Distinction Without Difference
Diversity at NYU Abu Dhabi

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Abstract

This essay looks at diversity in New York University Abu Dhabi. I measure diversity in terms of demographic data, patterns of cultural consumption, and normative orientations. The findings suggest a student body composed of global elites, economically privileged within their national contexts, and with little variance in normative stances but great variance in country of origin, religious affiliation, and cultural consumption.

This paper adds to the existing literature on education and diversity by suggesting specific forms of operationalizing diversity and by complicating the assumption that diversity in the range of nation-states represented equals diversity along other measures.

"The next time some academics tell you how important diversity is, ask how many Republicans there are in their sociology department."

Thomas Sowell

I. Introduction

"ARE you interested in becoming part of the next generation of leaders dedicated to the creation of new knowledge? Do you have a global citizen's outlook, a leader's purposefulness, and an understanding that the future is for the bold?" (NYUAD Admissions, 2014).

These questions, aimed at future applicants, aptly summarize the ambitions of New York University's campus in Abu Dhabi: By drawing prospective students from an international pool, it aims to create global leaders with an appreciation for other cultures.

To do this, New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD) has, since it opened its doors in 2010, sought to create a student body consisting of open-minded leaders with the academic credentials of an elite university. The university boasts having the lowest acceptance rate in the world—between 0.5% and 2% (NYUAD, 2016). In terms of open-mindedness, the university characterizes itself as free from the chains of ethnocentrism and moral objectivism. An NYUAD student is someone who has "empathy and the ability to think across cultural boundaries" (NYUAD, 2016).

In terms of leadership, the institution does not shy from disclosing who its students will be.

"THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS has a global outlook.... These are the students from every corner of the globe who have chosen NYU Abu Dhabi" [1] (NYUAD Admissions, 2014).

In other words, NYUAD is for future global leaders.

Who are tomorrow's global leaders? Based on a survey conducted in spring 2016, this paper explores the normative orientations of NYUAD students, their cultural consumption patterns, and their demographic diversity. I set out to inquire whether the national diversity of the student body reflects diversity along other vectors usually associated with educational and character-building benefits.

I find that the population surveyed presents heterogeneity in terms of nationality and religion, but is otherwise somewhat monochrome. In terms of demographics, the student body is composed primarily of students who are middle and upper class in their na-

*I am grateful to Hannah Brückner and Peter Stamatov for their inspiration and mentorship. I thank María José Rodríguez, Rina Cáceres and Roberto Rodríguez for continued support. Also Nino Cricco, Megan Eloise, Sebastián Rojas, and the anonymous referees for their excellent feedback. Lastly, I want to acknowledge everyone who responded to the survey I present here and the support from NYU Abu Dhabi.

[1] Emphasis in the original.

tional contexts, from highly educated households, and with an international high school education. I also find homogeneity in values; students tend to hold humanist values based on a limited form of cultural relativism. Lastly, in terms of cultural consumption, I find that although students consume mainly media produced in the United States and the United Kingdom, and they mostly consume media in English, there is also noticeable heterogeneity in the country of origin of the media consumed—particularly when considering the dominance of Anglo-American cultural production among young, middle-class, educated individuals.

There is strong consensus among sociologists that diversity is important in educational settings. Although measured in a multiplicity of ways, diversity matters because it allows for difference of worldviews, contested definitions, and different opinions to be present in a single social space, thus enriching and encouraging dialogue. I operationalize diversity along three factors that I believe capture the said variance: cultural consumption, values, and demographics. These will be discussed in the next two sections.

By looking at three concrete vectors along which students might vary, I propose that there is an ideal type, in a Weberian sense, of an NYUAD student. Such typology seems to be the product of a selective admissions system. The data suggest that NYUAD actively selects students from a diverse range of national backgrounds who practice a limited form of moral relativism, take normative stances based on humanist principles, and actively engage with and consume from a wide range of cultures. Because of its aspirations to be a highly selective university for global leaders, however, the pool from which the university selects appears to be limited to global elites.

Section I provides an overview of the scholarly literature on diversity. In Section II, I present the main challenges of this study, brought about by the particularities of the population in question—a non-random population from a variety of national contexts. In Section III, I present my findings. First, I look at patterns in demographic markers (class, household human capital, high school experiences, religion, and home country), followed by patterns in terms of values. I find that none of the demographic data seem to account for patterns in value orientations. I conclude the section by looking at patterns in the origin of the cultural items students consume. Section IV analyzes these findings further by considering their implications and possible avenues for future research. If the student body of NYUAD is one composed of future leaders, then the findings of this paper are also important to discussions on elite formation. With this data we can begin to make inferences on this particular type of elite formation. The evidence that there is not a process of socialization that accounts for the aforementioned patterns indicates a selection process that actively filters for a particular kind of student. I posit that this has implications for the student body, among them the reification of certain normative stances.

II. The value of diversity. But which diversity?

As previously mentioned, diversity has been judged as a force for good in educational settings. There are two main effects of diversity in pedagogy. Firstly, in broader terms, the presence and mixing of different values, worldviews, and cultural practices among peers enriches a cultural environment. It has been shown that engagement with students with different values leads students to become more likely to question their own values and beliefs (Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, and Terenzini, 1996). More specifically, diversity has been found to have positive academic outcomes, at least when it comes to ethnic (Gurin, Nagda, and Lopez, 2004; Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, and Gurin, 2002) and socioeconomic (Park, Denson, and Bowman, 2013) diversity.

Contrastingly, homogeneity leads to cultural silos. Centola, Gonzalez-Avella, Eguiluz, and San Miguel (2007), using network theory, explains how the existence of homophily in a social environment can lead to social homogeneity and enhanced cultural differentiation from outsiders. In other words, the longer actors remain in a social environment of sameness, the starker the difference between them and others becomes. The authors find that even when introducing factors such as cultural drift—caused by disturbances in traits due to exogenous factors such as globalization—homophily can be strong enough to reinforce cultural boundaries, thus perpetuating homogeneity and isolation (Centola et al., 2007). Erosion of cultural boundaries is less likely to occur as time progresses, because adults often find it taxing to engage with others with different values or cultural frameworks (Jehn, Northcraft, and Neale, 1999). Therefore, outside of situations in which value or cultural diversity is purposefully infused, such as in a university, individuals will draw strong boundaries between those like them and others.

These findings suggest that it is often not enough to occasionally introduce different ideas to a social environment, since resistance to changes in social boundaries is a powerful force. Long-term exposure to diversity among the relevant variables is a more productive venture that reaps the rewards of diversity, both in

terms of education and more generally in terms of improved well-being and social outcomes (Cheng, Sanders, Sanchez-Burks, Molina, Lee, Darling, and Zhao, 2008).

It is necessary to operationalize diversity along vectors, the variance of which has the aforementioned benefits. I chose three specific vectors, which possibly define the similarity or difference of the worldviews of individuals and the cultural repertoires with which they engage their surroundings. Specifically, I look at cultural consumption, normative stances, and socioeconomic status as measurable vectors of diversity.

If diversity matters in a pedagogical setting, that is because it allows students to approach the world from different perspectives and to challenge their preconceived notions, their ways of knowing, and the mental frameworks with which they engage with the world. It thus makes sense to look for those traits that can expand, narrow or define the values, outlooks, and cultural repertories of students. Lamont, Morning, and Mooney (2002) describe how North African immigrants in France approach the subject of racism by evoking Islamic tenets and universalities, while French elites refer to Enlightenment and values of republicanism. Difference in religious practice as well as normative stances leads to different approaches to the same subject, even among co-nationals, making them appropriate components of this study.

Class and consumption are also relevant demographic variables. Wimmer (2013) suggests it is erroneous to assume that ethnic or nationality homogeneity necessarily indicates homogeneity of other traits. The study instead suggests that the effects of cultural capital, economic endowments, and behavior within a social setting have significant consequences on life chances, world views, and behavioral patterns of individuals, and that "[t]he meaning of a specific ethnic background may change quite dramatically depending on these various trajectories" (Wimmer, 2013, p. 37). In the section below, I describe how my study defines and measures cultural consumption, normative stances, and status.

III. Methodology: Challenges in a hyper-diverse setting

The data gathered suggest that students display common patterns not produced by any one demographic characteristic but rather, the data seemingly indicate an underlying variable uniting the majority of the student body; the purposeful selection of a particular type of applicant by the university. Before presenting my findings, I will reflect on the particular challenges faced from this particular population of interest.

The data presented here are based on the responses to a survey I designed and released in the spring of 2016. The data consist of 436 responses, which from a population of 873 students represent a 49% response rate. The survey was advertised electronically via email and social media, presenting the possibility of respondents' self-selection, however, there is not much evidence of systematic bias in the data. The survey included questions (not presented in this analysis) on social ties that required non-anonymity from respondents.

I. Culture: Participation, knowledge, or origin

Dynamics of cultural consumption are important for answering the ultimate question, "how diverse is NYUAD?" One of the main reasons that diversity is lauded as beneficial in pedagogical contexts is that different students are endowed by different worldviews, cultural items, and frameworks of understanding and students may share those with each other. Cultural consumption is an important component of this operationalization of diversity, as what individuals read, watch, and listen affects and shapes their world views and moral frameworks, and it partially determines the cultural repertoires with which they engage and define the world around them.

Bourdieu (1986) argues that culture is the product of upbringing and education. He goes on to explain how "all the agents in a given social formation share a set of basic perceptual schemes" (Bourdieu, 1986, p.470), which cannot be disassociated from class. This is to say, individuals in a class share commonalities with each other, in their aesthetic tastes, understandings, manners, and so forth. This is cultural capital in its embodied state (Bourdieu, 1986). Moreover, Bourdieu links this concept to a power dynamic whereby it is elites who have the most cultural capital because they have access to the "right," acceptable, or legitimate forms of cultural capital. In other words, cultural capital is the consumption trends of accepted forms of culture.

Khan and others speak of cultural omnivores replacing Bourdieu's high-brow, dominant-culture-centric consumers as the standard for Western elites (Khan, 2011). Warde, Wright, and Gayo-Cal test this hypothesis through a survey in the U.K. to "identify and isolate cultural omnivores" (Warde, Wright, and Gayo-Cal, 2007, p. 143). They find that "while there is evidence of wide cultural participation within the U.K., the figure of the omnivore is less singularly distinctive than some studies have suggested" (Warde et al., 2007, p. 143). Thus, the question of in what patterns elites consume and display culture remains open.

Some scholars have tried measuring what individu-

als consume to make assertions about their status and worldviews. Some studies use attendance at "high-brow" events (concerts, galleries, museums, etc.), familiarity with "high-brow" culture, and habitual reading of "high-brow" literature as indicators of cultural capital. DiMaggio (1982), for example, measures high school students' cultural capital using self-reports of involvement in art, music, and literature. Khan (2011) looked specifically at how and which culture high school elites consume. Katsillis and Rubinson (1990) use participation in four cultural activities—attendance at theatre, lectures and concerts, and visits to museums and art galleries—as indicators of cultural capital among Greek secondary school students. De Graaf looked at students' literature reading habits other than books required by school (De Graaf, De Graaf, and Kraaykamp [2000] in Vryonides 2007).

Cultural capital has three main components: what people consume, how they consume it, and why they consume it. The latter two are uniquely challenging to measure in the population under study with traditional mechanisms of measurement. Focusing on what actors consume and how they consume it is problematic in settings with a small size and a diverse number of world regions represented. Traditional quantitative methods present a problem insofar as they impose the options respondents can answer from, and thus presume an *ex ante* knowledge of what high-brow culture consists of in the social context of every respondent. It would be difficult to assemble knowledge of the consumption patterns of elites worldwide in order to create list of cultural items for students to select from. Therefore, if we do not know beforehand what cultural items students are consuming, creating such a list would limit our measurements by limiting and imposing possibilities. In measuring eliteness, we run into the same problem. Highbrow culture and signifiers of eliteness tend to be highly localized. As such, even if students are all elites, the way they perform eliteness might differ regionally to an unknown degree. Measuring activities, as Vryonides (2007) does, might seem like a solution, but such measurement faces two challenges. First, the way in which people perform eliteness varies, so limiting the scope of questions to activities does not solve the issue of difference in the meaning of eliteness. Although going to the theatre might be an elite activity in Bulgaria, it might not be so in Germany. Qualitative methods require either a small sample size from which one generalizes or an unfeasible amount of resources, both economically and time-wise. A small sample to observe would yield unrepresentative data, given the large number of nationalities of the population of interest. As Lamont, Morning, and Mooney state, surveys increase the data's reliability vis-à-vis observational methods due to the relative ease with which the researcher can gather information from a larger number of individuals, rendering surveys a valuable sources of information (Lamont et al., 2002).

As a result of the limitations created by this specific population of interest, I measure origin of cultural consumption. This, I believe, is sufficient to measure diversity or homogeneity in cultural consumption, at least, for an exploratory study. This approach is limited in that it does not produce information on what students consume, which would allow us to draw inferences on how the culture they consume shapes their worldviews. This limitation, however, would be present even if we did know what items students were consuming: watching a telenovela in Mexico might be an importantly distinct experience from watching the same telenovela in Singapore. As such, any study of cultural consumption within such a seemingly diverse population must proceed with caution.

II. Socioeconomic status: Self-identity vs objective measures

Measuring socioeconomic status in a population from a large number of countries presents a challenge, since class structures vary widely globally in terms of income, occupational composition, and schooling levels. Additionally, measurement errors in respondents' answers due to different conceptions of class are a hurdle in measuring status. Occupation of parents is a limited measurement tool. Liberatos, Link, and Kelsey (1988) note that although occupation is a possible barometer for social class, up to seven questions are required to create a proper measurement of occupation (Liberatos et al., 1988). Furthermore, similar occupations around the world might convey different levels of socioeconomic status. Asking about parental occupation, besides being difficult to code due to all the possible categories of work around the world, does not necessarily capture socioeconomic status and lengthens the survey considerably. I thus opt to use the more direct MacArthur scale of subjective social status, which asks respondents to position themselves relative to other citizens of the country they select as "home." Since socioeconomic status is a social category, to answer respondents create a subjective, individually weighted average composed of capital, occupation and schooling. Snibbe, Stewart, and Adler (in preparation 2007) study how respondents decide their relative position on the MacArthur scale. The authors find that the overwhelming majority of respondents use material wealth, occupation, and education as barometers; these are the three main factors

generally thought of when using socioeconomic status as category of analysis.

IV. Results

The survey asked respondents for four kinds of data: demographic information, values, cultural consumption, and social networks. In this section, I present the data, broken into the aforementioned sections, point to an emerging normative profile suggested by the data, and explain how this profile relates to demographic and cultural information. Because answering all questions was optional, at times responses for a given question are fewer than the total respondents.

First, I show from analysis of the answers to the demographic questions that the NYUAD student body consists of socioeconomic elites from around the world, or global elites.

I. Demographics: Educated, English-speaking, Economic (global) Elites

Reflective of the school's policy to recruit students from around the world, the data in Table 1 show a great deal of variance in the region of origin of students, both in the regions they "call home" and in the regions where students "spent most of [their] high school, secondary education years." The differences between home region and high school region reflect a small pattern of traveling for education or of expatriate families; however, in no region do more than six students report different countries for their homes and high schools.

We also see some level of religious diversity. Table 3 shows that Islam, Christianity and "No Religion" were the most common religious affiliations. In terms of religious practice, 51.7% of the students reported that they engage in formal or informal forms of worship such as prayer or attending sermons at least once a week, while 48.3% report to have never done so.

Additional questions were asked about cultural practices, specifically whether students, where applicable, wear a headscarf either for cultural or religious reasons, as well as how often they wear non-western clothing (such as kandura or a kameez). On the former, 15.4% students answered "yes" and 84.6% answered "no", disregarding those who ignored the question or found it non-applicable. Out of all respondents, 15.1% reported that they wear non-Western clothing somewhere in the range of once a week to daily. Despite this variance in origin and religion, the student body presents noticeable uniformity when it comes to socioeconomic status.

Table 1: *Students by home region*

Region	*Frequency*	%
Middle East & North Africa	76	17.97
North America	65	15.37
Eastern Europe	58	13.71
Latin America and Caribbean	41	9.69
Southern Asia	39	9.22
West and Northern Europe	30	7.09
Eastern Asia	34	8.04
Sub-Saharan Africa	22	5.20
Southern Europe	20	4.73
Southeast Asia	16	3.78
Oceania	13	3.07
Central Asia	9	2.13
Total	**423**	**100**

Table 2: *Students by high school region*

Region	*Frequency*	%
Middle East & North Africa	81	19.01
North America	69	14.08
Eastern Europe	54	12.68
Latin America and Caribbean	41	9.62
Southern Asia	37	8.69
West and Northern Europe	33	7.75
Eastern Asia	31	7.28
Sub-Saharan Africa	22	5.16
Southern Europe	21	4.93
Southeast Asia	20	4.69
Oceania	16	3.76
Central Asia	10	2.35
Total	**426**	**100**

As mentioned, socioeconomic status is measured using the MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status. The findings, shown in Table 3, suggest that the vast majority of students see themselves as better off than the median in their national contexts. Only a fifth of

students described themselves as being below the median.

Table 3: *Students by religious affiliation*

Religion	*Frequency*	*%*
Islam	**84**	**19.63**
Hinduism	11	2.57
Buddhism	7	1.64
Judaism	1	0.23
No Religion	**142**	**33.18**
Spiritual	23	5.37
Christianity	**144**	**33.64**
Other	16	3.74
Total	**428**	**100**

Although often used to measure socioeconomic status, the education level of a respondent's mother can also be used as a measure of a household's human capital, which in turn is linked to cultural capital (DiMaggio and Mohr, 1985). Less than a third of students report having mothers with less than a college degree. Such a high rate of students from formally educated households hints at a selection bias whereby students from educated households are disproportionately more likely to attend NYUAD. It is worth noting that these numbers are higher than those from other elite universities in the United States (US) [2]. Of the 79 students who identified as being below their country's median (socioeconomically), 43 have mothers with two-year college degrees or higher education. Of the 97 first-year students, 61 identify as being above the socioeconomic median. Only 36 students, or 8.7% of the sample, identify both as being below the socioeconomic median and belonging to households with low human capital.

When compared regionally, over 30% of students from Eastern Asia, Southern Europe, and Southern Asia reported that their mothers have less than a college degree. The highest regions in which students reported mothers holding degrees were Central Asia and Eastern Europe, both with rates over 50%. This might reflect particularly high educational attainment for women in post-Soviet states, self-selection bias of applicants, or selection bias on the side of the university's admissions department.

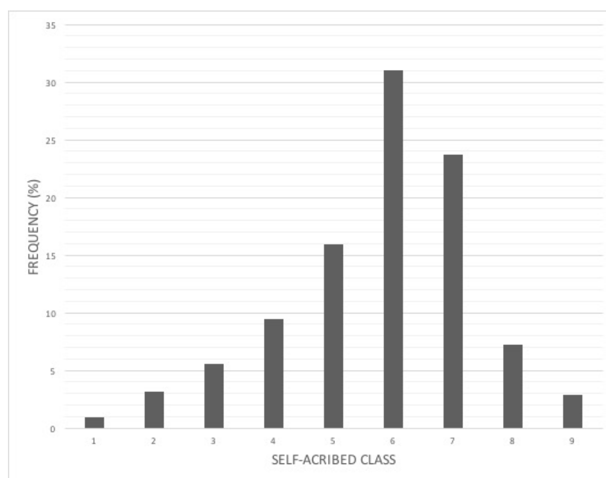

Figure 1: *Students by socioeconomic class n=413*

Another set of questions pertained to the high school education of respondents. These questions asked how many of students' high school classes took place in English, whether or not students attended a private high school, and whether their high school curricula were international[3].

Table 4: *High school classes imparted in English*

Classes in English	*Frequency*	*%*
More than half	342	80.28
Less than Half	84	19.72

Table 5: *Private or public high school*

Private vs public	*Frequency*	*%*
Private	277	65.80
Public	144	34.20

Table 6: *High schools with international curricula*

International curricula	*Frequency*	*%*
Yes	271	62
No	165	38
Total	**436**	**100**

[2]Students whose parents do not have college degrees make up 11% of the student body in Dartmouth, 12% at Princeton, 14% at Yale (Pappano, 2015) and 15-20% at NYU's campus in New York (NYU, 2015).

[3]International curricula included: the International Baccalaureate, the International General Certificate of Secondary Education, A Levels for non-British students and the AP curriculum for non-U.S. Americans.

Unsurprisingly, the data also show high numbers of polyglot students. In a sample of 426 students, 62.4% speak a second language and 25.5% speak a third language. A clear pattern appears: Most students attended private high schools, prepared for an international examination, and received most of their classes in English. Between these three variables we obtain correlations in the order of 0.4 to 0.5, meaning there exists a relationship between the variables, on average, with some residual variance.

It is not the case that language-related responses are driven by English-speaking regions. In almost every region, with the exceptions of Central Asia and Eastern Europe, a majority of students received the majority of their classes in English.

Overall, the trends suggests that the university was partially successful in being socioeconomically inclusive. The number of first-generation university students is significantly higher than elsewhere; however, the number of students who identify as below the median socioeconomically in their home countries is small. In non-economic terms, a significant portion of students received private education, took classes in English (even in non-English-speaking countries), or went through an international curriculum in their high school. Combined with the high numbers of polyglots, the data suggest that not only are students predominantly economically well off in their home countries, but also that they are, for the most part, cultural and educated elites.

It is likely that the pattern of the enrollment of global elites reflects barriers to entry into the institution. As mentioned in the opening remarks, NYUAD strives to be academically selective. Private education and international curricula likely predominate due to the application process—classes at NYUAD are conducted in English and international curricula are easier to send to the admissions office, possibly favoring global elites. English is the second language for a considerable number of students, suggesting that to be eligible to apply students must attend a high school offering English-language courses. It is also possible that an international curriculum leads students to have particular worldviews or behaviors not captured here, which would make them more attractive candidates.

MacLeod (2009) has famously written about the aspirations of lower-class young people. In his ethnography of a group of young men in Chicago public housing, he shows that structural conditions and media narratives lead worse-off students to lower their expectations in life, making them less likely to aspire to higher education, let alone to highly selective universities. Although by no means representative of lower classes elsewhere, it is possible that NYUAD's marketing itself as a top-tier university makes it unattractive for students whose aspirations do not include attending an elite institution. Lastly, although no data are available, it is possible that the university does not advertise itself outside of private elite high schools, meaning that access to information might be low in high schools with less access to information about universities abroad, such as college counselors.

II. Value patterns

Having looked at the student body's demographics, I now turn to the values they hold. First, a caveat: although the results of the survey are confidential, due to the inclusion of questions on social ties, the survey was not anonymous. The nature of the survey questions, despite the results' confidentiality, creates the potential for desirability bias. This error cannot be avoided, nor can it be easily estimated. However, Lelkes, Krosnick, Marx, Judd, and Park (2012) suggests that anonymity may actually compromise measurement accuracy, and thus a non-anonymous yet confidential survey seems to be the best way to ensure accurate results for sensitive questions on values.

A major finding is that most responses congregate around socially egalitarian answers, taking normative stances for equal treatment of different groups. This suggests not only to homogeneity in terms of values but a specific kind of homogeneity.

Seven questions asked students to rate their attitudes toward a series of issues, with the options ranging from 1 to 5. Specifically, the stances were:[4]

- You think same-sex marriage should be legal in your country.
- When jobs are scarce, employers should give priority to nationals over immigrants.
- Where women wear the veil as a cultural or religious practice, this generally indicates that men are exerting control over women in more areas than what they can wear.
- Democracy is the best kind of government.
- When a mother works a paying job, her children will necessarily suffer.
- When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women.
- Men are more effective political leaders than women.

[4]These questions were taken from those asked in the World Values Survey.**?**

The heat map below (Figure 2) illustrates the density of responses for each of the above questions. For the sake of clarity, answers are coded so that 1 represents a strongly held mainstream response, in terms of the direction most popular among respondents, while 5 indicates a non-mainstream response. This translates to 1 representing strongly held approval in the case of same-sex marriage, prioritizing nationals in the job market, and democracy and strongly held disapproval otherwise. The map illustrates both response homogeneity and the direction of said homogeneity. For most responses, only a minority of students respond in the non-mainstream direction, with even fewer expressing strongly held beliefs in non-mainstream directions.

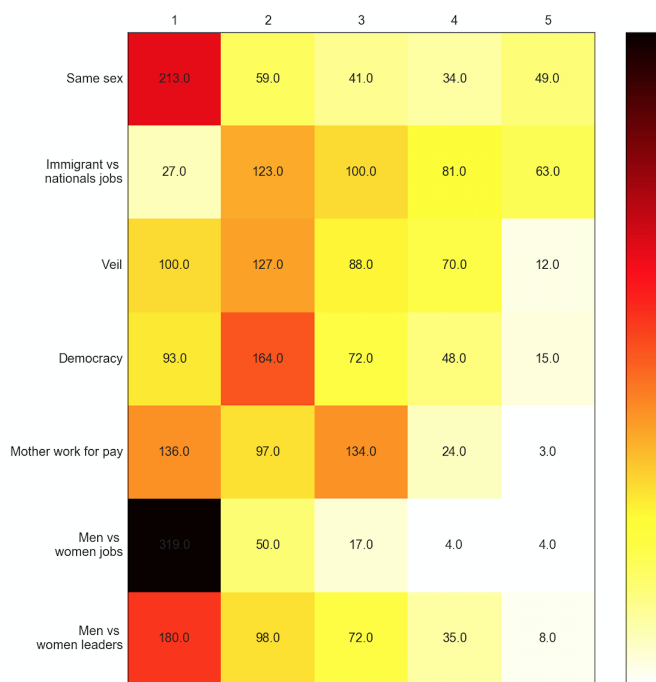

Figure 2: *Heat map of questions 1–5*

A similar trend can be seen in the following heat map (Figure 3). Three other value questions asked how students would react to a series of possible changes in their society; they chose from positive (1), neutral (2), and negative (3) options. The three most popular options will be discussed below. It suffices, at this point, to show that there is significant homogeneity in responses.

On a scale from 0 to 4, which measures authoritarianism based on a battery of four questions on child rearing first developed by Feldman and Stenner (1997), students fall overwhelmingly in the first two categories—those which indicate the lowest levels of authoritarianism. Although this study has not been replicated around the world, Perez and Marc (2014) finds that among whites in the U.S. the average is 2.4 and 3.12 among blacks. This is significantly higher than the hereby recorded mean score of 0.95. To my knowledge this scale is yet to be consistently measured globally, however these figures suggest that there is a bias towards the enrollment (through selection or application) of significantly non-authoritarian students. Because of the political and normative positions linked to the authoritarianism score, this scale provides a useful proxy for other normative measures, and thus might shed light on the normative package of respondents.

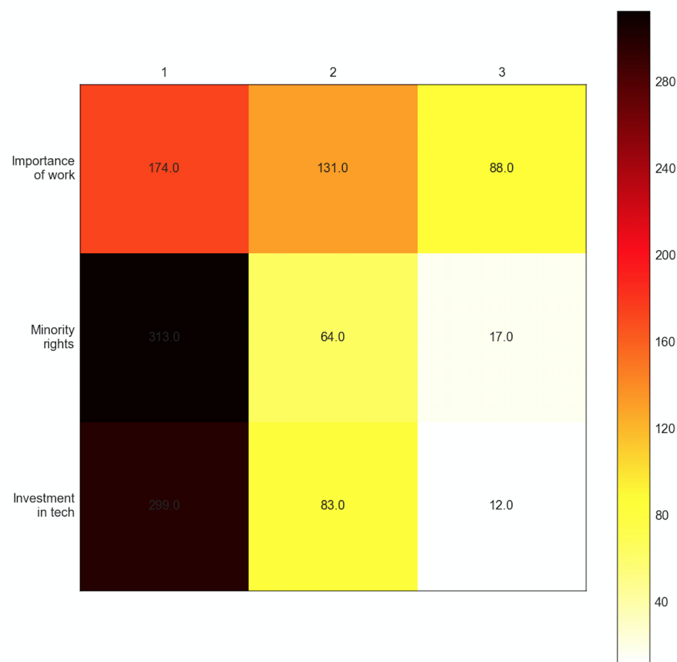

Figure 3: *Heat map questions 1–3*

Table 7: *Authoritarianism scale*

Authoritarianism scale	*Frequency*	*%*
0	168	43.19
1	125	32.13
2	54	13.88
3	32	8.23
4	10	2.57
Total	**389**	**100**

Lastly, students were asked which of two real opinion articles best reflected the kind of articles they normally read. The first challenged traditional Western ideas of romance as heteronormative and patriarchal while the second promoted conservative gender roles

in romantic relationships. Almost half the respondents selected the gender progressive article while 22% selected the gender-role-perpetuating article. Thirty-four percent of respondents selected "not sure".

The most common answers in this survey follow a clear pattern. Students tend to choose responses which imply attitudes towards equality, openness to other cultures and institutions, gender progressiveness, low authoritarianism, and new normative frameworks. The responses predominantly lean towards cultural pluralism and acceptance of non-Western institutional arrangements. The uniformity in inclusive and humanist values[5]—which were measured in questions pertaining to gender, same-sex marriage, and minority rights, among others—and of a form of limited moral relativism—measured in questions pertaining to democracy, and to veiling—indicates that students are selected so as to be part of a student body with a specific value package.

As previously mentioned, the data suggest homogeneity in terms of normative stances. Although this survey has not been reproduced at the time of writing, the questions above, selected the World Value Survey (WVS), can serve as evidence.

From Table 8, note that NYUAD students differ significantly from WVS respondents. This holds even when the WVS responses are restricted to cohorts of the same age group as NYUAD students and of similar education level, and to those who self-identity as lower middle class and above. Although the responses from the WVS change with class and age, they are far from being as resolute and homogeneous as NYUAD student responses. The pattern holds when this limited group of WVS respondents are divided into regions; even the regions which answered most similarly to NYUAD students are more heterogenous and equivocal in their values when compared to the NYUAD respondents. This comparison highlights that NYUAD students are significantly distinct from even other educated middle-class young people with high school degrees. Looking closely at four sets of responses, we can sketch the outline of the value framework presented here.

First, three questions on child-rearing yield a four-point authoritarianism scale, an index that has been shown to correlate accurately with a set of political and normative beliefs. On a study on intolerance, Martin concludes that "there is probably no other question on which tolerants differ from intolerants more sharply" (Martin, 1964, p. 86). Feldman and Stenner link authoritarianism to intolerance and prejudice, while Kohn concludes that the responses that lead to high authoritarianism "imply not only intolerance of deviant political belief, but also intolerance of any beliefs thought to be threatening to the social order [such as] religious beliefs, ethnic and racial identifications, even beliefs about proper dress and deportment" (Kohn, 1989, p. 201). Conversely, the very low scores on this scale allow us to infer that the student body in question is overwhelmingly open to variations of social arrangements and practices, and open to changes in the status quo.

Second, it might seem surprising that NYUAD students are much less positive about democracy than young middle-class individuals elsewhere. However, this makes sense when linked to the authoritarian literature above. Openness to different cultural practices or institutions is associated with a low score. Moreover, when speaking of NYUAD, former NYU President John Sexton has said that the best reaction to globalization trends is to have the "humility to acknowledge that there is much that is imperfect about their own views of the world, to perceive that there is much to be learned from others, and to embrace a process of engagement even with normative difference" (Sexton, 2010). If we are to assume the president's views inform the development of the university, it is much less surprising to see an institutionally relativist student body. Such relativism seems to include rejecting, for the most part, the idea of objectively better social arrangements, with the exception of egregious violations of universal values (for example, human rights). The extent and limit of this relativism can be best seen in gender, immigration and democracy questions. Although students are open to non-democracy as an open arrangement, they are much less likely to be open to discrimination against women or, to a lesser extent, immigrants. Democracy thus falls within the realm of cultural and institutional arrangements that NYUAD students allow to change across societies. Seemingly, NYUAD students agree on a base set of values like equality and fairness, but outside of these, they also believe in multiculturalism being horizontal—no cultural social arrangement is objectively better than others.

Third, multiculturalism is reflected in responses to the statement "where women wear the veil as a cultural or religious practice, this generally indicates that men are exerting control over women in more areas than what they can wear." Most students responded either "definitely not" or "probably not." There are multiple reasons why this might be the case. First, it might be the case that students, given their geo-social location in Abu Dhabi, are mostly exposed to women who veil in a situation of privilege both in the city and through classmates—women who, due to their social or eco-

[5]Only in the case of the statement "When jobs are scarce employers should prioritize nationals over immigrants" was the mainstream response not the same as the intuitively progressive, egalitarian response.

Table 8: *NYUAD responses versus World Value Survey (WVS) responses*

Question	*NYUAD*	*WVS 18–23 years*	*WVS 12–23 years, at least High School, middle class*	*Closest two WVS regions*[6]
Men are better leaders than women	45.8% strongly disagree	13.3% strongly disagree	14.45% strongly disagree	SubSahara 32.82% East Asia 28% (strongly disagree)
When a mother works for pay her children necessarily suffer.	34.5% strongly disagree	13.69% strongly disagree	14.97% strongly disagree	East Asia: 30% East Europe: 15.38% (strongly disagree)
When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women	93.65% disagree	42.35% disagree	46.00% disagree	East Asia: 84% East Europe: 80.77% (disagree)
When jobs are scarce, employers should give priority to nationals	38.07% agree	59.75% agree	59.14% agree	U.S: 86,99% South Europe: 83.33% (agree)
Democracy is good[7]	65.56% in favor	85.83% in favor	88.62% in favor	Sub-Sahara: 89.23% U.S.A: 92.69% (in favor)
Less emphasis on work is a good change in society	44.27% good	25.99% good	27.10% good	W. & N. Europe: 46% East Asia 38.93% (good)

nomic situation, truly do have a choice of whether or not to take up the practice. A second possibility is desirability bias; because of the socionormative context of NYUAD, students might perceive this to be the "correct" answer since it implies an open-minded perspective. Third, the wording of the question implies an intrinsic link between practice and culture. Students who analyze veiling or the cultures in which it is practiced, as well as students aware of the nuances surrounding the veil, might resist such simplistic a narrative and thus might actually believe that cultural practices do not imply a single cultural context. In the first scenario, the effect of being surrounded by actors with similar perspectives and social positions makes specific contexts seem universal. The latter two options reflect openness to other cultures and values—either actually believed in, or preformed. Such a view acknowledges nuances in other cultures and resists assumptions about them.

Fourth, NYUAD students overwhelmingly responded that "less importance placed on work in our lives" in their home society would be a good change. This contrasts the almost exact opposite response in the World Value Survey, except for the answers of Western and Northern Europeans, and Eastern Asians within the respondents' age range, class, and education. I believe this is a reflection of class privilege, as well as of a particular feature of the NYUAD value package. On the former, the only people who can afford to choose between greater and lesser care to work are those whose work hours increase or decrease based on social pressures, not on immediate survival needs. On the latter, the World Value Survey associates this particular answer with the value groups "secular-rational" and "self-expression" (Inglehart and Welzel, 2010). These value groups are in turn associated with post-industrial societies, particularly Scandinavian countries—in 2015, Sweden reduced its working hours from eight to six (Crouch, 2015). It is probable that our respondents share

this value with post-industrial knowledge economies for a reason. This particular normative framework, which does not value work as much as other traits, follows logically from a secular, humanist, and egalitarian value framework. It follows from the basic tenet that individuals should have the freedom to choose what to do with their time. This raises an interesting question: If the values that NYUAD students have are secular, rooted in humanism (as opposed to, for example, based on divine law) mirroring post-industrial Western societies, would it not seem that, in terms of values, we are seeing a student body affected by a global Westernization process?

If NYUAD students present an openness to other cultures, inclusive egalitarianism, and equality, how can we separate their value framework from that of the median ideal/typical citizen of a modern Western, liberal democracy? Although outside of the scope of this paper, it is it also probable that the similar education systems in which the students in this survey were formed, as well as the greater globalization forces have contributed to the spread of these values among this student body. Suffice it to say for this study, however, that we see a non-random global elite population that espouses a particular set of values, in part Western, but, in important ways, unique. The values we observe differ from the average modern Western, liberal democracy in important ways, namely their relativism and openness. As previously discussed, around the world individuals tend to be more supportive of democracy than the respondents to this survey, who seem inclined to reject the essentialization of cultural practices. Only 26% of students said they find it easier to interact with students with similar religious beliefs, which contrasts with the 58.2% of the reduced group of WVS respondents who said they either “do not trust” or “do not trust at all” people with differing religious beliefs. Although not the same question, it would make sense that individuals who do not trust people of other religions would find it difficult to interact with them. At times, the difference between Western Liberalism and the archetypical NYUAD student is clear, as when individuals from Western, liberal democracies believe that democracy is objectively good or when Europeans increasingly support bans on veils (PewGlobal, 2006).

In summary, what we see is a phenomenon of a student body composed of mostly of middle-class students from educated households and with international educations. These students present both a homogeneity in their values and heterogeneity, as discussed below, in the origin of the media they consume. These patterns hint at an institutional bias toward the enrollment of a specific type of student in the university. First, students have a value framework seemingly guided by humanist principles of egalitarianism and inclusivity. Second, and in possible friction with said openness, there is a limited moral relativism in terms of cultural practices and institutional arrangements of different societies. It is limited in the sense that students object to challenging certain base normative principles, for example, when it comes to violations of human rights or systematic oppression of the marginalized. Regardless of country or regional differences in legal protection against discrimination of minorities, students responded in overwhelming unison. This is indicative that such stances are not contingent on social arrangements in the respondents’ societies. Lastly, there might also be a pattern of secularization among respondents, based on the large number of non-religious students and students who identify as religious but never engage in informal or formal religious practices.

III. The NYUAD value index

Having delineated the value framework of respondents, I will show that homogeneity in values, or adherence to said framework, is not caused by a particular demographic. To do so, I created an index that measures how often students reported the strongest feeling in the direction that the overall student body leaned, whether in support of or opposition to a particular statement. This index allows us to measure the conviction that students have in the values they support as well as whether or not their overall value framework can be predicted by demographic traits. The index consists of a binary variable for each question, with 0 representing strong adherence to the value framework in question, and 1, deviation from it.

Not all questions were coded the same. A response of “not sure” to the question “do you think same-sex marriage should be legal in your country?” would fall under the “NYUAD ideal” category, while a “not sure” response to “men are more effective political leaders than women” would not. This uneven coding responds to the fact that lack of certainty in one metric might be more indicative of lack of progressivity in some questions but not in others. For example, the definitiveness in the wording of the leadership question makes it such than any hesitation would be an openness to the possibility that men are better leaders than women, which is not a gender-progressive attitude. On the other hand, uncertainty in a question about same-sex marriage in one’s specific national context might indicate support for the policy but contextual reservations, such as possible backlashes or cultural appropriateness .

Another possible approach would be to look at the

difference in levels of certainty for each question. Such differences are less pertinent to this analysis than the extent to which responses are in line with a particular normative framework. Capturing mostly strong stances instead of including ambivalent feelings allows me to capture only responses where students are certain of their value stances. This provides more robust data since it does not include ambivalent responses as part of the NYUAD framework. Even with this conservative approach, the data suggest a distinct value framework .

Added up, the binary variables yield an 11-point index which spans from a possible 0, scored by a respondent who indicated a strong adherence to every question in what seems to be the NYUAD value framework, to 10, which would require 11 detracting responses. It is telling that the highest score reached by any respondent was 8, and only four respondents scored that high. The distribution of the NYUAD Value Index (NVI) is shown below (Figure 4). This suggests that while many students will provide a few detracting responses, it is rare for any one student to do so more than five times out of a possible 11.

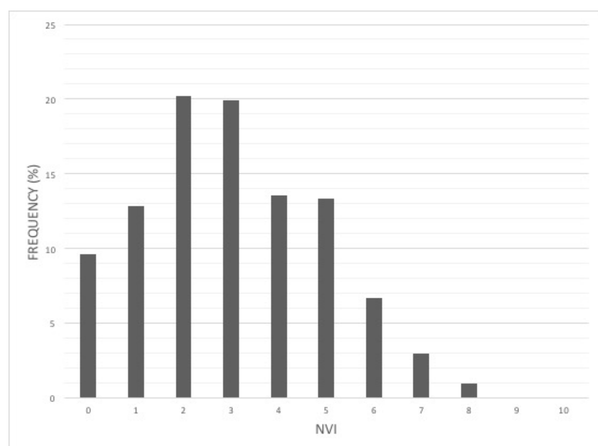

Figure 4: *NYUAD Value Index n=413*

There are almost no significant correlations between any of the measured demographic data and the NVI variable. This suggests high levels of homogeneity across the student body for this index, since the values are not skewed by a particularly overrepresented group.

The effects of socioeconomic status (Table 9), household human capital (Table 10), and the three education variables (Tables 11–14) are small and not statistically significant. Graduation class (Table 14) shows a statistically significant result: first-year students are, on average, half a point further from the NYUAD ideal than seniors. This effect disappears when other demographic data is taken into account. Here, a negative coefficient signifies a greater deviation from the norm.

Table 9: *The NVI and socioeconomic class*

	Dependent variable:
	NVI
Less than college[8]	0 (.)
College degrees	0.0870 (0.229)
Advanced degrees	0.294 (0.237)
Constant	3.030*** (0.182)
Observations	413

Note: Standard errors appear in parentheses.
* $(p < 0.05)$, ** $(p < 0.01)$, *** $(p < 0.001)$

Table 10: *The NVI and household human capital*

	Dependent variable:
	NVI
Socioeconomic class	-0.0186 (0.0560)
Constant	3.279*** (0.336)
Observations	413

Note: Standard errors appear in parentheses.
* $(p < 0.05)$, ** $(p < 0.01)$, *** $(p < 0.001)$

Table 11: *The NVI and international curricula*

	Dependent variable:
	NVI
International exam	0.205 (0.186)
Constant	2.891*** (0.147)
Observations	436

Note: Standard errors appear in parentheses.
* $(p < 0.05)$, ** $(p < 0.01)$, *** $(p < 0.001)$

Table 12: *The NVI and attending a private high school*

	Dependent variable:
	NVI
Private high school	0.0519 (0.192)
Constant	3.035*** (0.156)
Observations	421

Note: Standard errors appear in parentheses.
* ($p < 0.05$), ** ($p < 0.01$), *** ($p < 0.001$)

Table 13: *The NVI and taking classes in English*

	Dependent variable:
	NVI
Classes in English	0.108 (0.227)
Constant	3.035*** (0.101)
Observations	426

Note: Standard errors appear in parentheses.
* ($p < 0.05$), ** ($p < 0.01$), *** ($p < 0.001$)

Table 14: *The NVI and graduation year*

	Dependent variable:
	NVI
2016	0 (.)
2017	0.240 (0.299)
2018	0.308 (0.268)
2019	0.592* (0.259)
Constant	2.773*** (0.211)
Observations	420

Note: Standard errors appear in parentheses.
* ($p < 0.05$), ** ($p < 0.01$), *** ($p < 0.001$)

Although no panel data is available for this survey, comparing responses across class years might provide a glimpse as to the whether there exists a socialization process as students progress in their NYUAD careers. Although there is a small, statistically significant difference between freshmen and seniors, there is no such significant difference between freshmen and other classes or between seniors and other classes. This could imply that students are not socialized into these responses but hold these values as early as spring of their freshman year, when this survey was conducted.

In terms of religion, Muslim and non-religious students identify predominantly as natives from the MENA region and North America, respectively. Therefore, I control for the respondent's region of origin when regressing religion on adherence to the NYUAD value framework. The data, shown in Table 15, suggest non-religious students tend to be closer to the NYUAD average than their religious peers, albeit by less than one point. Belonging to any other religion does not act as a statistically significant predictor of adherence to the measured value framework. As a side note, this finding is noteworthy as it contradicts the commonly held conceptualization of Islam as a particularly conservative religion. At least for this cohort, Muslims seem to be no more conservative nor more liberal than their peers of different faiths.

Table 16 shows the results of regressing the NVI against the respondent's home region. Each column reports a different model specification. In Model 1 (first column), I compare students from all regions against Central Asian students. In Model 2 (second column), I collapse all Western regions (Western and Northern Europe, North America, and Oceania) into a single variable, against which I compare other regions. Model 3 includes as a covariate a dummy variable that compares all Western students to all non-Western students.

Table 15: *The NVI and religion*

	Dependent variable:
	NVI
Islam	0 (.)
Hinduism	-0.137 (0.635)
Buddhism	-0.889 (0.750)
Judaism	-1.003 (1.850)
No Religion	-0.864** (0.311)
Spiritual	-0.475 (0.459)
Christianity	-0.429 (0.329)
Other	-0.635 (0.520)
Constant	3.548*** (0.615)
Observations	421

Note: Standard errors appear in parentheses.
Controls include the respondent's home region.
* ($p < 0.05$), ** ($p < 0.01$), *** ($p < 0.001$)

Western students are significantly more adherent to the NYUAD value framework than Eastern European, MENA, Southern Asian, and Sub-Saharan students. When collapsed into a dummy variable, Western

Table 16: *The NVI regressed against home region*

	Dependent variable:		
	All regions	Collapsed Western	Western dummy
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Western regions		0 (.)	
Central Asia	0 (.)	0.935 (0.633)	
Eastern Asia	-0.451 (0.685)	0.484 (0.359)	
Eastern Europe	0.201 (0.655)	1.136^{***} (0.297)	
Latin America & Caribbean	-0.504 (0.673)	0.431 (0.335)	
Middle East & North Africa	-0.00439 (0.645)	0.931^{***} (0.273)	
North America	-0.979 (0.650)		
Oceania	-1.026 (0.793)		
Southeast Asia	-0.0208 (0.762)	0.914 (0.489)	
Southern Europe	-0.283 (0.734)	0.652 (0.444)	
Southern Asia	0.179 (0.676)	1.115^{**} (0.341)	
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.394 (0.724)	1.329^{**} (0.427)	
West & Northern Europe	-0.800 (0.695)		
West dummy			0.888^{***} (0.203)
Constant	3.333^{***} (0.609)	2.398^{***} (0.176)	2.398^{***} (0.175)
Observations	423	423	423

Note: Standard errors appear in parentheses. * ($p < 0.05$), ** ($p < 0.01$), *** ($p < 0.001$)

students are almost a point less digressive than non-Western students. Although one could interpret this as people from the West holding more of the measured values, this would ignore that the population at hand was not selected randomly. NYUAD's admission process includes a weekend-long interview process during which students fly to Abu Dhabi and meet with a series of faculty and student evaluators. It could be the case that during this process interviewers are more tolerant of certain attitudes in non-Westerners and are more strict when it comes to Western students. The possibility for selection bias calls into question what the correlation between a respondent's region and their values actually captures.

As previously mentioned, respondents display homogeneity in class, household human capital, and type of high school education. Students also show homogeneity across the measured value stances. However, no demographic identifier is a good predictor for how strongly a student will adhere to the NYUAD value framework.

IV. Cultural consumption: Unexpected heterogeneity

The third set of questions asked about students' patterns of consumption. I asked for the origin of the cultural products students consumed (specifically, literature, news, film, and television), as well as the language in which students consumed them. The pattern shows that, although (predictably) Anglo-American forms of culture predominate, there are also notable levels of heterogeneity in the origin of the cultural items that students consume.

In terms of literature, 88.9% of respondents said they had read a book in the 12 months prior to the survey. Of these, 81.8% said that the last book they read was in English, 84.4% of which were originally written in English, rendering 15.6% translations. The majority of these authors (63.5%) came from three countries: the U.S. (46.7%), the U.K. (12.7%), and France (4.1%). No other country was chosen by more than 3% of respondents. More than half of the students (50.8%) reported not having read a book from the country they identify as their home in their time at university. These results

suggest that a relatively high number of students read books for leisure while at university that are neither from their home country nor from an Anglo-American repertoire.

Regarding television, two countries produce 83.6% of the shows last watched by the respondents: the U.S. (76.7%) and the U.K. (7%). The next most represented country was South Korea, with 2.9%. This suggests that at least 17% of students watch television from outside the U.S. and the U.K.—this number is probably higher, since this question asked only about the last program they watched. A significant majority of respondents (85.6%) watched their selected show in English. No other country scored higher than 1%.

In terms of films, 69.7% of respondents reported that the last movie they had seen was produced in the U.S., 4% in India, and 2.5% in Britain. This indicates that students consume movies from outside the U.S. and the U.K. more frequently than they consume television programs from outside these countries. More than three-quarters of the respondents had watched movies whose primary language was originally English, while the remaining had watched a movie in a different language (no language other than English was selected by more than 11 students, or 1.2%).

Regarding news, 63.7% of respondents stated that they mostly read news from global, non-local news sources. Another 14% selected global but local news sources (for example, if they were British and read the BBC). Furthermore, 337 (82.2%) respondents read the news primarily in English, despite only 123 students selecting English as their native language. Conversely, this means 22.2% of students reported reading local news and 17.8% of students read the news in a non-English language.

When asked about their online habits, 21.6% of respondents selected national or regional websites as the pages they visit the most often. Although this number might seem low, considering the prevalence of U.S.-based social media like Facebook, Reddit, and Gmail, some might find this number unintuitively high.

At first glance, these numbers point to a homogeneous consumption of Anglo-American cultural products, since the U.S. and the U.K. are the countries most often selected in all categories. However, an astonishing number of students do not consume Anglo-American cultural content. It is remarkable that in a U.S. American university, with students who all speak English, and out of which a high number received international education, over a third of students reported consuming cultural products from outside the Anglo-American world. Taking into account the omnipresence of U.S. cultural products and the fact that the question only asked for the last item they consumed from each category, this number is surprisingly high.

The data suggest that students often seek cultural products foreign to their own culture. Of the 112 students whose last-watched film was neither from the U.S. or the U.K., only 15% watched a movie from their home country. Similarly, out of the 29 students who did not last watch a television show from the U.S. or the U.K., only 17% watched a show from their own country. Tentatively, this suggests that a significant number of students consume from countries outside of their own. That being said, English is still by far the dominant language, and international news sources and U.S. websites are still very prominent ways in which students engage with the world. It would be overly simplistic to say that the trend noticed is a limited form of westernization, or Western dominance of cultural production that is on its way to becoming ubiquitous. The U.S. and the U.K. are the major producers of the media consumed by students across all categories. However, given the population in question—a student body made up of economic elites, educated in English and through international curricula currently attending a U.S. university—deviations from Anglo-American forms of cultural productions are impressive. The variance in terms of the origin of cultural products students consume is indicative of a desire to diversify their intake across a variety of cultures.

In other words, the fact that students' patterns of consumption are not completely westernized suggests that a different force is causing students to seek out cultural products from outside mainstream cultural centers. It is not the case that students are instead flocking to other cultural centers like Bollywood or China. In fact, for films, literature, and television, few countries were chosen by more than a handful of students. What this means is that a significant number of students are consuming media from around the globe eclectically and heterogeneously. This pattern could be seen as an amplified version of the phenomenon some call cultural omnivores, a tendency of elites nowadays to consume media from different sources. In the words of Kahn, elites "have incorporated some of the cultural attributes and tastes of those that they had previously excluded. Yet this new practice—omnivorous consumption—is itself a symbolic marker [...]. This omnivorousness becomes their own mark of distinction" (Khan, 2011, p 152). Using the same logic, I would posit that NYUAD students, who are a particular subsection of educated elites in their national contexts, not only consume media from across the social ladder, but from different ladders altogether; they seek to consume and appreciate a diverse range of national and cultural products.

The data presented here corroborate this hypothesis, given the low number of students who selected both a television show and a movie from their own country, although more analysis is necessary.

The patterns along the three vectors measured—demographics, values, and media consumption—point to the archetypical NYUAD student, from which few differ significantly. NYUAD students are highly educated elites from around the world that hold a seemingly humanist moral framework, support a limited form of cultural relativity, and seek to consume media from outside their home country and away from media hegemons.

V. Conclusion

The main finding from this survey is that students responded homogeneously in terms of values, language of cultural consumption, and news sources, and responded heterogeneously in terms of the origin of their other forms of cultural consumption. From these results, we can sketch the extent and limitations of diversity among NYUAD students. I also posit some possible implications for actors in a social environment where these patterns are a social norm. If this specific environment is one where global elites are formed, the effects described here offer a glimpse into a particular form of elite formation.

Because of the processes of institutional selection on the side of the university's administration and of self-selection on the side of students, the student body differs from other young, middle-class people around the world. While the university is diverse in its own ways—country of origin and religion—this is not reflective of other forms of diversity existing in the world. It is diverse, but in specific, select ways.

I. On the origin of these values

The question of where the students' framework comes from lies outside the scope of this paper. It is probable that different societies have developed similar values independently and that students have simply picked up on these. However, it would be ambitious to try to divorce the interconnectedness of these global elites from the values they hold—particularly the life circumstances they share, such as language and international high school education. The parallel between Western values and the values students hold becomes more plausible, considering the access to particular forms of consumption, language ability, and the cultural capital exercised by middle-class, educated elites.

There are reasons to think that an NYUAD student differs from the ideal progressive, Western liberal being. For instance, in France it is a common sentiment among prominent feminists and general society that the veil is a symbol of oppression, and de-veiling a symbol of female autonomy (Bowen, 2007). Even when veiling by choice, the patriarchy is latent in these decisions, goes the argument. Ahmed (1992), however, argues that feminist discourses, defined by Europeans, lead men who want to seem modern to force women to remove the veil. Ahmed provided a convincing account of how the removing of the veil actually disempowered women and that veiling in some instances is an expression of agency. In this sense, the same normative stance, whether or not women should veil, is both gender progressive and gender regressive depending on the context in which it is taken.

As previously mentioned, when contrasted to the WVS data, the value framework of the student body differs from that of Western, young, middle-class people. The literature on cosmopolitanism—a value and consumption framework shared by individuals around the world—provides a possible explanation. Cleveland, Laroche, and Papadopoulos (2009) put forward a 12-point scale to measure cosmopolitanism. This scale functions as a multidimensional measurement of acculturation to global consumer culture and of forming an identity based on a sense of belonging to the world (Cleveland et al., 2009). The authors validate this index through a non-representative, snowball sampling in eight countries. Based on this index, they explored the correlation between cosmopolitanism and "the individual values of universalism, stimulation, benevolence and self-direction" (Cleveland et al., 2009, p. 940). Using surveys they conducted in Turkey and Canada, the authors found that their index positively correlates with the "cultural values of intellectual autonomy, affective autonomy, egalitarianism, and harmony, and inversely to conservatism" (Cleveland et al., 2009, p. 940). Lastly, their results affirm that there exists a relationship between cosmopolitanism and intellectualism (Cleveland et al., 2009). Although these results are yet to be corroborated by other studies, these findings match the aforementioned value orientations for cosmopolitanism. Szerszynski and Urry (2002) focuses on the tendency of cosmopolitans to identify as part of the world as opposed to a particular region. Although the authors found few of what they call global citizens, or true cosmopolitans, they did find a cognitive shrinking of the world as a result of increased awareness of global flows of media and capital and an increased concern for non-co-nationals. Importantly, they defined cosmopolitans as being highly mobile, endowed with capital, and hav-

ing an openness to interpersonal relationships outside of their immediate networks (Szerszynski and Urry, 2002). A few years later, Hannerz (2007) defines cosmopolitanism as an impulse which tends to favor more inclusive arrangements of compassion and solidarity.

Schueth and O'Loughlin (2008) focuses on World Value Survey respondents who identify as belonging more to the world than to their own region. The study finds that cosmopolitan identification is found prominently among individuals who are less patriotic, politically active, with higher levels of education, young, are positively oriented to living near migrants, and concerned with the environment (Schueth and O'Loughlin, 2008). Despite the lack of robust scholarly literature on who they are, an emerging consensus seems to be that cosmopolitanism consists of a transnational culture associated with a homogeneous consciousness open to the world and to cultural differences (Kendall, Skrbis, and Woodward, 2009).

In this study, the presence of cosmopolitanism would be unsurprising given the rhetoric of the university. NYUAD highlights that those enrolled at this institution will be part of a "fully interconnected global network" (NYUAD Admissions, 2014). The university also describes itself as a new kind of higher education institution, one that practices "global education" with a "global orientation [that] reflects the international diversity of the student body" (NYUAD Admissions, 2014). As previously mentioned, it would be expected that an institution aiming to educate future global leaders from diverse national backgrounds would attempt to select a cosmopolitan student body. Although outside the scope of this exploratory research, measuring cosmopolitanism at NYUAD might provide an answer to what force mold the patterns observed here.

II. Sticky forms of identity

One of the only questions for which the progressive preference was not overwhelmingly the most common response was "when jobs are scarce, employers should give priority to nationals over immigrants." When regressed against graduation year, and controlling for other demographics and values, we see that students closer to graduation are more likely to agree with the statement. Although it is possible there are other demographic variables underlying this pattern, it is also possible that as students get closer to entering the job market they become less idealistic and more realistic about their preferences, especially if they face a tough job market at home. Feldman and Stenner suggest that threat activates authoritarian predispositions. Following this logic it might be the case that a person's attachment to these values wanes when faced with a threat to their personal livelihood (1997). Another possibility is that although students might want to conceptualize the world as a global community, nationalism is a "sticky" concept. In this sense, this result is a healthy reminder that, despite forces to the contrary, the nation-state as an identity source, and as an organization understood to grant members special rights, persists.

Another reminder of the limits of a seemingly cosmopolitan spirit among students is that although few responded that they do not find it particularly easier to interact with peers of similar religious beliefs, they did find it easier to interact with students from the same region. It is unsurprising that actors would prefer to engage with co-regionals, given common cultural capital, norms for and ways of interaction, and other social protocols that allow for easier communication. It does, however, bring back the fact that, despite the consumption of and engagement with other cultures, geo-social spaces are still extremely relevant in an individual's socialization, which has an obvious impact on those with whom they choose to establish relations.

Lastly, it is not the case that students are immune to trends in media globalization. Although eclectic in the origin of their media, the U.S. and the U.K. are still the prominent producers of media that students consume. Importantly, students report consuming news mainly from sources considered "global" that, with a few notable exceptions like Al Jazeera, emanate from the West. Of note, as well, is that English was the preferred language of media consumption: for all forms of media, over 80% of students selected English as their language of primary consumption.

III. Implications: Limited forms of diversity

Returning to the social space in question, there are pertinent implications of this social phenomenon occurring at New York University Abu Dhabi. The available evidence indicates the presence of a particular social reality: The prevalence of certain values among a diverse group of students, in terms of nationalities, can create an atmosphere in which these values go unquestioned. As such, these values might be elevated to seemingly objective truths. As discussed above, the fact that there does not seem to be a socialization process at hand suggests that the university purposefully selects similar students with similar conceptions of the world.

Such selection fails to introduce challenging or competing world-views by means of dissenting voices. Wood and Sherman (2001) argues that in the U.S., the mere presence on campus of students from varied racial backgrounds could be shown to directly foster edu-

cational benefits. Ethnic diversity, however, only has this benefit because students must engage with a perceived other. Speaking of this mechanism, after a series of experiments on price bubbles, Levine, Apfelbaumc, Bernardd, Bartelte, Zajacf, and Starkg (2014) concludes that homogeneous markers lead to an unquestioning of group consensus. Under their causal inference, it is the perception that those in one's social space are alike that leads to an unquestioning of the validity of popular opinions. If ethnic markers cease serve as a main indicator of identity, as the university's rhetoric implies happens at NYUAD, other markers like agreement on fundamental social axioms might take their place. Value hegemony, despite ethnic diversity, might preclude students from obtaining the benefits of diversity, which Levine et al. (2014) summarizes in its findings: "diversity facilitates friction that enhances deliberation and upends conformity" (p. 18524).

When discussing the all-encompassing nature of the concept of the nation, Billig (1995) states that "nationhood provides a continual background for [the people's] political discourse, cultural products" (p. 7); in short, it is ever-present, so ingrained that they become "common sense" (p. 13). If we replace nationhood for our specific value framework, the point becomes clear: When the basic axioms upon which a moral framework is built are so pervasive so as to become mundane, they will begin to seem as natural. In the absence of countervailing axioms or epistemologies, shared values are likely to be accepted uncritically as common sense. As with nationalism, value frameworks need not be conspicuously reiterated within a social space to become ubiquitous, rather they need only be unchallenged and assumed. For this to happen, it does not matter through what process these values come to be—that is, whether they are tacitly accepted by students or are the product of contestation and thought. Regardless, when students persistently engage with the same values, which the presented value heterogeneity suggests they do, these values and ways of thinking can become pervasive and reified.

A possible objection to this reasoning is that students might be more value-heterogeneous before attending NYUAD, after which a socialization process homogenizes them. Although this survey has not yet been supplemented with panel data, it is possible to use the differences between class years as proxies for such data, assuming there has not been a dramatic change in acceptance policies. Although freshmen are slightly less adherent to the NVI than older students, this difference is small and suggests only a slight, if at all existing, socialization force.

Overall, this survey has found that there are clear patterns among NYUAD students. Although students are heterogeneous in multiple ways, the data suggest a limited diversity in terms of socioeconomic background, cultural and human capital, and value stances. The similarities I found suggest the existence of barriers to entry for those who do not belong to global elites, although the university seems more inclusive of non-elites than its U.S. counterparts. I posit that the emergence of a global cosmopolitan class might have caused elites from around the world to share value stances. These findings also shed light on the implications of limited diversity in a pedagogical setting among the specific vectors measured here. This study adds to existing literature on diversity, education, and elite formation by providing novel ways to measure culture in a population from a multitude of countries and by providing a case study of diversity in an elite university.

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