phase of the *Liberia Teacher Education Program* (LTTP II). Included in this program were two major components focusing on teachers: a) Improved Teacher Professional Development: Policy, Management and Supervision and b) MOE Performance in Improving Teacher Skills and Implementing Teacher Training Standards (USAID/Liberia, 2010). The program was implemented between 2010 and 2015.

Table 2 lists the main objectives or expected results from these three programs that focused on teachers or teacher education. As can be observed in Table 2, these programs devoted attention to developing policies (e.g., teacher standards), strengthening systems (at the national or institutional level), and designing and implementing preservice and/or inservice teacher education programs. Implicit in the latter aspect (designing and implementing programs) is the program’s focus on supporting efforts so that teachers receive preservice and/or inservice teacher education. And, for the Education Reform Program in Egypt this is stated explicitly as an objective of the program: “Teachers receive pre-service education and in-service training in learner-focused teaching and assessment methods” (USAID/Egypt, 2003, p. 9).

Table 2

**Selected Objectives of Teacher-Focused Objectives of Three USAID Education Programs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Reform Program (USAID/Egypt, 2003)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• [Teacher] performance standards are developed, monitored, and applied;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Faculties [of Education assisted] ... to reform the curriculum and assessment system of pre-service education so that teaching methods and instructional materials are improved to match the needs for learner-centered approaches;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• [Inservice Educational Training Centers strengthened] in undertaking local training design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation and playing a greater role in supporting school-based training units; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teachers receive pre-service education and in-service training in learner-focused teaching and assessment methods.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preservice Teacher Education Program (USAID/Pakistan, 2008)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Improve systems and policies that support teachers, teacher educators and educational managers;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support [Higher Education Commission and Ministry of Education] teacher institutes to develop/revise, evaluate and finalize standards, curricula and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ginsburg**
modules for pre-service teacher education degrees;
• Develop a plan for implementing the new curricula for [educating] new and existing teachers

Liberia Teacher Training Program II (USAID/Liberia, 2010)
• Strengthened MOE capacity to plan and manage teacher training and professional development activities;
• Increased capacity of [Rural Teacher Training Institutes] to plan effectively and deliver quality teacher training;
• Preservice and inservice teacher preparation programs are implemented with new and enhanced content and training strategies that meet requirements for quality education and direct experience with schools and classroom level reforms;
• Inservice “C” Certificate teacher training continued

Note. The information presented in this table is drawn from the “program descriptions” (i.e., requests for proposals) for the three USAID programs: USAID/Egypt (2003), USAID/Pakistan (2008), and USAID/Liberia (2010).

Conclusion
In conclusion I want to emphasize two general points. The first is that the USAID education strategy documents treat teachers as human capital, a human resource input, rather than as human beings. The second is that the USAID education strategy documents characterize teachers as implementers of policy rather than as key stakeholders who should also be involved in dialogue and decision making about educational policy at various levels of the system.

Teachers as Human Capital or Human Beings?
I noted in my analysis of World Bank education strategy documents (Ginsburg, 2012) that is was not surprising that such documents highlighted the view that education contributes to human capital development (e.g., see Psacharopoulos, 1995; World Bank, 1995; World Bank, 1999; World Bank, 2011). Similarly, one would anticipate that USAID education strategy documents would devote substantial attention to the role played by formal education in developing the human capital of students as future workers, which is the main focus on education within human capital theory (e.g., Levinson, 2002; Woodhall, 1997) [6]. For example, the following excerpts from the three USAID education strategy documents analyzed in this article illustrate this focus:

Increasing equitable access to quality primary education and basic education skills is the central objective of USAID’s goal for human capacity development. (USAID, 1998, p. 11)

[Enhancing knowledge and skills for productivity …, including focused efforts in workforce development and in higher education. (USAID, 2005, p. 7)

Education is both foundational to human development and critically linked to broad based economic growth … Goal Two: Improved ability of
tertiary and workforce development programs to generate workforce skills relevant to a country’s development goals … (USAID, 2011, p. 1)

However, as noted above, these three USAID education strategy documents also highlight that teacher should be considered as human capital or human resources potentially contributing to the “production” process in schooling. The percentage of references to “teacher” or “teaching” that were so categorized ranged from 36% (1998) to 34% (1999) to 27% (2011), with an additional 16% to 44% of the references assigned a related category, “employee.” Moreover, the attention that the USAID education strategy documents give to teachers as recipients of preservice and inservice teacher training (combined: 15.6% in 1998, 22.7% in 2005, and 24.3% in 2011) can also be seen as an extension of the view of teachers as human capital, that is, providing training as a means of enhancing the development of human capital. This view of teachers as human capital, to be managed and to be trained also is evident in the Program Descriptions released by the USAID Missions in Egypt, Liberia, and Pakistan.

As discussed in my analysis of World Bank education strategy documents (Ginsburg, 2012), the framing of teachers as human capital rather than human beings in the USAID education strategy documents and the USAID Missions’ Program Descriptions seems likely to explain why the latter documents did not devote any attention to teachers as learners (0% in 1998, 2005, and 2011). That is, because the USAID education strategy documents present a view that commodifies teachers’ labor (and, indeed, of teachers themselves). Attention to teachers’ learning (a process that is core to existence of human beings) might be considered as tangential to an education sector strategy document as the processes of enhancing financial capital (e.g., collecting taxes) or enhancing fixed capital (constructing buildings).

**Teachers as Implementers and/or Developers of Educational Policy**

An analysis of USAID education strategy documents showed that teachers are mainly presented as classroom actors, implementing curricular and other educational policies. The percentage of references to “teachers” and “teaching” categorized as focused on teachers’ classroom roles ranged from 15.6% (1998) to 13.6% (2005) to 27.0% (2011). However, while the 1998 document gave some attention to the role of teachers as school staff members (9.4%) and professional association/union members (9.4%), these extra-classroom roles for teachers are almost absent in the 2005 document (0% and 0%, respectively) and the 2011 documents (2.7% and 0%, respectively). Note also that while the three Program Descriptions released by USAID Missions in Egypt, Liberia, and Pakistan gave attention to developing policies and strengthening systems, their teacher capacity development efforts focused only on enhancing teachers’ knowledge and skills for performing their classroom roles.

In some cases, there may be space for teachers to develop practice or even local policy through the decisions they make on a day-to-day basis in classrooms. However, to develop broader policies teachers need to be active as individuals or members of organizations at the school-, district-, province-, and national levels. The USAID education strategy documents and the USAID Mission Program Description
downplaying or ignoring these extra-classroom roles signals that USAID’s perspective is not aligned with global educational policy statements such as:

The 1966 *ILO/UNESCO Recommendations Concerning the Status of Teachers* states that “teachers’ organizations should be recognized as a force which can contribute greatly to education advance and which therefore should be associated with the determination of educational policy.” (ILO & UNESCO, 1966, ¶9)

*Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action* articulates that ‘teachers and educators, and their organizations, are crucial partners in their own right and should be engaged at all stages of policy-making, planning, implementation and monitoring” (UNESCO et al., 2015, p. 24).

It seems likely that USAID’s focus on teacher as a human resource input, especially in its 2005 and 2011 education strategy documents and the USAID Missions Program Descriptions, contributes to the agency’s limited attention to teachers as participants in policy dialogue and decision-making. If teachers are mainly perceived as human capital to be invested in to produce learning outcomes, then perhaps the logic is that they are not key stakeholders, sources of insights, and critical contributors to analyzing and developing policies – either at the school, district, provincial, or national level.

**Mark Ginsburg** retired in 2016 from FHI360. He is visiting professor at University of Maryland (USA) and Universidad de Ciencias Pedagogicas (Cuba), and was a faculty member at other universities: Aston (England), Houston, Pittsburgh, and Columbia (USA). He was President of C.I.E.S (1991) and Coeditor of Comparative Education Review (2003-2013).

**Notes**
[1] Nevertheless, based on a study conducted in Bulgaria, Denmark, Egypt, Greece, Hong Kong, Macedonia, the Netherlands, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States, Bangs and Frost (2012, p. 1) claim that “when it comes to policy making at both national and international levels, teachers themselves remain the ghost at the feast” (see also ILO/UNESCO, 2012; Villegas-Reimers and Reimers, 1996).
[2] As Cochran-Smith and Demers (2010, p. 28) explain, an inquiry stance offers a challenge to the dominant discourse during the current “era of accountability” in which emphasis is given to “scripted curricula and teacher-proof materials designed to compensate for a weak teaching force. On the contrary, inquiry-centered teaching and teacher preparation are based on the twin premises that teaching and teacher preparation are intellectual rather than technical activities and that most educators are capable of inquiring into practice, posing and answering questions, generating local knowledge within learning communities, and making complex decisions about teaching and learning.”
[3] While the 2011 Education Strategy was initially focused only on the 2011-2015 period, in 2015 the Agency reported that “USAID’s next *Education Strategy* (2016-2020) will maintain the goals and focus that our Agency introduced over the last four years of education programming. … An updated Education Strategy will be issued in early 2016,
[but, in fact, was not]. Until then, the USAID Education Strategy 2011-2015 will remain in full effect” (USAID, 2015a, pp. 1-2). This was announced at the USAID Global Education Summit, held in November 2015, at which USAID presented its Education Strategy Progress Report, 2011-2015 (USAID, 2015b). This Powerpoint presentation highlighted that USAID had “supported activities central to achieving the education goals of our partner countries, including improved pedagogy through training for an average of 450,000 teachers annually, increased parental and community engagement through support for an average of 26,000 parent teacher associations or community-based school governance structures annually” (USAID, 2015b, p. 4).

[4] It is noteworthy that, within the category of human resources, teacher absenteeism was the focus in 2 of the 9 (22%) references in the 2005 document and 4 of 8 (50%) in the 2011 document, but none of the 19 (0%) in the 1998 document. This likely reflects the critical attention given in various World Bank publications to teacher absenteeism as a major explanation of low student learning outcomes (e.g., Abadzi, 2007; Bruns et al., 2011).

[5] As discussed in Ginsburg (2012), while earlier World Bank strategy documents devote limited attention the teachers’ role as learner/inquirer (i.e., 2% in 1995 strategy and 4% in 1999 strategy), no discussion of the teacher as learner/inquirer was included in the World Bank’s (2011) strategy document, despite the fact that it is entitled Learning for All.

[6] Human capital may be defined as “the concept based on the belief that the role of workers in production is similar to the role of machinery and other forces of production” (Johnson, 2000, p. 46; see also Becker, 1993). And as Schultz (1961, p. 3) argues, “human beings are incontestably capital from an abstract and mathematical point of view,” In workers are commodified, treated—at least conceptually—as things to be bought, sold, traded, or invested in (see Marx, 1859). However, even Schultz (1961, p. 2) recognized the potential problem of the concept of human capital, in that “it seems to reduce man [i.e., human beings] ... to a mere material component, to something akin to property.”

References


Ginsburg, M. (2016). Increasing and improving teacher participation in Local Education Groups (LEGs): Designing in-service professional development programs to facilitate teachers’ engagement in social dialogue. Final draft of literature review report for UNESCO-Education International project funded by the Global Partnership for Education.


Ginsburg


Teachers as Human Capital or Human Beings?


USAID/Pakistan (2008). *Program description for Pre-Service Teacher Education Program (Pre-STEP)*. Islamabad: USAID/Pakistan.


Unpacking Community Participation: 
A Gendered Perspective

Leva Rouhani 
University of Ottawa

In recent years heightened attention has been directed towards the connections between schooling and local communities in sub-Saharan Africa. While community participation in school management has been emphasized as a strategy to promote sustainable development and improve quality education in sub-Saharan Africa, in practice this strategy has reproduced power hierarchies at the community-level. Furthermore, it has had limited impact for advancing gender equality because community participation in sub-Saharan Africa is not framed to encompass the dynamics of power that exist at the community level and how societal structures govern how community members participate: specifically girls and women. In this paper, I outline the gendered effects of community participation in schooling and alternative methods of participation using specific case studies from West Africa.

Introduction
Notions of community participation have been prevalent in development discourse, but particularly in the field of education-for-development (Edwards, 2017). Community participation has taken on different forms and meanings depending on the context. Within the context of education in sub-Saharan Africa, community participation has been framed as the involvement of the whole community (families, parents, school institutions, community members) in the education of the child. While there are various ways of participating in education, Heneveld and Craig (1996) have identified five channels in which communities can participate in education throughout sub-Saharan Africa: (1) children come to school prepared to learn; (2) the community provides financial and material support to the school; (3) communication between the school, parents, and community is frequent; (4) the community has a meaningful role in school governance; and (5) community members and parents assist with instruction. Understanding the complexities of community participation in education throughout sub-Saharan Africa is critical because it is one of the most effective strategies that determine school effectiveness (Fitriah, 2010). As such, community participation in education has been promoted in multiple ways by influential international organizations working on issues related to education—including the World Bank, UNESCO, think tanks, non-governmental organizations, and regional development banks (Edwards, 2017; UNESCO, 2009; World Bank, 2004). More recently, as a strategy to improve education quality, community participation has been embedded both in the framing of Sustainable Development Goals and in their implementation. This new trend has received immense attention from education and development researchers, who highlight the importance of community participation in improving school quality and
ensuring sustainable development (Cheung & Pomerantz, 2012; Nkansah & Chapman, 2006). While community participation in the management of school affairs has been emphasized as a strategy to promote sustainable development and improve quality education, in practice this strategy has reproduced power hierarchies at the community-level. Furthermore, it has had limited impact for advancing gender equality because community participation is not framed to encompass the dynamics of power that exist at the community level and how societal structures govern how community members participate: specifically, girls and women. To further elaborate on this argument, this paper will provide the context of education in sub-Saharan African, a brief history of community participation, the various notions of community participation, and the impact on gender. The paper will then provide an analysis of alternative methods of community participation in schooling.

Context
The importance of educating girls and its effect on society as a whole has been well documented and extensively researched for many decades (Biraimah; 1982; Manion, 2011; Unterhalter, 2007). This research supports numerous international initiatives such as the global Educational For All framework and the UN Sustainable Development Goals to promote girls’ access to basic education (Mundy, 2006). While many developing countries have achieved gender parity in basic education, studies show that gender parity has not translated into gender equality through education (Manion, 2007). Plan International ‘State of the World’s Girls’ report outlines that 63 million girls currently do not attend formal primary and secondary schooling in the Global South (2015). While unequal access to formal education and experience through formal education among males and females appears to be widespread in the Global South, women in many countries throughout Africa tend to experience more gender discrimination compared to their male counterparts (Manion, 2007). Across sub-Saharan Africa, women continue to contribute to the development and progress of their communities notably, yet most lack the formal education to improve their own condition, reduce their social barriers, and release their economic burden (Egbo, 2000). In 47 out of 54 African countries, girls’ prospects to completing primary school are less than 50 percent, whereas completion rates for boys are well above 70 percent (UNESCO, 2011). Similarly, of the 58 million children out-of-school, 31 million of them are girls and Sub-Saharan Africa continues to account for approximately 52% of all out-of-school girls (UNESCO, 2015). Increasingly, much of the discourse surrounding girls’ education has shifted from a focus on increasing girls’ access to school to much closer attention on the quality of education that girls receive (Grolnick, Friendly, & Bellas, 2009). However, primary schools in sub-Saharan Africa often lack the necessary resources required to provide quality education, particularly to girls. In recent years, the burden of ensuring quality education has fallen on the shoulders of parents and community members (Dei, 2004). In other words, more and more communities have now engaged with primary schools to support quality education. The next section will outline trends in community participation throughout sub-Saharan Africa.
Trends in community participation in sub-Saharan Africa
The implementation of mass schooling in sub-Saharan Africa during the 50s and 60s resulted in the crisis of schooling during the 70s and 80s: poor infrastructure, lack of school materials, undertrained teachers, overcrowded classrooms, and reduced resources (Lloyd, Kaufman, & Hewett, 2000). As a mechanism to address the various issues that arose with the implementation of mass schooling in sub-Saharan Africa, policymakers began introducing reforms that focused on improving quality education. One trend to improve quality education was the trend of decentralization, or the transference of control from the central to lower levels of a system. A central premise for greater decentralization of education in sub-Saharan Africa is that those “closest to the school, e.g., community members, have a better understanding of local conditions and are in the best position to make decisions about the educational process that best serve local needs” (Chapman, Barcikowski, Sowah, Gyamera, & Woode, 2002, p. 181). This central premise stems from three general arguments: (a) decentralization of programs will lead to greater responsiveness to the particular needs of local communities; (b) decentralization will result in better service delivery by transferring tasks from central authorities to be managed more effectively at local levels; (c) decentralization of social programs (such as education) will foster greater participation of local people, specifically in decision-making processes and more distributive equity (Maclure, 1994; Rondinelli & Cheema, 1983; Wunsch, 1991). However, it must be noted that the process of decentralization is not neutral a neutral process. In fact, engaging communities to participate in decision-making processes is a gendered process.

Unpacking community participation
This section will unpack the how using the term community participation to encompass a homogenous group can, in fact, reproduce unequal power dynamics and reinforce gender inequalities. Participation, in one form or another, has for many decades been a buzzword in international development (Cornwall 2006; Leal 2007). Indeed, over twenty years ago, Dudley (1993) noted that “participation used to be the rallying cry of the radicals; its presence is now effectively obligatory in all policy documents and project proposals from international donors to implementing agencies” (p. 7). In the decades after Dudley’s observation, the popularity of ‘participation’ as a central concept in development has only increased as many have recognized that achieving quality education for all requires the active participation of local communities (Nkansah & Chapman, 2006). Specifically, in sub-Saharan Africa, community participation has been widely used across the continent as development efforts have underscored the benefits that accrue to communities when their members participate in local community development initiatives (Apple 2008; Campbell and Vainio-Mattila 2003; Mfum-Mensah 2004, 2009; Muthuri, Chapple, and Moon 2009; Sultana 2009).

The central premise for community participation in education is based on the argument that beneficiaries of education programmes need to take active roles that empower them to monitor their schools and to make decisions about their children’s education (Kendall, 2007). Mfum-Mensah and Friedson-Ridenour (2014) further argue that community participation in education initiatives creates opportunities to promote sustainable development, address community needs, build local trust, and shift the role of
community members from beneficiaries to actors (p. 352). However, community participation is not a panacea for sustaining quality education because various power dynamics exist in communities. All activities grouped under the notion of community participation involve power in some shape or form. For example, in Mfum-Mensah and Friedson-Ridenour’s (2014) case study of community participation in Ghana’s School for Life complementary education programme found that local community members do not engage in the project in identical ways, and the ways in which they participate determine the different benefits they receive (p. 358). The School for Life programme was implemented in 1995 and provided nine months of education for children in rural communities who had either dropped out of school or who never enrolled in school. The objective of this programme is to offer a second chance education to children who are above the school-going age (Arkorful, 2013; Hartwell, 2006). Unique to this program was the community participation approach taken. In fact, the role of the community to identify and recruit individuals to be classroom facilitators, to identify children to participate, and to outline a school schedule is instrumental in sustaining the program. However, Mfum-Mensah and Friedson-Ridenour’s (2014) case study demonstrated that those most educated participated in the program more often. In other words, the education the community members receive determines the confidence and power they have to participate. Therefore, given that men were often more educated than women, they participated in more formal roles and were given more authority in how they participated. This case study emphasizes the importance of understanding the politics of participation and how power dynamics and societal structures influence who participates and how they participate.

**Power and Participation**

To further understand the complexities of community participation, it is important to understand power and power dynamics that govern how community members can participate, specifically women. For Foucault (1983), power is “a mode of action which does not act directly and immediately on others […] instead it acts upon their actions” (p. 220). From this perspective, power is understood as something that is exercised, not possessed. Foucault resists defining power in a metaphysical way, insisting “something called Power […] which is assumed to exist universally in a concentrated or diffused form, does not exist. Power exists only when it is put into action” (p. 219). In other words, Foucault (1983) refrains from defining power and rather focuses his inquiry on how power is exercised in particular contexts. Therefore, for Foucault (2003) the issue is to determine “what are the various power-apparatuses that operate at various levels of our society, in such different domains and with so many different extensions” (p. 13).

Within this definition, I can argue that there is no homogenous form of community participation since the way in which power is exercised in each circle of interaction is context specific. With this in mind, Foucault encourages us to think of ‘powers’ rather than ‘Power.’ For example, the power a teacher exercises over their students is not the same as the power that those students exercise to resist the teacher’s demands, nor is it the same as the power exercised by that teacher’s director. Similarly, these kinds of powers are likely to differ from the power exercised by a parent (Gallagher, 2008, p. 398). This exemplifies Foucault’s (1978) claim that “power is everywhere” – power
circulates and exists in various networks, relationships, and structures (p. 93). Therefore, power is not concentrated in the hands of institutions and trickled down the social hierarchy; rather, power animates local practices and is distributed through all levels of society.

Whose Voice?
A Foucauldian conception of power could suggest that it is useful to examine power in community participation within the context of networks that exist and relationships that are formed (Tisdall & Davis, 2004). Given that power always involves a relationship between at least two entities, it will vary “according to the nature of [those] relationships, the personal characteristics of the actors involved, [and] the resources (social, cultural, material) available within [those] relationships” (Gallagher, 2008, p. 403). Therefore, when analyzing the power dynamics involved in community participation, merely stating that men possess power over women in a community is simplistic and does not encapsulate the various networks and relationships that exist among community entities.

The discourse on community participation assumes communities to be homogenous, harmonious, and static entities, whose resources can collectively be mobilized for a perceived collective community good (see DeStefano, 1996). However, communities do not speak with a single voice. Communities in sub-Saharan Africa are heterogeneous, multi-layered, and governed by various hierarchies of power—determined to an extent by economic, ethnic, age, gender, caste, and other social factions that disagree about educational goals and management of local schools (Dunne & Humphreys, 2007). Since different hierarchies of power exist within communities, the question of concern should not be whether communities participate in school management; rather, the question should be who is participating—which community members are having their voices heard, which members are participating in decisions about schools, and whose agenda is being advanced. Very often it is the most visible, vocal, wealthier, more articulated, and educated groups that participate in managing schools. Given these restrictions, it is often those who are most vulnerable (women, girls, rural dwellers) who are excluded from community participation in school management (Moghadam, 2005; USAID, 2015). While women are not formally excluded from participating in the decision-making processes of school management, gender inequalities and social norms in the community frame how women and men participate. Eto (2012) argues that in mixed-sex activities of deliberation, for example, men tend to have more dominant roles than women, or meetings tend to be at times when women are not available. Therefore, while participation is open to all, power dynamics and gender relations between the sexes govern how participation is actualized and it is these relations of power that are often masked in the notion of community participation (Eto, 2012, p. 104). The next section will outline the connection between gender and power, as it relates to community participation.

Gender and Participation
As mentioned earlier, the justifications for community participation in school management are (a) to improve quality education and promote sustainable development, (b) to involve and empower communities in decision-making processes,
and (c) to develop the capacity for schools to address the particular needs of local communities. While these justifications aim to promote inclusivity and equity, the practice of community participation often obscures the gendered nature of power dynamics in communities—that is the ways in which notions of gender (societal expectations of men and women) interact with how power is exercised. Under the guise of community participation, communities are often perceived as gender-neutral units with shared interests in education. However, this perception neglects the importance of distinguishing who participates, how they participate, within which structures they participate, and at what stage they participate in school management. For example, the implementation of Parents Associations—formally organized committees through which parents can play an active role in education—throughout sub-Saharan Africa best exemplifies community participation strategies that did not distinguish who participates and how. The objectives of these Parent Associations were to create a liaison between the school and the community and to encourage children’s enrolment in school, to improve school performance, and to empower local communities (Compaoré, 2006; Mundy, 2008). During their formation, Parent Associations were particularly prominent in the rural regions, where the education sector has shifted from state-led school management to an increase in community-based school management (Sultana, 2009). When Parent Associations were formed, the ideal for these committees was to have both mothers and fathers participate. However, if we question who has an active role in Parents Associations, who is present at Parent Association meetings, or whose voice is valued, in most cases it is men who are present at committee meetings and their voices that are being heard (Spear & Dambekalns, 2016). These male-dominated Parents Associations run the risk of neglecting issues specific to the needs of girls—e.g., barriers to education for girls (access, enrolment, completion) and inequalities in education for girls (classroom participation, gender-based violence, menstrual hygiene management) (World Education, 2015).

Therefore, without a gendered perspective—one that situates the participant within the wider societal context and examines power relations involved—community participation, in fact, can reproduce inequalities present in wider society. For instance, women’s participation in the process of planning and decision-making regarding school resources and school management is constrained by gendered responsibilities (productive and reproductive), logistical constraints relating to women’s time, as well as local norms of what is deemed appropriate gender behavior (Agarwal, 1997; Cornwall, 2003). In other words, a woman’s ability to participate in planning and decision-making processes is governed by social perceptions of their abilities and social norms of women’s behavior and actions—e.g., speaking in a public forum (Sultana, 2009). Consequently, a woman’s autonomy to participate is curtailed by sociocultural ideologies of her capacities to participate.

As mentioned earlier, distinguishing who participates, how, and at what stages determines how ‘participation’ is implemented into practice. However, simply including women in participation strategies will not in itself enable them to exercise their agency or promote gender equality in practice because power relations that exist between men and women, and among different women are not addressed. Emphasis is placed on the
latter to highlight the hierarchies of power that exist between women and the harmful nature of collectively categorizing women into one group. Intersectional feminists (Crenshaw, 1989; Collins, 1990) argue against homogenizing women into a single group as it assumes that all women share the same perspective by virtue of being women. An intersectional approach to community participation in sub-Saharan Africa requires an analysis of social inequalities among those who participate, one that moves beyond the gender marker but explores the interaction between different identity markers (ethnicity, race, age) that underpin social, political, and economic formal rules and informal norms and cultures (Evans, 2016). In other words, intersectional analysis of community participation in sub-Saharan Africa speaks directly to questions of power in relation to racism and sexism. Therefore, questioning what power dynamics are in place that enables some members of the community to participate while excluding others.

Cornwall (2000) posits that situating women on school committees as “a legitimating device may merely shore up and perpetuate inequitable ‘gender relations’ between women” (p. 13). At the community level, the myth of female solidarity can often wear thin as female participants may not identify themselves primarily, or even at all, with other women. Therefore, to assume female solidarity is to dislocate women from their social networks and relationships and to ironically “mask women’s agency in the pursuit of projects of their own that may be based on other lines of connectedness and difference” (Cornwall, 2000, p. 13). Indeed, notions of community participation ignore the fact that women experience simultaneous processes of inclusion and exclusion based on other social processes—such as, social relations of class, kinship, and marriage—all of which can complicate how people participate.

**Participation and Women’s Associations**

Community participation is often perceived as increasing the empowerment [1] and agency of women. However, as mentioned earlier, participation takes place within a context that is governed by pre-existing power relations and unequal dynamics that dictate the ways in which people participate. These power dynamics can constrain how women participate in school management and further perpetuate societal inequalities. Therefore, to examine whether participation can address power dynamics and in fact enhance women’s ‘agency’ requires us to look at developments within communities. Indeed, in response to the unequal dynamics prevalent in the communities and the advent of the global feminist movement, women in local communities throughout sub-Saharan Africa are getting organized and using their networks to gain social power and improve their situation.

Similarly, the promotion of girls’ education and the increase in school enrolment for girls has led to a heightened consciousness of unfair power dynamics that permeate society at large and more specifically within schools. In light of this reality, growing numbers of mothers in sub-Saharan Africa have organized their own Mothers Associations with the specific purpose of improving the education of their daughters. The objectives of Mothers Associations include: (a) to raise public awareness of the importance of girls’ education, (b) to encourage girls to enroll, (c) to monitor girls’ attendance, and (d) to remove barriers to education for girls (World Education, 2015).
The goals and mandate of Mothers Associations are unique to their community but in general focus on improving school learning conditions for girls (both in school and around the school community). Evidence suggests that mothers’ associations in Benin have had a significant influence on the educational development of girls (World Education, 2009). For example, by setting up walking programs to and from school to protect girls from gender-based violence, intervening with families that have accepted child brides to negotiate plans that would allow girls to continue their primary school, and setting up daycare programs for teenage mothers to prevent teenage mothers from dropping out (USAID, 2007).

In Benin, as a form of activism, Mothers Associations have collaborated with NGOs to implement community workshops on sexual assault, to create presentations for International Women’s Day, and to generate radio broadcasts in local languages on the benefits of educating girls (World Education, 2009). In fact, through their activism, mothers have extended their influence more broadly in economic and political realms. The more mothers took ownership of the education of girls in their community (ex. reaching out to different parents to encourage enrollment, raising funds to create housing for teachers, setting up a caregiving students for teenage mothers) the more confidence they received to voice their concerns and to be more visible in the affairs that concerned their community (USAID, 2007). Through mothers’ associations, women gained a strong voice to both support and improved the learning environment for girls in school and to speak out in the community. It must be noted, that although Mothers Associations have brought women together, hierarchies of power still exist between women. Evidence demonstrates that in communities where literacy rates differ dramatically across the community population, women who are most literature tend to have their voices heard most, therefore, reproducing inequalities.

In their study of Mothers Associations in Burkina Faso, Spear and Dambekalns (2016) also note that in spite of the perception of solidarity among women, this is not often the case. Within Mossi society, there is a rigid hierarchy, among women as well as between the sexes. Spear and Dambekalns (2016) further note that women with status will control resources, be appointed to positions, and be listened to and followed by the other women. While hierarchies of power exist, mothers’ associations in Benin have created a degree of solidarity among women interested in advocating for one cause: gender equality in education. This limited solidarity has become a source of leverage and empowerment for women to advocate in larger, male-dominated parents’ associations, and to collaborate with other male partners in the community to promote gender equality (Compaoré, 2006). Using this leverage, women are challenging the power dynamics and tensions that exist: between women advocating in public forums/participating in school management, and sociocultural ideologies and expectations for women’s behavior/ability to participate.

Conclusion
Community participation in school management has become hegemonic in development discourses and generally conceals the processes of unjust and illegitimate exercises of power (Cooke & Kothari, 2001). Ideally, community participation in school management...
would (a) improve quality education and promote sustainable development, (b) involve and empower communities in decision-making processes, and (c) develop the capacity for schools to address the particular needs of local communities. While these objectives are noble in their aim, in reality, community participation is not a panacea to achieve gender equality because notions of community participation do not encompass the power dynamics and the complexities that govern community relationships. Therefore, a focused lens is required to examine how community participation can promote agency, transform power relations, and encourage inclusivity. Suggestion for future research is to further unpack the characteristics that encourage and allow Mothers Associations in certain communities to overcome hierarchies of power and to work in solidarity for gender equality.

Leva Rouhani is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa. Leva’s doctoral research assesses how Mothers Associations in Benin have mobilized to address gender-based violence; whether the activities of Mothers Associations have led to women’s empowerment; and whether Mothers Associations have had an impact on changing harmful social norms and attitudes that lead to or propagate violence against women and girls.

Contact: Leva Rouhani, University of Ottawa, 145 Jean-Jacques-Lussier, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5, e-mail: leva.rouhani@gmail.com

Notes
[1] The term empowerment and its implementation remains highly contested, ambiguous, and difficult to measure. For the purpose of this paper, empowerment is a process that involves the mobilization of people, the building of capacity, the resisting of norms, and the creation of enabling environments.

References


Unpacking Community Participation


Unpacking Community Participation


Unpacking Community Participation


Educational Attainment and Egalitarian Attitudes Toward Women in the MENA Region: Insights from the Arab Barometer

Amy Auletto
Michigan State University

Taeyeon Kim
Michigan State University

Rachel Marias
Michigan State University

Despite increasingly egalitarian attitudes toward women in the Middle East and North Africa, nations in this region continue to rank among the lowest in measures of gender equality. Using survey data, we examine the relationship between educational attainment and support for women. We find that increased educational attainment is predictive of greater support for women’s employment and women’s participation in post-secondary education. We also find that egalitarian attitudes have increased over time and education continues to remain a strong predictor of these attitudes. We argue for increased investment in education that promotes egalitarian attitudes for both genders in the MENA region.

Introduction
Despite historically large gender gaps in Middle Eastern and North African countries, citizens of these nations have developed increasingly egalitarian views of women in recent years. Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries regularly score low on the Global Gender Gap Index, a composite measure of gender gaps in economic, educational, political, and health outcomes. Gender inequity in MENA countries has attracted attention as women become more involved in multiple venues of society: civic engagement, economic contribution, and political involvement. Women’s increased participation in society has prompted research regarding how women are viewed in these countries and how egalitarian attitudes toward women might be strengthened.

Given the evolving status of women in the MENA region, the purpose of this study is to offer evidence that increased educational attainment is a promising strategy for bolstering egalitarian attitudes toward women. In this study, we use survey data from the Arab Barometer to examine the relationship between educational attainment and egalitarian views of women in 12 of 20 countries commonly identified as part of the MENA region: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen. We also consider how this relationship has changed over time. We find that increased educational attainment is associated with more egalitarian views of women in MENA countries, including support for women participating in the workforce and post-secondary education.

Based on the results of our analysis, we argue that education is one way to create more equitable environments in the MENA region. While prior research has demonstrated the potential benefits of education across a number of measures, our study is unique in that we identify a statistical relationship between education and views of women in the MENA region. Using human capital and social movement theory lenses to view these findings, we call for further investment in education for both men and women as a means to improving the status of women. We know that when women are educated they see direct benefits through increased income levels, they are healthier, delay marriage, have more economic autonomy, and experience less violence in their lives (Results Educational Fund, 2009). However, educating women alone will not change views of women in these countries. Rather, increasing education for both men and women in a way that is culturally sensitive while also addressing differences by gender will change attitudes about women’s participation in society as it focuses on all citizens, rather than a single gender.

Background
We draw on five areas of literature when discussing views of women in MENA countries. As a starting point, views of women in MENA nations are grounded in understanding the current status of women in these nations. Strongly held views of women and their status within society are a cornerstone assumption in our study. Views of education as a broad benefit to society comes from a feminist viewpoint where what is good for women is good for all of society (Unterhalter, 2006). Increased levels of education are better for an entire society, not just the women in that society. Finally, the research questions of this paper focus on women’s involvement in society through three specific arenas: first, women’s involvement in the workforce as potential economic contributors; second, women in political leadership as a form of significant political engagement; and third, post-secondary education as an emancipatory experience that assists in creating egalitarian views of women.

Education as a Broad Benefit to Society
Education is a basic human right that is critically important to developing nations. Increased educational attainment for both men and women has been linked to improved health outcomes, economic growth, and greater levels of democracy and stability specifically in the Arab world (Faour, 2011), as well as worldwide (Center for Global Development, 2006). Furthermore, individuals with greater education levels are exposed to more egalitarian ideas and are more likely to pass these ideas onto their children. This phenomenon has been found across a variety of settings, including in the United States (Bolzendahl & Myers, 2004) and the United Arab Emirates (Matherly, Amin, & Al Nahyan, 2017). Developing nations also experience a number of benefits related specifically to the education of women (King & Hill, 1997; Cin & Walker, 2016). When MENA nations fail to invest in women’s education, income levels and economic growth suffer (Dollar & Gatti, 1999). Worldwide, women with more education delay marriage, are more empowered, and have more economic autonomy (Results Educational Fund, 2009). In turn, societies in the MENA region with more empowered women also experience less violence and terrorism (Monshipouri & Karbasioun, 2003) along with other criminal behaviors (Stromquist, 2007). Furthermore, mothers with increased education levels have better health outcomes for themselves and their children (Grossman, 2006; Results Educational Fund, 2009; Stromquist, 2007), and their children are also more likely to attend school (Filmer, 2000; Pilařová & Kandakov, 2017).
Although increased women’s education is a worthy goal with many benefits for society as a whole as well as women specifically, we focus the remainder of our review of the literature on the potential relationship between increased education for all citizens and egalitarian attitudes toward women. We focus specifically how educational attainment may relate to both men and women’s attitudes toward female participation in the labor force, political leadership, and post-secondary education.

**Women in the Labor Force**

Prior research has demonstrated that educational attainment is a positive predictor of support for women’s participation in employment outside of the home. Bolzendahl and Myers (2004) argue that formal education is an effective strategy to expose individuals to egalitarian ideas, such as women’s participation in the labor market, and that more educated individuals, in turn, pass these egalitarian ideas to their children. Formal education also generates career interests that lead women to pursue employment they may not have otherwise considered (Bolzendahl & Myers, 2004). While education levels explain to some degree the extent to which individuals support women working outside the home, Gamal (2015) argues that social attitudes in the MENA region also play a significant role. Beliefs that women are primarily responsible for caring for their families and concerns that men may lose their jobs if more women are employed also drive the lack of support for women working outside of the home (Gamal, 2015). Support for women’s labor force participation in the MENA region is not necessarily explained by religion, but it is not possible to fully disentangle the role it plays (Price, 2016). Hayo and Caris (2013) found that there is no significant difference in the employment rates of Muslim and non-Muslim women in MENA nations but rather that traditional social attitudes and family environments explain different levels of women’s participation in the labor force. Among married couples, research from the U.S. has also identified that education has positive spillover effects on spouses’ attitudes toward women’s employment. The more educated a married man is, the more likely he is to support women’s employment and these attitudes also positively influence his wife’s beliefs as well. Similarly, the more educated a married woman is, the more likely she is to support women’s employment and her husband’s beliefs about women’s employment are also positively influenced (Kroska & Elman, 2009). In the MENA region specifically, when men are married to women who continue to work after marriage, they also expressed greater egalitarianism than single men and men whose spouses do not work (Benstead, 2016).

Job sectors in the MENA region also play a role in attitudes toward women’s participation in the labor force. Unlike other developing nations, the MENA region has not seen an expansion in job sectors that typically employ females (Verne, 2015). Rates of female participation in the labor market also vary by sector and Haghight (2012) argues for the importance of examining sectors individually rather than looking at overall rates of employment. Lower aggregate rates of female labor force participation in developing MENA nations can be explained by an overall decline in agriculture and a lack of increase in female participation in the service sector that other developing nations typically experience (Haghight, 2012).

**Women in Political Leadership**

Relative to other similarly developed areas of the world, predominantly Muslim nations in the MENA region demonstrate significantly less support for women’s participation in political
leadership (Price, 2014). Increased investment in education for both men and women, however, has been argued as one strategy for increasing support for women in political leadership (Basiri, 2016). In a study of 181 countries, Bullough and colleagues (2012) identified that increased spending in public education is a contributing factor to the increasing number of women in political leadership and that this finding held true across the MENA region. Education may work to improve women’s participation in political leadership by giving students the opportunity to practice civic skills and offering hands-on experiences with the democratic process (Faour, 2011). There are also additional benefits to investing in organizations that focus on women’s education as increased levels of education among women are predictive of higher rates of female political participation in the MENA region (Baliamoune-Lutz, 2013). Increasing women’s participation in political leadership also has spillover effects that positively impact egalitarian attitudes toward women in other realms of society as well. When women are represented in political positions, such as seats in parliament, more citizens indicate support for women holding employment outside of the home (Price, 2016).

Women in Post-Secondary Education
Increased education levels among both men and women have been linked to increased support for women’s participation in post-secondary education. When women participate in post-secondary education, they are given the opportunity to experience a community outside of the family, and they develop higher expectations for equity in marriage and employment (Shavarini, 2006). Increasing women’s rates of post-secondary enrollment have been shown to increase egalitarian attitudes toward women’s participation in the labor force and other realms of society (Price, 2016). In fact, in many MENA nations, women are enrolling in post-secondary education at higher rates than men (Jalbout, 2015). However, women are often not treated equally in universities and can experience issues with future marriage prospects if their education levels exceed those of potential spouses (Shavarini, 2006). Furthermore, women often experience barriers to entering the labor force upon completion of their education (Jalbout, 2015). Despite these barriers, Haghighat (2012) argues that the social status of women, specifically women’s standing in society relative to men, has been improving due to increased participation in post-secondary education and that women’s positions in society will only continue to improve as the MENA region continues to diversify its job opportunities. Additionally, Chamlou and colleagues (2011) argue that women’s participation in post-secondary education has a positive impact on women’s labor force participation in MENA nations. By increasing the education levels of all citizens in the MENA region, egalitarian attitudes toward women will increase, thus improving women’s abilities to fully access and participate in post-secondary education.

Theoretical Framework
Although gender gaps in the MENA region are still problematic, some researchers have reported positive changes regarding women’s rights and their social involvement (Haghighat, 2012; Keddie, 2007). These researchers have noted the important role of education in driving social changes. Thus, education has been instrumental in revising societal views on women’s social participation, which in turn, improves societal development as a whole (Dris-Aït-Hamadouche, 2007; Faour, 2011; Kilgore, 1999). With this notion, researchers and nation states have addressed the importance of investment in education (El-baz, 2007). In this section, we utilize human capital theory and social movement theory to explain how education can help
narrow gender gaps. We couch this theoretical stance with the assumption that MENA nations are gendered societies. Specifically, the three forms of societal involvement discussed in this paper are highly gendered environments: an individual’s gender identity plays a fundamental role in the hegemonic norms in educational attainment, workforce involvement, and civic participation. Education is an “ideological state apparatus which not only [represents] a key site of social and cultural reproduction” (Dillabough, 2006, p. 3). Education is a key location for learning the meaning of gender, and also learning about equality among people and genders.

**Human Capital Theory**

Taking an economic perspective, human capital theory explains why education is important to encourage women’s participation in the labor force. The foundations of human capital were first described by economist and philosopher Adam Smith in 1776. Smith (1776/1952) said that labor inputs qualitatively include “the acquired and useful abilities of all inhabitants or members of the society” (p.119). These labor inputs are acquired through “education, study, or apprenticeship” (p.119) and come at a high cost (Smith, 1776/1952). Building on this idea, economic research on human capital has mainly examined economic growth and explored workers’ productivity and earning relationships. Human capital theory suggests education can increase individuals’ future outcomes in labor markets and society’s economic growth in general (Labaree, 2010; Schultz, 1961; Tyack, 1976). Research has revealed workers’ education levels are associated with their income in labor markets by assuming that, as levels of education increase, labor productivity and income also increase. Investment in schooling has been considered a critical factor in increasing job opportunities and incomes (Becker, 1985; Mincer, 1958).

Aligning with human capital theory, researchers have identified a number of additional benefits to education. For example, Arcidiacono, Bayer, and Hizmo (2008) found that the wages of college graduates were more commensurate with their abilities in comparison to high school graduates. Education can also impact population growth control and quality of life (Becker, 1993). In addition to the effects of education on individuals, researchers have reported that education benefits society in general. McMahon (2010) provided empirical evidence to support the benefits of education, such as increasing the level of democratization and average life expectancy. This shows that as more people are educated, societies experience additional benefits.

Human capital theory provides evidence that education plays a critical role in improving the quality of individual life and developing society in general, especially focusing on economic perspective. Thus, it is possible to say investment in education can increase women’s participation in labor markets and decrease income inequality by gender in MENA nations. Moreover, increasing educational attainment may support positive views of women’s social and political participation by generating more egalitarian values in its society as a whole.

In the context of MENA where gender gaps are high, human capital theory provides possible explanations for a link between educational attainment and egalitarian views toward women. As gender inequality in the labor market is high, research has specifically focused on national economic growth by increasing educational attainment for women, relying on human capital theory (e.g., World Bank, 2004). According to human capital theory, holding a higher education
degree provides qualified skills and With the increase in economic status resulting from greater educational attainment, individuals may recognize the importance of schooling and social participation for women. For example, focusing on women’s perceptions of feminism in Bahrain, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates, Findlow (2013) found that while male-dominant social structures limited women’s activism and freedom, higher education provides women with opportunities to learn radical ideas, make public demands, and express themselves. Among men in MENA societies, it can be assumed that those with greater educational attainment are more likely to agree with women’s participation in the society. Qualitative data suggest that men are reluctant to have spouses with greater levels of education than themselves in the MENA region (Findlow, 2013). Thus, as human capital theory implies, educational attainment plays a critical role in individuals’ perceptions of women in the society as well as participation in the labor force in the MENA region.

Social Movement Theory
To explain social changes in predominantly Islamic countries, many researchers have adopted social movement theories (e.g., Bayat, 2005; Tuğal, 2009). Social movement theories focus on what drives social movement, and the mechanisms by which social change is achieved. Models of resource mobilization and political process are popular in social movement theories. In the 1990s, theories of New Social Movements developed by distinguishing their approaches from those of the old social movement theories. While old social movement theories situated economy and institutional politics in the center, new social movement theories emphasized civil society (Scott, 1990; Tuğal, 2009).

Resource mobilization models began to emerge in the late 1960s (see Gamson, 1975; Jenkins & Perrow, 1977; McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Oberschall, 1973), and these models viewed social movements as organized activities to achieve already defined movement goals. This approach focused on resource utilization, including organizational venues, external support, and elite sponsorship to increase mobilization (Tuğal, 2009). A resource mobilization approach is useful to reveal active and rational sides of social movements, but this model neglected the importance of the public by focusing on elites, and did not clearly define what can be counted as resources (Zald, 1992). To complement the resource mobilization model, the political process model focuses on state power (see McAdam, 1982; Tilly, 1978). Social movements here can be defined as “an organized, sustained, self-conscious challenge to existing authorities” (Tilly, 1984, p. 304), and therefore, the cognitive emancipation and the process of consciousness are valued in the social movement processes. These changes can be achieved by structural changes of the state and availability of resources. The political process model views socioeconomic status, the level of political opportunities, organizational capacity, collective solidarity, and social control as critical to achieving successful social movements. Unlike these two approaches, the new social movement theories highlight the importance of lifeworld [1] and individuals’ life experiences in social changes (e.g., Habermas, 1987; Mellucci, 1996). The new social movements aim to change value systems, lifestyles, attitudes, cultural symbols, and protect lifeworld rather than political or economic integration. Networks and grassroots communities are also important organizations to achieve these goals (Scott, 1990). This approach suggests that social changes can be led by the movements that focus on cultural and social aspects (Cohen, 1985).
Educational Attainment and Egalitarian Attitudes

Researchers have applied social movement theories to analyze social changes in the Arab region. While the literature has provided different cases, researchers have agreed on using integrated frameworks in analyzing social movements in Arab or Islamic nations because these regions have complex dynamics of social changes. For example, unlike other Western countries, their state power is a strong driver, and at the same time, religion has a strong power in shaping collective norms and value systems (Bayat, 2005; Tuğal, 2009). Given this, education can play a critical role in realizing social changes through movements. From the view of old social movement theories, which focus on structural changes in politics and economy, reforming educational systems and institutions can be one way to lead changes (El-baz, 2007). From the view of new social movement theories, which focus on everyday life and value systems, education can help emancipate learners and integrate individual meaning and collective identities (Kilgore, 1999). Therefore, education can be a significant mediating factor in making social changes in MENA countries.

Approach
Using survey data from the Arab Barometer, we identify the extent to which educational attainment predicts individuals’ attitudes toward women in MENA nations and we also look at trends in this relationship over time. First, we describe the Arab Barometer and the specific variables we include in our analyses. Next, we offer several descriptive analyses and explain our analytic approach. Finally, we present the findings from our analyses. The following research questions inform these methods:

1) What is the relationship between educational attainment and individuals’ attitudes toward women?
2) How have attitudes toward women and their relationship to educational attainment changed over time?

Arab Barometer
We utilized data from the Arab Barometer, a publicly available data set that was established in 2005 by the University of Michigan, Princeton University, and other universities and research centers in the MENA region [2]. While definitions can vary, the MENA region is generally considered to include 20 countries, spanning from Morocco to Iran (World Bank, 2014). A 2011 World Bank Report describes the MENA region as an area of rapid urbanization with pockets of very dense population and high economic activity. Due to uneven rapid growth across the region, there are substantial disparities in development and employment rates.

The Arab Barometer survey was designed to produce data “on the politically-relevant attitudes of ordinary citizens” in MENA nations (Arab Barometer, 2005). All surveys were conducted in-person using a complex national probability sample design with stratification and clustering. Surveys were independently conducted within each country by a national institution, such as a research center or university. The specific sampling design varies by country based on unique district or province boundaries. Survey data was collected in three waves: 2006-2008, 2010-2011, and 2012-2014. In each wave of data collection, seven to thirteen countries in the region participated.
We utilized the most recent wave of data to answer our first research question pertaining to the relationship between educational attainment and attitudes toward women. In our first set of analyses, we used all 12 countries in the data set: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen. We used the first wave of data, 2006-08, in conjunction with a portion of the most recent wave of data to answer our second research question pertaining to changes in attitudes and their relationship to educational attainment over time. This set of analyses focused on six nations that participated in both waves of data collection: Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, and Yemen. Each country surveyed a nationally representative sample of approximately 1,200 adult citizens over the age of 18. These countries share a number of common characteristics: Arabic is the official language, Islam is the dominant religion, and the population is fairly young (Assaad & Roudi-Fahimi, 2017). However, it is important to note that the populations of these nations are not homogenous. For example, there is a large Christian minority in Lebanon and varying dialects are spoken across countries. There is also substantial variation in per capita incomes, with Sudan on the lower extreme at $4,730 and Algeria on the upper end of the spectrum at $15,075 (World Bank, 2016).

Variables
Our analyses focused on three survey items that measure participants’ attitudes toward women’s equal participation in society. These questions measured the extent to which citizens believe women can work outside the home, women’s ability to participate in political leadership, and the importance of university education for women relative to men. We considered each outcome individually due to the unique attitudes each question assessed. Cronbach’s alpha was 0.42, so these items could not be used to generate a composite measure. We verified that these three outcomes needed to be considered individually by also calculating Cronbach’s alpha for various subgroups by gender, education, level, and country. We found that these values generally fell between about 0.35 and 0.45, indicating that the variation was not being driven by a particular subgroup of our sample. As we were interested in whether or not individuals supported women’s equal participation in outside employment, higher education, and political leadership, we conflated survey responses regarding each of these forms of participation from a four-point scale to a binary measure of supporting or not supporting women, where egalitarian responses received a “1,” and non-egalitarian responses received a “0.” We felt that although an individual may waver between strong agreement and agreement with a woman’s right to participate in society (or similarly between strong disagreement and disagreement), he or she is not likely to waver between agreement and disagreement. To ensure this was the appropriate decision, we ran a series of comparison tests between individuals who selected “strongly agree” and “agree” (and similarly, those who selected “disagree” and “strongly disagree”). We compared these groups based upon educational attainment and found that, while a handful of these comparisons were significantly different, there were no substantive differences among those who indicated some level of agreement (or disagreement). At most, educational attainment rates fell within approximately four percentage points of each other. Additionally, binary outcomes allowed for easier interpretation of findings.

Our main independent variables of interest were the attainment of a high school diploma and a bachelor’s degree. Other independent variables used in our analyses included: age, gender, religion, employment status, student status, income stability, and marital status. These
Educational Attainment and Egalitarian Attitudes

demographics were selected due to their potential impact on attitudes toward women’s equal participation in society. We controlled for these characteristics to isolate the relationship between educational attainment and egalitarian attitudes.

Descriptive Statistics
In Table 1, we provide descriptive statistics for education attainment and other demographics by country for all participants included in our analyses. All countries participating in 2012-14 were used to answer our first research question and our second research question was answered using the six countries in 2006-08 that also participated in 2012-14. While there was a fair amount of variation between countries, about half were women, most identified as Muslim, and a majority of participants were married. About half of participants held a high school diploma and approximately one in five participants held a bachelor’s degree. Although the average participant age was about 38, this variable was positively skewed (0.647), with younger participants representing a substantial portion of the sample. This mirrors larger trends in the area, as the youth in the MENA region currently represent a substantial portion of the population (Assaad & Roudi-Fahimi, 2017).

Table 1
Observable characteristics of Arab Barometer participants, 2006-2008 and 2012-14.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Employed</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>High School Diploma or Greater</th>
<th>Bachelor's Degree or Greater</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(13.7)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
<td>(0.44)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>(0.42)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>1143</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(13.8)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.12)</td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>(0.46)</td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>(0.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>1195</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(13.5)</td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.39)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>(0.47)</td>
<td>(0.47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>1277</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(14.8)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.39)</td>
<td>(0.29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>1270</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(13.7)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.15)</td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>(0.42)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(9.9)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
<td>(0.48)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>(0.47)</td>
<td>(0.46)</td>
<td>(0.46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>6902</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(13.4)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.31)</td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.43)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2012-14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Employed</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>High School Diploma or Greater</th>
<th>Bachelor's Degree or Greater</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria*</td>
<td>1220</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(15.0)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.48)</td>
<td>(0.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>1196</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(13.3)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.23)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.45)</td>
<td>(0.45)</td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>(0.40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>1215</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(13.1)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.48)</td>
<td>(0.48)</td>
<td>(0.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan*</td>
<td>1795</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(13.7)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.07)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.46)</td>
<td>(0.46)</td>
<td>(0.48)</td>
<td>(0.37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>1021</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(10.6)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.46)</td>
<td>(0.39)</td>
<td>(0.44)</td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>(0.43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon*</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(15.4)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>(0.45)</td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>1247</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(13.7)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.10)</td>
<td>(0.48)</td>
<td>(0.50)</td>
<td>(0.49)</td>
<td>(0.45)</td>
<td>(0.47)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
countries, we found significant differences in levels of support for women. We used variance tests to determine if these differences were statistically significant. Across a majority of countries, we also conducted a series of analysis of variance tests to determine if these differences were statistically significant. Across a majority of countries, we found significant differences in levels of support for women.

Table 2 summarizes our outcomes of interest in our first research question by country and education level. Each value can be interpreted as the portion of individuals holding an attitude toward women. While there was variation by country and education level, there tended to be fairly high support for women working outside the home and attending university, with levels of support ranging from 75 to 90%. Egalitarian attitudes toward women in political leadership were substantially lower. On average, only about 35% of individuals disagreed that men are better at political leadership than women. Because of the substantial variation between countries in these outcomes, we also conducted a series of analysis of variance tests to determine if these differences were statistically significant. Across a majority of countries, we found significant differences in levels of support for women.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>&quot;A married woman can work outside the home.&quot; (Agreement)</th>
<th>&quot;In general, men are better at political leadership than women.&quot; (Disagreement)</th>
<th>&quot;University education is more important for males than females.&quot; (Disagreement)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less Than High School</td>
<td>High School Diploma or Greater</td>
<td>Bachelor's Degree or Greater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These countries are included in analyses for both research questions 1 and 2.

Note. Income stability data was not collected in 2006-08. Aside from N (number of participants), all values are formatted as mean (standard deviation). Min-max is included below the mean (standard deviation) for each variable for “All Countries.”

Exact ages for Morocco were not collected in 2006-08. Estimates were generated based on a 1-7 scale where 1 = 18-24, 2 = 25-34, and so on. Morocco is not included in the mean for Age in All Countries.
Analysis: Educational Attainment and Attitudes Toward Women

To answer our first research question, pertaining to the relationship between educational attainment and attitudes toward women, we first conducted a series of two-sample tests of proportions to identify significant differences by education level in the proportion of citizens reporting egalitarian attitudes toward women. Because we hypothesized that greater levels of education predict more egalitarian attitudes, we compared individuals with and without high school diplomas in order to determine whether education might be predictive of support for women. Table 3 contains the results of these tests of proportions. In all countries, support for women working outside the home was significantly higher for individuals with a high school diploma. With regard to political participation, six of twelve countries had significant differences by education level, but in three of these countries, those with more education were surprisingly less supportive of women and overall, both groups of individuals supported women in political leadership at a rate of 35%. In regards to university education for women, seven of twelve countries had significant differences in education and the overall difference across all countries was significant as well. In general, those with high school diplomas had significantly higher rates of support for women attending university.

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>&quot;A married woman can work outside the home.&quot; (Agreement)</th>
<th>&quot;In general, men are better at political leadership than women.&quot; (Disagreement)</th>
<th>&quot;University education is more important for males than females.&quot; (Disagreement)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less Than High School Diploma or Greater</td>
<td>Less Than High School Diploma or Greater</td>
<td>Less Than High School Diploma or Greater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>p-value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>0.84 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.30 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.94 (0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.93 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.44 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.98 (0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>0.81 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.33 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.76 (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.86 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.32 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.79 (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>0.77 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.26 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.73 (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.84 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.32 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.80 (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>0.79 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.25 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.73 (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.86 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.28 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.78 (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>0.87 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.51 (0.03)</td>
<td>0.60 (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.92 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.38 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.72 (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>0.88 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.59 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.88 (0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.93 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.63 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.87 (0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>0.80 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.26 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.78 (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.85 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.23 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.75 (0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;.10</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Observing this potential relationship between education and attitudes toward women as well as the significant variation between countries, we estimated a logistic regression model with country fixed effects in order to determine the likelihood of an individual supporting women based on educational attainment. We estimated the following model:

$$
\text{SUPPORT}_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{EDUCATION}_{ij} + \beta_2 \text{DEMOGRAPHICS} + \mu_j + \epsilon_{ij}
$$

We estimated a total of six models, where SUPPORT is a binary outcome representing whether individual $i$ in country $j$ supports women in the labor market, political leadership, and higher education. EDUCATION, represents the level of educational attainment that person $i$ in country $j$ has attained. We estimate separate models for high school diploma and bachelor’s degree. $\beta$ is the constant term. DEMOGRAPHICS represents a vector of individual characteristics, including age, gender, religion, employment or student status, income stability, and marital status. Country fixed effects are represented by $\mu_j$ and $\epsilon_{ij}$ is the error term. Our estimates used robust standard errors clustered by country.

**Findings: Educational Attainment and Attitudes Toward Women**

Table 4 contains the findings of our first research question, with all coefficients displayed as odds ratio estimates. We found that increased educational attainment is a statistically significant predictor of support for women in the labor force and university education. For example, an individual with a high school diploma was 1.772 times as likely as someone who did not complete high school to support women working outside of the home. Having a bachelor’s degree versus not completing high school predicts that individual would be 1.929 times more likely to support women in the workforce. Similarly, individuals with high school diplomas and bachelor’s degrees were 1.418 and 1.380 times more likely, respectively, to support women attending university. For political leadership, we did not find that educational attainment increases one’s odds of supporting women. While the coefficients were slightly above 1 (1.074 for high school diploma and 1.087 for bachelor’s degree), these odds ratio estimates were not statistically significant. Across all models, we found that female participants have significantly higher odds of supporting women’s equal participation in society. In the case of participating in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>β (SE)</th>
<th>β (SE)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>β (SE)</th>
<th>β (SE)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>β (SE)</th>
<th>β (SE)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>0.73 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.80 (0.02)</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
<td>0.53 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.59 (0.03)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.68 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.82 (0.02)</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>0.77 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.87 (0.01)</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>0.33 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.28 (0.02)</td>
<td>&lt;.10</td>
<td>0.78 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.80 (0.01)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>0.82 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.87 (0.02)</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
<td>0.20 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.27 (0.02)</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>0.66 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.76 (0.02)</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>0.81 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.88 (0.01)</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>0.43 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.43 (0.02)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.83 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.85 (0.02)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>0.73 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.81 (0.02)</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>0.29 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.25 (0.02)</td>
<td>&lt;.10</td>
<td>0.60 (0.02)</td>
<td>0.70 (0.02)</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>0.80 (0.00)</td>
<td>0.87 (0.00)</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
<td>0.35 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.35 (0.01)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.75 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.80 (0.00)</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Comparisons were conducted using two sample tests of proportions within countries by education level.
Educational Attainment and Egalitarian Attitudes

the labor force and political leadership, individuals who identified with a religion other than Islam were more likely to support women. Finally, income stability predicted higher odds of egalitarian attitudes in several models. Overall, these findings demonstrate that higher levels of education are a strong predictor of egalitarian attitudes toward women’s participation in society.

Table 4

| Odds ratio estimates for educational attainment as a predictor of support for women with robust standard errors clustered by country and country fixed effects, 2012-14. |
|---|---|---|
| High School Diploma or Greater | "A married woman can work outside the home." (Agreement) | 1.772 (0.068)*** |
| | "In general, men are better at political leadership than women." (Disagreement) | 1.074 (0.097) |
| | "University education is more important for males than females." (Disagreement) | 1.418 (0.098)*** |
| Bachelor’s Degree or Greater | 1.929 (0.246)*** | 1.087 (0.091) |
| | 1.380 (0.131)*** |
| Age | 2.809 (0.393)*** | 1.984 (0.236)*** |
| | 2.000 (0.241)*** | 1.975 (0.244)*** |
| Female | 1.467 (0.388)*** | 2.300 (0.384)*** |
| | 1.483 (0.388)*** | 2.305 (0.384)*** |
| | 0.888 (0.113) | 0.896 (0.114) |
| Non-Muslim | 1.035 (0.093) | 1.126 (0.082) |
| | 27.2 to 38.0% | 27.2 to 38.0% |
| | 1.061 (0.060) | 1.069 (0.070) |
| | 1.095 (0.091) | 1.100 (0.097)*** |
| Employed or Student | 1.224 (0.050)*** | 1.126 (0.055) |
| | 1.048 (0.050) | 1.046 (0.055) |
| | 1.108 (0.081) | 1.108 (0.081)*** |
| | 1.081 (0.083) | 1.164 (0.077)*** |
| | 1.065 (0.082) | 1.114 (0.081)*** |
| | 1.033 (0.055) | 1.007 (0.051)*** |
| | 1.031 (0.055) | 0.999 (0.051)*** |
| Married | 1.443 (0.300)*** | 0.282 (0.048)*** |
| | 0.289 (0.044)*** | 1.457 (0.145)*** |
| | 0.908 (0.166) | 1.017 (0.166)*** |
| N | 14706 | 14706 |
| | 14539 | 14539 |
| | 14578 | 14578 |
| Constant | 1.443 (0.333)*** | 0.282 (0.048)*** |
| | 0.289 (0.044)*** | 1.457 (0.145)*** |
| | 0.908 (0.166) | 1.017 (0.166)*** |

Note. * p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01

Analysis: Trends in Support for Women and Educational Attainment Over Time

Finding a strong relationship between educational attainment and attitudes toward women’s participation the workforce and university education, we next sought to identify trends in these attitudes over time and to determine whether this relationship is a new or longstanding phenomenon. To do this, we completed additional analyses of the six nations appearing both in the 2006-08 and 2012-14 waves of data: Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, and Yemen. Displayed in Figure 1, we calculated the mean level of support for women in both 2006-08 and 2012-14. Across all three outcomes, the portion of individuals with egalitarian attitudes toward women increased. Disagreement that men are better at political leadership increased from 27.2 to 38.0%; disagreement that university is more important for men than women increased from 72.9 to 78.9%; and agreement that women can work outside the home increased from 78.5 to 82.7%.

Observing this increase across all measures, we estimated a series of logistic regression models for this subset of six countries in both 2006-08 and 2012-14 to determine how the relationship between educational attainment and attitudes toward women changed over time. Our second set of analyses followed a similar model as our first set. In this set, however, we only analyzed
the six countries in both waves of data and income stability was dropped as a covariate because it did not appear in the 2006-08 survey. We estimated a total of 12 models, looking at our three outcomes of interest during both waves of data, and considering both high school diploma and bachelor’s degree attainment. As with our first analyses, we included country fixed effects and clustered robust standard errors by country to account for the variance across settings.

Findings: Trends in Support for Women and Educational Attainment Over Time

The findings of our second research question can be found in Table 5. All coefficients displayed are odds ratio estimates. In nearly every model, we found that educational attainment predicts an increase in one’s likelihood of supporting women’s equal participation in society. Not only was educational attainment nearly universally significant, but the likelihood of increased education predicting more positive attitudes toward women increased over time in a number of instances as well. For example, individuals with bachelor’s degrees were 1.865 times more likely to agree women can work outside the home in 2006-08 and these odds increased to 2.456 in 2012-14. Similarly, the odds of bachelor’s degree holders disagreeing that university education was more important for men than women increased from 1.585 to 1.783 in this same period of time. As with our first analyses, women had higher odds of holding egalitarian attitudes in all models and in a majority of our analyses, individuals practicing a religion other than Islam were also more likely to hold egalitarian attitudes. Overall, these findings provide further evidence that the relationship between education and support of women is not new and has, in some cases, been strengthening over the past decade.
### Table 5

**Odds ratio estimates for educational attainment as a predictor of support for women with robust standard errors clustered by country and country fixed effects in six MENA nations, 2006-09 and 2012-14.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006-08</th>
<th>2012-14</th>
<th>2006-08</th>
<th>2012-14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>&quot;A married woman can work outside the home.&quot; (Agreement)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma or Greater</td>
<td>2.260***</td>
<td>1.920***</td>
<td>1.865***</td>
<td>2.456***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree or Greater</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.020</td>
<td>0.970</td>
<td>0.973</td>
<td>0.939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2.787***</td>
<td>3.239***</td>
<td>2.735***</td>
<td>3.271***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Muslim</td>
<td>2.522***</td>
<td>1.558***</td>
<td>2.718***</td>
<td>1.608***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed or Student</td>
<td>1.062</td>
<td>1.013</td>
<td>1.130</td>
<td>1.089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>1.076</td>
<td>1.001</td>
<td>1.055</td>
<td>0.967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>6871</td>
<td>7684</td>
<td>6871</td>
<td>7684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.828***</td>
<td>1.618***</td>
<td>2.647***</td>
<td>1.960***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>&quot;In general, men are better at political leadership than women.&quot; (Disagreement)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma or Greater</td>
<td>1.128 (0.112)</td>
<td>1.167 (0.103)</td>
<td>1.321 (0.196)*</td>
<td>1.295 (0.142)**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree or Greater</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.004</td>
<td>0.967</td>
<td>1.004</td>
<td>0.959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1.742***</td>
<td>2.185***</td>
<td>1.744***</td>
<td>2.188***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Muslim</td>
<td>2.299***</td>
<td>2.224***</td>
<td>2.302***</td>
<td>2.253***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed or Student</td>
<td>1.062</td>
<td>1.013</td>
<td>1.130</td>
<td>1.089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>1.076</td>
<td>1.001</td>
<td>1.055</td>
<td>0.967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>6871</td>
<td>7600</td>
<td>6871</td>
<td>7600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.314</td>
<td>0.256</td>
<td>0.312</td>
<td>0.270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>&quot;University education is more important for males than females.&quot; (Disagreement)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma or Greater</td>
<td>1.581***</td>
<td>1.478***</td>
<td>1.585***</td>
<td>1.783***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree or Greater</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1.021</td>
<td>1.028</td>
<td>0.995</td>
<td>1.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Discussion**

Overall, we find strong relationships between levels of education and egalitarian views of women. Leaning on education as a way to continue to improve views of women is a particularly powerful tool due to the nature of changes in views of women over time as predicted by levels of education. This relationship indicates that views of women are not fixed and influencing young people’s view of women will in time have an effect on a society’s shared cultural viewpoint. This follows the theoretical understanding of social movement theory that focuses on changes in attitudes: young people’s views toward women can be changed with time and focused attention on the role of education.

Increased access to education may be an explanation for changing views of women and provides a venue to continue influencing views of women in MENA countries. Educating young people in MENA countries is a developmental imperative when taken within the context of egalitarian views of women (Roudi-Fahini & Moghadam, 2003). However, simply increasing access to education is not adequate; using curriculum and teaching styles that value women’s contributions to society is crucial to change views of women. This feminist focus on curriculum that directly addresses women’s contributions is key to changing value systems and attitudes toward women. When an entire educational system values women through positive representations of them in the curriculum, extended exposure to this message may further develop the increasingly egalitarian views of women in MENA countries. We stress that it is not just increasing access to education, but also the content of educational experiences that will influence students as they mature. Feminist theory highlights the importance of the content of educational experiences, not just the existence of women in the classroom (Dillabough, 2006).

While curriculum that values women is one way to improve views of women in MENA countries, teaching problem-solving skills, cooperation, and critical thinking are helpful in building democracy and citizenship (Akkair, 2004). These skills are linked to continued social, economic, and political reforms aimed at democratizing the region. Investments in education that focused on these skills build on this paper’s findings that increased levels of education are indicative of positive views of women’s involvement in society. These skills’ association with economic, political, and social reforms aligns with our analysis of increasingly positive views of women’s involvement in work outside of the home, political leadership, and the importance of university education, respectively. The intersection of these three forms of societal involvement highlights the contributions of women through a human capital framework. Women are untapped economic, political, and social inputs when they are not viewed as equal contributors...
Educational Attainment and Egalitarian Attitudes

In those environments. By raising the views of women in these fields, they become contributors to these respective fields.

In addition to investment in the content of education, educational investments need to be for all students. We found that women generally have more egalitarian views of women compared to men. Additionally, those whose partners had egalitarian views of women would be more likely to hold similar views. Therefore, it is imperative that educational reforms, while promoting positive images of women, are targeted toward both men and women (Unterhalter, 2006). This is a central idea of new Social Movement Theories that focus on changing everyday life and value systems (Kilgore, 1999). Focusing on a single gender will not democratize views of women as effectively as educating both genders. These content-sensitive investments should be implemented quickly to take advantage of the large population of young people in Arab countries in this region (Faour, 2011). Educating students when they are young with a curriculum that promotes egalitarian views of women promotes these ideas at an early age. As students age, the society’s overall views of women will become more egalitarian (El-baz, 2007).

Based on the findings of this paper, we call for continued education investment in MENA countries. However, investments in infrastructure and education supports, such as buildings and computers, are not sufficient if the goal of these education investments is to create lasting egalitarian views. Investing in education as soon as possible will support the findings that views of women are becoming more egalitarian with time. Teaching the large population of young people in MENA countries egalitarian views of women will be seen in future measures of views of women. These investments in education should focus on teaching all students, not just women or men and focus on building skills associated with democracy as well as teaching how women contribute to society in multiple arenas.

Conclusion

In this study, we explored the role of education in shaping egalitarian values in the MENA region. Overall, we found that while there are statistically significant relationships between educational attainment and egalitarian views of women in the MENA region, these relationships are not significant across all countries and do not necessarily point to the conclusion that post-secondary education leads to stronger support of women than a high school diploma does. Despite non-significant relationships between education and support of women across some countries, we have no reason to believe that more education is harmful to developing egalitarian views of women.

Future research should explore the mechanisms that produce these findings: why is education correlated with egalitarian views of women, but inconsistently across national contexts? Although further education beyond high school did not consistently predict increased support of women, completing high school was consistently a predictor of significantly more support for women relative to no high school diploma. Future research should address the mechanism through which increased levels of education affect views of women. What specifically happens in institutions of secondary and post-secondary education that affects views of women? Are there additional contextual factors at play? We also found that the number of people who hold egalitarian views of women has increased with time. Further research should look to address potential explanations for this change in viewpoint. This study found evidence that increased
educational attainment is predictive of more egalitarian views of women in the MENA region and future research should explore contextual and time-specific mechanisms that led to these egalitarian views.

**Amy Auletto** is a PhD student in Educational Policy at Michigan State University. Her current research focuses on the role that new teacher induction plays in encouraging persistence in the teaching profession and improving students' access to effective teachers. She is also interested in gender equality in international education settings.

**Rachel Marias** is a PhD student in Educational Policy at Michigan State University. Her research focuses on organizational identity and change in interdisciplinary programming and majors. She also studies college persistence with the aid of growth mindset and belonging. She currently lives in California.

**Taeyeon Kim** is a PhD student in K-12 Educational Administration at Michigan State University. Her research focuses on leadership development and school governance under education accountability policies. She is also interested in comparative research with an emphasis on the interactions between global changes and local education policies.

**Contact:** Amy Auletto, aulettoa@msu.edu

**Notes**

[1] According to Jürgen Habermas (1987), social arena is composed of the *lifeworld* and the *system*. The *lifeworld* is the closely related to our social and personal life, which is based on the shared meaning and values that lead to actions. In contrast, the *system* is related to interactions with the institutional authority, in which money and power are essential drivers for our action.


**References**


Educational Attainment and Egalitarian Attitudes


Educational Attainment and Egalitarian Attitudes


Education for international mindedness: Life history reflections on schooling and the shaping of a cosmopolitan outlook

Katie Wright
La Trobe University

Emma Buchanan
The University of Melbourne

The development of “international mindedness” is an established aim of international education and has recently gained prominence in national school systems. Despite its increasing salience, it remains an ambiguous construct and an understudied aspect of schooling. It is implicated in globalized educational markets and attempts to measure international mindedness and its kindred concepts, such as cosmopolitanism, are fraught. Drawing on a study of subjective perceptions of the influence of schooling over the life course, this article explores education for international mindedness. Informed by life history and narrative approaches, it provides an analysis of reflections from people who completed International Baccalaureate (IB) programs from the 1970s to 2010s. Commonalities and differences in narratives of those who attended “international schools” and “national schools” are explored in relation to influences people attribute to shaping their worldviews. The article illustrates the value of qualitative approaches and offers new insights into sociological critiques of international education and international mindedness, grounding and enlivening recent characterizations in complex life histories.

A central aim of international education is to promote the kinds of knowledge, skills and understandings that foster in students a predisposition towards cosmopolitanism (Cambridge & Thompson, 2004; Matthews & Sidhu, 2005). While various descriptors are employed to characterize this attribute, international mindedness is the term which has garnered most traction, largely due to its promotion through educational programs developed by the International Baccalaureate (IB) (Bunnell, 2008; Haywood, 2007). The IB is an educational foundation established in 1968 with the dual aim of developing an internationally transportable academic credential and creating an educational program that fostered “a sense of common humanity” (Rizvi, 2009, p. viii). Since the introduction of the original IB Diploma Program (DP) for students in their final two years of secondary schooling in a small number of international schools, the IB has grown tremendously and its offerings have expanded to four different educational programs, all of which seek to promote international mindedness. As articulated by the IB, key attributes of international mindedness are global engagement, multilingualism, and intercultural understanding (Sriprakash, Singh, & Qi, 2014).

While closely associated with international education, the intensification of globalization, mobility, and transnational flows has seen the values invoked by international mindedness become increasingly salient to educational endeavors in national schooling contexts (Fielding & Vidovich, 2017; Lai, Shum, & Zhang, 2014). Yet despite widespread usage and growing
significance in educational discourse, international mindedness remains an ambiguous concept and an understudied aspect of schooling and curricula, with conceptual discussion and scholarly debate outweighing empirical exploration (Belal, 2017; Cause, 2011; Harwood & Bailey, 2012; Tarc & Beatty, 2012; Sriprakash et al., 2014). International mindedness is, moreover, an increasingly problematized concept. Recent scholarship has underscored the multiple and contradictory dimensions of international mindedness and its kindred concepts, notably cosmopolitanism, and critiqued the IB for its position in globalized neoliberal educational markets (Doherty, Luke, Shield, & Hincksman, 2012; Tarc, 2009).

This article seeks to enliven theorization of international mindedness and enrich recent sociological critiques highlighting tensions between the liberal-humanist values of cosmopolitanism – such as the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake and the openness to difference and other cultures – and the co-option of these educational goals for instrumental ends – such as economic advantage through labour market opportunities (Doherty et al., 2012). The study on which this article draws aimed to generate new insights into the connections people make between their schooling experiences and their later lives (Wright, 2015). Subjective reflections on the influence of schooling over the life course were elicited through in-depth interviews with people who had completed IB programs. While most studies of the IB have focused on recent graduates, this research offers fresh perspectives on the cultivation of international mindedness from the standpoint of both recent graduates as well as people who completed their schooling decades ago.

The article begins by considering definitional and conceptual issues around the construct of international mindedness, the IB’s approach to fostering it, and how this has been understood and debated in the scholarly literature. An overview of the broader study and the qualitative biographical approach taken is then provided. In examining themes related to international mindedness and the links people made between educational experiences and their later lives, we consider school type, specifically what we term “international schools” vis-à-vis “national schools”. Acknowledging that considerable differences exist within these categories, this emerged as a key point of distinction in people’s reflections on the influence of schooling in general and curricular and program aspects in particular. Yet, as our analysis also reveals, participants identified broad ranging resonances that resist simple categorization. The interview narratives presented below offer new insights into conceptual engagements with the construct of international mindedness, grounded in the narratives of a diverse group of people who experienced changing formulations of this construct in their schooling.

Conceptualizing and Critiquing International Mindedness
We begin our review of the literature by considering definitional and conceptual issues in relation to international mindedness, turning first to questions of what constitutes international education. While international education has a range of meanings and is readily associated with international schooling (Heyward, 2002), we follow Cambridge and Thompson’s (2004, p. 162) description of international education as a set of ideas mobilized in “the theory and practice of education for ‘international mindedness’ in international schools and other institutions”. International mindedness is also a slippery and multidimensional concept, one that has been understood in different ways (Haywood, 2007; Lineham, 2013; Sriprakash, Singh, & Qi, 2014).
Offering a definition that overcomes the conceptual muddiness of the term, Hill (2012) delineates its key attributes, arguing that international mindedness:

> embraces knowledge about global issues and their interdependence, cultural differences, and critical thinking skills to analyse and propose solutions. International mindedness is also a value proposition: it is about putting the knowledge and skills to work in order to make the world a better place through empathy, compassion and openness – to the variety of ways of thinking which enrich and complicate our planet. (p. 246)

Drawing out its attitudinal components, Harwood and Bailey (2012) suggest it is reflected in a “person’s capacity to transcend the limits of a worldview informed by a single experience of nationality, creed, culture or philosophy and recognise in the richness of diversity a multiplicity of ways of engaging with the world” (p. 79). Hayden, Rancic and Thompson (2000) highlight its dispositional dimensions – being open-minded, flexible in thinking and having respect for others – but note it can also include linguistic competence.

An examination of international mindedness, both conceptually and empirically, necessitates engagement with its kindred concepts, notably global citizenship and cosmopolitanism. Global citizenship entails connections between the local and the global and a curriculum that will prepare students to understand and engage with global issues in a spirit of openness to difference (Taylor, 2017). Similarly, while acknowledging the long lineage and the complex and contested meanings of the term cosmopolitanism, we employ it as another complementary term, one that points to “an intellectual and aesthetic sense of openness towards peoples, places and experiences from different cultures, especially those from different nations” (Matthews & Sidhu, 2005, p. 53). Our use of the term is also attuned to the double-sided nature of cosmopolitanism, entailing both instrumental and strategic dimensions as well as a liberal-humanist orientation (Doherty et al., 2012; Tarc, 2009). Empirically, our interviews with IB graduates affirm that these terms are enmeshed, overlap, and may be used interchangeably.

Schools and education systems across the world have taken a strong interest in internationalizing education (Sripriakash et al., 2014). Promoting international mindedness has historically been, and remains, a central goal of the international schooling sector (Haywood, 2007; Hill, 2012). Yet, as educational systems have increasingly sought to prepare young people for future citizenship in a globalized and interconnected world, the attributes captured in the constructs of international mindedness, global citizenship, and cosmopolitanism are now viewed as important dispositions to foster in national educational jurisdictions (Fielding & Vidovich, 2017; Lai et al., 2014). With its founding internationalist aims, the IB was well placed to capitalize on this trend, becoming a key player in global educational markets. Its expansion in recent years has been rapid, particularly in publicly funded schools (Tarc & Beatty, 2012). A range of rationales have driven its adoption in different jurisdictions, from concerns with developing a distinctive educational identity (McGhee, 2003) and gaining competitive advantage (Doherty et al., 2012) to state-supported strategies of addressing disadvantage and raising academic standards, as evident in the USA (Siskin & Weinstein, 2008).
Conceptualizations of international mindedness as a framing concept for the IB have changed over time. As Hill (2012) notes, during the mid to late 20th century, the construct emphasized intercultural understanding, language learning and human rights. However, this changed somewhat towards the end of the 20th century to encompass “principles related to sustainable development, awareness of global issues, and international cooperation as conflicts continued to arise around the globe” (Hill, 2012, p. 245; see also Tarc, 2009). Mobilizing international mindedness thus encompasses ethical and moral facets, for example, acceptance of difference and promoting intercultural goals, what Tarc (2009, p. 23) describes as “a diffuse set of liberal-humanist, cosmopolitan” values. It also entails more instrumental orientations, enacted through strategic engagements with cosmopolitanism, bringing economic advantages that flow from transnational lifestyles, buttressed by international mindedness as a form of cultural capital. Doherty and colleagues (2012, pp. 313-314), for example, suggest that there is “an inherent, unarticulated tension between cosmopolitanism as an end in itself, and as a means to other, specifically economic and occupational, ends”. Doherty and Li (2011) found both dimensions evident in response to questions of the choice of the IB over the national curriculum in a group of IB Diploma Program (DP) students in Australia. In contrast to studies with a narrower program impact and evaluation focus, more sociological oriented analyses such as this position the IB as an “elite credential” in an increasingly marketized national and transnational educational landscape (Doherty et al., 2012, p. 317; see also Weis & Cipollone, 2013).

There have also been criticisms that the IB, with its foundation in a humanist tradition, may be understood as a project of westernization (Sriprakash et al., 2014; Tamatea, 2008). While the IB has sought to integrate non-western views and perspectives, it has been suggested that the overarching aspirations of international mindedness “may still be decided by the western knowledge industry” (Poonoosamy, 2010, p. 19) and contribute to the normalization of educational standards and benchmarks. In addition, there are concerns that the promotion of international mindedness by the IB – as opposed to the promotion of international understanding in earlier iterations of IB programs – reflects an embrace of neoliberalism, whereby understandings between individuals, rather than understandings between nations has become the central focus (Resnik, 2012).

A Life History Approach to Exploring Education for International Mindedness

The distinctive approach of our study is that it takes a longer view of participation in IB programs and the fostering of international mindedness. We examine perspectives of IB graduates dating back to the 1970s, across a range of educational jurisdictions. Further, in contrast to other research, our approach did not seek to measure international mindedness but rather to provide new biographically situated qualitative perspectives on the connections people make between their schooling experiences and their later lives. Importantly, we did not set out to delineate the extent to which formal education may have more or less of an impact than other factors, such as family. Nevertheless, the interview narratives do offer insights into different spheres of influence in the shaping of what the IB calls international mindedness and what may also be termed a cosmopolitan outlook.

The study on which this article draws employed a life history approach, informed by biographical and narrative methods (Plummer, 2001; Roberts, 2002). The aim of the research was to explore subjective perceptions of the ways in which participation in a particular
educational program, the IB, is understood by people in the post-school years and over the course of people’s lives. This encompassed exploration of personal values, attitudes, and dispositions, including international mindedness, which is a key goal of IB programs. A life history approach was selected to generate rich and detailed insights (Roberts, 2002) into links people themselves make between their schooling experiences and the shaping of their worldviews. As with other qualitative approaches, the intention was not to produce empirical generalizations. Rather, the aim was to elicit in-depth, situated biographical accounts that would add depth and nuance to studies of educational impact and the IB, as well as generate reflections that could enrich more critical readings of the IB as producing and reproducing social stratification.

Illuminating self-perceptions of international mindedness through interviews poses methodological challenges – both in defining and measuring it (Tarc & Beatty, 2012). An interview-based interpretive approach is fruitful for illuminating the complexity of this concept. Analysis of the views of former students of educational programs that explicitly aim to inculcate international mindedness sheds light on its experiential dimensions, which in turn can contribute to and extend conceptual discussions. Given the diversity of our participants, and indeed the study’s temporal scope – schooling experiences spanning more than 40 years – our findings offer fresh and empirically grounded perspectives, complementing a range of existing studies of international mindedness and the IB.

In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with 22 people, 11 women and 11 men, aged between 20 and 63 years who participated in IB programs from the early 1970s to 2010s. Participants included people with a variety of nationalities, cultural backgrounds, and schooling experiences in different locations and school types. Recruitment took place through IB networks and schools offering IB programs and interviews were conducted via Skype or telephone. Interviews began with questions about family of origin and early schooling experiences. Memories of IB programs were then explored, before turning to reflections on life after school and perceived lasting influences of their education on their lives.

During the interviews, focused questions were asked, such as “tell me about your memories of the IB program and the IB subjects you studied” and “to what extent do you see your education shaping your life beyond school?” However, the semi-structured approach to the interviews allowed for flexibility and openness. Participants were thus given opportunities to reflect on other areas of interest as they arose, an approach advocated by Patton (2014) and Plummer (2001). Discussion of international mindedness, global citizenship, and cosmopolitanism arose in some interviews without prompting by the interviewer. In others, it surfaced in response to the question of how their schooling or the IB program they undertook may or may not have influenced their outlook and worldview. Audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed and transcripts were sent to participants. Analysis of interviews was undertaken iteratively, in two phases. The first comprised examination of individual life stories. Phase two involved cross-case thematic analysis of all interviews.

**International Mindedness and School Type**
An important point of difference that emerged across interviews in relation to the development of international mindedness was the type of school attended. Participants had graduated from a
variety of schools but for analytic purposes we distinguish between two types: “international schools” and “national schools”. In drawing this demarcation, we acknowledge that the question of what makes a school “international” is not simple (Heyward, 2002). We categorize international schools as those historically or primarily catering to expatriates and in which there is an explicitly international orientation or non-nationalistic ethos (Heyward, 2002). We use the term “national school” to refer to educational institutions positioned within national systems that have adopted IB programs. While there are of course differences within these categories, it is the differences between them that are most salient for our discussion.

A common response from participants, when asked about the influence of the IB on their later lives was that it provided them with “a broader view of the world”. For many, this was described in terms of the development of an international, global, or cosmopolitan perspective, and for some this had important ethical and political dimensions. Critical thinking, an important dimension of international mindedness (Hill, 2012), was also a notable theme and was conceived of variously as an orientation and skill. Responses pointing to the importance of critical thinking and the IB to the development of international mindedness were consistent across school types, although there were important differences, as we explore below. While issues around the cultivation of international mindedness in relation to areas such as social mobility, inequality, globalization, and identity formation (Doherty et al., 2012) are not the primary focus of our discussion, the life history narratives offer insights into these wider dynamics.

Consideration of narratives of former IB students with schooling experiences in these two categories of school type offers insights into program and curricular dimensions, as distinct from other factors, such as school ethos in efforts to foster international mindedness. We acknowledge that pathways to different school types are important and therefore, within the constraints of space, we also consider family background. Not surprisingly, a number of students who attended international schools came from globally mobile families with considerable degrees of intercultural and transnational cultural capital (Doherty et al., 2012). However, most did not.

**International Schools and the Cultivation of International Mindedness**

We turn now to interview narratives of people who attended international schools, looking first at commonalities that emerged in interviews with people aged over 50 who attended international schools on scholarships in the 1970s and early 1980s. We then look at a somewhat different narrative and life trajectory of a younger participant, who completed the IB DP at an international school in the late 1990s. Overall, for those who attended international schools, the student body and ethos of the school were vividly recalled as aspects of schooling experience that informed the development of concepts, attitudes, and outlooks related to international mindedness, a finding also noted in other empirical studies (Belal, 2017).

For participants aged over 50 years, all of whom attended international schools, a recurrent theme was that their schooling experience opened them to the wider world. Clearly, the impact of their experiences is attributable not only to their educational program but to the fact that they were living abroad. Participants in this age range undertook IB studies abroad at a time in which international travel and intercultural engagement was limited. As 57-year-old David...
commented, cohabiting with “a broad mix of students from all over the world” was life-changing. David had been attending a local high school before he was awarded a scholarship and left his family in Australia before completing the DP in 1976. Similarly, 55-year-old Claire, who left Northern Ireland in the mid-1970s and completed the DP in 1978, felt that the experience had an enormous impact. As she explained:

The slogan at the school is international understanding and for me, that was the big, big thing. I mean I came from a really small, closed yet divided community, which I was very attached to and very defensive of … it was a huge difference … I [became] more interested in mixing with people from different backgrounds … and that has stayed with me very much.

With regard to spheres of influence, disentangling school culture, ethos and student body from curricular or program aspects, is a difficult task (Belal, 2017; Lineham, 2013). This is suggested in comments made by 51-year-old Sabina, who completed the DP in 1980. Reflecting on the international school she attended in Germany; she said: “I think you can’t separate the IB from the fact that it’s an international school. They adopted the IB … because it fit their mission statement”. Similarly, David found it difficult to distinguish between the two, although he did identify the ways in which certain subjects he studied fostered a global perspective.

The experience of cultural immersion and being “opened up” to the world appears to have appreciably shaped the working lives of the older graduates interviewed: David has lived and worked in a number of countries, while Claire now lives in France and works in international relations. Such mobility is also evident in the career trajectory of Sabina, who lives and works in the United States as a journalist. Indeed, three of the four people in the over 50 age group went on to work abroad in areas requiring the capacity to navigate cultural and political differences. In some respects, this is suggestive of practical and even instrumental effects of education for international mindedness, wherein attitudes related to international mindedness operate as forms of cultural capital, affording advantage and mobility in a globalized economy.

A characterization of these former IB students as adopting the logic of the strategic “IB chooser” (Doherty et al., 2012) does not apply easily here. Their studies were undertaken before the rise of global league tables that shaped the mission statements of aspirational and elite schools. Nevertheless, their schooling opportunities do appear to have afforded them a degree of cultural capital; they were able to take advantage of and create opportunities beyond national borders, even though they did not grow up in mobile, transnational families.

This type of cultural immersion and exposure to a wider world was, however, more complex for some, as our interview with Roza revealed. In the mid-1970s she was nominated by her school to participate in a newly established Polish government educational program, which supported two students each year to complete their education at an international school abroad, which she did from 1975 to 1977. She says at the time, she was “completely in love with the experience”. She described it as liberating in many ways; she had newfound independence and she experienced the IB emphasis on individual opinion as new and exciting. She also reflects upon difficulties experienced by some of her fellow students.
One example Roza provided of the difficulties that arose in the context of challenges to the norms associated with students from different cultural backgrounds was the expectation that everyone would have boyfriends or girlfriends. As she recalls, this was problematic for some,

There were so many nationalities in every class and it was assumed that we would therefore acquire a certain amount of internationalism … But on the other hand, I would say that the expectation was rather that in the end, everybody would conform to this sort of European/American standard. That this one particular way of seeing things would prevail in the end.

Critiques of efforts to promote internationalism, particularly in terms of its universalizing dimensions, are brought into sharp relief in Roza’s narrative. Her more ambivalent account is suggestive of wider tensions at play in efforts to promote international mindedness, an endeavor suggested by some as a form of cultural imperialism (Sriprakash et al., 2014; van Oord, 2007). In addition, unlike many of her contemporaries from other regions, Roza was required by the conditions of her scholarship to return to Poland upon graduating. While acknowledging the rationale to build national capacity, her story reveals the personal impact of this state policy:

This philosophy has a big flaw, namely, it assumes that people are happy in their own country, and while it’s probably quite right when you think of students from Holland, Italy, or the United States, but if you think about people like us, from Poland or from certain African countries … I’d say this policy was naive to the point of being cruel because [it] gave all those people a glimpse of what the world could be like, and now go back [home] and basically waste it all, because nobody is going to need it.

Roza’s experience underscores the double-edged nature of efforts to foster international mindedness for those unable to take advantage of its promise. While she welcomed the opportunity to study outside of Poland, enjoyed being immersed in an international school environment and found the IB exciting and liberating, this was problematic upon her return home. While she wanted to stay abroad for her university education, she did not have a visa or the financial resources to do so. She found returning to Poland extremely difficult – her options for tertiary study were limited and she experienced the social and political conditions as stark and oppressive in contrast to the two years she spent abroad. Her description of the coping strategy she developed is poignant. She lived, she said, in a state of “internal expatriation” what she described as physically living in one place but being “somewhere else” mentally.

At university, in Poland, Roza became politically active and she attributes this to her educational experience of the IB, particularly learning about historical struggles for independence. She acknowledges too that she more easily found work than many of her peers because she was equipped with English language skills that fostered employment opportunities, mainly translation work and tutoring. Maintaining friendship networks outside Poland also meant that she preserved an intellectual engagement with the wider world, both through that personal contact and with friends sending her books.
For Roza and others, for example, David, the IB’s fostering of international mindedness was understood as deriving from the experience of immersion in an international school setting and also through the curricular program that was based on non-nationalistic critical inquiry. Many students mentioned the importance of particular subjects, especially History, which was typically recalled as being globally focused. Such exposure fostered, they suggested, broad and critical perspectives that contrasted sharply with the narrower nationalistic views they associated with their previous education.

Reflections on the IB provided by Roza, Sabina, Claire and David offer insights into how people reflect on international mindedness as promoted in international schools offering the IB in the 1970s to early 1980s. This was a time when the construct tended to be interpreted in terms of intercultural understanding, language learning and human rights (Hill, 2012). For those who graduated more recently, experiences of the construct of international mindedness were somewhat different, given that the concept itself shifted somewhat to include concerns with sustainable development, international cooperation and geopolitics (Hill, 2012). Without implying a simplistic causal relationship, we do find traces of these different emphases in more recent graduates’ narratives. To illustrate, we briefly consider Harith’s story, which is suggestive of these dynamics. His account also illuminates the complexity of interconnected dimensions of influence – family, culture, school and curriculum – that shape people’s experiences of schooling and, in turn, their reflections on its resonance over the life course.

Harith completed the DP in 1997 at an international school in China. Unlike the older group of IB graduates, he came from what could be described as a transnational and globally mobile family. His parents were professionals from Sri Lanka, they moved to Japan for a period and then to Hong Kong, where Harith was born. During his childhood, he developed a keen interest in Chinese culture and learned Mandarin. Harith’s description of his younger self is of someone who is independent, competent, and curious. He wanted an experience of immersion in Chinese culture and he was attracted to the internationalist orientation of the IB, so sought out an international school offering the IB in Mainland China. While recognizing that both his family background and the experience of being in an international school played an important role in the development of his worldview, he delineates what he says was the particular influence of the IB on his present-day sense of himself as an internationally minded, global citizen. As he said:

We had to read a lot of global literature … from Japan, Nigeria, the United States, and UK … And with history we did Chinese history, French, you know the Cuban Missile Crisis, United States, the Russian Revolution, we did a lot of global politics. However, if I had come at sixteen and said that I wanted to be a doctor [which he did become], I would have done maths, chemistry and physics, and my global perspective would have been very, very different. So I do think the global perspective comes very much from the subjects that I chose, and I’m so glad that I did those subjects because I feel that I can talk and understand politics a lot more than some of my very scientific counterparts.

Harith and his family could be described in terms of Doherty and colleagues’ (2012) depictions of “IB choosers” – families in high-income brackets, parents with postgraduate education,
linguistically diverse and globally mobile. In such cases, they suggest that it may be the transnational family who is “seeking out the IB to better accommodate their worldviews” because local curricula fail to meet their needs (Doherty et al., 2012, p. 328). The corollary is that rather than international mindedness being an outcome of the IB, it reflects a pre-existing transnational disposition. Certainly, Harith strategically chose the IB and there have been professional benefits for him, including transnational medical work. However, this is not the full picture. The complexities and interconnected spheres of influence come into focus when considering his narrative in greater depth. In his subjective account of international mindedness, it is clear this also includes a strong personal orientation of being critically engaged with the world, beyond a narrow instrumental professionalism. He links, for example, experiences of community service in the IB with his current humanitarian medical work. Harith’s narrative, then, suggests that cultural competence and global mobility has multiple faces, including what might be termed a critical ethic of care. This was also evident in the narratives of younger graduates of international schools, particularly in discussions of the volunteering work they currently do, and links they make between this and the community service component of the IB.

National Schools and the Cultivation of International Mindedness
Reflections from people who attended “national schools” and undertook IB studies from the 1980s through to the early 2010s provide a point of contrast and another perspective on the complexities associated with educational efforts to foster international mindedness. Approximately half the people in the study undertook the IB at such schools. As with the classification of international schools, we acknowledge the heterogeneity of the “national” educational experiences we are considering together here, which includes schools operating in different national contexts and catering to very different student cohorts. Yet common themes did emerge. Most strikingly, and perhaps not surprising, students who attended national schools spoke of international mindedness as being promoted through the disciplines and broader curriculum – course content, pedagogical styles and epistemic orientation – rather than through a school-wide ethos, extracurricular activities or an institutional emphasis on international dialogue.

Five of the six participants who attended state-funded secondary schools did so in North America, where the IB experienced considerable growth in the public sector from the 1980s onwards (Tarc, 2009). We also draw here on interviews with two people who were students at private schools in Australia and Mexico, and one person who undertook IB studies in her local state school in Poland. Whether private or state funded, the national schools described here differed from those we categorize as international schools in important ways. They generally had a more homogenous student body, at least with regard to nationality, and the ethos of the school tended to reflect a nationalistic or local outlook, rather than an explicitly internationalist one. It follows, then, that participants’ reflections on international mindedness would focus more on program and curricular aspects rather than the inculcation of such values through other characteristics of their school, for example, the student body. This was certainly suggested by the reflections of our participants.

A typical response to the question of whether a global perspective was an important part of their schooling was that it came through strongly in certain subjects, particularly History,
Education for International mindedness

Geography, and Literature. Belal’s (2017) recent study of international mindedness found similar views amongst alumni; and yet, interestingly, current students in her research underplayed curricular aspects. In our study, 39-year-old Benjamin, who attended an American high school and completed the DP in 1993, responded to this question by saying:

I don’t recall them saying, now we’re going to focus on being cosmopolitan, but it was cosmopolitan, it was just a fact of life, when you’re scouring all this literature. And I do remember them saying we’re trying very hard not to be Eurocentric. So I guess in that way they were trying to be cosmopolitan.

Benjamin described his education as giving him “the tools to understand the broader world”. This occurred, he said, through literary texts, such as *Heart of Darkness*, which dealt with colonization and European expansion, and provided alternative standpoints to consider: “we were always learning to think about things from the other point of view”. Like many of our participants, Benjamin’s comments also suggest that people interpret international mindedness as being closely related to open-mindedness and critical thinking, as identified in the literature (Hill, 2012; Wilkinson & Hayden, 2010).

Benjamin’s reflection on critical thinking is suggestive of a cosmopolitan orientation as an end in itself. Benjamin did not explicitly describe himself as internationally minded; yet this came through strongly in his interview. Responding to a question about the overall influence of the IB over the twenty years since graduating high school, he said it shaped his understanding of public policy and international affairs. He describes his tertiary studies in engineering as narrowly technical and believes the education provided by the DP fostered a broad and critical perspective that has stayed with him. In raising the subject of public policy, he explained that he could understand political debates and put them into an international, historical and global context, and he attributes this to his IB experience. This theme was reiterated in many interviews, supporting earlier research undertaken with former IB students soon after graduation (Taylor & Porath, 2006). While our study was not intended to measure program impact, our research suggests that for some, these influences may be long-lasting.

A number of participants commented that the global perspectives promoted in the IB program challenged nationalistic views. This has been a contentious issue in the United States. As Bunnell (2009, p. 61) has shown, while the IB has received state support and federal funding, it has also been subject to “concerted attack” from “a vast array of ultra-conservative agencies and commentators who denounce the curriculum as federal interference, and fundamentally ‘un-American’”. Doherty et al. (2012, p. 316) have similarly noted that some neoconservatives view the IB as “a dangerous form of internationalism”. Thirty-five-year-old James, who completed the DP in 1997, throws light on the source of concern:

We talked about the US in a very honest way, which is not what you really get in a lot of, in most, high school education in the US … we definitely were taught to question and criticize the role of the US in foreign affairs and the thinking that you know, everything that the US did was right, or something like that … there was definitely a focus to see us in the entire world, and not just the US.
It was not only students from the United States who made such comments. Twenty-three-year-old Miguel, who completed the DP at a private school in Mexico City in 2010, recalls an international perspective as central to his education. As he explained: “The thing is that the IB provided units that would, well, they have to be analysed from another perspective, other than from a Mexican perspective”. This was a recurring theme across the interviews. For 20-year-old Frederico, who attended a religious school in Australia and completed the DP in 2012, it came through most strongly in English. He recalled, in particular, the exploration of many cultures, facilitated through reading literature from across the globe.

Reflections on international mindedness from 26-year-old Stefa, provide another viewpoint. Stefa completed the DP in 2007 at a state school in Poland. For her, while there were dimensions of internationalism in the curriculum, the most striking moments were rather more incidental. She described an event when former IB students visited her school to talk about opportunities to study abroad. This gave her a new sense of possibility. She contrasted the widening of her worldview provoked by this, with the horizon of possibilities she saw as broadly reflective of Polish education and society. She also recounted other incidental aspects of schooling as important, including teachers undertaking training abroad, suggesting a form of international mindedness as a proclivity towards transnational mobility. Interestingly, Stefa went on to work in an international organization. In addition to such incidental comments or encounters, an important aspect of the IB for her was subject matter and teaching style, which contrasted sharply to what she described as Poland’s nationalistic and homogenous pedagogical and curriculum culture.

Yet not all those interviewed experienced a strong sense of the IB program as fostering internationalist perspectives. For 34-year-old Cooper, who attended a state school in Canada and completed the DP in 1998, this was not an aspect he recalls as significant. As he described it: “in many respects it was still a sort of very suburban Canadian perspective”. For others, though, engagement with the IB was remembered as crucial in their development. Jessie, a 46-year-old Canadian woman who took only two IB subjects in her local high school in 1986, was adamant that the experience was transformative:

“I mean history doesn’t really cover it … [it was] far more geopolitical, global … very much a big picture … how economics fit in, how individual human rights fit in, how you followed the markers and the tracers of the ups and downs of different empires and countries. I still use it today when I’m looking at geopolitical affairs around the entire planet, including economics, which is one of the reasons why I went into activism in politics.

The impact of studying IB History, and the IB subject Theory of Knowledge, is striking in Jessie’s case. She describes this as something that “set the framework” for the rest of her life.

Concluding Comments
This article has explored narratives of 13 former IB students, aged 20 to 58, reflecting on schooling experiences and the cultivation of international mindedness. Drawing on the accounts provided by a diverse range of people with schooling experiences spanning more than four decades, this research provides new biographically informed insights into schooling and the
Education for International mindedness

shaping of personal values, attitudes, and dispositions. As the literature suggests, international mindedness is a complex and multidimensional concept. It is, moreover, a challenging educational “outcome” to research empirically, with only a limited number of qualitative studies exploring international mindedness and the IB. At the same time, educational efforts to foster attitudes and outlooks associated with international mindedness are subject to increasing critique, primarily due to their place in a marketized and elite global educational economy. The research presented in this article provides fresh insights into international mindedness through exploration of subjective perceptions of the lasting influence of schooling. Uniquely, our study grounds analysis of international mindedness in the life histories of former IB students, and our findings suggest that the “effects” of IB programs that seek to foster this outlook are both instrumental and attitudinal.

In our study, international mindedness emerged as a multifaceted and sometimes ambiguous construct, interpreted by former IB students in a variety of ways and often associated with kindred concepts, such as cosmopolitanism. The type of school people attended – broadly grouped above as “national” and “international” – emerged as an important factor in the reflections made by participants regarding the influence of the IB in the formation of their worldview. For people who undertook IB studies in international schooling contexts, a common theme that emerged across all age groups was that cultural immersion in an international school setting was an important component of fostering comfort with, an interest in, and an inclination towards engaging cross-culturally, and helped attune many to geopolitics. For those educated in national school settings, the development of an awareness of cultural, social, and political diversity through school programs was more closely related to curriculum. While a multiplicity of influences come into play in the shaping of people’s worldviews, the identification of particular subjects as important in fostering international mindedness was clearly evident.

International mindedness encompasses abstract forms of understanding, what some participants referred to as a “broad worldview,” as well as practical effects and instrumental dimensions, such as the capacity to work in intercultural settings and to move across national borders with ease. In our study, the instrumental – and often critiqued – practical “benefits” of IB programs were evident in the life trajectories of people who are now globally mobile. Thus, the cultivation of international mindedness may be understood as enacting a strategic form of cosmopolitanism. Yet, as we have noted, a narrowly instrumental characterization of this proclivity fails to capture the complexity of international mindedness, particularly the ethical engagements that we have described as being an important part of a cosmopolitan orientation. As the narratives suggest, international mindedness entails critical thinking, acceptance of difference and being engaged in the wider world – attributions that are simultaneously instrumental and attitudinal.

Our exploration of subjective perceptions of the influence of the IB over the life course, which we considered alongside scholarly debates on international mindedness, offers historically grounded and biographically situated insights into how a group of former IB students understand the process of becoming “internationally minded”. Crucially too, the article has further illuminated the multiple faces of international mindedness, including how its instrumental dimensions operate within increasingly stratified schooling systems and how this can coexist with a wider cosmopolitan ethic.
Katie Wright is an Australian Research Council Fellow (DECRA) and Senior Lecturer in Sociology at La Trobe University.

Emma Buchanan is an Early Career Researcher working in the history and cultural study of education.

Contact: Dr. Katie Wright, Department of Social Inquiry, La Trobe University, Australia. katie.wright@latrobe.edu.au

References


Education for International mindedness


