



# The Power of a Democratic Education

## : How Education Cultivates Democratic Values and Behaviors

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### INTRODUCTION

Does education in a democracy change people’s political values and behavior? If so, how?

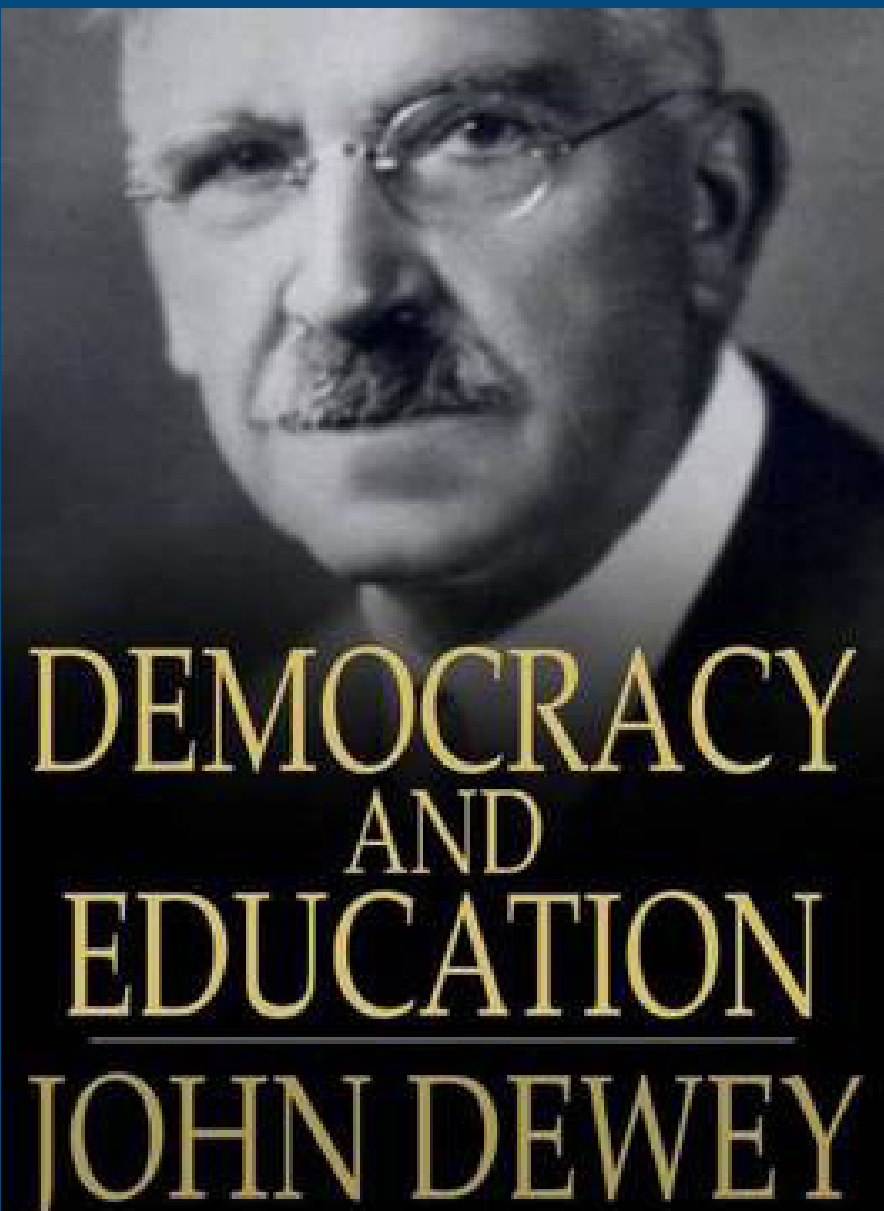
To answer the question, this study explores the relationship between democratic education and the consequent development of democratic attitudes and behaviors within individuals and societies.

To test a validity of learning experience in democracy as an important factor for political socialization, this study compares three models that account for different democratic components  
: years of democratic education, years of democratic experience, and a level of institutional democracy.

- Main goal of the study  
: To substantiate John Dewey’s claim that “learning by doing”—education that leads to certain behaviors and notions—bolster democratic values and practices.

- Data used  
: World Values Survey, a comprehensive survey of individual values and attitudes which is conducted throughout five waves from 1981-2008 and includes about 250,000 respondents from 97 countries.

- Methodology: Hierarchical Linear Modeling (individuals nested within country-waves)



“Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself”

### VARIABLES

Dependent Variables

- Democratic Values-----
- Perception of governmental responsibility
  - Scale from 1 (“the people should take more responsibility”) to 10 (“the government should take more responsibility”)
- Democratic Behaviors-----
- Signing a petition
  - Scale: 1 (have signed a petition) / 2 (might sign) / 3 (would never sign)

Independent variables

- DemEdu (Years of Education in Democracy) / CtyDemEdu (country-level mean)
  - DemExp (Years of Living in Democracy) / CtyDemExp (country-level mean)
  - Democracy Level (Aggregate level of democracy)
- + Control variables: Income / Education level / Town Size / Age / Sex / Social Capital (both in individual and country levels)

### REGRESSION RESULTS

Democratic Value - Popular Sovereignty			
People vs govt responsibility	Model 1 Democratic Education	Model 2 Democratic Experience	Model3: Level of Democracy
DemEdu(centered)	-.01759744**		
CtyDemEdu	-.03711104***		
Income(centered)	-.0200598	-.00941306	-.01994338
Education(centered)	-2278.8066	-3505.8626**	-3084.0352**
TownSize(centered)	-3972.1819*	.53933311***	.46816467***
SocialCap(centered)	-.05657624***	-.05711798***	-
Age (centered)	-.00253081	-.00464716**	-.05592893***
Sex	.26921817***	.34769919***	-.00343382*
Income (country)	.00521864	-.02016108	.28725218***
Education(country)	.14503721*	.7752845	.01447285
TownSize(country)	(omitted)	(omitted)	.13379089
SocialCap(country)	-.92868897***	-.74466051***	(omitted)
Age (country)	-.08738702***	-.03588415	-.71642214***
DemExp(centered)		.00937834	-.064435*
CtyDemExp		-.00852581	
Democracy Level	-.06675432	-.07300511	
Constant	10.319023***	-.83597135	-.05022946
Ins1_1_1_cons	-17.800786*	-2.1753579***	8.5027944***
Insig_e_cons	1.0425182***	1.0201017***	1.0371617***
Statistics			
AIC	44554.83	57383.639	64524.315
LL	-22261.415	-28675.819	-32248.158

Crosstable for Democratic Education and Signing a Petition

Proportion of Democratic Education in Country		Democratic Education of Individual			Total
		None	Some	All	
No Democratic Education (undemocratic country)	Have done	16.5%			16.5%
	Might do	35.7%			35.7%
	Would never do	47.8%			47.8%
Some Democratic Education (new democracy)	Have done	23.3%	27.9%	31.6%	24.7%
	Might do	34.4%	37.5%	39.1%	35.3%
	Would never do	42.3%	34.6%	29.4%	39.9%
Majority Has Exclusively Democratic Education (mature democracy)	Have done	47.6%	56.2%	68.0%	67.2%
	Might do	25.5%	28.3%	22.5%	22.7%
	Would never do	26.9%	15.5%	9.5%	10.1%

- About 70% of democratically educated people are willing to sign a petition
- About 50% of people in undemocratic countries would never sign a petition

Democratic Behavior- Signing a Petition

	Model 1 Democratic Education	Model 2 Democratic Experience	Model3: Level of Democracy
DemEdu(centered)	-.00653041***		
CtyDemEdu	-.04099512		
Income(centered)	.01303196**	-.00957781***	.0099456**
Education(centered)	-4594.5897***	-5412.559***	-5424.9008***
TownSize(centered)	-653.16532	.07288831***	-.02053434
SocialCap(centered)	-.05491046***	-.03820766***	-.03757793***
Age (centered)	-.00214327***	.00016532	.00043285
Sex	.02099375	.0057283	.02276741
Income (country)	.03267874	-.00744076	-.06018682
Education(country)	.00385272	-.0395321	.16952976
TownSize(country)	(omitted)	(omitted)	(omitted)
SocialCap(country)	.0349915	-.12102647***	-.1457141
Age (country)	.08085368	-.12113164***	.01304634
DemExp(centered)		.02482773***	.1009562
CtyDemExp		-.02423334***	-.41059184
Democracy Level	.16734601*	-.39721083***	
Constan	-2.2336558	8.8036198***	
Ins1_1_1_cons	-1.3010744***	-20.284306*	-1.3635096***
Insig_e_cons	-.34744976***	-.37491523***	-.38391612***
Statistics			
AIC	18599.439	23921.341	26354.818
LL	-9283.7193	-11944.671	-13163.409

### CONCLUSION

✓ Individuals with more democratic education tend to embrace more democratic values and actions than their counterparts with lower levels of democratic education.

✓ Model 1 with democratic education variables better illustrates the individual-level variation in democratic values and behaviors than model 2 and model 3 do.

✓ In addition to a correlation with citizen sovereignty and willingness to sign petitions, democratic education turned out to encourage rational and secular values, more active civic engagement, and peaceful demonstrations.

✓ Surprisingly, democratic experience and democratic institutions are not able to explain democratic values, and in many cases have a negative relationship with democratic behavior. This is likely due to a variation within mature democracies, but more research is necessary.

### ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

- ≠ What are the factors that affect a variation of democratic actions and choices within a well-established democratic country?
- ≠ How can we develop a model of democratic education that can be applied to non-democratic societies?

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### REFERENCES

Haddad, Mary Alice, “The Power of a Democratic Education,” 2012.