Education and the Arab Spring

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Education and the Arab Spring: Resistance, Reform, and Democracy explores the current debate about education in the Middle East and North Africa post-Arab Spring. It draws from a variety of conceptual frameworks rooted in different disciplines and fields, such as education, religious and cultural studies, political science, and Arab studies. The book is, in part, a response to an increased demand since the Arab Spring – by universities, cultural institutions, think-tanks, education officials, policymakers and journalists – for a richer, deeper understanding of the role of education in post-Arab Spring states and societies. The book adds a unique and much-needed perspective to this field: its specific focus is on the Arab context, and its analysis is of issues of particular relevance to a changing world order. The great mix of experiences of the contributors attests to the excellent quality of this promising work.

“It is not infrequent to hear sweeping but general criticisms of all aspects of educational systems in the Arab world – everything from textbooks to teaching methodologies have come under scrutiny. The authors of this collection seek to move the debate beyond generalities by providing detailed studies; while informed by a sense of the inadequacy of existing systems, they also provide an empirically rich analysis of existing systems.” – Nathan Brown, George Washington University, USA
Education and the Arab Spring
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Resistance, Reform, and Democracy

Foreword by Bessma Momani

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ROTTERDAM/BOSTON/TAIPEI
To my father Ahmed Abdelwahab Mohamed who passed away a couple of years ago. He taught me the value of education.

– Eid

To Selma and Mostafa, youth who have unknowingly encouraged me to think through the shifting norms of education and democracy in the Egyptian context.

– Hannah

To my father’s soul, Messaoud Aboulkacem, and my beloved mother, Khedidja. They believe good education can better the world. They have always inspired me to value education and strive to spread it.

– Slimane
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The Arab world is at a crucial turning point. The Arab region has one of the most youthful populations in the world, a rising class of educated young people, an increasingly connected society to technology, social media, and online opportunities. Yet, the Arab region remains stuck repeating old teaching pedagogy of rote learning. To turn the region around, deep reforms in education delivery and political institution are needed. In an aptly titled volume, Mohamed, Gerber, and Aboulkacem explore education in the Middle East and North Africa region after the Arab Spring and how this is an important step toward democracy.

The Arab region has made considerable progress toward post-secondary education in the Middle East and North Africa. Throughout the 2000s, the number of universities doubled as the region witnessed an expansion in both private and international post-secondary education institutions. Some countries, particularly in the Arab Gulf, invested significant amounts of money into expanding post-secondary education. New and shiny campuses were noted across the Gulf and many other parts of the Middle East and North Africa, and students flocked to acquire the latest status symbol; a university education. Similar trends prevailed in other parts of the Arab region, where new, private universities offered opportunities to many Arab youth. Most remarkable, Arab women acquired post-secondary degrees at rapid rates that exceeded most other developing regions. Arab women, like their male counterparts, sought post-secondary degrees as important cultural and societal achievements. While female employment did not increase in the same way as female post-secondary education, the rising gender equality in post-secondary education was one of the most notable achievements in the Arab region of the 2000s.

While post-secondary education has soared in the Arab region, the quality and delivery of primary and secondary education remained dormant, if not decreasing and deteriorating. Many of the chapters in this volume take great care in investigating and understanding the state of education in the Arab world. The interdisciplinary approach and mixed methodology employed by the various authors also provided an important insight into how to study education in the region. From the perspective of youth, teachers, student unions, to religious authorities, the chapters in this volume offer unique research into the state of education in the Arab region. There is no shortage of books on the security, political, and economic challenges facing the region, but the dearth of books on education in the Arab region is noteworthy. This book is one step in helping to rectifying the imbalance of study on the Arab region,
and yet the message of how education is intimately tied to bettering the lives, society, and institutions throughout the region is significant as well.

If the Arab region is to overcome its emphasis on rote learning and memorization, decision-makers in policy, academia, and public institutions will need to learn from the findings and suggestions of the authors in this edited volume. Indeed as the editors passionately point out; for democracy to flourish in the Arab region, the essence of critical thinking needs to be fostered and nurtured. There is no better place for critical thinking to take hold than in the classroom. Students that ask questions of their teachers and are active learners, are more likely to be successful in the global workforce. Yet, active learners are less likely to be passive citizens that do not question their leaders and governments. Hence this is the dilemma for the Arab region, an active learner will produce an active citizenry; if Arab governments want to prepare their populace for the workforce of the future, they will need to see the benefits of a critical-thinking society.
PREFACE

The “Arab Spring,” also known as the “Arab Revolutions,” was one of the most thrilling political events of this generation. Not only was it enormously influential and groundbreaking, but it unfolded in real time on both the television and the Internet, enabling people throughout the world to feel a sense of connection with the protesters they saw. Indeed, the Arab Revolutions exemplify the first global protest movement that emanates from transnational social media technologies like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Along with the social changes that we have seen throughout the world, the political changes of the Arab Revolution have altered the dynamics of our world. Education has been at the heart of the reform spirit of the Arab Spring.

This book was the product of multiple conversations that emerged during the period following the political uprisings of the Arab Spring in the Middle East. The editors first met in Egypt in 2012 over a mutual interest in developing programs to promote educational equality in Egyptian schools. The editors discussed plans to conduct research on educational equality in the Egyptian context and planned to work toward understanding the shifting definitions of democracy and its relationship to education across the entire Arab World. Over several conversations spanning multiple time zones, including meeting on three different continents in four different countries, the editors grappled with the complexity and nuances inherent in the discussions surrounding education and democracy in a region of the world that, to date, faces continued instability and political dissidence.

Defining education and democracy in the time following the Arab Spring is a challenging task; therefore, the editors sought contributions that would allow the widest understanding and meaning making to occur. The editors did not set regimented parameters for education, hence they do not define education as something that only occurs inside a formal institution, rather they see education as something that occurs formally and informally; inside school buildings, churches, and mosques, as well as in community centers and neighborhoods. This wide definition of education allows us to grapple with how learning takes place, and allow us to see how ideas take root and grow with careful cultivation and attention. Education is an equalizer, but only if we recognize the diverse and varied ways in which people come to learn and make meaning of the world.

Democracy, similarly is a challenging concept to define within the Arab Spring context. Our book contributors have all come to examine democracy a little bit more deeply, and to question and wonder what democracy really is. Does the Western definition adequately define democracy, and does the Western definition actually meet the needs of the changing face of democracy in an increasingly global and digitized interconnected transnational world? Many Westerners, for example, equate
democracy with freedom, but then equate freedom with remaining in a constant state of war against “invisible and/or nonexistent ‘terrorists’, or protecting their “rights” by taking the lives of others. Is this democracy, and if so, is this a state of democracy we want to promote in an increasingly interconnected world?

Moreover, the Arab Spring is followed by many calls from young people to get rid of the type of instruction in humanities and social sciences that continues to drill obedience and submission to the regime rather than encourage freedom of thought. Schools tend not to foster creative and independent thinking, instead making their students learn long passages by heart. The Arab Spring brought to the fore, social informal learning, through highlighting what youth are doing to educate themselves through technology when their education system falls short. It is with this greater definition and examination of education and democracy, that we examine how these shifting norms can have a lasting impact on educational equality in our global and interconnected world.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to thank our respective universities, Doha Institute for Graduate Studies and Sam Houston State University, for providing us the opportunity to engage in areas of research that impact the global community. Both universities have been incredibly supportive in allowing us to engage in travels and research around the topic of education and democracy.

We want to thank Michel Lokhorst, our acquisitions editor at Sense Publishers, for his excitement about our text. We appreciate his guidance and support throughout the process. Additionally, the editors want to thank Jolanda Karada for her tireless support during the publication process.

We also want to thank our contributors, for without them this book would not be possible. Their chapters are insightful and thought-provoking and truly encouraged us to rethink how education and democracy are interwoven principles that encourage freedom of thought and expression among all people. It was a pleasure to work with each of them. Extra special thanks to Bessma Momani for writing the Foreword to the book.

The editors would like to thank their families for their love, support and patience. Lastly, the editors would like to thank the participants from each study presented in this book who informed us about education across the Arab world. The studies presented in this book were carefully researched and conducted in order to bring educational inequalities to light and to provide a richer path toward understanding educational democracy for all of the peoples of the Arab World. Without them, this book would not be possible.
CHAPTER ABSTRACTS

SECTION ONE: CLASSROOM ISSUES AND TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRUGGLES POST-ARAB SPRING

Chapter One
Teaching for Democracy in Post-Arab Spring: Challenges & Opportunities
Abdullah F. Alrebh & Radhi Al-Mabuk

Abstract: This chapter examines educational reform in general and pedagogical reformation in particular in the Arab World. Teachers have a moral responsibility to empower students in learning about democratic values, and prepare them for participation in a democracy. The issue of pedagogical reformation is examined by addressing four areas: (1) prevailing pedagogical approaches in the Arab World and their impact on students; (2) how teachers affect change by embodying the democratic ideals and values of citizenship, social justice, and pluralism and serving as democratic role models; (3) transformative pedagogies that promote democracy and how; and (4) challenges and opportunities for teaching for democracy in the Arab World. The chapter concludes by discussing teacher training and examining the role teacher assumptions and beliefs play on how they teach. Ways for teachers to examine their assumptions in order to gain more insight and awareness of themselves as individuals, professionals as well as agents of change are suggested.

Chapter Two
Arab Spring and Teacher Professional Development in Egypt: A Case Study
Nahed Abdelrahman & Beverly J. Irby

Abstract: The scale of the demand and need for teachers’ continuing education, if the goal of Egypt education system is to achieve education with high quality, has far outstripped existing provision. Educational quality is the main issue that the Egypt education system aims to achieve; however, education quality has not been achieved due to the lack of effective teacher in-service education. In order to explore the influence of Arab Spring on in-service teacher education, we explored in-service teachers perceptions on teacher professional development programs provided prior and post-Arab Spring. Six high school teacher leaders in Egypt were interviewed to answer the research questions. The teachers responded pessimistically toward the revolution as to its impact on teacher professional development in Egypt.
CHAPTER ABSTRACTS

SECTION TWO: YOUTH EDUCATION AND THE SEEDS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Chapter Three
Democracy as Student Mobilization: How Student Unions Struggle for Change in Egypt
Ahmed Abd Rabou

Abstract: The Arab world has been swept by popular uprisings calling for change, freedom, and social justice. Those who demonstrated against the autocratic regimes were mainly educated youth who had basic intellectual and organizational skills and had been engaged in the public sphere for years before the uprisings. The Arab Spring, empowered mainly by educated youth, initially seemed to be very successful. After all, its participants ousted Mubarak in Egypt, Ben Ali in Tunisia, and Kaddafi in Libya; however, a few years later the former regimes came back even more aggressively and, under new leaders, quickly quashed the dreams for democracy and change. This chapter explores the relationship between education and democracy with a focus on Egypt’s student unions and movements both before and after the revolution in an attempt to understand why the hoped-for change did not occur in this densely populated country and why the military eventually intervened to oust the country’s first-ever democratically elected president.

Chapter Four
Vulnerability of the Tunisian Education System: A Pendulum Swing between Reality and Hope
Fadwa Bouguerra & Slimane Aboulkacem

Abstract: The current study explores the fragility of the Tunisian education system before and after the Revolution, also known as the Arab Spring. A state of chaos expanded over six countries from the Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) region, and dethroned four presidents and their administrations. The paper tracks the development of education and its outcomes by discussing various issues such as equal access to education, private and public education, and inequality between rural and urban areas. An interview research study was conducted with 12 cadres from different levels of education in order to examine the pre, current, and post-Revolution phases, and how the different social, political, and economic factors affected education in Tunisia. The results show a persisting gap in education between urban and rural areas, high rates of dropouts, more job strikes, a narrowing of the curriculum, and the emergence of private tutoring/schooling that imperils public education and renders the system vulnerable. Although the challenges facing the post-revolution generation were huge, results demonstrated hope and inclination on the part of Tunisians to change.
Chapter Five
Youth & Revolution: A Call to Reform Higher Education in Yemen
Waleed F. Mahdi & Abdulghani A. Al-Hattami

Abstract: At the onset of Yemen’s current transformation process, students emerged out of the country’s post-secondary institutions as a contending voice challenging status quo politics that produced unbearable conditions of corruption, unemployment, and disenfranchisement for 30 years. The revolutionary moment was eventually disrupted along partisan, sectarian, and tribal negotiations, often mediated by regional and international power players. To understand the underpinnings of this disruption, it is critical to underline the paradoxical role of the Yemeni higher education system in producing active yet docile citizens as well as playing a significant role in solidifying trends of socio-political instability and uncertainty in the country. Towards that end, the chapter captures the contours of this paradox by investigating three policy-oriented dimensions in current higher education establishments, i.e. admission policy, teaching methodology, and campus politicization. The significance of this work lies in its critique of the failure of the Yemeni higher education system in producing conditions for students to claim agency and consolidate a front that transcends current counter-revolutionary sociopolitical forces.

SECTION THREE: IDEOLOGIES, RELIGION, AND EDUCATION AFTER THE ARAB SPRING

Chapter Six
Higher Education and Contestation in the State of Kuwait after the Arab Spring: Identity Construction & Ideologies of Domination in the American University of Kuwait
Bader M. Al-Saif & Haneen S. Ghabra

Abstract: This study examines identity construction and ideologies of domination in higher education in the State of Kuwait through the example of the American University of Kuwait (AUK). We argue that hegemonic ideologies have implicated education and identity post-Arab Spring in local universities, such as AUK. We first explore the history of formal education in Kuwait, showcasing the interaction between local, regional, and global elements and the entrenched foreign presence since the beginnings of formal education in Kuwait. We then conduct an ideological rhetorical discourse analysis of AUK respondents that consist of students, faculty, and staff. Through the lens of Whiteness, intersectionality, and hegemony, we attempt to trace ideologies as they transcend into curricula and the classroom. Hence, the study is an attempt to balance the tension between resisting and conforming to dominant ideologies. We end with policy recommendations and a way forward that aim on mitigating the identified hurdles.
CHAPTER ABSTRACTS

Chapter Seven
Non-Muslim Students and Religious Education in Egyptian Classrooms
Hyun J. Ha

Abstract: This chapter examines the experiences of religion class and its impact on Muslim-Christian relations through the lens of non-Muslim students in Egyptian classrooms. In Egypt, religious education has a long history and Islamic and Christian religion classes have been integrated into modern school curriculum in all types of schools since 1948. Drawing from in-depth interviews with Coptic Orthodox Christians conducted in Egypt in 2014, this chapter questions how school education can contribute to respect and mutual recognition among Egyptians, instead of marginalizing non-Muslim students in the classroom. The findings show that the current religious education divides students by religion and further deepens the gap between Muslim and non-Muslim students, affecting friends networks. Given that education literature in the Middle East and North African region to date has largely disregarded the experiences of non-Muslim students at school, the focus on the voices of non-Muslim students presented through the interview data expands our understanding of Egyptian religious education, helping us see aspects of Egyptians’ everyday life in classrooms.

Chapter Eight
Al-Azhar: the Challenge of Reforming Religious Education in Egypt
Saïd Hassan

Abstract: This chapter investigates the attempts to reform al-Azhar religious education during the pre and post 25th January Revolution era. It attempts to demonstrate that the reform of al-Azhar religious curricula has been going on for almost a decade but it took faster and more intensive steps after the revolution. It questions to what extent new reforms of the religious education reflects nation-state democratic principles of citizenship, justice and equality of all state subjects. The chapter is divided into two main parts. Part One provides a historical account, reviewing the history of al-Azhar both as an educational center and as a public social political institution. The objective of this part is to investigate how al-Azhar gained its status in the modern world, and what role it played and is expected to play in Egyptian life. Part Two examines the question of reforming al-Azhar’s current religious curriculum in the post 25th January Revolution era. The paper examines curriculum changes in pre-university education (ages 11–17), with a special reference to curriculum changes for first-year prep students (K7 students; age 11–12). It attempts to answer the question: To what extent do curriculum modifications at that level respond to the debate on religious education reform, and in what way does it correspond to political changes and democratic principles in the post 25th January Egyptian Revolution era?
Les anciens régimes is a phrase that connotes the colonial oppression, political stagnation, and despotism that continues to rule the Arab world. These anciens regimes have colonized the MENA—Middle East and North Africa—region for centuries by politics of military force and exploitation and left behind the seeds of indigenous autocratic successors and traditional monarchs (Lewis 1993; Chaney, 2012; Ismael & Ismael, 2013). After 2011, the anciens regimes witnessed waves of popular anger following the unpredictable turmoil that followed Bouazizi, a Tunisian produce vendor, whose self-immolation in Tunisia breached the grip of four despised dictators and their governments in the MENA region. Bouazizi’s incident served as the prelude to serious attempts to newly map the politics in the MENA region with diverse peoples’ hope to empower the youth, establish freedom of speech and press, and create a strong education. January 2011 marked the involuntary departure of Zin Al-Abidin Ben Ali, the former president of Tunisia; a month later in late February in Egypt, Hosni Mubarak was ousted as a result of millions of protesters’ calls from the iconic fulcrum, Tahrir Square, which witnessed the birth of the Egyptian revolution (Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011). At the same time, a state of disorder and chaos was cropping up in Libya which resulted in the killing of President Muamar Qaddafi by Libyan armed rebels with the help of NATO in October 2011 (Rieff, 2011).

Brutality, dictatorship, and armed oppression have always been the legitimate response of the anciens régimes. The wave of instability and protests soon spread to Yemen and deposed the fourth authoritarian President Ali Abdullah Salah in November, 2015, after thirty-three years in the presidential palace. Next door, the Manama’s Pearl Roundabout in Bahrain gathered thousands of protesters, who demanded democracy and fair treatment toward the Shia Muslim community by the royal Sunni government. King Hamad Al-Khalifa introduced several reforms to contain people’s anger and succeeded to end the protests. As of this writing in the winter of 2015, Syria is battling an endless civil and ethno-sectarian war that started with peaceful and innocent protests against President Bashar Al Assad in March 2011. The common denominator among these ousted rulers was their longstanding dictatorship, corruption, and lack of freedoms (“The Economist”, 2011). The Arab Spring came as a result of a history of absolutism (Chaney, 2012) and “highly undemocratic” regimes (Noland, 2008, p. 1).
The Arab Spring was a cluster of unexpected and spontaneous revolutions and uprisings that came with a purpose to civilize the Arab World and cut all ties with dictatorship and political infringement. The masses wanted change and democracy. They wanted freedom and cherishment of their personal rights. The upheaval was also a result of youth population growth, unequal access to education, unemployment, censorship, and deplorable socio-economic situation (Chaney, 2012; Allagui & Kuebler, 2011). According to Campante and Chor (2012), the “combination of education and unrewarding economic circumstances is associated with an increased propensity towards political protest” (p. 13). One of the roots of the Arab Spring was the imbalance between schooling opportunities and job market offerings. Many educated youth lost hope and desperately embraced any job after graduation. A state of despair reigned the region and “most of the Middle East countries that have been at the center of violent protests exhibited large schooling gains and poor employment …[and the educated] who had not seen that education rewarded in the labor market …would …channel their efforts towards political action, and political protest in particular” (Campante & Chor, 2012, pp. 6–10).

People came together and organized with the help of popular and social media. “Facebook started it all. It was how people got along and came out with a plan to start the protests,” said Ali, an Egyptian Master’s student based in the U.S. (Ali, personal communication, December 2015). Information Communication Technologies (ICT) tools—Facebook, cell phones, YouTube, or verbal communication—channeled the voices, and brought people of different ages, beliefs, and objectives together in the streets, and many of them lost their lives (Allagui & Kuebler, 2011). The use of technology in revolutions was not new. The Iranian Revolution, for instance, used cassette recordings, and the anti-Soviet protesters used fax and photocopying machines to communicate and get organized (Ismael & Ismael, 2013).

However, some suggest that technologies should not be seen as the panacea of change in modern day revolutions. Some say that citizens have always self-organized efforts, without the use of modern day social media, dating back to the sit-ins during the Civil Rights era in the United States, or East Germany in the 1980’s, where even phone access was limited; however, with this limited phone access the citizens still brought down the Berlin Wall after the East German Communist Party authorized the citizens to cross the borders, others brought the necessary tools to demolish the “concrete Antifascistischer Schutzwall” (“History”, 2009, n.p). It is argued that simply having social media and new technologies therefore cannot be credited for the uprisings in the Arab World (Gladwell, 2011). In fact, Toyama (2015), a former Microsoft technology guru who has spent the last decade examining how people interact with technology, and how technology ultimately fails people, stated that real change needs people [emphasis added] to enact that change, not just technology, and that the central guiding force is the human force not the technological or mediated force. “Social media is neither necessary nor central for revolution” (Toyama, 2015, p. 35).
Furthermore, it would be remiss to discount the ways that technologies were indeed embedded in the revolutionary actions of the Arab uprisings, as many others claim that technology was central to the uprisings (Ghonim, 2012; Herrera, 2012). In fact, government intervention in technology use must be recognized as an insidious part in the revolutions. Perhaps, therefore, it was not always as much of an equalizer and central organizing force as some people originally thought. In Morozov’s seminal book, *The Net Delusion* (2011), he remarked that ICTs not only served protesters, but also their governments in restricting access to news websites, in addition to spying and tracking private conversations of civilians. In fact, Morozov states the hype around the 2009 Iranian Revolution was Western made, as most of those Tweeting were actually not on the ground in Iran (he cites about 60 were from inside Iran), but rather the West’s way to peer inside and eavesdrop on the events. Therefore Hillary Clinton’s mandate to the CEO’s of Twitter to postpone their routine maintenance so that the Iranian Revolution would be allowed to continue, was more of a way to be a voyeur on the outside to the inside of the Iranian Revolution. Ultimately, this meant the citizens’ actions were seen by other governments as well as the Iranian government. A similar case can be said of the technologies used in the uprisings and revolutions in the Arab Spring. Many technologies enabled governments to spy on their citizens, as well as allowed them to shut down central units of organization by simply turning off access to such portals. Additionally, governments were responsible for highly censoring the material and media that was allowed through. Such tools and approaches were widely spread and used by Qaddafi and Mubarak (Morozov, 2011). The revolutions, hence, represented the power of networks and a digital war in addition to the physical one that challenged the dictators together with online and offline police.

Despite the close ties of government spying and organization challenges, the revolutions suggested that social networks and citizen media can be stronger than the state-owned media (Howard, 2011; Nakib, 2012). Additionally, big satellite channels such as Al-Jazeera—which is banned in Morocco and Algeria, for instance—helped reproduce content and spread information to those who had no access to Internet (Allagui & Kuebler, 2011). Remarkably, the public succeeded in ending those anciens régimes, and launched a political turn in the history of the MENA region. The revolts have encouraged Algerian, Moroccan, and Jordanian leaders to introduce some social and economic changes to avoid clashes (Campante & Chor, 2012). However, it has been argued that the Arab Spring has not been successful in purifying the region from disorder, dictatorship, unemployment, corruption, bureaucracy, and under-education. The chapters in this book, *Education and the Arab Spring: Resistance, Reform, and Democracy*, seek to interrogate reasons why, and propose that education is truly the only way to disrupt the inequities and biases inherent in the autocratic and totalitarian regimes.

The edited collection of articles and research case studies outlays various key caveats about education and living democracies. *Education and the Arab Spring:*
Resistance, Reform, and Democracy brings scholarly work from international scholars who study different countries in the MENA region, together to establish a platform for the quest for democracy in the Arab World. The range of studies in this book encompasses research participants from a diversified population ranging from undergraduate and graduate students to teachers, practitioners, and deans of colleges. By means of vivid interviews, discussions, and surveys, the book’s contributors tackled teacher development struggles, mandated education, informal and unorganized mentoring, defects of standardized Baccalaureate exams, and the effects of a mixture of widely spread ideologies resulting from traditional religions (namely Islam and Christianity) and other ethno-sectarian groups as well as Western cultural influences in the rich patrimonial Middle East. Overwhelming, the contributors argue that education leads to democracy and civic engagement. Education founds a society of equality, tolerance, and freedom. Education is the only way forward. The overarching discussions in the book center on education, its relation with democracy, and how their interaction occurred in the MENA region before, during, and after the Arab Spring.

The text is divided into three sections, Classroom Issues and Teacher Professional Development Struggles Post-Arab Spring, Youth Education and the Seeds of Social Change, and Religion and Education after the Arab Spring. The journey starts off by profiling the pillar of educational systems—teachers, their role in education, struggles and needs. The concern then shifts to students’ engagement in reform and civic change with an examination of the education systems and policies of select countries in this regard. The collection closes with rich discussions of religious conflicts in educational settings, and raises the question of schools’ spiritual orientations. It also discusses Western university models implanted in the Middle East, and their accompanying ideologies and exercises of democracy.

The first section “Classroom Issues and Teacher Professional Development Struggles Post-Arab Spring” has two chapters. In Chapter One, Abdullah Alrebh and Radhi Al-Mabuk explore education in Egypt with a constructivist-Deweyan lens and examine how classroom conversations give birth to good citizenry and participatory democracies. The authors impart a responsibility on the teacher to impart values of democracy, open-mindedness, and inspire liberal conversations, which increases tolerance, fosters critical thinking, and empowers students with important skills and values. Levine (2007) considers democracy in a constructivist education not only an outcome, but an essential component of education. Chapter Two shifts focus to teacher professional development in Egypt. Nahed Abdelrahman and Beverly J. Irby shed light on teacher struggles, the scarcity of teacher professional development opportunities, and how the post-Arab Spring instability continues to threaten the process of building strong teacher competencies. For example, Finland, one of the best educational systems in the world attributes its success to heavy investment in teacher professional development and classroom practice (Robinson & Aronica, 2015), so examining ways in which the Arab World can make similar investments is an important avenue to explore.
Section Two, “Youth Education and the Seeds of Social Change”, contains three chapters that feature youth empowerment, education, and civil empowerment. Chapter Three by Ahmed Abd Rabou examines students’ civil participatory culture inside the schools of Egypt through the students unions and organizations. Abd Rabou foregrounds student governments as a path to equality and democracy (Levine, 2007), and evidences the underlying reasons of their failure in Egypt after the Arab Spring. Fadwa Bouguerra and Slimane Aboulkacem, in Chapter Four criticize the Tunisian education system and consider it vulnerable to change. They underscore key factors that failed democracy and annihilated youth civic engagement, including high-stake testing (the Baccalaureate exam), private tutoring, limiting the curriculum, and teacher dissatisfaction with job conditions. Scholars Robinson and Aronica (2015) and Levine (2007) consider civic engagement a result of the interaction between school and community to prepare competent, engaged, and self-confident citizens. Civic engagement and civic education is to participate in the making of the society and to engage in ways to sustain its growth. Indeed, civic education produces participatory societies, promotes personal and public interests, and enhances equality (Robinson & Aronica, 2015). Harber (1995) writes about education and civic engagement in the Arab World, “[f]ew governments want a politically informed, articulate, confident and critical population – … referring here to many governments in democracies as well as in authoritarian regimes” (p. 7). Next, Chapter Five maps education in Yemen. Waleed Mahdi and Abdulghani Al-Hattami debate the Yemeni higher education policies and its end result. Their chapter explains how the government predominates admission policy, teaching methodology, and campus politicization, and how this affects the identity of students as unable to grasp agency and build their futures and shape their communities in which they live. In this matter, Faour (2011) views education in the Arab world as controlling and restrictive; it “drill[s] obedience and submission to the regime rather than encourage[s] freedom of thought” (n. p). Indeed, the core mission of education is to nurture the thought, enrich the souls, and emancipate the minds.

Section Three entertains timely topics pertinent to religion, hegemony, personal rights, and education, which, historically, have inspired revolutions worldwide. Chapter Six, Bader Al-Saif and Haneen Ghabra take up the topic of education from a political standpoint. They analyze mixed identity universities (USA and Kuwaiti) in the state of Kuwait and the spreading of ideologies that emerged after the Arab Spring. Through a set of raw data they uncover these ideologies and explain how these ideologies infuse the curriculum and influence schooling. Chapter Seven by Hyun Ha debates religious conflicts resulting from public policy and mandated curriculum, and how this affects student-student relationships, parent-student relationships, and government-schools relationships. Hyun concludes that intolerance and discrimination are the fruit of purportedly tolerant and humanistic religions: Islam and Christianity. The author considers religious education as personal absolute right, and it should not conflict with public education which is the legitimate right of every child in Egypt. In Chapter Eight, Said Hassan discusses
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the iconic Al Azhar education in Egypt and questions to what extent do curriculum modifications respond to the debate on religious education reform and how does this correspond to political changes and democratic principles in post 25th January Egyptian Revolution?

Together through this volume we argue that “neither education nor democracy can rest upon brute force” (Butler, 1939, p. 27). It is imperative for a society to be educated and to each individual to take part in sustaining the community, as true democratic citizenship is participatory. Brutality, fear, and religious intolerance can only engender deprivation, division, antagonism, and breakdown anything humanity advocates. Only the freedom of thought in schools, and freedom of knowledge in societies can destroy the fallacy of dictatorship and defeatism of individual thinking and achievement. The governments should work to bind schools and education to maintain public interests and build countries, where not only the individual education matters, but also the environment. Mandated curriculum, and teaching to the test fails knowledge and kills creativity (Ravitch, 2014; Robinson & Aronica, 2015). Policymakers should care more about what learners want and know to do best; they should care about teacher professional development, and truly seed tolerance and guarantee the right of education to everyone regardless of personal beliefs and religious orientations.

In schools, teachers and administrators should encourage students to engage in dialogue about “what it means to be citizens who learn how to think, seek and produce knowledge, question, and innovate rather than be subjects of the state who are taught what to think and how to behave” (Faour & Muasher, 2011, p. 1). It is fundamental to educate and democratize the environment in which the optimistic, full of energy Arab youth operates. Only when this occurs will we be able to truly say that we are shifting toward democracy.

REFERENCES


SECTION ONE
CLASSROOM ISSUES AND TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRUGGLES POST-ARAB SPRING
1. TEACHING FOR DEMOCRACY IN POST-ARAB SPRING

Challenges & Opportunities

Democracy needs to be re-born in each generation and education is its mid-wife.

(John Dewey)

The Arab Spring that has swept through a number of Arab countries directly and the rest of the Arab countries indirectly has spurred an intense sentiment for democracy. The desire for democracy especially among youth, who comprise more than forty percent of the population in the Arab World, needs a favorable school environment that would transform it into democratic values and commensurate skills in children and youth. A crucial success factor to teaching for democracy initiatives is the teacher. Thus, changes in what teachers teach and how, and how they relate to their students are significant factors in teaching the basic skills and habits of democracy. Restructuring education in the Arab World to produce democracy-minded citizens requires “an independence of education from the ideological dominance of the political elite, whether theocratic or secular” (Muasher, 2014, p. 140). Through professional autonomy teachers will refrain from conforming to the culturally and state sanctioned paradigms and be able to act on what Placha (2007) called ‘teacher ethics.’ In her opinion, a teacher must “fulfill a larger moral agency than just reflect a particular community’s and school board’s values” (p. 124), and “take action against any pressures that restrict democratic freedom—namely, the restriction of open discussion and critical thinking” (pp. 134–135). The idea of teaching for democracy is transformative and liberates the teacher from the task of molding and patterning their students to fit into the narrow and particular needs of their societies. For Placha, teaching for democracy is not just a political imperative; it is emphatically a moral one through which the teacher educates about and engages students in the three central pillars of democracy: citizenship, social justice, and pluralism.

In this chapter, we examine shifting toward democracy in the Arab World through the lenses of educational reform in general and pedagogical reformation in particular. Our focus on educational reform is predicated on two premises. The first is that teachers have a moral responsibility to empower students in learning about and in the practice of democratic values including citizenship, social justice, and pluralism. The second premise, which builds on the first one, is that what teachers teach and
how they do are key to preparing students for participation in a democracy. That is, the teacher is the catalyst by which students can be transformed into peaceful, productive, and engaged democratic citizens. The transformative process can be accomplished when teachers help all students learn, promote mastery learning, help students develop self-governing skills, encourage students to think critically, enable students to think about issues constructively, inspire and assist students to develop constructive attitudes toward others, and engender awareness about and development of actions for social justice, equality, and freedom in students. In other words, teaching for democracy requires that teachers transform their classrooms into laboratories where democracy is learned and experienced. Through active and experiential learning, students will be able to transfer what they learn in class to their everyday living.

In the chapter, we propose to examine the issue of pedagogical reformation by addressing four areas: (1) prevailing pedagogical approaches in the Arab World and their impact on students; (2) how teachers effect change by embodying the democratic ideals and values of citizenship, social justice, and pluralism and serving as democratic role models; (3) transformative pedagogies that promote democracy and how; and (4) challenges and opportunities in teaching for democracy in the Arab World. Each of these sections will be the main heading followed by subsections. In the challenges and opportunities section, which concludes the chapter, we highlight the importance of teacher training and examine the role teacher assumptions and beliefs play on how they teach. We offer ways for teachers to examine their assumptions to gain more insight and awareness of themselves as individual professionals as well as agents of change. Before we move into discussing the three major parts of the paper, we briefly discuss the three pillars of democracy: citizenship, social justice, and pluralism. Figure 1 shows the interrelations among these three pillars and highlights the pivotal role of citizenship in democracy education.

The three areas (pedagogical mechanism) we elaborate in this chapter revolve around the democratic values of citizenship, social justice, and pluralism (democracy-education curricular focus). Depending on the nature and type of citizenship education, pluralism and social justice as valuable democratic ideals
may or may not be addressed in schools. There are two methods for teaching values, beliefs, and skills related to citizenship (Stanley, 2005). The first, which is the most common and dominant one, is transmission of values, beliefs, and behaviors deemed essential by a culture to the next generation of citizens. The second method is known as transformative citizenship education (Field & Castro, 2010). Transmission citizenship socializes children and youth to be loyal, obedient, passive, and productive citizens. Transformative citizenship education, however, strives to empower students to be honest, compassionate, respectful, responsible, active, engaged, critical, and courageous, and to use the strength of their character and enlightened minds to question the dominant social order and change it as needed (Wade, 2007, 2000; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Further, Michelli (2005) asserts that teaching for active citizenship entails teaching for civic and civil responsibility and engagement as well as teaching for understanding what it means to be free.

The second pillar of democracy that needs to be incorporated in democracy education is social justice. Social justice is both a product and a process that need to work in a reciprocal fashion. As a product, social justice includes “a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure” (Bell, 1997, p. 3). Others emphasize ethical values, care, respect, and moral responsibility as important products of social justice (e.g., Marshal & Oliva, 2006; Kohl, 2001). Teaching for social justice as a process includes providing students with the skills and opportunities to develop and exercise their “intellectual, social, emotional, and expressive capacities” (Young, 1993, p. 123). Additionally, Greene (1998) and Hooks (1994) argued that teaching for social justice requires teachers to live social justice by engaging in and committing to making decisions that impact them.

The third pillar of democracy is pluralism and refers to respect and tolerance of and dialogue with others. Diana L. Eck (2015) emphasized the following four dimensions of pluralism that are essential for citizens in a democratic society: energetic engagement with diversity, active seeking of understanding across lines, encounter of commitments, and engaging in dialogue.

The four major sections of the chapter that relate to teaching the above mentioned pillars of democracy are discussed next.
learning process based on repetition and is based on the assumption that students will be able to quickly recall the taught content the more they repeat it (Mayer, 2012). Research (e.g., Perkins, 1993, 2008; Perkins & Salomon, 1988) shows that very often students do not transfer facts and principles they acquire in class into other contexts, particularly when the dominant mode of learning is by rote. If facts and principles are not activated, pondered upon, and connected to previously learned material, the possibility for new ideas and creative outputs will be minimal or non-existent. In many classrooms around the Arab World, learning is equated with regurgitation of facts and figures (Adams & Winthrop, 2011). The average Arab student is likely to go through 12 years of schooling or more but lacks the inquiry and citizenship skills that would make him or her a fully productive and competent contributor to society. Although schooling attainment has increased in many Arab countries from 1980 to 2010 (for example in Algeria, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Jordan, Libya, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia), there has not been a corresponding increase in the quality of education (Barro & Lee, 2013). The reason for the gap between years of schooling and impact on personal and social well-being is the low quality of education, and narrow focus of the curriculum. For example, Egypt ranked 70 out of 133 countries in competitiveness, but the quality of its elementary education and its science and mathematics teaching ranked 124th out of 133 (Schwab, 2015). The Economist (2009) pointed out that “the gap in education between Arabs and other people at a similar level of development is still frightening” (2009, p. 2). It is no wonder that the Arab Spring uprisings in countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and to a lesser extent Bahrain and Yemen, were carried out mostly by poorly educated youth who felt among other factors that their educational systems have not prepared them with the knowledge and skills needed to meet the demands of the 21st Century (Adams & Winthrop, 2011).

Prevalent Pedagogies: Role of Tradition

In the Arab World, drill and practice and rote memorization pedagogies have been perpetuated by both tradition and authoritarian forms of government as they produce citizens who are not disposed to reflect and question what they are taught, and who are usually obedient and compliant to authority (Akkary, 2014; Compante & Chor, 2013). Traditionally, learning is synonymous with one’s ability to remember verbatim information that has been committed to memory. Oral recitation of information of memorized material has been used as the assessment technique of a student’s mastery of the subject. Until very recently, corporal punishment was commonly used with students who make mistakes while reciting information in oral exams or on essay tests where questions are written to assess only a student’s ability to remember. Fear of punishment and coercion has forced many a student in the Arab World not only to acquiesce to learn by rote but also to feel joy and pride when they outperform their classmates by memorizing more information and doing so more quickly (Salem, 2013; Almazroui, 2013). Almazroui shared her experience of teachers’ use of
corporal punishment to coerce them into obedience and submissive, and sometimes apathetic, behavior to learn by rote. The experience goes as follows, “I once had a math teacher in primary school who would hit us on our hands with a large ruler when we failed to show up prepared for a lesson, or if we were unable to memorize the multiplication tables” (2013, n.p.). Reported in the same paper (Ahmed, 2011) stated that although corporal punishment is banned in state schools, incidents of students being beaten by teachers have been reported. The aforementioned cases show that old and prevailing practices of corporal punishment are still in use despite their many potential deleterious effects. Teachers who fear legal repercussions of resorting to corporal punishment turn to verbal and psychological means of intimidating students to submission. Consequences of psychological, verbal, and physical maltreatment of students include misbehavior, alienation, and aggression (Hyman & Perone, 1998). There are two consequence of most relevance for the focus of this paper. The first is the formation of a strong association in students’ minds between learning and pain. That is, students see learning as an unpleasant, dreadful and even revolting experience. The second is that students are very likely to become docile and susceptible to indoctrination.

In most elementary and secondary classrooms, there is a lack of effort by teachers to engage students more deeply and thoughtfully in subject-matter learning. Also, most teachers do not make the subject matter relevant to students by seeking connections between students’ lives and the subject matter, between theory and practice, between the past and the present. Moreover, students are not provided opportunities to think through concepts and situations (Elsayed, 2011).

To transform existing teaching practices that do not help students to apply knowledge thoughtfully and fail to equip students with skills of democratic citizenship in the Arab World would require creating positive school climates that foster independent, creative, and critical thinking on the one hand and learn about and actively engage in citizenship and civic studies on the other. Teachers would need to adopt particular qualities of mind to become effective educators and promoters of democracy.

Prevalent Pedagogies: Role of Governance

In addition to tradition, the second and significant challenge to teaching for democracy in the Arab World is the nature of governance (Wilkens, 2011). Totalitarian environment, which the Arab Spring came to uproot, typifies most political systems in the Arab World. The Arab World has lived under monarchal and martial totalitarian rule for many decades. Those entrenched in power are not eager to share it with the people. Allowing schools to teach tenets and skills of democracy undoubtedly pose a threat to the hegemony of the state because students will learn to think about and question authority, and push toward democratization and power sharing. They will aspire for a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. They will seek to develop and establish institutions that provide a check on
governmental power thereby limiting the chances of rulers and public officials to abuse power, amass personal wealth, and to institute and carry out unpopular policies (Compane & Chor, 2013, 2014; Bellin, 2012; Barro, 1999). The hopeful youth of the Arab Spring have experienced totalitarian and royal forms of government, and feel that their dreams and aspirations have not been fulfilled. For them, it is time to give democracy a chance. Why democracy? Ayers (2010) distinction among totalitarian, royalty, and democracy provides a succinct answer:

Totalitarianism demands obedience and conformity, hierarchy, command and control. Royalty requires allegiance. Democracy, by contrast, requires free people coming together voluntarily who are capable of both self-realization and, at the same time, full participation in a shared political and economic life. Democracy is a form of associative living in which people must assume and fight to achieve political and social equality; acknowledge a common spark of humanity in each soul; and embrace a level of uncertainty, incompleteness, and the inevitability of change. (p. 157)

The quote “An informed citizenry is the bulwark of democracy” and this variant of it “An educated citizenry is a vital requisite for our survival as a free people” is believed to have been written by Thomas Jefferson (Wagoner, 2004). As one of the Founding Fathers of the United States, President Jefferson believed that informed citizens are the protectors, preservers, and defenders of democracy. By defending democracy, the people preserve freedom for all citizens. The word ‘informed’ speaks volumes as it subsumes qualities of educated, well aware, responsible, active, and engaged citizens. These qualities do not evolve on their own; they need to be fostered and inculcated in the minds and hearts of the people. The best and appropriate place for such teaching and training is the school (Dewey, 1916; Fullan, 1993, 1999).

The Arab Spring has provided youth with an utter sense of hope of changing the status quo into a government that is on their side (Cole, 2014). Their hope is for those in power to be open and transparent about what the government is doing and why. Youth in many, if not all, Arab countries are demanding accountability of and responsiveness from their governments. At the most basic level, the Arab Spring is a fight against non-democratic governments because they were not doing their duty of giving the people a voice and role in governance (Eldin, 2011).

The bright rays of hope brought by the Arab Spring seem to have dimmed—but not for long. The ruling elites in Arab countries would do well to heed the call of the people for democracy, and to include teaching for democracy in the school curriculum. Teaching the skills and values of democracy are beneficial for citizens and their elected officials as well as for the development, prosperity, social harmony, and security of society (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Sanborn & Thyne, 2014). The next section focuses on how teachers effect change by embodying the democratic ideals and values of citizenship, social justice, and pluralism and serving as democratic role models.
EFFECTING CHANGE BY EMBODYING DEMOCRATIC IDEALS & SERVING AS ROLE MODELS

The focus of this section is on the pivotal role of the teacher in preparing students for citizenship, social justice, and pluralism. The section comprises of four subsections: teachers as agents, educating through modeling, cultivating constructive attitudes actions in students, and fostering a mastery learning environment. We begin with the first subsection which is related to the role of teachers as change agents.

**Teachers as Change Agents**

Schools in general and teachers in particular have the awesome responsibility of preparing individuals for citizenship, social justice, and pluralism. To reiterate, teachers have “a moral responsibility, both to their students and to their community, to empower their students in the practice of democratic values” (Placha, 2007, p. 123). Teachers are essential agents of change through teaching both inside their classrooms and beyond. Teachers’ beliefs, which impact their practice, must be fully compatible with democratic ideals and values. Moreover, teachers’ beliefs must be reflected in their language, behaviors, and practice. The teacher’s attitudes, feelings, thoughts, perceptions, and expectations, and behaviors ought to align with teaching-as-a-sacred-duty ethos of Arab culture. The training that teachers receive must therefore engender in them the belief that educating students is an awesome responsibility that must be assumed with a high level of commitment and dedication. Teacher training must have more than one focus. That is, in addition to helping students to become top performers in every academic subject, they also deem it their utmost duty to help students in their personal, spiritual and character development. They empower their students to become moral and democratic agents who engage in systematic and intentional pro-social behavior. Moreover, the teachers must deliberately seek to cultivate virtues and ideals of citizenship, social justice and pluralism in the minds, hearts, and souls of their students. This practice is in line with Lickona’s (2009) thinking, particularly his description of character as comprised of a cognitive, an affective, and a behavioral dimension. The cognitive component is responsible for moral knowing; the affective part carries out the moral feeling; and the behavioral aspect carries out moral action. Thus, an individual with good character knows the good, desires the good, and does the good. Put another way, Lickona views the cognitive as the place where habits of mind are cultivated, the affective as the site for habits of heart, and the behavioral as the stage where habits of actions or behaviors are activated and enacted. Addressing the cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects is what Rugg (1936) refers to as democratic-method-in action and includes preparing citizens who are well informed, think through or deliberate the pros and cons of positions and actions, and above all take action (Boyle-Baise & Zevin, 2014). Rugg is a social reconstructionist who conceived of democratic education as process
of teaching students to be active participants in a democratic civic community. Teachers in Arab countries must be trained and socialized to address all of these three dimensions of character with special emphasis in translating moral thoughts and feelings into moral actions, and to empower their students to be well informed, to think through issues and positions, and to acquire the skills of civic action.

Teachers from pre-school onward in Arab countries must internalize moral and democratic habits of action and strive to model for and instill these values in their students. Classrooms in Arab countries must be transformed into laboratories where an “elixir” of empathy and love and a “vaccine” against violence and evil are prepared and administered. That is, the teachers impart life skills that strengthen the inner core of the individual along with scientific knowledge and skills. Moreover, schools must turn into theaters where relevant, authentic, and essential events are enacted and reflected upon. The two metaphors, “laboratory” and “theater” point to the active and dynamic environment of the learning and teaching for democracy (e.g., Singhal & Rogers, 2004). Instead of being places where knowledge is passively delivered; they are hubs where education is facilitated by teachers who have the highest commitment to their work. The dedication of teachers, administrators, and staff must also be demonstrated in their continual striving to attain and maintain the highest educational standards by keeping current with the latest ideas and innovations in the field of education. They would need to participate actively and regularly in professional developments at the departmental and school level, and with colleagues in other schools in their localities or regions. The teachers and staff would also need to be supported by equally dedicated administrators who reflect and evaluate current practices and enact changes that best serve the school’s mission. For teachers to be successful in their teaching for democracy, they will need to model democratic values, ideals and actions, cultivate constructive attitudes and actions in students, and promote a mastery-learning orientation. The next sub sections elaborate these three dimensions beginning with educating through modeling.

Educating through Modeling

Teaching for democracy in Arab countries is a formidable challenge in a culture where democracy seems alien, perceived as a suspect by some, a curiosity and new concept for some others, but a hope and a dream for many. Some Arab countries (like Tunisia) have had fledgling democratic institutions, but it is nonexistent in most Arab lands. The Arab Spring has intensified the desire and call for establishing democracy. Hence, teaching for democracy is a mission that ought to be carried out by professionals who match their words with actions, and better yet, let their actions precede their words. Teachers, administrators, school staff, student mentors and volunteer teachers must be selected and hired for their strong academic qualifications and moral, ethical, and democratic dispositions. It is imperative for educators to internalize democratic values and ideals and model them before they instill such values in their students. Their actions must precede their words.
TEACHING FOR DEMOCRACY IN POST-ARAB SPRING

teachers speak to their students about universal values such as democracy, altruism, honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, courage, respect, tolerance, responsibility, love, and compassion, their actions must align with their words. Teachers must therefore be diligent in exemplifying values they promote to students. They must also help their students to develop the capacity to translate universal values into action. An observer of model schools of academic excellence pointed out that schools excel in academics because the instructors strive for perfection not only in having a command of their subject matter but also in (1) loving and caring for their students and (2) developing their own character as much as, if not more than, their students’ character (Woodhall, 2005).

Constructive Attitudes and Actions

For students to acquire the skills and knowledge of democracy, they must be socialized in the ideals of the third pillar of democracy, which includes tolerance, dialogue, and respect for diversity and pluralism. This can be accomplished by nourishing students with the awareness of social justice, civic duty, and moral and ethical responsibility. Students must be afforded the opportunity to practice these ideals in schools. Focus and care are given to the role of self-disciplined training to deepen one’s sense and capacity for democratic ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving, and to put them into action. Emphasis must also be placed on adopting constructive means to resolve differences and conflicts with others.

Two strategies that schools can use to engender skills of democracy such as tolerance and positive dialogue are empathy and sympathy. When we empathize, we try “to put ourselves in that person’s shoes,” and endeavor to perceive as accurately and fully as possible the “internal frame of reference of another” (Rogers, 1995, p. 79). Similarly, Carl Rogers (1975), a noted psychologist, wrote that when we empathize, we “enter the private perceptual world of the other person, temporarily living in that person’s life, and moving around within it non-judgmentally, delicately, and sensitive to the felt meanings and values of that person, and also being sure to check and communicate with the person as you go” (1975, p. 4). This description clearly indicates that to empathize we must adopt the other person’s psychological viewpoint, or, what some call “fellow-feeling.” For students to be adept at “fellow-feeling,” teachers can implement a three-step process. The first entails mobilizing a willing to detect the various emotions the other person is experiencing. This is followed by the second step, which involves understanding the other person’s experiences or circumstances. In the third step, students develop the willingness to adopt the other person’s perspective to experience his or her emotional state and to become aware of the complementary feelings aroused within him/her as he/she engage in this process.

The second strategy is sympathy, which means to suffer with another person whose suffering can be undertaken in the context of our own. The sameness can be attributed to our human condition and our affinity to experience much of life in
similar ways. This affinity based on our feelings serves at least two purposes: (1) it provides us with clues as to the feelings of the other person; and (2) it creates in us a willingness to consider ways to alleviate their pain as we deal with our own.

Both empathy and sympathy are necessary strategies for students to learn and internalize so that they exhibit actions that are consonant with the ideals of citizenship, social justice, and pluralism including respect for other people’s feelings, opinions, property, rights, and their sense of dignity. The fourth and final subsection which we turn to next deals with the importance of fostering a mastery-learning environment.

Mastery-Learning Orientation

Democratic ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving can be fostered by schools through making students associate learning with positive outcomes so that they gradually become passionate about learning—both scientific knowledge and ethical and moral ideals. Emphasis on citizenship will motivate students to strive to excel so that they can be productive and responsible and engaged members of society. The ultimate goal of the school is not to produce docile subjects, but rather citizens with protective and development-enhancing competencies they will need for their personal and socio-moral well-being, and inculcate in them a love of serving, peace-building, and life-long learning.

To conclude, educational initiatives and school restructuring to teach for democracy in the Arab World must equip students with universal democratic values that instill in them love, respect, peace, and service-oriented ethic for people in their society and for all people of the world. In addition, children and youth must be provided with opportunities that would allow them to develop the capacity for independent and critical thinking, to respect and engage with diversity, and to actively participate in civic and civil action.

Educational policy makers can be more effective, better prepared, and more united when they join hands, learn, and work together with curriculum designers, teachers, students, and parents to promote the cause of democracy. Governments need to invest as much if not more on teacher training as they do on school infrastructure. Both a macro and micro approaches to teaching for democracy need to be adopted, and education needs to be accessible to and open for all. Teachers would need to be rewarded monetarily and morally for their dedication and service to teaching. Now we turn to the third major section, which deals with democracy-promoting strategies.

TRANSFORMATIVE PEDAGOGIES THAT PROMOTE DEMOCRACY:
THE WHAT AND HOW

This section provides a description and analysis of pedagogies that promote democracy and does so in three subsections. The first discusses democracy-promoting pedagogies; the second delves into definitions of democracy; and the third
focuses on how to teach for democracy. We will begin with democracy-promoting pedagogies.

**Democracy-Promoting Pedagogies**

The pedagogies that promote democracy are grounded in the belief that all students should have an equal access as a basic human right in a democratic society. With rights comes responsibility, so teachers must help their students to develop self-governing skills. In the classroom, teachers need to create an environment that fosters respect, belonging, and acceptance. They would need to create learning communities where they learn about and practice citizenship, social justice, and pluralism. These three pillars of democracy should not be abstract subjects that are merely taught but rather as concrete constructs that are lived and experienced.

The hope for outcomes of teaching for democracy include but not limited to: fostering pro-social attitudes and motives in children, promoting socio-moral reasoning competencies such as perspective taking, helping children develop pro-social self-systems demonstrated in moral identity and conscience, teaching and coaching children in internalizing relevant behavioral competencies such as the ability to disagree respectfully and learning effective conflict resolution skills, learning and acquiring characteristics that support enactment of such pro-social motives and inclinations, engendering and supporting the development of perseverance and courage, and enhancing knowledge of ethical issues and considerations, nurturing moral emotional competencies such as empathy and sympathy, civic engagement, and respect for diversity and pluralism (Berkowitz, 2007, 2004, 2002).

What pedagogical approaches are most effective for achieving these aforementioned positive outcomes? This question will be answered in the next subsection by first exploring different definitions of teaching for democracy and then examining and describing pedagogical approaches that are commonly used for teaching for democracy.

**Definitions of Teaching for Democracy**

Some definitions of teaching for democracy are broad and some are specific. Some of the broad definitions include the process of nurturing the skills, attitudes and values necessary for democratic life (Wood, 1990). Others define the term more specifically. For example, Placha (2007) defines teaching for democracy as a commitment by teachers to help their students to “discover and nurture their self-expression, develop consciousness, claim a new and ever-evolving awareness, as well as act on it (p. 124). Ayers (2010) described Stokely’s the dialogue of learning to teaching for democracy. Stokely taught classes in Freedom House in Mississippi in the 1960s and used civil rights as a vehicle for community education and involvement. The teaching is done primarily by engaging students in thoughtful discussion and through critical thinking
about issues. There are many methods for teaching for democracy, and the next and last subsection provides a sample of some methods.

How to Teach for Democracy

Ways of teaching for democracy stem from how it is defined. Wood (1990) considers schools and classrooms as communities where students learn and experience what it is like to work for the common good and to be a compassionate, respectful, responsible, contributing, and productive citizen. Community building in the schools that Wood studied was achieved by assigning students to advisors who serve as their point of contact for students and parents with the school. Groups of students meet with their advisors three times a week to talk about academic, social, and personal issues. In these meetings, different issues are discussed. Although facilitated by the advisor, students take the lead in talking, discussing, and dialoguing with each other. In this way, students learn to listen attentively, actively, and respectfully to each other. They learn how to disagree in an agreeable manner, and entertain different perspectives on an issue. They also express concern and compassion for each other as they discuss personal issues. Students also plan social gatherings and keep a journal. The advisors, who stay with their assigned students for two years, write progress reports, meet with parents, and avails himself or herself to students. The primary goal of meetings is to connect students to increase their sense of belonging to the school, to make them feel respected and accepted, and to make them assume meaningful roles in the school and classroom. In their classrooms, students rarely work alone; they work collaboratively on projects, material and data gathering, and writing reports or research papers. The classrooms are student-centered, engaged in authentic learning tasks, hands-on and minds-on activities. The schools are open to the larger communities they are located in so students experience the civic mission their schools are dedicated to. All mini communities within the larger school community are focused on promoting the values and skills needed to live in a democracy. These schools were transformed into democratic learning communities that Wood described as follows: “these schools are laboratories where democracy is experienced, not museums where it is just observed” (1990, p. 37).

Ayers (2010) described the dialogue of learning approach to teaching for democracy practiced by Carmichael Stokely in the 1960s. Stokely espoused and utilized thoughtful discussion and critical thinking as means of nurturing students’ self-expression and broadening and deepening their consciousness. Stokely was masterful in provoking students’ thinking and igniting their curiosity about relevant, critical, and important issues. His overarching learning goals for students were for students to be able to analyze arguments, see both sides of an issue before choosing a position, and discern what is left unsaid. During the course and discourse of dialogue, students discover, construct, and connect new insights with things not-yet-known. According to Stokely, these key critical thinking skills are essential to democratic
participation. Hence, teaching these critical thinking skills students must be one of the essential functions of schools.

Stokely taught for democracy first by genuinely acknowledging and affirming students input and then used it to build upon and to traverse to different terrains to elevate students’ thinking and awareness. For example, in one lesson that Ayers (2010) described in his book, Stokely started the day’s lesson by writing three sentences on the left and three others directly opposite to them on the right. The sentences on the left reflected the African American lexicon while the ones on the right are written in standard English. As Stokely was writing, the students were teasing and snickering.

These were the two sets of sentences Stokely (Ayers, 2010, p. 119) wrote:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I digs wine</th>
<th>I enjoy drinking cocktails</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The peoples want freedom</td>
<td>The people want freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wants to reddish to vote</td>
<td>I want to register to vote</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dialogue of learning began when their teacher turned to students and asked what they thought of the two sets of sentences he just wrote on the board. When one student said, “peoples” don’t sound right, the teacher asked if they knew what ‘peoples’ meant, and if they knew anyone who said “peoples.” This was followed by several students answering the question by saying that they knew people who said “peoples” including themselves, but one student commented that “peoples” “isn’t correct English.” Starting from the basic and acknowledging students answer, the teacher decided to catapult the class into the terrain of critical thinking by asking them about who decides questions of correct and incorrect. The exchange with the students went on until it was time for students to go to lunch. Before students went on lunch break, Stokley asked them to reflect on this question: what constitutes a society and who makes the rules for society? This question led students to think deeply and told their teacher that although most people spoke some form of “incorrect English,” the “correct English” minority had and exercised power and monopoly on all aspects of life including jobs, money, status and prestige.

From seemingly simplistic introduction to the lesson, students were led to think critically about an issue that is relevant to them and through dialogue left their class with an increased awareness. The teacher helped them to continue to reflect on the interconnections among language, culture, control, politics, and power. Stokely’s brief lesson describes an approach to teaching for democracy that can be implemented by teachers in the Arab World. The steps of the approach are deceptively simple. They begin be the teacher respecting students and valuing their input. The teacher then travels with the students to higher planes of thinking to extend, connect, and deepen their thinking. The students could use what they learned in the lesson as a tool for discovering and knowing. The students left Stokey’s with more awareness
and inspiration. They also left with a desire to return to continue the exciting journey of dialogue of learning.

Similarly, Placha (2007) described a method to teaching for democracy that focuses on social justice and uses critical literacy as a vehicle to create action-oriented awareness. This approach is replete with implications for teaching for democracy in the Arab World because teachers can become liberating teachers, and critique the system while they are teaching in it. By not conforming and thoughtfully challenging traditional authority, teachers can transfer traditional authority and promote social transformation thereby creating a culture of democracy.

Placha’s approach is a rich blend of Boal’s (1979) theater-of-the-oppressed and Freire’s pedagogy-of-the-oppressed methods. She used both models in her classroom and commented about how teachers can enact the dialogical approach in a safe, empowering, highly participatory and equitable environment. Use of scenarios and case studies provide students and teachers to examine their assumptions, beliefs, and discover and create meaning as they go.

Now we turn to the fourth and final section of the chapter which focuses on a discussion of potential challenges and opportunities for transforming teaching approaches into democracy-promoting pedagogies in the Arab World.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES IN TEACHING FOR DEMOCRACY IN THE ARAB WORLD

In this final section of the chapter, the challenges and opportunities involved in teaching for democracy are discussed in three subsections: teacher training, teachers’ assumptions and beliefs about teaching, and opportunities. The first subsection which deals with the challenge of teacher training is discussed next.

Challenges: Teacher Training

Many researchers have noted the crucial role of rigorous teacher education training in producing effective teachers (e.g., Goodwin, 2002; Fareh, 2010; Stewart, 2014). In terms of rigorous training, teachers, especially language teachers, are among the best trained teachers in Morocco. Their training includes an undergraduate degree, a one-year specialization in a language-teaching related field, and another year training in and practicing language-teaching methodology. Other countries, like Finland, also accord a high status to the teaching profession. The best high-school students are recruited as teacher candidates in universities where admission is highly competitive. In Singapore, teachers are recruited carefully and they undergo an intensive interview process to determine their suitability to the highly valued and prestigious teaching profession. Once admitted, the teacher candidates receive a high quality training that blends academic subject matter with pedagogical methods and practice. Teachers are among the most highly paid in Singapore. The teacher candidates receive 60% of a teacher’s salary while in training and must commit
to teach for at least three years after graduation (Stewart, 2014). These countries understand the vital role of teachers and spend the time, effort, and money to ensure that they receive adequate and proper training. In most Arab countries, teachers are poorly trained, paid low salaries, and receive some, if any, professional development opportunities (Faour, 2012). As a result of some or all of these factors combined, the prestige and status that teaching once had has diminished over time. In many high-achieving countries require teachers to participate in many hours of professional development a year. Related to teacher training is the issue of teachers’ attitudes and beliefs about teaching that have to be examined. Thus, it is to this discussion that we turn next.

**Challenges: Teacher Assumptions & Beliefs about Teaching**

Teachers’ previous learning, knowledge, and beliefs about teaching serve as a powerful determinant of teachers’ present perceptions and practices, and are often resistant to change (Bailey, 2006; Bailey, Curtis, & Nunan, 2001; Kennedy, 1990; Freeman, 1992; Lortie, 1975). Therefore, raising teachers’ awareness about their beliefs, assumptions, and perceptions regarding teaching and learning must be included and strongly emphasized in any teacher training program. To underscore the role previous experiences and perceptions play on current beliefs and practices, Lortie (1975) drew attention to the “apprenticeship of observation.” This apprenticeship of observation is one’s cumulative observations of teachers, estimated at 13,000 from preschool or kindergarten until the twelfth grade, and influences new teachers’ perceptions of teaching. Unless the assumptions are challenged and examined, a teacher may go operating under the influence of potentially limiting views and beliefs. Freeman (1992) asserted that the number of days of the apprenticeship of observation period, which in his opinion also includes the college years, totals to approximately 3,060 days. In contrast, the number of days of classroom experience a teacher has in many the Arab World as well as in many countries including the United States is approximately 75. Freeman wonders what could possibly happen during these 75 days to significantly alter the practices learned in the preceding 3,060 days. Indeed, a teacher goes through a lengthy history observing and internalizing teachers’ behaviors. The models of teaching observed over the years during the “apprentice of observation” are likely to predispose the teacher candidate to teach as he/she has been taught. For some scholars, the internalized observations become a habitual pattern of teaching practice that may be difficult to change. Kennedy stated that, “teachers acquire seemingly indelible imprints of teaching from their own experiences as students and these imprints are tremendously difficult to shake” (Kennedy, 1990, p. 17). Similarly, Freeman (1992), asserted that “Apprenticeship of observation serves as de facto guides for teachers. The urge to change and the pull to do what is familiar creates a central tension in teachers’ thinking about their practice (p. 4). Relatedly, Johnson (1996) commented about the tension between teachers’ vision and realities of the classroom and the need to resolve the tension in
a systematic and constructive manner during teacher training. One of the vehicles to resolving this tension is to raise awareness about it in class and to use field experiences and practicum opportunities to examine their assumptions and beliefs and shape teachers’ understanding. A number of methods of raising awareness have been developed and implemented including specifically the autobiographical one.

The use of autobiographical narrative in teacher education was initially focused on first identifying and then addressing concerns of pre-service teachers (Parker & FitzGibbon, 1986–1987). Over the tears, teacher trainers have come to realize even more the importance of teacher candidates’ prior experiences and their role in shaping what he/she will be and do in the classroom. Thus, autobiographical writing has become a way for pre-service teachers to use their reflections on their perceptions, beliefs and experiences to increase their knowledge and skills in teaching and learning (Alvine, 2001). Autobiographical writing has been used in various teacher education disciplines such as science (Rosenthal, 1991), math (Pereira-Mendoza, 1988); language arts (Danielson, 1989); teacher education (Alvine, 2001); and language teaching (Bailey, Bergthold, Braunstein, Fleischman, Holbrook, Tuman, Waissbluth, & Zumbo, 1996).

Bailey et al. (1996) used language learners’ autobiographical narratives to examine their ”Apprenticeship of Observation” assumption. They used the following three questions to tap into the pre-service teacher’s prior observations of teaching:

1. What language learning experiences have you had and how successful have they been? What are your criteria for judging success?
2. If you were clearly representative of all language learners, what would we have learned about language learning from reading your autobiography? What can be learned about effective (and ineffective) teaching by reading your autobiography?
3. How has your experience as a language learner influenced you as a language teacher? (Bailey et al., 1996, p. 12)

The data collected by Bailey and her colleagues showed trends, critical incidents, and salient factors that affect the development of teachers. More specifically, the following themes emerged from the autobiographical narratives: (1) teacher behaviors and beliefs versus methods and materials; (2) reciprocal respect between teacher and students; (3) maintaining motivation; and (4) affect and classroom environment.

The first theme, teacher behaviors and beliefs versus methods and materials, relates to teacher personality traits and disposition. The focus in this theme is on how the teacher is perceived by the student, and how that perception affects learning. Teachers’ dispositions and behaviors such as tolerating students’ mistakes, pushing students to learn, challenging and inspiring students, being strict and overbearing were judged by students differently depending on what else the teacher did. For example, a teacher who is strict and pushes students to learn was thought of as a “good” teacher if he/she communicated high expectations. In contrast, a teacher who is nice but does not promote learning was thought of as a “bad” teacher.
who were perceived as supportive, friendly, and sympathetic and also communicated high expectations were judged to as ideal and worth of emulating teachers. The teacher’s high expectations for students were internalized by students and caused them to set high expectations for themselves thereby positively impacting their achievement.

Reciprocal respect was the second theme. The teacher sets the tone for a positive and conducive learning climate by the respect he/she gives to students. Students described a teacher’s respect for them by being available to them, listening attentively to their questions and concerns, valuing them, and creating a sense of welcome and belonging. Students reported that the teachers they respected the most were ones who respected them as students and individuals. The reciprocal respect between teacher and students not only made for a closer community of learners but also positively impacted students motivation to learn and to excel.

Teachers’ personality characteristics and behaviors as well as reciprocal respect impact the affect and atmosphere of the classroom, which is the third theme. How a student feels in the classroom is indicative of the emotional climate. The students described the classroom context as positive if it promoted learning, if it fostered a psychologically safe environment in which they were free to take risks, it provided an enjoyable and fun learning atmosphere, and it offered useful, practical, and relevant knowledge and skills. A high positive affect classroom is one, which values relationships between students and the teacher and among students. In such a context, all members of the classroom feel connected to learning and growing process where everyone is supportive and encouraging of each other.

In summary, the autobiographical narratives show that pre-service teachers have internalized models of good and bad teachers and teaching, and through examination, the teacher candidates realize the importance of caring for student, setting high expectations, and creating a positive learning environment will enable them to better teach their future students. The teacher factor plays a more vital role in teaching than teaching methods and instructional materials. Effort in teacher training, therefore, ought to be concentrated and oriented toward teacher-making. The teacher trainers must practice what they preach by consistently and repeatedly demonstrating the behavior, attitudes, and practices they wish to instill in their future teachers.

The research on teacher training and teachers’ assumptions and beliefs points to the significance of the potential positive and negative influence that a teacher has on students. The implications take on even more importance when teachers are assigned to teach for democracy in a system that has relied for so long on rote learning as the method of teaching. In most Arab countries, schools are fundamentally organized in opposition to the goals of democratic citizenry. Schools are undemocratic for both students & teachers. How a teacher navigates this terrain in itself is a formidable challenge, let alone transforms it so traditional authority is wrested away and school acquires professional autonomy. The trap that some schools fall into when attempting to teach for democracy is to offer a curriculum that is devoid of politics. The focus of the program becomes on character building so students become good and caring
citizens who do not hesitate to render service to their communities. Programs that purport to teach for democracy need to include discussion of social movements, social transformations, and systemic change along with citizenship, social justice, and pluralism.

The other challenge is for departments or ministries of education in the Arab world to provide sustained professional development for teaching in general and for teaching for democracy in particular. In high-achieving nations, extensive professional development is required of teachers. For example, teachers spend 104 hours in professional development in Sweden, 90 hours in Korea, 100 hours in Singapore. All of these factors need to be addressed (Wei, Andrée, & Darling-Hammond, 2009). In addition to challenges, there are also opportunities for teaching for democracy in the Arab World. Thus, it is with a brief discussion of the opportunities we conclude the chapter.

**Teaching for Democracy: Opportunities**

As attested to by the uprisings of the Arab Spring, Arab youth are aspiring for democracy. They have endured decades of living submissively under undemocratic regimes and long to participate in a representative government in which they have a voice. An additional opportunity is the fact that youths have an inherent drive to be autonomous, to be able to express themselves freely, and to be able to think critically about issues. A curriculum that emphasizes teaching for citizenship, social justice, and pluralism would fulfill the youths’ needs for power sharing and self-governing. The teaching force must aim for teaching big ideas, teach for inquiry, help students to construct deep understanding based on considering multiple views, help their students to investigate information, and to teach for deliberation and interrogation. Moreover, teachers must expand their pedagogical imagination to teach through drama, music, art, and poetry, and to avoid the temptation of protective discourse by promote discussion and debate of controversial issues.

The opportunities and challenges of teaching for democracy are worth considering as some countries introduce or continue an ongoing focus on teaching for democracy. The initial steps will be fraught with difficulties and hardship; however, in the long run, civic-minded, workers for the common good, respectful and tolerant citizens propel a nation toward progress, prosperity, and security. When teachers who assume and will assume the awesome responsibility of teaching for democracy in the Arab World experience hardships and seemingly endless challenges in effecting change and transforming schools into laboratories of democracy, they will do well to reflect on Walt Whitman’s quote that democracy “is a great word whose history, I suppose, remains unwritten because that history has yet to be enacted” (as cited in Ayres, 2010, p. 120).
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