

**INFLUENCING THE SOCIAL MOVEMENT ENVIRONMENT:
THE EFFECT OF POST-PRIMARY EDUCATION FOREIGN AID ON SOCIAL
MOVEMENT SUCCESS ABROAD**

by
Catherine M. McCabe

A research paper submitted to Johns Hopkins University in conformity with the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Global Security Studies

Baltimore, Maryland
August 2020

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ABSTRACT

The question of how the United States Government can best support democratic social movements abroad has not been satisfactorily addressed by policy research thus far. Military support, coercive diplomacy, economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation, and direct financial support have all been shown to be ineffective strategies. By using a mixed method approach of studying comparative cases as well as quantitatively analyzing data through descriptive graphs and bivariate regression models, this paper considers the possible alternative policy option of soft power influence as a solution for supporting social movements abroad. Although the study concluded that no significant relationship exists between foreign aid designated for post-primary education and the number of successful social movements that emerge, policy researchers should continue to be encouraged to find soft power alternatives to the detrimental hard power tactics that are being used today.

Primary Reader and Advisor: Professor Sarah Clark

Secondary Reader: Professor Collin Paschall, Professor Elly Rostoum

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my family and friends for their love and encouragement as I worked my way through the Global Security Studies Master program at Johns Hopkins University. Their presence in my life over the last 2 years was vital to my success in the program. I would also like to thank my professors, lecturers, and classmates for all that they taught me and for the lessons and discussions that inspired this research paper.

Catherine M. McCabe

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INTRODUCTION

In the past decade, more than half of the countries monitored by Freedom House (a nonprofit organization dedicated to freedom and democracy worldwide) have had a net decline in their level of freedom.¹ As governments have pulled back civil liberties in their states, the populations around the world have responded with citizen action, protests, and civil disobedience. In 2019 alone, social movements calling for more freedom and democracy erupted in Iran, Sudan, Lebanon, Algeria, Venezuela, and Hong Kong; some more successful than others. Even more still have erupted over government corruption, inadequate or distorted justice, and government overreach.

Social movements – occasions of collective action where citizens come together to create or prevent change in reaction to a social grievance or issue – occur worldwide in both democratic and authoritarian countries. The question of what makes them successful has been studied in a wide variety of research and remains an important and relevant topic of research today. In his book on sociology, Rodney Stark concluded that in order for social movements to succeed, they need to effectively mobilize people and resources, overcome opposition and competition, and receive support from external allies.² This third condition – the support of external actors – has been particularly difficult for researchers to identify as multiple studies have shown that not all forms of support are appropriate or beneficial. Solidarity with a social movement or use of a privileged role in society to help address oppression can be valuable forms of support, but only when they

¹ Sarah Repucci, *Freedom in the World 2020: A Leaderless Struggle for Democracy* (Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2020), 1.

² Rodney Stark, "Social Change and Social Movements," in *Sociology*, (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1992), 613-614.

do not undermine the framing or fundamental messaging of a campaign.³ Limiting support to strictly monetary aid may benefit a movement's mobilization resources, but continued reliance on external donations can cause a movement to lose its original social or political goals due to concessions made at the request of the donors.⁴

The dilemma with external support persists at the international level. It is not unusual for social movements to reach out to the people and leadership of countries that the movements want to emulate or believe to be in a position of privilege for support. However, in an effort to provide assistance, foreign countries may unintentionally undermine a movement's legitimacy, overshadow a movement's messaging, or worsen the domestic environment of repression within which the movement exists. For the past century, social movements with the stated goal of championing democratic or liberal change in their countries have reached out to the United States for assistance. It is the national security and foreign policy of the United States to promote democracy worldwide as a way to promote peace, but the question of how best to support these movements has yet to be effectively addressed. This is the fundamental question of the research study below: how can the United States Government best support democratic social movements abroad?

The paper below will first review the current literature on the ways in which governments can influence other international actors and the roles that external allies can play in social movements. As the literature will show below, most research on conventional and direct forms of international support of social movements describes

³ Kelly Rae Kraemer, "Solidarity in Action: Exploring the Work of Allies in Social Movements," *Peace & Change* 32, no. 1 (Jan 2007): 20-38.

⁴ Kristin McKie, "International Donor Funding and Social Movement Demobilization: The Barabaig Land-Rights Movement in Tanzania," *Africa Today* 66, no. 1 (Fall 2019): 73-95.

what is *not* effective. The literature review section concludes with the possibility of using societal level soft power tactics to indirectly influence the environment surrounding the social movement. Next, the paper will discuss foreign aid targeted toward post-primary education as a possible independent variable, and why this type of aid can be hypothesized to influence social movement success as well as any intervening variables in between. After describing the data sources and methodology used, the study will then examine three cases from the 2010/2011 “Arab Spring” uprisings (Egypt, Syria, and Tunisia) to identify how the independent variable played a role in the emergence and success or failure of each state’s movement. From here, the paper will expand outside of the Arab Spring examples, and use quantitative modeling to determine the effect of the independent variable on social movement success worldwide. Finally, the study will discuss the implications of the research and conclude with why this research is important.

CURRENT LITERATURE

Power is the ability to make others do what you want them to do. In international relations, there are primarily two different types of power that states can use to influence and affect the behavior of other states: hard power – which refers to forceful coercion or inducement through threats, military means, payoffs, or economic sanctions, or a “push”; and soft power – which refers to persuasion, cultural influence, and positive attraction, or a “pull”.⁵ When thinking about how the United States Government can influence a repressive regime to change its behavior, most policymakers immediately imagine hard

⁵ Joseph S. Nye Jr., *The Future of Power: Its Changing Nature and Use in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), 19.

power options. Not only is hard power what the United States has historically used in such situations, but it is also more direct and easier to understand and measure. Whereas soft power many times requires the intricate knowledge of the preferences of the other actor so as to understand where persuasion could be targeted, hard power relies more on understanding the capabilities (economic, financial, military, etc.) of both sides and the straightforward cost-benefit calculation to each action. As such, with its unsurpassed economic and military might, the United States has traditionally sought to use hard power to influence and coerce foreign governments to democratize or give concessions to domestic social movements seeking democratic change. However, US efforts to support local resistance movement have many times led to mixed results in the short-term and, in several cases, outright failure in the long-term making many theorists (who's arguments are discussed below) question whether the actions by the United States have had any positive effect at all.

Hard Power: Military

The classic example of hard power is the use of military force, including the financial and material support of armed actors, the training of allied militias or armed groups, and the deployment of American military troops. A quantitative study on social movements since 1945 by Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan found that participation has a positive relationship with the success of a social movement in achieving its stated goals – i.e. the higher the levels of participation, the more likely the movement will result in a success.⁶ Due to this, there are several reasons why armed or violent force would not

⁶ Erica Chenoweth and Maria J. Stephan, *Why civil resistance works: the strategic logic of nonviolent conflict* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 39-40.

be a suitable option for forcing a repressive government to concede. First, not all citizens are able to physically fight in an armed struggle even if they share the movement's grievance. Children, pregnant women, the elderly, and the disabled are unlikely to be able to participate in an armed struggle in the same numbers that they could participate in a boycott, sit-in, or nonviolent protest. Second, armed struggles typically involve a measure of secrecy in planned activity, leaving the general population out of the loop and unable to participate. Third, the morality and ethics of military action resulting in death and maiming of political adversaries may prove a step too far for some citizens and observers, further cutting down on the number of willing participants. And finally, the commitment and risk involved in armed movements is many times too high for the average risk-averse individual.⁷ By financially and materially supporting or training armed actors, the United States would be negatively affecting the number of citizens willing and able to participate in a movement, thereby likely leading to the movement's failure in achieving its goals.

Beyond basic participation, there are other theories which suggest that military assistance would not be an effective way for the United States to support social movements abroad. Utilizing backlash, for example, is not only a tactic that nonviolent protesters can use when state security forces use repressive methods; the repressive government can also use backlash and public opinion when domestic groups use violence or foreign militaries invade by turning the framing, messaging, and claims of legitimacy against social movements. Moreover, by using guerilla or military tactics, social movements and their allies are more likely to cause further repression by the government

⁷ Chenoweth and Stephan, 34-39.

(further repression resulting 70% of the time in violent campaigns)⁸, and it may damage the movement's own ability to utilize backlash against regime actions. Additionally, studies have shown that undermining the loyalty of security forces within the state should be a key objective for movement success.⁹ However, violent confrontations with the police, intelligence services, and military are unlikely to encourage them to defect, and may instead result in a rally-around-the-flag effect.¹⁰ Finally, quantitative studies in civil resistance movements have shown that nonviolent movements are statistically much more likely to result in partial or complete success of a social movement's objectives than violent resistance groups – 79% versus 38%.¹¹ And, multiple studies have shown that even during failure, nonviolent movements, as compared to violent movements, achieved more substantial democratic gains.¹² It is therefore in the interests of the United States to avoid the use of military-driven hard power or the offer of support to social movements that promote violence as a method for change.

Hard Power: Coercive Diplomacy

Another form of hard power associated with military force is coercive diplomacy.

This refers to traditional diplomacy that is combined with an ultimatum or threat of force

⁸ Jonathan Pinckney, "Making or Breaking Nonviolent Discipline in Civil Resistance Movements," Edited by Maciej Bartkowski and Amber French, *ICNC Monograph Series* (ICNC Press, 2016), 37.

⁹ Marcos Degaut, "Out of the Barracks: The Role of the Military in Democratic Revolutions," *Armed Forces & Society* 45, no. 1 (2009), 78-100.

¹⁰ Anika Locke Binnendijk and Ivan Marovic, "Power and persuasion: Nonviolence strategies to influence state security forces in Serbia (2000) and Ukraine (2004)," *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 39, no. 3 (2006), 411-429.

¹¹ Chenoweth and Stephan, 9.

¹² Mauricio Rivera Celestino and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, "Fresh Caranations Or All Thorn, No Rose? Nonviolent Campaigns and Transitions in Autocracies," *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no.3 (2013): 385; Adrian Karatnycky and Peter Ackerman, *How Freedom is Won: From Civil Resistance to Durable Democracy*, (Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2005). <https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/resource/freedom-won-civic-resistance-durable-democracy/>.

if the target does not comply. Similar to the actual use of force, threats by external actors are unlikely to convince domestic security forces to defect from the current regime. Furthermore, not all threats are believable. Threats are only credible if they are communicated clearly and if the threatening state has the means, willingness, and reputation to follow through.¹³ While the United States certainly has the means and reputation to militarily intervene in other states, it has not always communicated this clearly as an ultimatum and in many situations may be unwilling to intervene if the White House and Congress perceive no benefits or if the foreign military engagement is unpopular with U.S. domestic constituents. Furthermore, repressive governments can point to these open and intimidating tactics in claims of violation against their sovereignty. There are several recent examples of repressive governments, such as China, Russia, and Iran, who have claimed that *any* domestic protests or disputes are primarily driven by hostile foreign actors, thereby delegitimizing domestic social movements and affecting real numbers of citizen participation. Like military intervention, the use of coercive diplomacy cannot be considered an effective tool in supporting democratic social movements abroad, as they may do more to harm to the messaging and legitimacy of the social movement than they provide any help.

Hard Power: Economic Sanctions

Finally, economic sanctions are a third form of hard power that the United States has historically used in an effort to punish repressive governments and force them into changing their behavior. However, several studies have found that economic sanctions

¹³ Nina Wilén and Paul D. Williams, "The African Union and coercive diplomacy: the case of Burundi," *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 56, no.4 (2018), 684.

are only effective in specific circumstances. For instance, sanctions can fail if the target state receives significant assistance from a third party or if there was a lack of a pre-existing trade linkage between the two countries.¹⁴ Furthermore, sanctions may only succeed if pre-sanction relations between the two countries were either cordial or neutral.¹⁵ These characteristics begin to limit the type of states that the United States could effectively use sanctions against, and brings into question whether sanctions against non-state actors and individuals would work at all. Furthermore, studies have found that sanctions may result in increased repression, worsened public health, increased poverty, and intensified authoritarianism.¹⁶ Finally, like threats, sanctions are only credible when the country imposing the sanctions is willing to enforce them. As the United States' political leaders need to answer to the public, whose incomes and financial well-being rely partly on international trade and business, there may be incentives to ignore the enforcement of sanctions.¹⁷ So, as with the other options of hard power, economic sanctions do not provide a sufficient policy option for supporting social movements abroad.

It is clear from the literature that the underlying assumption that punishment and coercive hard power tactics are effective in changing state behavior, or even effective in forcing concessions to domestic social movements, needs to be challenged. If the United

¹⁴ Shane Bonetti, "Distinguishing characteristics of degrees of success and failure in economic sanctions episodes," *Applied Economics* 30, no.6 (1998), 811.

¹⁵ Bonetti, 812.

¹⁶ Dursun Peksen, "When Do Imposed Economic Sanctions Work? A Critical Review of the Sanctions Effectiveness Literature," *Defense and Peace Economics* 30, no. 6 (2019), 643.

¹⁷ Navin A. Bapat and Bo Ram Kwon, "When are Sanctions Effective? A Bargaining and Enforcement Framework," *International Organization* 69, no. 1 (2015), 159-160.

States seeks to support social movements for democracy abroad, it will need to find a non-traditional method of assistance. As hard power does not appear to be as effective a tool as desired, the focus should then turn to soft power as a means for supporting change. This is not an unrealistic option. In the anti-terrorism wars in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan, soft power has already been established as a potential tool in influencing the behavior of terrorist groups and their state sponsors.¹⁸ In the democratic world, the ability to persuade and attract (in the manner of soft power) is “a staple of daily democratic politics”.¹⁹ As such, if the United States is aiming to spread democracy in its actions towards social movements, perhaps it makes sense that the primary actions taken be derived from its soft power.

Joseph Nye Jr., who originally coined the term “soft power”, asserts that soft power draws its capacity for influence through attractiveness of a culture, sincere political values, and legitimate and moral foreign policy.²⁰ Soft power and the spread of cultural values occurs on two levels: the state level and the societal level. The state level consists of exchanges between governments, elites, and state-backed diplomats. Examples of this could include conventional meetings of ambassadors, international forums, bilateral or multilateral agreements, or humanitarian efforts conducted by military forces or government agencies. On the state level, the United States can utilize soft power in agenda-setting through international institutions, promoting peace and human rights in international forums, and consistently following its own norms and laws that it endorses on the international stage.

¹⁸ Noor Fatima and Zahid Ali Khan, "Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy as Counter-terrorism Measure in Contemporary International Politics," *Global Social Sciences Review* 3 no.2 (2018), 1-20.

¹⁹ Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 6.

²⁰ Nye Jr., *The Future of Power*, 84.

Soft Power: Diplomatic Isolation

In supporting the efforts of social movements abroad in the past, the United States has considered the tactic of international and diplomatic isolation of the repressive government from international institutions. This restrains the repressive regime's own ability of agenda-setting and the use of propaganda domestically and abroad, but it comes with limitations and drawbacks. First, similar to threats and sanctions discussed in hard power tactics, the effectiveness of international isolation relies on the credibility and willingness the United States to follow through in isolating the target country, and on the cooperation of third parties. While the U.S. may be willing to cut all international and diplomatic ties with a country, it cannot guarantee that the rest of the world will follow suit. Second, by isolating a country, the United States loses its ability to openly monitor for human rights abuses and other injustices first hand. Social movements are able to gain attention and mobilize the domestic population through information sharing and news media reports on the repression and grievances of the citizens. Without a free press or impartial witnesses to repression, social movements may be unable to successfully rally a large portion of the population around their goals for change. Finally, isolating a country from the international community may leave the door open for another hostile country to come in, influence, and even strengthen the hold that the repressive government has over its people.²¹ While more research is needed on the effectiveness of international isolation in changing state behavior, the above effects of isolation render it an inadequate policy choice for supporting social movements.

²¹ Lyong Choi, Jong-dae Shin, and Han-hyung Lee, "The Dilemma of the "Axis of Evil": The Rise and Fall of Iran-DPRK Relations," *The Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 31, no.4 (2019), 608.

Soft Power: Direct Financial Support

The second level of soft power exists at the societal level. While more difficult to control, it is certainly something that the United States Government can foster and encourage through foreign policies and programs targeted toward foreign civil society. Examples of this include student exchanges, foreign work visa programs, foreign aid programs, public and private trade, tourism, programs led by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and exchanges of art, music, and shows for museums and theaters. These actions work to enhance the attractiveness of the United States culture and norms, and persuade states to follow in U.S. footsteps. By increasing interactions with a country through several of the examples above, the United States can naturally spread liberal cultural norms, present an alternative form of government to the citizenry of another country, and encourage access of the foreign press – all important factors in encouraging the participation of individuals in a social movement.

Policy options for supporting social movements through societal soft power can occur in two ways – by directly supporting social movements and their domestic allies through funding and training programs, and by indirectly supporting social movements by affecting the environment within which they exist. However, past research has shown that the former option may not be an effective form of support in the long-term. State-funding of social movements has been found to be useful for movements that do not have natural constituents to draw resources from, such as movements focused on public interest issues like environmental protection or welfare rights.²² As these issue areas

²² Dominique Clément, "State Funding for Human Rights Activism: Channeling Protest?" *American Behavioral Scientist* 61, no.13 (2017), 1706.

affect the public broadly, a collective action problem arises where no one individual feels compelled to mobilize because they feel others will do so in their stead. Channeling theory in social movement mobilization argues that state funding can help in the proliferation of these public interest movements by giving individuals an incentive to get involved and creating networks between organizations.²³ However, for issue areas that do have a natural constituency, such as in social movements fighting against government repression, direct funding may cause divisions within the movement and force activists to alter their momentum toward administration instead of advocacy. International funding pressures a social movement to professionalize in order to manage budgets and provide state sponsors with reports, give concessions to donors who want to avoid political instability, and compete with other movements and organizations for resources, thereby weakening domestic solidarity.²⁴ Because of these pressures and structural changes, social movements with direct state funding can lose their messaging, alienate their paid leaders and staff from their volunteers, and demobilize the population in the long run. Furthermore, state funding through NGOs are similarly challenged. By following donor requirements rather than their constituents' demands, these organizations weaken their own ability to represent the local civil-society and force local grassroots movements to become reliant to intermediary support rather than support from the domestic population.²⁵ For the reasons above, directly supporting social movements and allied NGOs may not be an effective policy option for the United States in assisting democratic social movements abroad.

²³ Clément, 1712.

²⁴ McKie, 78-79.

²⁵ Anthony Bebbington and Roger Riddell, "The Direct Funding of Southern NGOs By Donors: New Agendas and Old Problems," *Journal of International Development* 7, no.6 (1995), 882.

Soft Power: Indirect Support

This leaves the United States with the option of influencing social movement success through indirectly affecting the movement's environment. In their book on civil resistance, Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan examine the successfulness of both violent and nonviolent social movements. As part of their study, they evaluated the usefulness of direct external international support and found it lacking. By looking at conventional military and economic support through sanctions and financial or material donations, they found that such international support may actually undermine the movement's probability of success by undercutting its maneuverability, messaging, and legitimacy.²⁶ Instead, they found that movements that primarily rely on domestic civilian support without direct financial or military assistance of a foreign government, do not face the above issues and may be able to recruit higher levels of participants.²⁷ This suggests that any foreign support may actually do better at a societal level, where soft power and the influence from foreign cultures occurs indirectly. Examples of this include encouraging tourism and trade, funding programs that help build social networks and empower people, and sharing alternative forms of media and art. However, as of now, there have been no rigorous studies on the possible effects of societal level soft power tactics on the success of social movements. This study seeks to fill that gap.

²⁶ Chenoweth and Stephan, 55.

²⁷ Ibid.

VARIABLES & HYPOTHESES

Although there are many different forms of societal soft power that could be observed, this study examines the role that foreign aid targeted to post-primary education programs may have on social movement success. By funding education programs abroad, the United States Government can affect the civil-society of another country in a way that that could benefit democratic social movements without supporting the social movement directly. This type of aid is also set apart from financial-based hard power, as it focuses on enhancing the environment to be conducive to political change rather than directly paying for supporters or coercing political actors (i.e. – the subtle “pull” rather than the forceful “push”).

A hypothesized relationship between secondary and tertiary education programs and social movement success is reasonable. Post-primary education is aimed at teenagers and young adults, and teaches critical thinking, self-analysis, innovation, and communication skills in addition to basic mathematics, science, literature, and history. These skills create a population of individuals who are open to new ideas and values, and who are prepared for leadership roles. Moreover, schools and education centers are vital nodes in community social networks. Information and resources can spread quickly through a school community; not just through the students, but also their families, teachers, and administration. Finally, students have historically played important roles in the composition and success of social movements worldwide. For instance, the Tiananmen Square protests for democratic reforms were led by Chinese university students, the Nashville lunch counter sit-ins to end racial segregation were conducted primarily by students, and the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia started with student

protests. It is the younger generations, in most cases, who take up the call for change, and have the built-in social networks, organization, and energy to form resistance against their governments or societies.

For the reasons above, this study will consider the effect of United States societal soft power in the form of foreign aid dollars designated for secondary and tertiary education on the likelihood that an emerging social movement will be successful. The Independent Variable – US Dollars of foreign aid for post-primary education – will be examined both as a sum total, in the case studies, and as a rolling 5-year average, in the quantitative regression models below. The Dependent Variable – the emergence of a successful social movement – will be measured as the quantity of social movements that emerged in a year and which eventually ended in failure, limited success, or total success in achieving the movement’s stated goals. These conclusions were determined by a panel of experts for the NAVCO 1.2 Dataset, and were measured by the campaign’s achievement of none of its stated goals (“Failure”), some of its stated goals (“Limited Success”), or 100% of its stated goals (“Success”). As secondary and tertiary education programs are linked with many important factors that can lead to social movement success (i.e. – energized youth, openness to new ideas, alternative forms of media, innovation, and community networks), this study hypothesizes that increases in foreign aid directed to post-primary education will lead to the emergence of social movements that are ultimately successful in achieving their stated goals. The null and alternative hypotheses are stated below:

H₀: There is no correlation between USAID dollars for post-primary education (*IV*) and the emergence of successful social movements (*DV*).

H₁: There is a positive correlation between the amount of USAID dollars for post-primary education (*IV*) and the emergence of successful social movements (*DV*), so as the amount of aid increases, the quantity of successful social movements increases.

As the process of affecting social movement success through USAID funding of post-primary education is not an immediate one, there are expected intervening variables that also need to be examined between the cause (*IV*) and the outcome (*DV*). First, the increase of funding dollars to post-primary education programs is expected to reflect an increase in the percentage of the population who have attended and/or completed secondary and post-secondary formal education (Intervening Variable # 1). This is a logical inference as schools and educational institutions will be able to spend the additional aid on expanding their programs, hiring more teachers, and lowering or covering the tuition for students, thereby increasing attendance numbers. Second, with a larger percentage of the population formally educated beyond basic primary schooling, a similarly large percentage of the population is expected to be empowered with skills and characteristics vital to social movement emergence and success: innovation, oral and written communication, teamwork, understanding of human rights and self-worth, knowledge of other cultures and governments, leadership, and community engagement and networking. These are just some of the skills that are fostered in secondary- and tertiary-level students. Third, these skills and characteristics should reflect in larger numbers of participants active at the height of a social movement campaign (Intervening Variable # 2). With a widened social network for communication and an awareness or conviction that change is possible, educated teenagers and adults may feel more emboldened and encouraged by their surrounding community to act against any

perceived grievance by their government. Finally, as shown in past quantitative studies, as larger portions of the population participate in a social movement (and therefore withdraw their support and consent from the government) the more likely it is that the movement will succeed in achieving its stated goals. The expected process of cause and effect from the Independent Variable to the Dependent Variable is shown below in Figure 1.

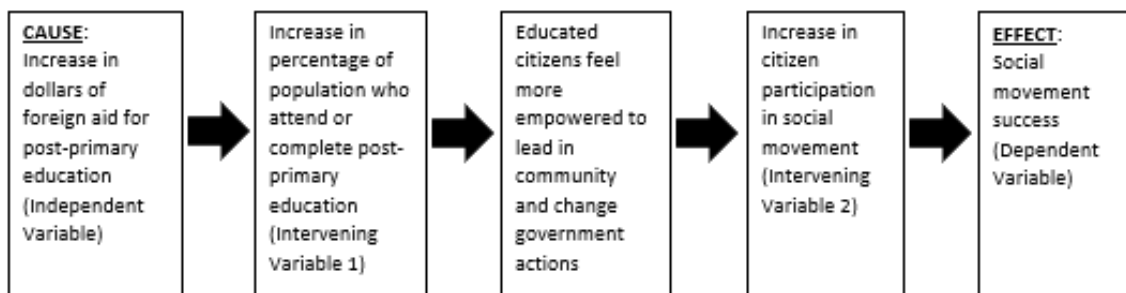


Figure 1: Hypothesized Cause and Effect Process

DATA SOURCES & THEIR LIMITATIONS

The data for this study were collected primarily from the U.S. Foreign Aid Explorer published by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and from the Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO) Data Project by Harvard University. Supplemental data were gathered from UNESCO Institute for Statistics, The World Bank, the Barro-Lee dataset referenced by The World Bank for global educational development, and the EU Aid Explorer published by the European Commission.

The U.S. Foreign Aid Explorer includes data on the obligations and disbursements of United States aid dollars by country from 1946 to the most recent

year.²⁸ However, it only begins to distinguish aid by sector (i.e. – by secondary education, post-secondary education, etc.) from 2001 onwards. As such, this study only focuses on the years with designated sector data starting from 2001, and begins the rolling 5-year averages from 2005. Additionally, this study uses current dollars for calculations, rather than constant dollars, in order to compare total sums with other datasets. Finally, while there is a sector of aid described as “Education, Level Unspecified”, data in this sector were not used as an unknown amount of aid may have been spent on education other than secondary or post-secondary education.²⁹

The NAVCO 1.2 Dataset includes information on 389 maximalist social movement campaigns that emerged between 1945 and 2013.³⁰ The dataset has three binary variables SUCCESS, LIMITED, and FAILURE which designate whether or not the campaign ended in complete success, in limited success, or in failure. This dataset also includes the variables PARTICIPATION and PERCENTAGE POPULAR PARTICIPATION, which provides the peak number of participants in the movement and is used in this study to measure participation as the Intervening Variable # 2 in the quantitative analysis below.

The NAVCO 1.2 Dataset has some limitations that need to be acknowledged. Although this dataset has been updated in 2019, it only identifies the level of success achieved by each campaign up to the end of 2014. Any movements that were still ongoing by the end of 2014 were not included in the data used for the quantitative

²⁸ U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Foreign Aid Explorer: The official record of U.S. foreign aid*, (April 23, 2020), <https://explorer.usaid.gov/data>.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Erica Chenoweth and Christopher Wiley Shay, *NAVCO 1.2 Dataset, V2* (October 31, 2019), Harvard Dataverse, <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/OUZOTX/N2DA8B>.

analysis below, as it would have skewed the total number of movements toward limited success and failure. Furthermore, as the number of resistance campaigns has dramatically increased over the last 15 years, there are almost certainly campaigns that are missing in the intervening years between the end of this dataset and today. Additionally, this dataset defines campaigns as “a series of observable, continuous, purposive mass tactics or events in pursuit of a political objective”.³¹ As such, it does not include independent or random events without a unified purpose, such as individual suicide bombings or flash mob protests. Moreover, the beginning and end dates for each campaign are based on expert and multi-source consensus, and may reflect any underlying biases present in the sources or expert opinions. Finally, the issue of underreporting bias is important, but difficult to avoid as the NAVCO data team could only investigate major campaigns with “mature” objectives and membership.³² Movements in their infancy, non-starters that were crushed immediately by repressive governments, and campaigns with limited objectives may not have been included in this dataset and therefore represent an important underreported group of movements.

As a result of the limitations in both datasets described above, the total number of years observed in this study as a whole is 13 years (2001-2013) and the total number of years observed with a rolling 5-year average of aid, used for the quantitative analysis section, is 9 years (2005-2013). As a result of the small number of observations for my explanatory variable, both the internal and external validity of the regression models will be affected, as small sample sizes may not sufficiently capture the real effect between

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

variables and any relationship found may not be generalizable. This will be further discussed in the Implications section below.

Finally, the data used from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics include information on educational attainment levels of the global population.³³ This research paper uses the average worldwide percentage of population that attained Upper Secondary education and the average worldwide percentage of population that attained Bachelor's or equivalent education in measuring Intervening Variable # 1 for the quantitative regression models analyzed below. Lastly, this study uses total project costs calculated for all World Bank projects under the Secondary Education sector and Tertiary Education sector from the World Bank website, information on level of education participation in 2000, 2005, and 2010 from the Barro-Lee dataset, and data from the EU Aid Explorer website on secondary education aid for use in the comparative case studies below.³⁴

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a mixed methods approach by first considering the relationship between the research variables in three comparative case studies from the “Arab Spring” events that erupted in 2010/2011, then quantitatively analyzing worldwide data

³³ UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), *Share of population by educational attainment, population 25 years and older*, (February 2020), <http://data.uis.unesco.org/>.

³⁴ Robert Barro and Jong-Wha Lee, *A New Data Set of Educational Attainment in the World, 1950-2010*, (2013), distributed in *Journal of Development Economics*, Vol. 104, <http://www.barrolee.com/>; European Commission, *EU Aid Explorer: Sectors data from 2007 to 2020*, https://euaidexplorer.ec.europa.eu/content/explore/sectors_en; The World Bank, “Projects in Secondary Education,” 2020, https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/projects-list?sectorcode_exact=ES; The World Bank, “Projects in Tertiary Education,” 2020, https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/projects-list?sectorcode_exact=ET.

regression models in order to measure the strength and predictability of the Independent Variable on the Dependent Variable. The intention of the mixed methods approach in this paper is to use inductive reasoning through the method of difference analysis in the case studies to make a generalization as to a potential way that foreign governments can influence the social movement environment abroad, and then use deductive reasoning through quantitative analysis to test that theory against worldwide data.

The three cases for this study were chosen with the purpose of using the analytical method of difference: they are all similar cases and yet they differed in the resulting success or failure of their domestic social movements. All three countries are from the Middle Eastern and North African (“MENA”) region with coasts on the Mediterranean Sea, and their populations are similarly described: Arabic-speaking, predominately Sunni Muslim, median age in the 20’s-30’s, and generally equal ratios between sexes.³⁵ Prior to the emergence of the social movements at the end of 2010 and beginning of 2011, the per capital GDP of the three economies were similar and considered “low to middle income” by The World Bank (\$2,644.80 in Egypt, \$2,032.60 in Syria, and \$4,142.00 in Tunisia).³⁶ All three countries were led by “democratically-elected” president-dictators who initially came to power in a bloodless coup or following the death of the previous leader in an unopposed election. Furthermore, the three leaders all kept their power by restricting political opposition parties, running in elections as the sole presidential candidate, and

³⁵ Central Intelligence Agency. 2020. *The World Factbook: Egypt*. June 17. Accessed July 2020. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/eg.html>; Central Intelligence Agency. 2020. *The World Factbook: Syria*. June 29. Accessed July 2020. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sy.html>; Central Intelligence Agency. 2020. *The World Factbook: Tunisia*. June 11. Accessed July 2020. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ts.html>.

³⁶ The World Bank. 2020. *GDP per capita (current US\$)*. Accessed July 2020. https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?end=2010&most_recent_value_desc=false&start=2005&view=chart.

exploiting government corruption. Finally, the social movements in all three countries emerged within a few weeks of each other, so time-dependent factors such as global geopolitical events, international economics, and available technology – especially in telecommunication – were the same between the cases. However, despite these similarities, Egypt and Tunisia are both considered successes by the NAVCO dataset (though the latter more long-lasting than the former), whereas Syria is considered a failure.

Following a discussion of the case studies, this paper broadens its examination to quantitatively study the effect of total worldwide USAID for post-primary education on the number of successful social movements using a series of bi-variate regression models between each variable, including the two intervening variables identified previously. The purpose of using linear regression analysis is to discover not only the significance of the relationship between the two variables, but also the relationship's strength and predictability. However, as stated earlier, the effect of the small sample size on the regression model validity must be acknowledged and discussed.

CASE STUDY 1: EGYPT

In late 2010 and early 2011, mass demonstrations in the Arab world took many by surprise, and their spread across North Africa and the Middle East became known as the “Arab Spring”. While the term itself is a misnomer (as many of the movements failed and others devolved into violence and civil war), Egypt was considered one of the few successes in the immediate aftermath of the events, having ousted its president-dictator through the will of the people.

When considering the emergence of the social movement protests in Egypt, the importance of its young population cannot be discounted. Like most of the MENA region, Egypt has what is known as a “youth bulge”, in which a disproportionate amount of the population is under the age of 25. In Egypt, this number accounted for 51% of the population in 2010.³⁷ As in other countries with youth bulges, unemployment in teenagers and young adults is (and was at the time) high as many individuals, particularly those with college degrees, fight for the same job opportunities available to an inexperienced workforce.³⁸ This economic hardship, in combination with general disillusionment with President Mubarak, created a population desiring change.

However, by the design of the Mubarak regime, there were few formal political or civil spaces available to the dissenting public. Opposition parties, while allowed to exist, were kept irrelevant and prohibited from organizing on a national scale.³⁹ And as each election passed with a “landslide” victory for Mubarak’s party, the ability of the opposition parties to represent their constituents was further diminished. As a result, informal horizontal networks of individuals emerged, created from labor unions, student groups, and collections of youth activists. These networks, driven by the young and inspired by the success in Tunisia, called for protests on January 25, 2011. Over the next 18 days, over 1 million people demonstrated throughout the country in solidarity against Mubarak, convincing those in Egypt and around the world that a new leader was

³⁷ Mark L. Haas and David W. Lesch, *The Arab Spring: The Hope and Reality of the Uprisings*, Second edition (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2018), 15.

³⁸ Haas and Lesch, 64.

³⁹ *Ibid*, 66.

needed.⁴⁰ On February 11, 2011, the Egyptian military generals forced Mubarak to step down and took provisional control until new elections could be held later that year.

The success in Egypt appears to be linked with the unprecedented levels of citizen participation in the protests and in the military's refusal to suppress the movement. Both of these factors can be at least partially attributed to the wide social networks that had informally formed across the country in the years prior to the protests. Regarding participation levels, as more people became involved in the demonstrations, they were able to encourage additional friends, family, colleagues, and neighbors to join as well, creating a snowball effect. In Tahrir Square, what first started as several thousand protesters soon swelled to tens of thousands of protesters. Furthermore, the built-in social networks within Egyptian cities allowed for information and resources needed for the success of the movement to pass quickly through different groups. Regarding the choices and actions of the military, they too were affected by built-in social networks. The Egyptian military consists of both professional military elites and conscripted soldiers pulled from the very same population that was revolting. Due to the pre-existing networks within Egyptian civil-society, many of the military personnel had family and neighbors who were participating in the demonstrations. This may have been a factor in the decision by military personnel on the ground to avoid the use of violence against protesters.

So, if both the emergence and success of the Egyptian social movement can be explained in part by the informal networks of dissatisfied citizens, then what is a possible action that foreign actors can take (or did take) to naturally, and perhaps even

⁴⁰ Ibid, 70.

unknowingly, encourage these networks from abroad? One possible solution may be related to the student groups that were central to the network creation. In 2010, 48.1% of the Egyptian population over 15 years of age had attended at least some secondary schooling and 11.8% had attended at least some tertiary schooling (a percentage that had grown since 2000).⁴¹ And with over half of the total population under the age of 25, a sizable amount of the population was most likely still attending secondary and tertiary education programs or was within a few years of having done so at the start of the Arab Spring. Although foreign governments cannot force citizens in other countries to attend school, they can certainly encourage furthering education and assist in removing barriers that may prevent citizens from gaining a secondary education, such as through foreign aid and international developmental programs. In the United States, Egypt was one of only two countries in the MENA region (the other being Lebanon) to have received foreign aid through USAID specified for secondary and post-secondary education. In the 5 years before the January 25, 2011 protests in Tahrir Square, the United States had sent more than US\$109 million, averaging just under US\$22 million per year, for the purpose of bettering the education in young adults.⁴² This foreign aid may have played a role in the increase in the percentage of the population who had attended secondary and tertiary education programs from 2000 to 2010, which in turn may have played a role in the prevalence of student groups that formed informal civil networks across the country.

⁴¹ Robert Barro and Jong-Wha Lee, <http://www.barrolee.com/>.

⁴² U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), <https://explorer.usaid.gov/data>.

CASE STUDY 2: SYRIA

Similar to Mubarak in Egypt, Syria's President Assad ruled his country through security-enforced political repression and restrictions on opposition parties. Like other dictators in the region, Assad kept his opposition fragmented by limiting the political spaces available to the citizenry and those outside of his party. Additionally, Syria was experiencing similar socioeconomic issues as Egypt with high commodity prices, growing unemployment and poverty levels caused by a youth bulge, and government corruption.⁴³ However, unlike Egypt which had seen a decade of growing numbers of protests and unease, Syria appeared to be – in part due to the repressive security apparatus and the population's tolerance, and at times approval, of the comparatively young President Assad – a relatively stable state in late 2010 and early 2011 even as other governments fell in the region.⁴⁴

This stability ended in mid-March 2011 following the arrest and torture of young students for the crime of writing anti-regime graffiti on a wall in the city Deraa. Protests against the brutality of police and internal security forces spread from the rural regions into the cities, and soon turned into protests against the regime as Assad's forces responded to the demonstrations with violent crackdowns. Many high-level Syrian officials would later reflect that concessions, even symbolic ones without much power, would have likely been a better response to the original protests in Deraa. But after protesters started attacking police in retaliation, hardliners in the government advocated crushing the dissent before it had the chance to spread any further.⁴⁵ The decision was

⁴³ Haas and Lesch, 119.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 117.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 125-127.

made to brutally eliminate the protests and place ultimate blame for their emergence on foreign enemies, such as the United States and Israel.

The experience of the social movement in Syria was very different from the one in Egypt. In the summer of 2011, two principal organizations formed in opposition to Assad's regime: the Free Syrian Army (FSA) consisting of soldiers that had defected from the Syrian Army and others looking for a military solution, and the Syrian National Council (SNC) made up of Syrian exiles intending to be internationally recognized as legitimate opposition to Assad and looking for a diplomatic or political solution.⁴⁶

However, neither the FSA nor the SNC fully developed into effective campaigns due to disorganization, fragmentation, and lack of coordination within each group. In fact, the FSA was so fragmented that UN-negotiated ceasefires almost always broke down as different factions within the FSA chose to follow different rules and protocols.⁴⁷ By the end of 2011, what originally started as nonviolent protests had turned into both a civil war of disjointed groups and a proxy war between foreign actors, and the original messaging from the graffiti-writing teenagers in early March had been completely lost.

Once again, the initial emergence of the movement appears to be linked with students and the response from their naturally-formed, informal social networks of friends, family, and neighbors. However, where the networks in Egypt had prior organization through student groups that the movements could lean into, the social networks in Syria were fragmented and at times relied on more tenuous connections, such as those through social media. Furthermore, while the social movement in Egypt tended toward nonviolence, the movement in Syria was not as disciplined, most likely due to the

⁴⁶ Ibid, 131.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 131-132.

lack of coordination between participants. Finally, the failure of the FSA and SNC to secure legitimacy rests on their inability to effectively organize and on the international reaction to the Syrian conflict as a whole. As the world watched in horror as Syria disintegrated before their eyes, the direct hard power actions by foreign actors (through sanctions, ultimatums, and military engagement), resulted in a worsening of the crisis. And, because the Assad government was quick to blame foreign actors, even peacekeeping and humanitarian operations by foreign governments and organizations were viewed with suspicion by the Assad regime and its allies.

This suggests that perhaps indirect support may have been a more effective tactic by foreign actors; especially support that encouraged a civil-society environment with focus on unity, cooperation, nonviolence, and innovation. As the Syrian protests started with the actions of students and continued through a population of majority youth, the answer to foreign support may rest in the enhancement and education of these demographic groups. In 2000, the percentage of the Syrian population over the age of 15 that had attended at least some secondary education was only 17.9%. For tertiary education in 2000, this percentage was only 3.6%.⁴⁸ While Assad did make some educational reforms during the early and mid-2000's which narrowed the gap in secondary education attendance with the rest of the MENA region, tertiary education was still left behind.⁴⁹ Relatedly, this area of Syrian society has not been previously considered as a sector in need of support from Western actors. Between the United States, European Union, and The World Bank, the EU was the only Western-based actor to send any amount of aid or loans for the development of secondary or post-secondary education

⁴⁸ Robert Barro and Jong-Wha Lee, <http://www.barrolee.com/>.

⁴⁹ Haas and Lesch, 122.

to Syria in the years prior to the Arab Spring. And, even the amount that was provided by the EU was lower than the amounts received by other countries in the region.⁵⁰ This adds to the possible theory that success in social movements may be in part due to the vibrancy and organization of the pre-existing networks in the environment, and that this environment can be encouraged through aiding secondary and post-secondary education programs.

CASE STUDY 3: TUNISIA

Finally, an important case that cannot be overlooked in regards to the Arab Spring is that of the lone long-term success in Tunisia. Unlike Egypt, the citizenship of this country was not only able to change their regime into a democracy, but 10 years later it is considered the only “Free” country in the MENA region by the Freedom House Index.⁵¹

Tunisia, the country at the start of the Arab Spring, erupted into protests in December 2010 following the self-immolation of a young man named Mohamed Bouazizi, whose actions brought national and international attention to the economic and political issues felt by all in Tunisia, but experienced profoundly by the youth. Similar to the experiences of citizens in Egypt and Syria described above, the people of Tunisia were ruled by a repressive dictator, Ben Ali, who maintained his presidency by keeping his political opponents weak, disenfranchising his people, and limiting options for political space. With a large percentage of the population under the age of 25, economic hardship was especially debilitating for the young. And while the people continued

⁵⁰ European Commission, https://euaidexplorer.ec.europa.eu/content/explore/sectors_en

⁵¹ Freedom House. (2020). *Countries and Territories*. Retrieved from <https://freedomhouse.org/countries/freedom-world/scores>

feeling frustrated and embittered by high unemployment, rising poverty levels, and difficulty in paying for basic food products like bread, the dictator Ben Ali and his family lavished themselves in palaces with opulent food brought in by private jets.⁵²

The discontent of the people also appears to be linked with the growth of education in Tunisia since the 1990s. In 1991, universal education for all children became mandatory in Tunisia by law and modern, free public education was available through secondary schooling.⁵³ However, as larger amounts of the population graduated from secondary and tertiary education programs without employment available, dissatisfaction with the regime grew. Tunisia considered itself middle class, but the disparity between the employed and unemployed was clear to the educated population. By the early 2000's, Tunisia already had a history of strikes and protests against food and water scarcity as well as demonstrations against high commodity prices on basic foodstuffs, which had been led by peasants, youths, the unemployed, labor unions, and students.⁵⁴ So, when protests arose once more in late 2010, they were once again led by union workers, students, and the young. The Tunisian army, consisting of citizen conscripts who had experienced the same hardships as the rest of the populace, allowed the massive street protests to continue unhindered. On January 14, 2011, Ben Ali fled the country for refuge abroad and the parliamentary speaker, Fouad Mebazaa took interim control while democratic elections were planned.

In comparing the case of Tunisia to the ones above, the result of the social movement protests was once again impacted by the pre-existing networks of activist

⁵² Haas and Lesch, 29.

⁵³ Ibid, 35.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 43.

youths. Furthermore, the initial emergence of the protests again appears to be linked in part to students and the education levels of the populace. By 2010, 37.1% of the Tunisian population over the age of 15 had attended some secondary education and 12.7% had attended some tertiary education (one of the highest percentages in the region).⁵⁵ However, when adding in the possible effect of foreign aid as discussed in the cases above, this case at first glance gives the impression that it proves the exemption. If educational aid is hypothesized to significantly help shape the environment for a successful social movement, then why did this country (which like Syria did not receive any U.S. foreign aid for secondary and post-secondary education) achieve such high levels of educational attainment and ultimately develop a successful social movement environment?

The answer lies outside of the United States. Although the U.S. did not provide any aid in the years preceding the protests, other countries and international organizations did. For example, the European Union awarded US\$25.62 million in aid for secondary education in Tunisia in the four years (2007-2010) before the Arab Spring – substantially more than Egypt’s US\$6.22 million, Yemen’s US\$3.23 million, or Syria’s US\$1.56 million.⁵⁶ Additionally, from March 2004 to September 2010, Tunisia received US\$290.92 million in loans and grant money from the World Bank and its related non-bank sources with 40% (US\$ 116.37 million) spent specifically on secondary education.⁵⁷ The only country to spend more on secondary education in the region during this time was Jordan, whose own government responded to Arab Spring protests with moderate

⁵⁵ Robert Barro and Jong-Wha Lee, <http://www.barrolee.com/>.

⁵⁶ European Commission, https://euaidexplorer.ec.europa.eu/content/explore/sectors_en

⁵⁷ The World Bank, “Projects in Secondary Education,” https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/projects-list?sectorcode_exact=ES.

democratic reforms and whose social movement ended with limited success according to the NAVCO dataset.⁵⁸ Of the other major countries in the Arab Spring (Libya, Egypt, Yemen, Syria, and Bahrain), only Yemen received loans from the World Bank for secondary education during this time (US\$90.99 million), but it was specified for female education development (i.e. – female retention rates, female staff, and gender parity of student enrollment) and was found to have only “moderately satisfactory” implementation and results.⁵⁹ Similarly, Tunisia also was awarded the most for tertiary education out of the 6 major Arab Spring states (US\$60.63 million as compared to Egypt’s US\$29.4 million and Yemen’s US\$19.48 million). These facts add credence to the rising conjecture that aid for post-primary education may indirectly affect the social movement environment enough to lead to movement success.

DISCUSSION OF CASE STUDIES

The three case studies above suggest a possible pattern regarding the benefits of post-primary education foreign aid on the emergence of a successful social movement. In the two countries that had successful campaigns – Egypt and Tunisia – foreign aid for secondary and post-secondary education in the 5-10 years prior to the emergence of their social movement totaled in the hundreds of millions of US dollars. In the country with a failed social movement – Syria – only a relatively small amount (under US\$2 million) of foreign aid for secondary and post-secondary education was awarded. Furthermore, this

⁵⁸ Erica Chenoweth and Christopher Wiley Shay, *NAVCO 1.2 Dataset, V2*, <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/OUZOTX/N2DA8B>.

⁵⁹ The World Bank, “Projects in Secondary Education,” https://projects.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/projects-list?sectorcode_exact=ES.

type of foreign aid may have affected the percentage of the population that attended the educational programs. The figures below show the population percentages that had attended at least some secondary and tertiary education programs for each country in 2000, 2005, and 2010.⁶⁰

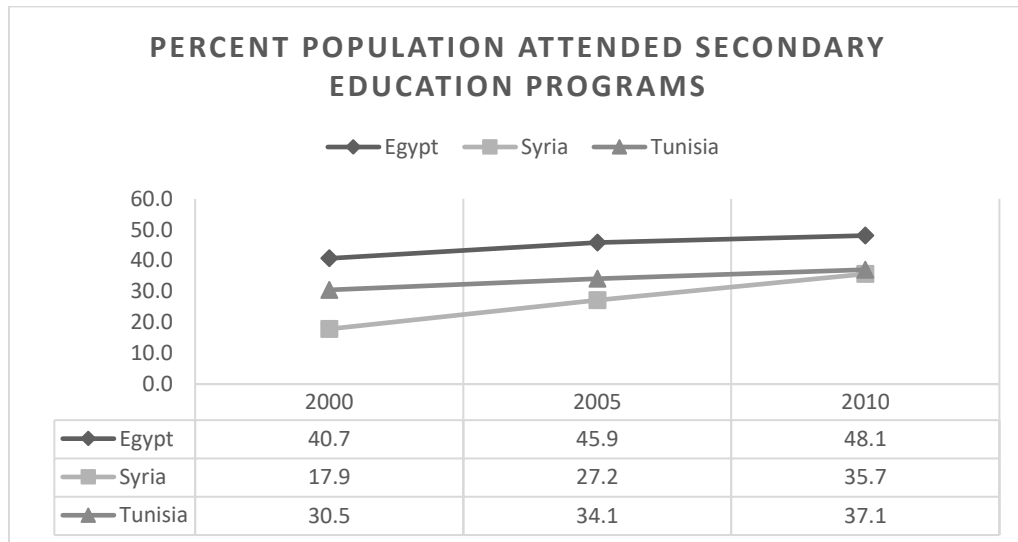


Figure 2: Percent Population Attended Secondary Education Programs (2000-2010)⁶¹

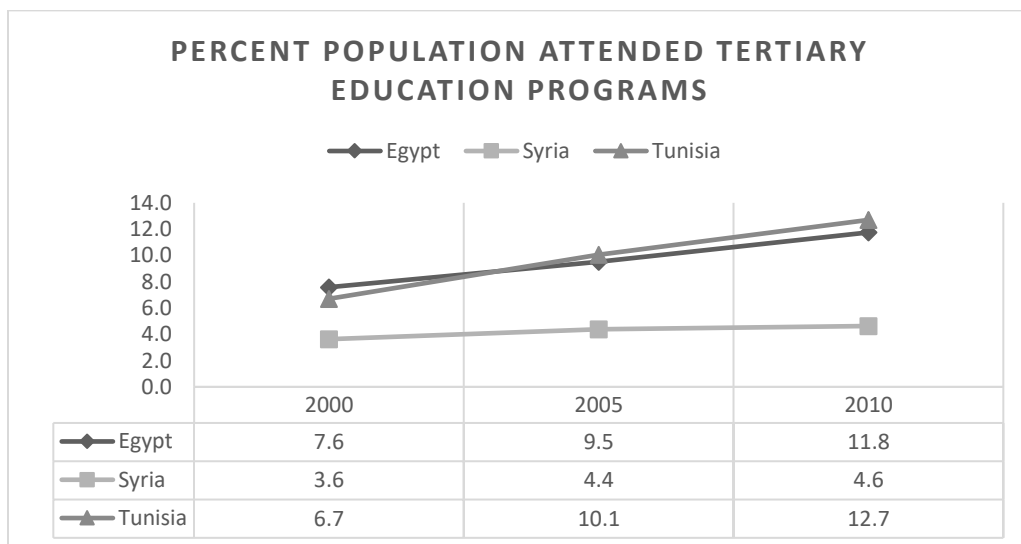


Figure 3: Percent Population Attended Tertiary Education Programs (2000-2010)⁶²

⁶⁰ Robert Barro and Jong-Wha Lee, <http://www.barrolee.com/>.

⁶¹ Robert Barro and Jong-Wha Lee, <http://www.barrolee.com/>.

⁶² Robert Barro and Jong-Wha Lee, <http://www.barrolee.com/>.

As shown above, while Syria was closing the gap in secondary education, in both metrics it had the smallest percentage of its population that had attended secondary and tertiary education programs. This difference is particularly noticeable in the percentage of population that had attended some tertiary education in 2010.

Additionally, the three cases suggest a pattern between social movements that are organized, coordinated, innovative, and disciplined in using nonviolent tactics and the movement's success. Part of this may be due to a movement's ability to lean into pre-existing social networks, such as organized student groups, that can quickly spread information and resources. Although all three cases involved social movements that emerged initially from student and youth actions, Syria did not utilize organized student groups to the same extent that Egypt and Tunisia were able to. Likewise, Syria did not have the same recent history of student-led protests as the other two countries. The disorganized and fragmented nature of the movement in Syria appeared to have accounted for at least part of the movement's failure.

Finally, the cases above also suggest that direct support from foreign actors had a negative effect on social movement success, as compared to reliance on internal, domestic mobilization. The intervention by external governments and organizations into the Syrian crisis worsened the situation and turned it into an international proxy war. The social movements in Egypt and Tunisia, on the other hand, utilized the domestic environment and its available resources to mobilize the population. Their success occurred despite (and perhaps because) of the lack of direct international support. This implies that if foreign actors seek to influence the success of a social movement, they should focus on motivating change in the domestic environment so it is more conducive

to social movement success, instead of trying to affect the resources and capabilities of the movement or its adversaries directly.

QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Having now established a generalizable theory from the three cases above, this study turns to the use of quantitative analysis to test the theory's strength and predictability. If foreign aid for post-primary education is hypothesized to affect the emergence of successful social movements abroad, then an overall increase in U.S. foreign aid in this sector worldwide should also reflect an overall increase in the number of successful social movements that emerge worldwide.

The table and graph in Figure 4 below show the changes in both US foreign aid designated for post-primary education programs and the number of successful and failed campaigns from 2001 to 2013. For the most part, there are less failed movements that emerge each year as compared to successful movements that emerge, with the exception of two years in 2006 and 2011. The first flip occurs the same year that the US spent the least amount on post-primary education aid – perhaps pointing to a pattern, but the second occurs during a year in which the US spent a substantially larger amount. Considering these two years, in addition to the erratic spikes in the number of successful movements each year, there appears to be no visible pattern in the data.

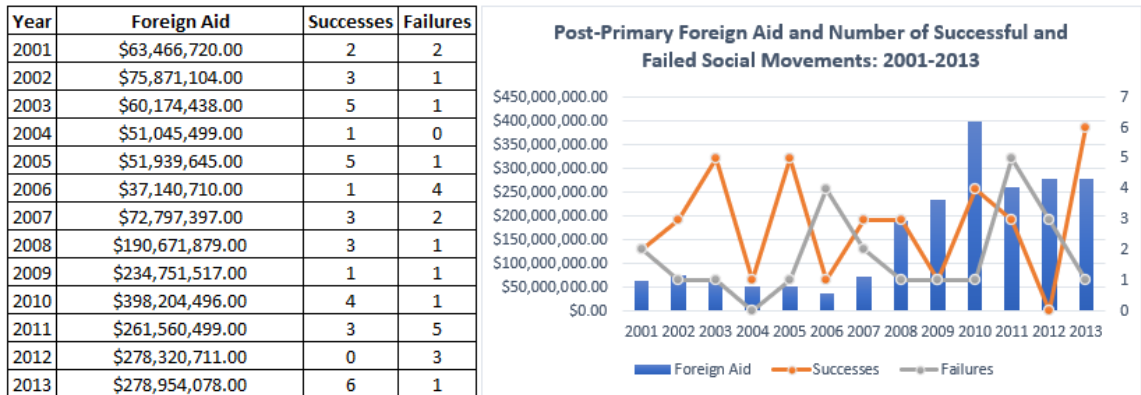


Figure 4: Time Series on Post-Primary Foreign Aid and Number of Successful and Failed Social Movements

However, we can expect there to be a considerable temporal lag in the effect of foreign aid on its targeted industry. And, as the effect of this form of soft power on the social movement environment is expected to work over the course of several years, the amount of aid can also be measured and analyzed as a 5-year rolling average. Figure 5 below shows a similar time series as above, but with the difference of using a rolling 5-year average in post-primary education foreign aid. However, again there appears to be no clear pattern in the data that would immediately suggest a relationship between the two variables. In particular, the last several years in the chart below show a steady increase in the rolling average of US foreign aid designated for post-primary education, but there is no similar steady increase in the number of successful social movements that emerge. The emergence of no successful movements in 2012 is predominantly visual in the last years below. This may suggest that there is no relationship, or that any relationship occurs on a much longer timeline than just 5-years.

Year	Rolling 5Yr Ave Foreign Aid	Successes	Failures
2005	\$60,499,481.20	5	1
2006	\$55,234,279.20	1	4
2007	\$54,619,537.80	3	2
2008	\$80,719,026.00	3	1
2009	\$117,460,229.60	1	1
2010	\$186,713,199.80	4	1
2011	\$231,597,157.60	3	5
2012	\$272,701,820.40	0	3
2013	\$290,358,260.20	6	1

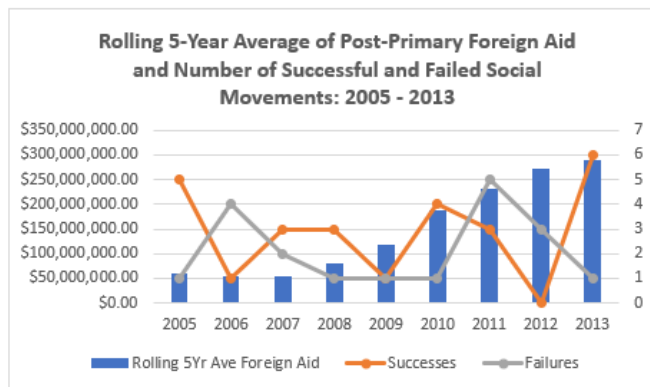


Figure 5: Time Series on Rolling 5-Year Average of Post-Primary Foreign Aid and Number of Successful and Failed Social Movements

In order to quantitatively test the data, regression models are used below. Similar to above, a rolling 5-year average for post-primary education foreign aid is used in an effort to capture the temporal lag in its effect. Additionally, because the effect is hypothesized to be indirect with two intervening variables, all variables are tested in the regression models below.

The first regression models between the Independent Variable (Annual 5-Year Rolling Average of Post-Primary Foreign Aid) on the Intervening Variable #1 (Percent Population that Has Attained Secondary or Tertiary Education) are shown below. Figure 6 shows secondary education attainment and Figure 7 shows tertiary education attainment.

. regress AvePopSecondary RollingAverageAid

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	9
Model	.001486311	1	.001486311	F(1, 7)	=	5.30
Residual	.001963802	7	.000280543	Prob > F	=	0.0549
				R-squared	=	0.4308
				Adj R-squared	=	0.3495
Total	.003450114	8	.000431264	Root MSE	=	.01675

AvePopSecondary	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
RollingAverageAid	1.41e-10	6.13e-11	2.30	0.055	-3.85e-12	2.86e-10
_cons	.281701	.0107541	26.19	0.000	.2562716	.3071303

Figure 6: Bi-variate regression (IV: Rolling Average of Aid, DV: Average Population with Secondary Education Attainment)

. regress AvePopTertiary RollingAverageAid

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	9
Model	.000028822	1	.000028822	F(1, 7)	=	0.29
Residual	.000688115	7	.000098302	Prob > F	=	0.6050
				R-squared	=	0.0402
				Adj R-squared	=	-0.0969
Total	.000716937	8	.000089617	Root MSE	=	.00991

AvePopTertiary	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
RollingAverageAid	-1.96e-11	3.63e-11	-0.54	0.605	-1.05e-10	6.61e-11
_cons	.1768196	.0063658	27.78	0.000	.1617668	.1918724

Figure 7: Bi-variate regression (IV: Rolling Average of Aid, DV: Average Population with Tertiary Education Attainment)

Interpreting the models above, the problem with this study's small sample size is already present. Of the various hypothesized relationships, this one between aid spent on education and the number of individuals who are educated should have one of the strongest and most significant relationships. However, the p-value for secondary education is right on the edge of being statistically significant (as it indicates that there is a 5.5% chance that this relationship occurred by random) whereas the p-value for tertiary education is high enough that no relationship between the two variables can be accepted

(as it indicates that there is a 60.5% chance that the relationship occurred by random).

Furthermore, not only are the slopes of both linear regressions so small as to be infinitesimal (indicating a weak relationship), but the slope for tertiary education actually shows that there is a negative relationship – in other words, as aid increases, the population with tertiary education attainment decreases.

As the relationship between the aid and secondary education attainment is the more statistically significant of the two, this study then considers the regression model between secondary education attainment and Intervening Variable #2 (Average Number of Participants in a Social Movement), shown below in Figure 8.

`. regress AveParticipation AvePopSecondary`

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	9
Model	6.7819e+11	1	6.7819e+11	F(1, 7)	=	1.01
Residual	4.7017e+12	7	6.7168e+11	Prob > F	=	0.3484
Total	5.3799e+12	8	6.7249e+11	R-squared	=	0.1261
				Adj R-squared	=	0.0012
				Root MSE	=	8.2e+05

AveParticipation	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
AvePopSecondary	1.40e+07	1.40e+07	1.00	0.348	-1.90e+07	4.70e+07
_cons	-3851774	4234535	-0.91	0.393	-1.39e+07	6161311

Figure 8: Bi-variate regression (IV: Average Population in Secondary Education, DV: Average Number of Participants)

Based on the above results, the relationship between the two variables is positive – in other words, as the average percentage of worldwide population that attains secondary education increases, the average number of participants in a social movement also increases. Furthermore, the R-squared value of 0.1261 shows that 12.6% of the average number of participants at the height of a social movement can be explained by the average percentage of world population that has attained a secondary education.

Considering all of the various factors that can go into participation numbers of a social

movement, 12.6% is an interestingly high percentage. However, the relationship between the two variables cannot be accepted as the p-value indicates that there is an almost 35% chance that any relationship between the two variables occurred by random, and is therefore not statistically significant.

Turning to the final hypothesized relationship between the average number of participants in a movement and the number of successful movements that emerge, the data should show a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between the two variables as past quantitative studies have already linked these two variables together. However, the regression model below in Figure 9 demonstrates again the validity problem of using a small sample size.

```
. regress AveParticipation BeginSuccess
```

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	9
Model	1.8464e+12	1	1.8464e+12	F(1, 7)	=	3.66
Residual	3.5336e+12	7	5.0479e+11	Prob > F	=	0.0974
Total	5.3799e+12	8	6.7249e+11	R-squared	=	0.3432
				Adj R-squared	=	0.2494
				Root MSE	=	7.1e+05

AveParticipation	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]
BeginSuccess	244487.2	127836.9	1.91	0.097	-57799.1 546773.6
_cons	-311905.2	438720.6	-0.71	0.500	-1349315 725504.3

Figure 9: Bi-variate regression (IV: Average Number of Participants, DV: Number of Successful Campaigns that Emerge)

In the regression model above, while the linear slope coefficient indicates the expected positive relationship and the R-squared value indicates that over 34% of the number of successful campaigns can be explained by the average number of participants, the resulting p-value signifies that a relationship between variables cannot be accepted.

With a roughly 10% chance that the relationship occurred by random, the correlation between the two variables is not statistically significant.

Of the various relationships studied above, only the relationship between the rolling average of foreign aid designated for post-primary education and the average percentage of the population that had attained secondary education can be argued as somewhat significant. Due to this, it is unlikely that the overall Independent Variable and Dependent Variable of this study will have a strong or significant relationship either. Figures 10 and 11 below show the regression models between the rolling 5-year average of aid and the number of successful campaigns that emerged (Figure 10) and the number of failed campaigns that emerged (Figure 11).

```
. regress BeginSuccess RollingAverageAid
```

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	9
Model	.365658549	1	.365658549	F(1, 7)	=	0.08
Residual	30.5232303	7	4.36046148	Prob > F	=	0.7805
Total	30.8888889	8	3.86111111	R-squared	=	0.0118
				Adj R-squared	=	-0.1293
				Root MSE	=	2.0882

BeginSuccess	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]
RollingAverageAid	2.21e-09	7.64e-09	0.29	0.781	-1.59e-08 2.03e-08
_cons	2.557062	1.340723	1.91	0.098	-.6132439 5.727369

Figure 10: Bi-variate Regression (IV: Rolling Average of Aid, DV: Number of Successful Campaigns that Emerge)

```
. regress BeginFailure RollingAverageAid
```

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	9
Model	.494577561	1	.494577561	F(1, 7)	=	0.19
Residual	18.3943113	7	2.62775876	Prob > F	=	0.6775
				R-squared	=	0.0262
				Adj R-squared	=	-0.1129
Total	18.8888889	8	2.36111111	Root MSE	=	1.621

BeginFailure	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
RollingAverageAid	2.57e-09	5.93e-09	0.43	0.677	-1.15e-08	1.66e-08
_cons	1.725197	1.040796	1.66	0.141	-.7358941	4.186289

Figure 11: Bi-variate Regression (IV: Rolling Average of Aid, DV: Number of Failed Campaigns that Emerge)

As expected, neither of the relationships above are strong or significant. In both regression models, it is very likely that the relationship between the variables occurred by random. Furthermore, a rise in successful social movements would suggest that there should be a decline in failed movements. However, both relationships' regression model coefficients are positive, indicating that an increase in aid results in increases in the numbers of both successful and failed movements worldwide. This complicates any argument that aid for post-primary education would lead to success over failure. Due to the models above, the alternative hypothesis – that a positive relationship exists between USAID dollars for post-primary education and the emergence of successful social movements – is rejected.

OVERALL IMPLICATIONS

The past literature on foreign assistance in social movements and the analysis in the comparative case studies above suggest that indirect support, as opposed to direct support, from a foreign actor may be the most effective method of influencing social

movement success. The three cases examined from the Arab Spring hint that foreign aid allocated for secondary and post-secondary education may be an example of effective indirect support. However, as shown in the quantitative analysis above, the sample does not demonstrate any significant relationship between the rolling 5-year average of post-primary education aid and the number of successful social movements that emerged in the same year.

The quantitative portion of this study was hindered by the small sample size due to available data. This has affected the internal and external validity of the results, as the regression models based on the 9 datapoints may not have sufficiently captured the real effect between variables and any relationship found may not be generalizable. As the NAVCO dataset and US Foreign Aid Explorer continue to be updated, additional research into this proposed relationship should be considered again in the future. Additionally, future research can relax the assumption of independence between the variables and examine only foreign aid sent to countries that are known to have social movements, so that the sample size can be expanded to at least 52 of the campaigns listed in the NAVCO dataset. Finally, this research study has a tendency toward viewing relationships and actions of various international actors through a mix of Realist and Liberal perspectives in its discussion of past research, description of the research problem and phenomenon, and hypothesis of a possible solution. Adding additional alternative perspectives to the problem and discussion of the hypothesis, such as ideas and theories pulled from Constructivism, Marxism, or Feminism, would further benefit any expansion of this study. If a significant relationship is later found between the two variables

proposed in the research above, it will provide a new policy recommendation for supporting social movements and democratization around the world.

CONCLUSION

The paper above considered the question of how the United States Government could best support democratic social movements abroad. The literature review found that past research has mostly tested tactics that are found to be generally ineffective, leaving US policymakers wanting a new policy solution. As an alternative, this paper suggested societal level soft power as a possible answer; a variable which has not been rigorously studied before. Specifically, this study considered the effect of US foreign aid designated for post-primary education on the number of successful social movements that emerged in the same year.

However, although the three cases from the Arab Spring studied above – Egypt, Syria, and Tunisia – implied that a relationship could exist between the two variables, the quantitative analysis showed that there is no significant relationship according to the data. The small sample size used in the regression models above diminished the internal and external validity of the results, but as further data is collected, future research into this relationship may provide a more accurate and generalizable conclusion. So, while the alternative hypothesis is rejected in the study above, future researchers should be encouraged to continue studying this and other forms of soft power as alternatives to the ineffective (and even harmful) hard power currently advocated today.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Catherine M. McCabe was born on July 5, 1990 in Reading, Pennsylvania, and grew up outside of Atlanta, Georgia. After graduating from South Forsyth High School with an International Baccalaureate degree, she attended The University of Georgia where she graduated with three Bachelor of Arts degrees in International Affairs, Political Science, and History as well as a minor in Chinese Language and Literature. She is currently a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Global Security Studies with a Graduate Certificate in Intelligence.