**Abstract**

There has been a recent global shift away from democracy and towards authoritarian forms of government. Much attention has been given to analyses of the social and economic trends that feed this decline in democracy, with further attention paid to the missteps of the global powers as they navigate shifting economic dominance and populist movements worldwide. My research arose from questioning whether certain factors might exist that are reliably predictive of democratic support or political participation and can be affected through nongovernmental avenues. I began with the idea that higher levels of education will produce a greater desire for being governed democratically.

This research explores the relationship between literacy rates and democratic desire in countries worldwide. My research finds that there exists a significant, strong, and positive relationship between literacy rates and enlightened democratic desire in democratic countries that is not reflected in nondemocratic countries. The absence of this relationship in nondemocracies may be due to the large range of nondemocratic regime types. Nondemocratic governments may also socialize their constituencies to prefer nondemocratic governance. Further research could look more closely at the effect of regime type through multiple democracy scores or through measures of freedom; possible effects of ethnic tension; and the effects of adherence to traditional gender roles.