



Private Universities in Egypt: Are they Venues for Democratic Attitudes and Behavior?

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Abstract

Public Universities remained the main arbiters of higher education in Egypt until 1996, with the only exceptions being the American University in Cairo, and the Arab Academy for Science Technology and Maritime Transport. However, in 1996, a presidential decree established four private universities, which later paved the way for the establishment of many other private universities in Egypt. By the year 2005, almost 40,000 Egyptian students were attending private universities.

In an effort to understand the political attitudes and behaviors which the growing numbers of students acquire from higher education in Egypt, this study answered the following questions: Do students who attend private universities have more tolerant and democratic political attitudes and behaviors as opposed to students who attend public universities? Can private universities, which are less controlled by Egyptian security and police, become agents of social change and thus lead to democratization in Egypt?

To answer these questions, the researcher first analyzed the political science programs offered in Future University (FUE), the American University in Cairo (AUC) and Cairo University (FEPS). Which courses do students in all universities have to attend? Second, the researcher studied the amount of availability of student groups/clubs and unions, and the popularity of these different groups. After the input of these different universities was examined, the researcher employed a survey study on sophomore and junior students belonging to these three Universities to understand the difference in their democratic political attitudes and behaviors.

The study yielded the following results: Students at AUC have shown the most positive attitudes toward equality, tolerance and liberty. There was no substantial statistical difference between students of Cairo University and Future University. The political engagement of AUC students was highest, however, students at FEPS and FUE have shown positive interest in political engagement, through high participation in simulation Models.

I. Introduction

Public Universities have remained the main arbiters of higher education in Egypt until 1996, with the only exceptions being the American University in Cairo (AUC), and the Arab Academy for

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Science Technology and Maritime Transport. However, in 1996, a presidential decree established four private universities, which later paved the way for the establishment of many other private universities in Egypt. By the year 2005, almost 40,000 Egyptian students were attending private universities. Many studies have been conducted to understand the economic impact of these universities in enhancing the employment opportunities for students, and creating citizens who can actively engage in the complex world market of today. However, no study has been carried out regarding the output of these universities regarding their influence on the political attitudes and behavior of students. Universities disseminate political knowledge, values and behaviors to students which are important in creating awareness, political knowledge and skills to their students (Bakry, 2003; Somit, et al. 1958; Galston, 2001; Niemi and Junn, 1998; Torney-Purta, et al. 1999). In this sense, it is important to understand the type of knowledge which is transmitted to Egypt's private university students and their influence on the political knowledge, attitudes and behavior of students. Private Universities are important herein, because they are not under the state security apparatus which is widely spread in public universities.

Therefore, the study of private universities in Egypt is important to shed light on their impact on the political socialization process of their students. Faculties of Economics and Political Science are important in this regard especially since the political science classes therein are mainly concerned with transmitting political knowledge. Findings have suggested that targeted education for the enhancement of civic knowledge and civic engagement skills can encourage students to become active democratic citizens when they graduate (Hillygus, 2005).

Earlier attempts at identifying university students' political attitudes and behaviors have concentrated on outputs of either Cairo University and/or AUC (Bakry, 2003). Moreover, an important study has been conducted by Kandil (2008) concerning the political attitudes of higher educated citizens in Egypt. This study found that citizens who obtained higher education, have positive attitudes toward the belief in political engagement. However, this belief is not articulated in real engagement, since the study found out that these same citizens rarely vote and rarely participate in associations. Therefore, it is important to build on this study and understand the difference between political attitudes and behaviors of citizens who belong to different academic backgrounds.

In an effort to understand the political attitudes and behaviors which the growing numbers of students acquire from higher education in Egypt, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

- Are Egyptian private universities agents for teaching students democratic political attitudes and behaviors?
- Do students who attend private universities have more tolerant and democratic political attitudes and behaviors as opposed to students who attend public universities?
- Can private universities who are less controlled by Egyptian security and police become agents of social change which can lead to democratization in Egypt?

To answer these questions, the researcher first analyzed the political science programs offered in Future University (one of the newest private universities in Egypt), the American University in Cairo (the oldest foreign private university in Egypt) and Cairo University (which celebrated its hundredth anniversary in December 2008). Which courses do students in all universities have to attend? Second, the researcher studied the amount of availability of student groups/clubs and unions, and the popularity of these different groups. After the input of these different Universities was examined, the researcher employed a survey study on sophomore and junior students belonging to these three Universities to understand the difference in their democratic political attitudes and behaviors.



This study employed Jack Dennis' (1973) flow of interest paradigm as the method of the study. His paradigm concentrates on investigating ten dimensions, three of which were utilized in this study:

1. Content (the content of the transmission to the new members within the system).
2. Sub-cultural and Group Variation (the differences amongst sub-cultural groups within the same system).
3. The extent of impact of the political system (the influence that the political system exerts upon individuals) (1973, 88).

These three dimensions were employed to understand the effect which is exerted by the different universities upon the political attitudes and behaviors of students. The content in this case is the different classes offered to students by their respective faculties. The sub-cultural and group variation is analyzed through drawing comparisons between a public university (Cairo University) a private university (Future University) and a foreign private university (American University in Cairo). This is to analyze the extent to which the university environment affects the political socialization process. The extent of impact of the political system is studied to measure the intensity of the political socialization process on all three types of universities, and the resulting political behavior, through employing a questionnaire for sophomore and junior students.

II. Political Science Department's Regulations in the three Universities

1. Cairo University Faculty of Economics and Political Science (FEPS)

a. Curriculum

The mission statement of FEPS is to advance the culture of Quality Education in Egyptian Universities. This requires the enhancement of the education experience for students who would graduate to be able to work in the labor market with the necessary personal skills. Second, the Faculty's objective is to develop a curriculum which creates a balance between theory and reality, and which builds work ethics like commitment, loyalty, proficiency and distinction. The Faculty's slogan is "Commitment, Excellence, and Distinction" (Al Baradei, 2007, 14).

For students to acquire their Bachelor Degrees from the Faculty of Economics and Political Science (FEPS), they need to complete four years of higher education. After their freshmen year, students choose their major. As of their minor studies, students decide their concentration therein in their junior year. In the year 1996 /97, the faculty created two new sections, an English section, and a French section, in which the students study some of their classes in English and some in French, according to the students' wishes (Student Guide, 2007 /08, 73). Students who show exceptional learning capabilities are given opportunities for summer internships in different governmental and private institutions, like for instance in the People's Assembly, Non Governmental Organizations, Banks, and newspapers (Ibid, 75).

After the completion of their bachelor degree, students in CU FEPS will have completed forty six classes, the majority of which are in political science, with only six elective classes. The classes offered by the faculty are basic political science classes, with no specializations in a certain field. The curriculum includes basic political science, international relations and Arab politics classes. There are no classes offered which focus specifically on democracy or democratization studies, the closest subjects are Civil Society and Human Rights, which are electives.

b. Student Union and Clubs/Groups

In addition to the classes offered by the Faculty of Economics and Political Science in Cairo



University, the faculty has an important office, the Community Affairs and Environmental Development Office. This office is headed by the Vice President for Community Affairs and Environmental Development. It was created by the Prime Minister decree number 1147 /1988, "to develop the students' skills and capabilities so as to create a new generation that is more aware of the major societal and environmental problems and thereby capable of proposing solutions to them" (FEPS, 2007, p. 6). Within this framework there are many research centers like the economic, political, surveys and statistical research centers. However, under the umbrella of this office lie also students' activities, like the employment fair, and the Simulation Models of the Model Arab League and the Model United Nations for Example. Moreover, the student Union which is selected at the beginning of each academic year falls under the direct control of this office.

The Student Union is comprised of six committees, which are supervised by one academic staff from the faculty (Student Union p. 2008). These committees are concerned with student affairs and activities. For instance, they conduct sports, arts and cultural activities in the Faculty. However, according to a research assistant at the faculty, the majority of students are not committed and/or interested in the Student Union, and its accompanying clubs. She contends that there is much intervention by the state security in their activities, and before doing any simple cultural or sports event, the student union needs permission first. As a consequence, very few students are interested in applying for candidacy for the Student Union, and very few go to vote for a representative in the Union. At certain times, like for instance in the year 2006, no student was interested in contesting for the Assistant Secretary for the Technical Committee, and thus the contestant thereof was appointed².

2. Future University in Egypt Faculty of Economics and Political Science (FUE)

a. Curriculum

The mission statement of the Faculty of Economics and Political Science in Future University in Egypt is to contribute to the overall sustainable development process in both the Arab world and Egypt. In this regard, an up-to-date curriculum is developed which should help students to meet the national and regional needs of development in a globalized world. To this end, FUE wants to train students to be able to work in economic, financial analysis, diplomatic corps and international organizations and public policies analysis. Last but not least, students should acquire learning abilities which would help them in conducting research and reports in the domains of economic, political and administrative management (Faculty Rules, 2006 /07, p. 3).

Future University requires all students to complete four years of higher education with a minimum average of 2.0 GPA. Students are required to study six courses, outside their major field in computer science or math for instance. All University students are required to complete two English language courses (Faculty Rules, 2006 /2007, p. 4). In addition, all economics and political science major students have to complete 41 classes in their major field of study, eight of which are electives.

Political science courses at FUE are the same courses offered at FEPS, there is no concentration in a particular political science field. There are only general topics in international relations,

² Interview with female Research Assistant at FEPS who refused to make her name public, on the 12th of February 2009.

political theory and Arab studies. No classes are offered for the study of democracy or comparative democratic studies. The closest classes to democracy studies are human rights and civil society, like FEPS. Hence, the substance of the political science department is the same in both Universities, with the same range of classes being offered. The only difference herein is that FUE is not regulated by State security, which might give both professors and students more advantage to express their opinions freely during the lectures.

b. The Student Union and Clubs

Student Activities are under the supervision of the Student Life and Welfare Department. These activities include social, sport and cultural activities (FUE, 2009). There are more than twenty small clubs, mainly charity clubs, environmental clubs and cultural clubs, which organize events and trips. All clubs need to obtain the consent and permission from the Student Life and Welfare Department's chair to conduct their activities. There is no Student Union in FUE, which is a drawback for democratic procedure in this University. The researcher asked the assistant for the Student Life and Welfare Department's chair the reason thereof, and the answer was that the University does not want to be mired in political and Islamic problems with the students. The policy of FUE is to first teach students to become "harmonious" members of social, cultural and sports clubs, which would then pave the way for a "rational" student union³. However, according to FUE sophomore students, the student clubs are puppets of the University authority, and they mainly conduct cultural activities like concerts and sports activities like games between different universities. As a consequence, many students are disinterested in being active members of these clubs⁴. As to the simulation Model activities, there is no Model activity in FUE; however, students from FUE are able to participate in the CU or AUC models without any problem. Thus the extracurricular activities in FUE, whether in the form of clubs, unions or Models for students are still embryonic and are therefore contributing to a very limited and targeted type of civic engagement, which is in the same line as the University authority. Hence, students are not able to explore for themselves the proceedings of democratic governance through their daily interaction in student activities.

3. The American University in Cairo Department of Political Science (AUC)

a. Curriculum

The major objective of the department of Political Science at AUC is to foster an understanding of contemporary world politics and to develop a "knowledge about, and an appreciation of, the complex mechanisms, authoritative structures, and the allocation of values, which characterize contemporary human communities" (AUC Catalogue, 2008 /09). Students are required to develop their analytical and comprehensive skills for the presentation of their oral and written work. Thus the political science department is more concerned with the short term benefits and knowledge of world politics today, rather than with the long-term employment opportunities of its students.

Students are required to complete 40 classes to obtain a degree in Political Science. Students have to fulfill an average of ten to fifteen courses from the Core Curriculum, which vary from English and Arabic language courses to Scientific Thinking and Philosophy. In addition, students

³ Interview conducted with Khaled Abdel Hanid, Assistant to the Chair of the Students' Life and Welfare Department, on the first of March 2009.

⁴ Interview conducted with three sophomore political science students, Ahmad Salama, Marwa Nasr, and Hadya Mohammed at FUE, on the first of March 2009.

are required to undertake four courses from different social sciences and humanities disciplines, which range from history, culture to sociology. These regulations are University regulations for all students and are not only for political science students. Students are required to accomplish eight compulsory courses in Political Science, and one Macro economics course. As of the rest of the classes, students may choose a specialization field, namely Political Science, International Relations, Middle East Politics, Political Economy, and Public and International Law. Concerning the minor, they can choose any minor in any other discipline in University, and not necessarily from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, under which Political Science is a department. Each of these specializations has a minimum of three requirements which students need to undertake, and the department offers them a number of elective classes which they may choose from. As with both other institutions, there is no concentration in democratic studies, the closest classes offered to the study of democracy are international human rights law.

b. The Student Union and Clubs

The student Union, academic clubs, cultural clubs and community service clubs' activities at AUC are under the supervision of the Office of Student Organization Activities Unit (Student Government, 2008). The Student Union represents all AUC degree students, i.e. all majors are represented therein. The president of the Union is elected four weeks after the end of every academic year by all students. Each constituency of the students' body, undergraduates, graduates, study abroad, and English Language Institute and freshmen students is represented in the Student Council. This council is considered to be the legislative branch of the SU. The executive branch of the Student Union consists of the treasurer, the vice president and the chair persons of the all committees. There are five committees, an academic, an activities club, a services club, public relations and coordination clubs, which are concerned with the general campus life and extracurricular activities of the students (Student Government, 2008).

In addition there is the Student Judicial Board, which consists of five students. They are elected annually during the spring semester, before the Student Union elections, to act as a monitoring body for the Student Union Elections, in addition to addressing students' concerns regarding University regulations and elections. The Student Judicial Board also monitors financial policies and the transactions which are adopted by the Student Union (Student Government, 2008). This kind of student body, which enhances the trust of students to participate in university affairs, enhances the political awareness and knowledge of student and helps them develop democratic political attitudes and behavior. In this regard they become motivated by thinking for the general well being of their university rather than their own self-interest (Harriger and McMillan, 2007; Colby, et al. 2007).

Concerning Clubs and Associations, there are almost nineteen academic clubs, like political science association, mass com association and the like. In addition there are different Cultural Programs, under which there are almost eight cultural clubs like dancing, and choir; Community service programs, where there are almost fifteen clubs, in addition to other community service projects and conferences. All these Associations and Clubs are supervised by the Office of Student Organization Activities, however, when a club is approved by the Office of Student Organization, the club is free to conduct any activity without the scrutiny of the university authority.

As to the simulation Models activities at AUC, its Cairo International Model United Nations was the first of its kind to be conducted in Egypt, and was originally founded in 1989 by a political science professor with some of his political science students. It is the oldest student activity at AUC and is one of the largest student-run Models outside North America (CIMUN Road, 2008).



III. Differences between the three Universities

In FUE, unlike FEPS, the faculty's long-term goal is to train students to be employed in similar fields to their studies, while FEPS wants to train students for general economic opportunities in different economic fields.

The University and Faculty requirements and regulations of FEPS, FUE and AUC, differ in many aspects. However, the difference between FUE and FEPS is less than the difference between both Universities and AUC. The first two institutions have more constraints on students' behavior in the simplest manner of merely choosing the courses which they are required to study. The amount of collateral courses which are offered in both Universities is much higher than that of AUC. In both FUE and FEPS, students' choices are limited to the year of schooling. During their freshmen and sophomore years, students may choose between only three classes. On the other hand, students at AUC have many options, and are able to concentrate on different subjects, according to their will. FUE and CU, do not offer concentrations within the political science discipline, and rely on teaching students general issues. In FUE unlike CU and AUC, however, all students are required to study Human Rights, which in general is an important subject for all students to enhance the knowledge of one's rights amongst students.

Concerning the range of courses which are offered to students beyond the scope of political science; AUC has the highest distribution, whereby students are required to study different subjects, which open up their horizons to different disciplines and ideas. FUE, gives some variety to students, who are required to also study different subjects like Sociology and Scientific thinking for example. However, students in FUE are not offered any philosophy classes, which are essential for introducing liberal education. FEPS is the least Universities which offers different horizons for studies for students, whereby students are only limited to the study of the different fields offered in their faculty, with the only exception being math, which is offered to students as collateral subject. Thus students are not introduced to other humanities, social sciences or science classes which widen the horizon of thought for students beyond the scope of their studies.

Concerning Student Unions and Clubs, AUC has by far the highest number of student clubs and the most effective student union body. The idea of having a judicial body which supervises elections and monetary issues in University, introduces the students to a wider scope of democratic procedure. Moreover, the student Union body which consists of different representatives who are subject to their constituencies makes students in the whole University aware of the operative procedures of a real democracy. The student activities, clubs and Union in FEPS are constrained with the idea of "security" and red lines, which the students are not allowed to cross. The fear by the general police security in CU, of an Islamic leadership in University puts constraints on all student activities. This on the other hand, has drawn students away from public life in their faculty, and made them more drawn into the Model Simulations which are not under the constraint of the security police. Hence, students are not introduced to the operative procedure of democracy, in FEPS. FUE, has a small number of clubs, however, this may be due to the fact that FUE has only been operative for three years. However, there is no Student Union in FUE at all. There have been some attempts to create one in the past year, with no success. Such a constraint on the ability of students to express their opinions and to be represented to the school board and to represent their opinions to the faculty is a major drawback to the socialization of students toward democratic political behavior.

Through studying and analyzing the different political science departments in three different Universities in Cairo, the researcher has two major hypotheses which will be tested through the



survey study. First, political science students at AUC have more democratic political attitudes and behavior, since they are exposed to more options and choices concerning the subjects which they choose to study, and concerning the type of Associations they may participate in. Second, political attitudes and behavior of both FEPS and FUE students are similar to one another. Students in both institutions are not politically active, due to the absence of a vibrant associational life in both universities. The next section will study the difference in political attitudes and behaviors of sophomore and junior students belonging to these three different Universities, to see whether students in private universities, which are not constrained by the police and security force, have more democratic attitudes and behavior than those of Cairo University Students.

IV. The Survey

The survey was administered to measure the difference in the democratic attitudes and behavior of students who belong to different universities in Egypt. Accordingly, the researcher set questions pertaining to students' attitudes regarding religious and gender equality, individual liberty and tolerance towards the other. As to the understanding of students' political behavior, the questions were addressed towards their membership in different associations and their voting behavior inside their respective universities.

The study encountered a difficulty in the number of students answering the questionnaire at AUC. There are only twelve students at AUC who gave in their survey, and thus the results of some answers may not be representative of the whole AUC political science students' body.

1. Social Background

Students' background was examined in the first part of the survey, to understand the differences regarding their school backgrounds, their gender, and their reading habits. These three major facts will shed some light on their current democratic political attitudes and behaviors in addition to their different university socialization. In this regard, the study showed that the majority of students in FEPS and FUE graduated from Thanaweya Amma, 97% and 53%. Students at AUC graduated mainly with foreign diplomas. The majority of all students under study were females, which constituted 66% of the whole respondents in all three universities.

Newspaper reading was the most popular amongst all University students, followed by reading books. Newspaper reading was highest amongst FEPS students, where 63% of all respondents argued they read Al-Ahram on a daily basis. At AUC, 25% of students said they read foreign newspapers rather than Egyptian ones.

2. Democratic Political Attitudes

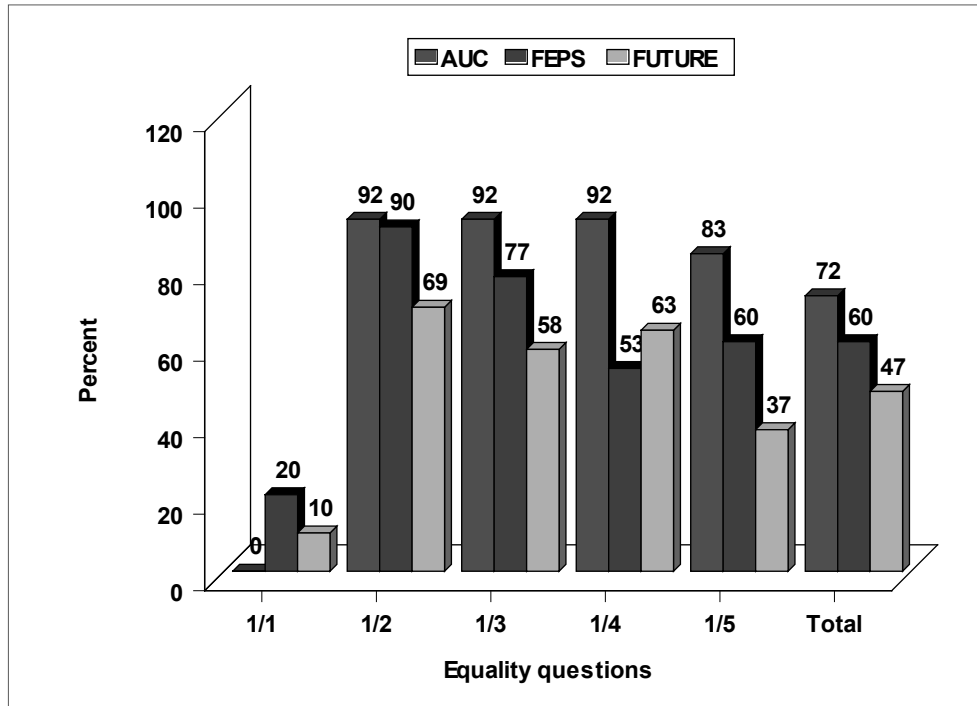
a. Equality

Investigation into thoughts on equality focused mainly on gender and religion. The attitudes of equality/inequality were measured through five questions, three questions were directly related to gender issues, and two questions were related to religious issues.

Concerning gender equality, students were asked many questions, amongst which was the ability of women to be judges (Question 1 /4). The clear majority of AUC students, 92% believed that women are competent to be judges, whereas 53% of FEPS believed in the statement. Hence, from another perspective, 34% of FEPS students, of which females are a large number, regard themselves as incompetent to be a judge. In general students had positive attitudes toward religious equality, with AUC having the most egalitarian attitudes. For instance, students were

asked whether Christians should hold high offices in the Egyptian Intelligence services (Q. 1 /5). FUE students scored the least concerning religious equality, where only 37% agreed. One can discern from figure 1, that AUC students have the most egalitarian attitudes regarding both gender and religious equality, followed by FEPS and then FUE.

Figure 1: Positive answers by students concerning equality questions



Other questions on equality:

1 /1: If a man and a woman have the same job, the man's salary should be higher.

1 / 2: A man or a woman who is competent enough can become the president of my university.

1/ 3: A Christian who is competent enough can become the president of my university.

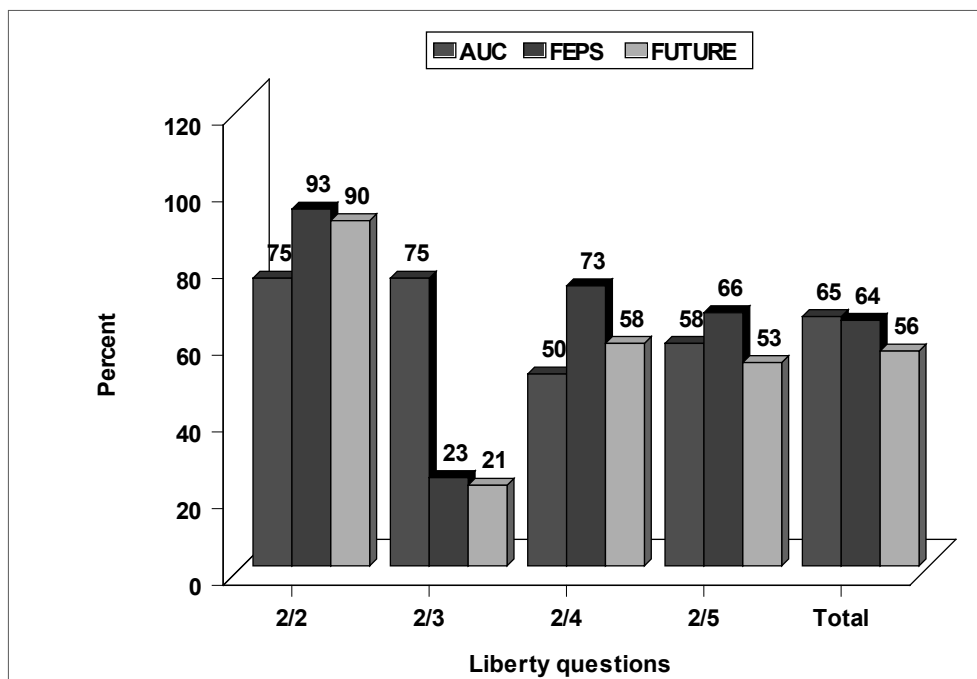
b. Liberty

Investigations into attitudes on Liberty were applied through indirect comments on freedom of thought, and religion. For instance, students were asked to comment on whether atheists should be allowed to discuss their beliefs freely (Q. 2 /3). The majority of FEPS and FUE students, 70% and 53% disagreed, whereas 75% of AUC students agreed with the statement. Students' answers concerning liberty show that FEPS and FUE students are more interested in obtaining freedoms for themselves, which fall within the boundaries of the cultural norms of their environments. However, when a cultural taboo (like atheism) was addressed, both FEPS and FUE students refuse the notion of freedom. It is noteworthy to address two important issues herein. First, is the amount of exposure to different nationalities and cultures, which students encounter in their respective universities. At AUC, students have exposure to both foreign (mainly Arab and American) students and professors, which makes them more inclined to accept people from different backgrounds. On the other hand, both FUE and FEPS students are only exposed to

Egyptian students and professors. At FUE, however, the percentage of students who have American Diplomas was almost 30% and hence they might have been exposed to different cultures during their high school years. It is important to highlight the fact that 53% of FUE students obtained Thanaweya Amma, and 53% of respondents at FUE refused to let atheists discuss their beliefs freely. Second, is the exposure of students in these universities to different thoughts and ideas other than their respective disciplines. At AUC students are obliged to study philosophy and literature amongst other science and social science classes through the core curriculum. These different disciplines render different ideas and beliefs to students which make them accept different beliefs and opinions. On the other hand, both other universities do not have these two criteria, of which the second is essential.

The majority of students in all Universities believed that when public order is at risk, it is more important to attain order than individual freedom (Q. 2/ 5). The highest majority was to be found at FEPS with 66%, followed by AUC with 58% and 53% for FUE students. Such a response is understandable given the general political environment in the Arab world. Students at this stage of schooling have entered their universities after the American invasion of Iraq, with all its consequent state and security failure. See figure 2.

Figure 2: Students' positive answers regarding liberty



Other questions on liberty:

2/ 2: The government's most important responsibility is respect of freedoms of individual.

2/ 4: University professors should be free from any constraints in their lectures.

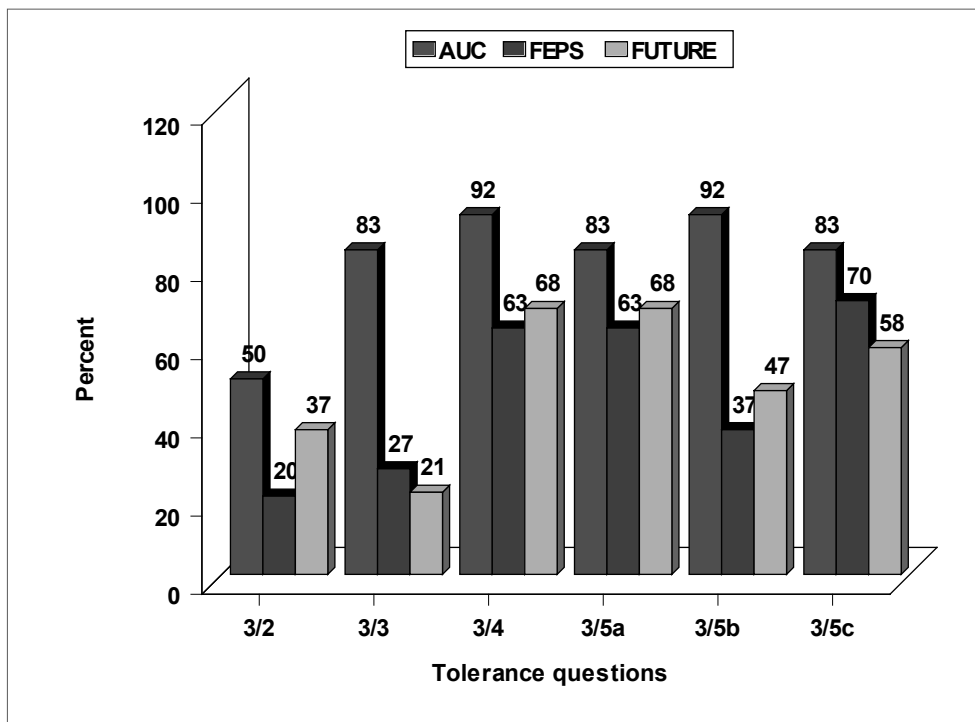
c. Tolerance

Investigations into the value of tolerance were conducted through adopting Peffley and

Rohrschneider's scale on tolerance (2003). As a consequence of their answers, students were then asked whether they would agree for this/group individual to hold public office (Q. 3 /2), hold public demonstrations (Q. 3 /3), and hold public meetings in which they can express their opinions freely (Q. 3/ 4). The last question was concerned with tolerance addressed the issue of whether students have friends who hold different political (Q. 3/ 5a), religious (Q. 3/ 5b) and social (Q. 3/ 5c) ideas than their own. See figure 3.

The findings concerning which group the students disliked the most varied, dramatically between the three groups. Apart from showing the student's level of tolerance, this question showed the general political inclinations of the students who belong to different universities. These ideas/opinions are beyond the scope of this research; however, they need to be further investigated. The absolute majority of AUC and FUE respondents disliked the Muslim brothers, with 83% for the first and 47% for the second. As to FEPS students, they mostly disliked Nawal al-Saadawi, with 40%, followed by the National Democratic Party in Egypt with 30%.

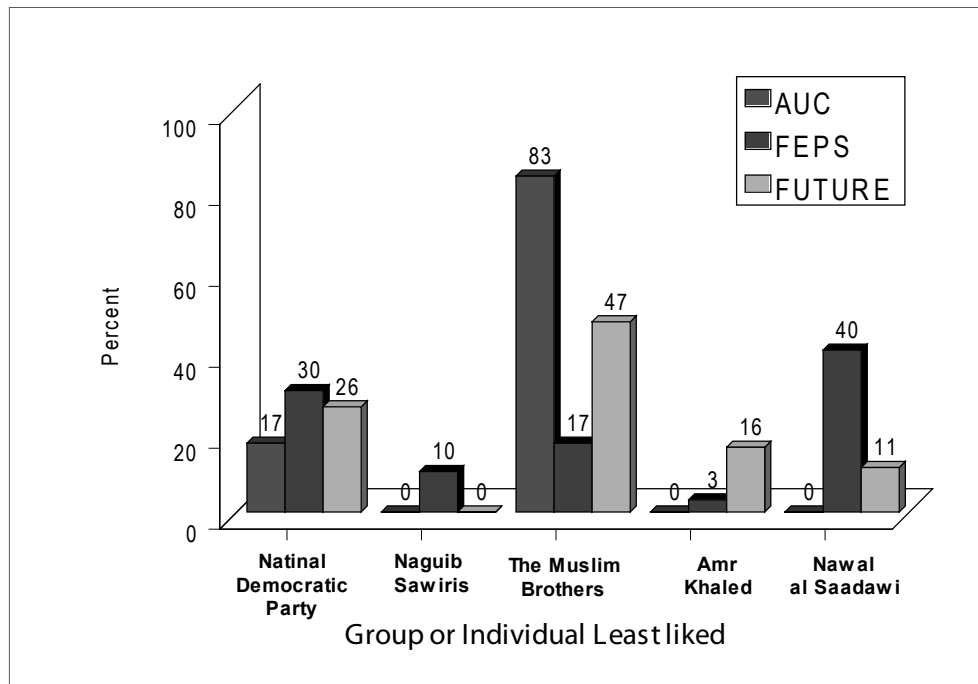
Figure 3: Students' answers regarding tolerance



When tolerance questions were developed to ask whether students believe the most hated group should be able to hold public office, publically demonstrate, and hold meetings, respondents at AUC showed most tolerance, and FEPS showed the least. Students at AUC were

the only ones who argued that they have friends who disagree with them concerning religious matters.

Figure 3 show that AUC students have higher tolerance levels than both FEPS and FUE students. It is important to regard the school background of all students as well, where as argued before, the majority of AUC students were exposed in their high schools and at their university to different nationalities. Thus as Miller and Sears (1986, p. 234) show “... the individual’s pre-adult and early adult social environments are stronger contributors to adults’ social tolerance than is the



current adult environment. Adult learning *usually* reinforces earlier learned norms and values (barring cataclysmic events or societal upheavals)... Basic social and political attitudes tend to be stable, in good measure because the life situations of most individuals remain fairly stable”.

Figure 4: Groups/individuals who are mostly disliked by students

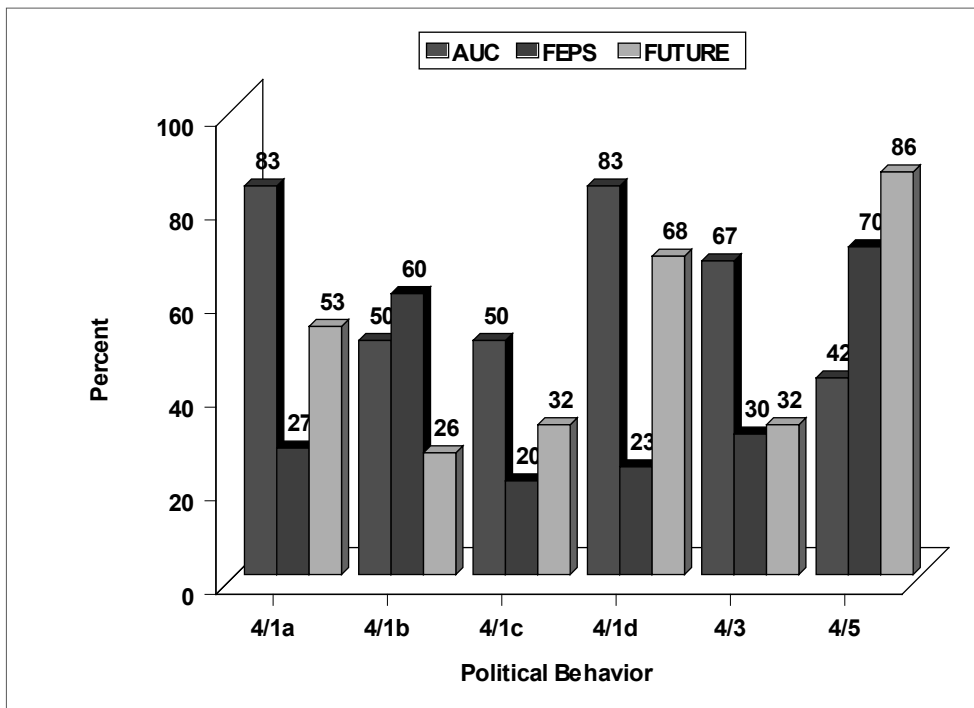
3. Political Behavior and Engagement of Students

Analysis regarding political engagement of students was conducted through investigating whether students have ever signed a petition (Q. 4/ 1a), joined a boycott (Q. 4/ 1b), attended demonstrations (Q. 4/ 1c) or voted in their University elections (Q. 4/ 1d). Moreover, they were asked if they are members of any club/group (Q. 4/ 3), or if they participated in a Model simulation before (Q.4 /5). Participation in different activities at University is believed to enhance organizational skills. According to Amber Seligson’s findings (1999), youth who participated in

community development organizations were more politically active and voiced their demands to local and national authorities more frequently than others.

Concerning students' answers regarding signing a petition, there were significant differences between all students in the different universities. Signing petitions was highest amongst AUC students, and least amongst FEPS. Regarding boycotts, FEPS showed the highest behavior, while FUE showed the least. As of participation in Demonstrations, 50% of AUC students participated therein, while a small percentage did in both FUE and FEPS. The small percentage of FEPS students in demonstrations is phenomenal, since Cairo University is well-known for students' demonstrations regarding many internal and regional political matters. Hence, the disinterest of FEPS students in demonstrations needs further investigations, since it is unclear whether they do not participate in demonstrations, as a result of fear of police force, or is it as a result of disinterest in participating with other faculties in their University?

The question pertaining to whether students participate in their University's elections yielded different results. First, 83% of AUC students said that they do vote, whereas a very low percentage



of students in FEPS, 23% said that they vote. The low turnout in voting by FEPS students is in accordance with the interview conducted by the researcher earlier, in which it was found out that the Student Union in FEPS has a lot of constrained and is controlled by the police force. Concerning membership in Associations, AUC students were the most engaged, where 67% of students said they belonged to an association or a club. Twenty seven percent at FEPS and 29% at FUE said that they do not participate because the groups of their respective faculties do not make a difference.

Figure 5: Political behavior of students

Concerning participation in any simulation Model, students in FUE, showed most interest, with 86%. This finding shows that students at FUE and also FEPS are keen on political participation, when they know that they have matters in their own hands, like the situation of the Models. The simulation Models are run by students, for students, where there is no intervention by any university authority in their proceedings. Thus in AUC where students have different venues to express their opinions and engage in different associational activities; their political behavior is divided between their different interests. While, the high percentage of FUE and FEPS participants in the simulations vis a vis their low participation in university elections, shows that students are politically engaged. However, they choose the area in which they believe that their participation may be influential, rather than participating in an organization or in elections, where the outcome of the elections might be rigged or influenced by political considerations. Therefore, the high difference in the level of engagement of AUC students versus the rest, is dependent on the level of trust, which the students feel towards the association in which they will engage in. For example students at AUC trust in their electoral body and institutions, and therefore, they are eager to actively engage therein. Their University has shown integrity and transparency in the process of elections especially through the student judicial body. Moreover, the university executive takes students' suggestions and petitions seriously. For instance when AUC moved from downtown to the outskirts of Cairo, the parking fees inside the University were 3000 L.E. per month at the beginning of the 2008 Fall semester. However, after receiving students' complaints through petitions and through articles written in the weekly university paper "the Caravan", the University changed the fees to 1500 L.E. Thus students trust that their voice will be heard, and can make a difference. On the other hand, students at FEPS do not have high voting turnout, since they believe that their votes will not be counted through an impartial manner. Moreover, they do not trust in the capability of the student body to bring about real change in the conduct of their faculty affairs. Nevertheless, they were highly engaged in the simulation Models, where they know that the security will not get involved its general proceedings. In FUE, students are highly engaged in the Model simulations, even though they do not have one in their own University. This shows that students are politically active and want to engage in different associations, however, only when they know that their voice will be heard and will make a difference.

V. Conclusion

The analysis of the different political science departments of the three Universities and the survey study of political science students therein, confirmed the researcher's hypothesis; that AUC students tend to have more democratic political attitudes and behavior. The political science curriculum along with the core curriculum at AUC, have positive outputs on students' democratic attitudes and behavior. Concerning the political science curriculum, its tendency to make students elect the classes they prefer, gives the students a sense of freedom of choice and opinion. Concerning the core curriculum, which emphasizes studying different fields than the major, especially fields like philosophy and literature, opens students' horizons and exposure to different perspectives. Thus the output is that students are more inclined towards democratic attitudes such as gender and religious equality, liberty and tolerance. Moreover, as discussed before, AUC students are more exposed to different cultures in their university campus, which makes them more tolerant of the "other". The departments' slogan of enhancing knowledge

about the different authoritative structures in the world, and enhancing values of the world community, resulted in enhancing democratic attitudes amongst students. As of democratic political behavior, the level of trust which students feel towards their University apparatus has shown high differences in the level of political engagement by AUC students vis a vis the rest of the students.

FUE and FEPS political science departments on the other hand, are almost identical. There is a slight difference therein, where FUE students are required to take extra science and social science classes. However, none of these classes are concerned with philosophy and/or literature. The non-exposure of these students to different thoughts and philosophies from around the world, makes it difficult for them to attain more democratic attitudes especially regarding religious equality, individual freedom and tolerance. The case is more evident in the case of FEPS, in which students are only exposed to economics, statistics and political science classes. Herein, students have failed to tolerate liberal feminist thinkers like Nawal al-Saadawi. Both Universities slogans concerning the development of students who are capable to become actively engaged in the economy, rendered students whose levels of equality, liberty and tolerance are not as high as their AUC counterparts. As of the political behavior of students in both Institutions, students have shown apathy concerning political engagement in their respective universities, whether in membership levels in associations, or in elections for the student body. However, the researcher attributes this apathy to the low level of trust the students have towards their respective universities. It is understandable for public universities' students to act in this manner, since political action is constrained in their universities with the security forces embezzlement therein. However, Private Universities are free from security intervention, and have more space to foster an open and free associational life. Therefore, private university clubs and groups should be given more freedoms and should be entirely left to students to manage. This will make students more acquainted with democratic deliberations. The high percentage rate of FEPS and FUE students' participation in the simulation models shows that when students are allowed to conduct their own affairs without intervention by any authority, they excel in their political engagement. This outcome is in accordance with Kandil's (2008) findings in which university graduates believe in the importance of political engagement, however, they do not engage themselves.

Therefore, for private Universities in Egypt to become venues for democratic political attitudes and behavior, they should offer students more courses from other disciplines. This will help students become exposed to different philosophical and scientific ideas beyond the prism of their own studies. Moreover private universities should open up their political space and widen the capability of students to become part of a vibrant associational life, which is effective and not marred by rules from the executive body of the university. Student Unions should become an integral part of university life, instead of avoiding their establishment, through the fear of becoming entrenched in Islamist politics.

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