

2013 Report of Research Collaboration & Management Support Course  
for International Research Output Training

# Social Transition and Its Impact on Southern Africa

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## **Overview of the seminar**

It has become common to emphasize the depth and diversity of economic and social changes that took place in the second half of the twentieth century, in both developed and developing countries. This transition has brought huge advances but has also raised disturbing questions about the long-term social, cultural, ecological, and political “sustainability” of various observable shifts. African countries are not exceptional in this context but are, in fact, experiencing accelerated rates of change. Cash economies, Western political theories, and massive foreign immigration have greatly changed the lifestyles of most Africans, especially those belonging to various ethnic groups. No sooner had they cheered for the better living conditions wrought by social transition than economic threats and political turbulence emerged as side effects.

This workshop was organized to contribute to the academic debate on the impact of social transition in Southern Africa by focusing on issues and challenges concerning living conditions, cultural, economy, and politics. The workshop sought to explore the necessary links between social advances and the problems brought about by such transitions, and consider potential strategies to maximize benefits and minimize negative effects. The workshop provided an opportunity to consider critical perspectives between members of Graduate school of Asian and African Area Studies (ASAFAS), Kyoto University and those of other cooperating institutions.

During the workshop, diverse presentations explored different aspects of social transition in Southern Africa, including the following: the impact of social transition on the Bayeyi people of the Okavango Delta in the northwestern edge of the Kalahari Desert of Botswana; the symbiotic relationship between people and the environment, and how a harmonious coexistence and sustainable development could be fostered between people and nature; the impact of foreign migration on local policies and social life in South Africa; and trading relationships in Botswana. The workshop also considered the role of education in the social, technological, and political transitions in Southern Africa.

Our acknowledgment and appreciation go to the International On-site Education Program (IOSEP) for Global Human Resources, ASAFAS, Kyoto University Special Research Project, for providing financial support toward the successful organization and execution of the workshop. Our thanks also go to Professor Akira Takada, who provided support and advice in the whole process of organizing and planning of the workshop.

## SEMINAR PROGRAM

### SOCIAL TRANSITION AND ITS IMPACT ON SOUTHERN AFRICA:

JANUARY 17, 2014, 1:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.,

INNAMORI BUILDING 318, KYOTO UNIVERSITY

#### **Workshop program**

1:00–1:10 Opening Remarks by Akira TAKADA (ASAFAS, Kyoto University)

#### 1:10–2:10 Session 1

**Speaker 1: Wei XU** (Researcher at the Institute of African Studies, Zhejiang Normal University)

“Social Change among the Bayeyi People of Botswana”

2:10–2:30 Discussion 1 (Yujie Peng, ASAFAS, Kyoto University)

2:30–2:45 Coffee Break

#### 2:45–3:45 Session 2

**Speaker 2: Meyu YAMAMOTO** (Department of Literature, Kyoto University)

“Half-Open Door to Africa: Chinese and Japanese Migrants in Twentieth-Century South Africa”

**Speaker 3: Yanyin ZI** (ASAFAS, Kyoto University)

“Factors Influencing Business Frictions between Chinese Merchants and Their Local Workers in Botswana”

3:45–3:05 Discussion 2 (Samuel Tefera Alemu, ASAFAS, Kyoto University)

4:05–4:20 Coffee Break

#### 4:20–5:20 Session 3

**Speaker 4: Salome MOGOTSI** (Faculty of Education, University of Botswana)

“The Impact of Social Transition on Botswana: Mathematics Education (Teaching and Learning) as a Vehicle for Social Transition”

**Speaker 5: Antonie CHIGEDA** (ASAFAS, Kyoto University)

“Nurturing Democratic Citizenship In Malawian Secondary Schools: Context, challenges and opportunities”

5:20–5:40 Discussion 3 (Yan Jiang, Department of Education, Kyoto University)

5:40–5:50 Closing Remarks

6:00 Reception

## **SOCIAL CHANGE AMONG THE BAYEYI PEOPLE OF BOTSWANA**

*Xu We : Institute of African Studies, Zhejiang Normal University*

### **Introduction**

Botswana is a landlocked country, bordered by South Africa to the south and southeast, Namibia to the west and north, and Zimbabwe to the northeast. Its border with Zambia to the north is poorly defined, but at most, it is a few hundred meters long. Botswana was selected for this study because of its long-term economic growth and political stability since gaining independence in 1966. The other reason is that my husband worked in Botswana. In addition, although Botswana is a midsized country with a population of just over two million, it is regarded as a successful model of development in Africa.

### **Profile of the Bayeyi people**

The Bayeyi are a Bantu-speaking people of Ngamiland in Botswana. They emigrated to the area from the north in the eighteenth century. They lived in close cooperation with the San people, who had lived in the area previously. The Bayeyi language was influenced by San languages. The Okavango Delta is located at the edge of the Kalahari Desert in Botswana. The Bayeyi are the most populous ethnic group in the area and mainly live in the northern part of the delta (Larson, 1992).

The fieldwork was conducted in Sepopa among the Bayeyi for three months in 2011 and 2013. Through interactions with the local people, the researcher developed a deep and intuitive understanding of the Bayeyi people. The relationship between the Bayeyi and the Okavango Delta has undergone dramatic changes as Botswana has developed into a modern democratic state. In this paper, I will describe the process of transition in the lifestyles and culture of the Bayeyi, compare the differences between the traditional and modern societies, and provide suggestions for future improvement.

### **Research methods**

This study applied anthropological approaches to the research. The researcher selected field sites, lived with the local people, and participated in their daily lives to experience their ways of life. The researcher recorded people's conversations on different issues. In addition, interviews were conducted with 30 households in Sepopa where the Bayeyi live.

### **The traditional lifestyle of the Bayeyi**

In early times, the Bayeyi had various living strategies, which mainly included hunting, fishing, animal rearing, and fruit gathering. They also performed some daily necessities, such as straw plaiting, boating, and pottery. Their language is unique in that it incorporates numerous San words along with their clicks (Larson, 1992). They have traditional practices in the arts of singing and dancing, which have been passed through the generations.

The Bayeyi are very skilled in fishing because they live near rivers. They fish for more than 30 kinds of edible fish, and the best season for fishing is during April and May. Farming skills were undeveloped in early times when the Bayeyi could only use very simple tools, such as hoes, to cultivate very small areas, which could barely feed their families. People normally planted in October and December and harvested in May.

The Bayeyi begin their hunting and gathering activities after the harvest season, which is also the period after the rainy season each year. They use various traps to hunt along with spears, bows and arrows, and swords. A successful hunter must be knowledgeable about animals; he must be able to identify an animal's age, distance, and direction by its footprints. Hunters shoot their prey with poisonous darts and follow them until they drop; a single hunt can span several days.

Bayeyi women mainly cultivate food and collect wild fruits. They are especially good at basketry. Botswana basketry is world famous and is mainly produced by the Bayeyi and Hambukushu people, who live near the Okavango Delta in Botswana. Both are known for their strong skills in basketry. Women can be found sitting under trees in their yard making baskets with palm tree leaves. The baskets are of different sizes; the big ones are for keeping food, while the small ones are for other daily uses.

### **The modernization of the Okavango Delta**

A modern democratic governing system was established after Botswana's independence. The Government Land Board of Botswana was founded in 1970, after which the land and resources in the Okavango Delta were managed by the central government. This caused traditional chiefs to lose ownership or management of land and resources. After the Okavango Natural Reserve was established, the local people in or around it could not fish as before, nor could they cultivate or allow their animals to graze. To some degree, the government forced the Bayeyi to abandon their traditional lifestyles to protect the natural resources and animals in the natural reserve for the purpose of attracting tourists.

The researcher revisited Sepopa village in July and August 2013 and administered



questionnaires in 30 households. Most villagers were still subsisting mainly on farming and animal grazing. A small number of educated people could work in schools, clinics, and other civil service offices. Most, however, worked as cooks, nurses, and cleaners, earning relatively little income. Villagers complained that after hunting was banned by the government, farms and cattle were frequently destroyed by wild animals. The government developed the natural resources of the Okavango Delta to boost tourism and income, but the local people gained very little from it; they were left behind in poverty.

### **Threats to traditions in modern society: Loss of language and culture**

After independence, Botswana, under the influence of its former colonial ruler the United Kingdom, tried to establish a modern state with a single language, culture, and nation (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2008). Botswana is essentially a country of the Batswana people who speak the Tswana language. *Botswana* means “country for the Batswana people.” The Tswana language is the mother tongue of the Batswana. In Botswana, therefore, the “nation” refers to the social group that speaks Tswana as its mother tongue; this concept was constructed by the country and has a strong political meaning. There are eight tribes in Botswana: Ngwato, Kwena, Ngwaketse, Tawana, Kgatla, Lete, Rolong, and Tlokwa. These tribes are named after their chiefs and have mixed blood relationships and similar languages, cultures, and customs (Tlou & Campbell, 1997). At the government level, Botswana established a presidential cabinet system on the one hand while retaining a traditional chieftain system on the other. In local society, the eight chiefs are still administrators and are also the subordinate court presidents holding executive and judicial powers under customary law.

Historically, the Okavango Delta area was administrated by the Tawana tribe (Kamanakao Association, 2009). Since independence, the Bayeyi have been governed by the Tawana, even though the Bayeyi have their own chiefs or headmen in their villages. The most notable difference between these two tribes is that the Bayeyi are matriarchal—that is, their lineage, ancestry, and surname are inherited from their mothers—but the situation is different in the subordinate courts, which are run by the Tawana tribe.

With the changes in society, only people over 40 still speak the Bayeyi language. Most young people, especially students, do not speak Bayeyi in daily life. Some can understand it but are unable to speak it; young people have lost the ability to use the language of their own tribe. One reason is that only students speaking Tswana could study without problems in the primary schools. In Botswana, primary schools teach in Tswana up through the third grade and in English from grade four onward. Tswana and English are the country’s official languages. Children from minor tribes

have to learn these languages, and their parents have to communicate with them in these languages in everyday life. Modern education forces children to abandon their own language and their traditional culture (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2008). Bayeyi students are learning the Tswana language and also Tswana music, dance, and customs. Bayeyi cultural traditions are slowly vanishing.

### **Conclusion**

People living around the Okavango Delta are at a crossroads. On the one hand, they must unite to protect their language and culture; on the other hand, they have to adapt to changes in society. I believe a certain portion of the benefits obtained from the rich natural resources of the Okavango Delta should be used to improve the lives of local people. Further, the local people need to strengthen themselves through modern education so they can play a bigger role in the decision-making process for local area development. A more rational attitude will be more effective in addressing the problems caused by modernization and will be more tolerable to people of different ethnic groups in achieving sustainable development.

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# HALF-OPEN DOOR TO AFRICA: CHINESE AND JAPANESE MIGRANTS IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY SOUTH AFRICA

*Meyu Yamamoto: Department of Sociology, Kyoto University*

## **Introduction**

In recent years, amid the increased presence of China and Chinese residents in South Africa, growing attention has been paid to Asian communities in South Africa. Historically, their existence has had considerable influence on South African immigration and racial policies. For example, Park (2008a) notes that the Mines and Works Act of 1903 prevented Chinese laborers from rising to skilled jobs, and this was the first “color bar” in South Africa’s history. He states that, “In the history of racist legislation in South Africa, it is worth noting that the first industrial color bars were framed specifically to exclude Chinese from skilled occupations” (Park, 2008a, p. 13).

The Japanese, on the other hand, comprised an ethnic/racial group whose position was ambiguous in “white” South Africa. Under the Immigrants’ Regulation Act of 1913, the Japanese were named among people prohibited from emigrating to the country. However, they were later removed from this list because the Union of South Africa needed to allow Japanese trading firm representatives and buyers into the country to expand the exportation of wool. This action can be considered the beginning of the special treatment of “eminent visitors” or “honorary whites”—that is, the special treatment afforded nonwhite inhabitants staying in South Africa for business or diplomatic reasons during apartheid. Thus, the presence of both Chinese and Japanese people had an impact on South African racial policy.

There is another reason for the recent increased interest in inhabitants of Asian descent in South Africa. In 2008, people of Chinese descent who had been residing in South Africa since the apartheid regime were officially recognized by the Pretoria High Court as “black people”—that is, as people who were historically disadvantaged. Chinese South Africans were initially excluded from the affirmative action policies that ensued in the wake of democratization, such as the Black Economic Empowerment Act. However, the Chinese Association of South Africa (CASA), an organization for inhabitants of Chinese descent, insisted that they had a legitimate right to this type of redress and sought the court’s judgment (Park, 2008b). Following the 2008 judgment of the High Court, some black business and professional organizations in South Africa objected to the High Court’s ruling defining Chinese South Africans as black people. These objections, and a series of reports that accompanied them, revealed that most South Africans had little knowledge regarding the existence and history of Chinese or Japanese communities in their country.

This study aims to illustrate how Chinese and Japanese migrants were treated in twentieth-century South Africa and how they experienced the white supremacist society at that time. Focusing on the strategies introduced by Asians for obtaining better treatment, this study also enables us to explore how Asian negotiation, adaptation, and resistance affected the racial boundaries of South African immigration policies.

### **Japanese and Chinese communities before apartheid**

Here, I will focus on the period from the beginning of the twentieth century when immigrant groups from China began to move to South Africa to the mid twentieth century when the apartheid system began. I will outline the history of the Chinese and Japanese communities, including changes in their treatment, in South Africa.

### **From the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries**

In the early twentieth century, under an agreement between South Africa and the Qing Dynasty, more than 60,000 people were “imported” into South Africa to work in the mines as indentured laborers. The impetus for this agreement was the South African War (1899–1902), during which the number of black workers who were essential to South Africa’s mining industry decreased (Harris, 2006). Most of the Chinese workers were repatriated to their home country upon completing the contract, while a small number of free immigrants stayed in South Africa for a longer period of time. These were self-employed merchants who went to South Africa dreaming of a triumphant return to their home countries with wealth, following the discovery of gold in South Africa in 1886. These were the ancestors of today’s Chinese South Africans. The sudden appearance of a large number of Chinese workers in the mining towns scared the white residents. In addition, exaggerated reports of crimes led to an increase in anti-Chinese sentiment.

The existence of Japanese people in South Africa first came to light at the beginning of the twentieth century. Documentation by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan shows that only 10 Japanese resided in South Africa in 1910. Most lived in Cape Town. Eight were connected with Mikado Shōkai, an art store in the Cape Town city center that was opened by Komahei Furuya. The store was well known among white enthusiasts of Oriental art (Aoki, 2000). Among the Japanese residents were also several *kayayuki-san*: Japanese women who worked as prostitutes. Most of them seem to have escaped to South Africa via Southeast Asia.

## **The Immigrants' Regulation Act**

South Africa enacted the Immigrants' Regulation Act in 1913 to control emigration from India. Both Japanese and Chinese were listed as "prohibited migrants" under this law, and entry restrictions for "Asiatics" were increased on the basis of this law.

After the enactment of the Immigrants' Regulation Act, Japan reached agreements with South Africa in 1915, 1921, and 1922 (Debates of the House of Assembly, 1931,p. 1129–1132; *The Star*, March 5, 1931). According to South African parliament records, a total of 164 Japanese entered South Africa between 1915 and 1931. Most visited for business purposes; 76 were merchants, and 18 were buyers of commodities such as wool (Debates of the House of Assembly, 1931,p. 1545–1546). On the other hand, the Chinese population at that time totaled 1,905, as noted in the 1911 census (Yap & Man, 1996,p.177).

In July 1926, a Japanese diplomat residing in Cape Town sent a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan entitled "The improvement of the position of the Japanese in South Africa" (MOFA diplomatic record J.1.1.0.J/X1-B6). According to this document, South Africa's minister of the interior had presented some conditions for excluding the Japanese from the prohibited immigrants defined by the Immigrants' Regulation Act. Considering the minister's intention, he proposed the following as policy that should be followed by Japan:

1. Since South Africa fears the immigration of laborers, travelers will be limited to government officials, merchants, company employees, their wives and children, students, and tourists.
2. Because anti-Japanese tendencies are growing in South Africa, the government does not welcome the permanent residency of the Japanese people. Therefore, the maximum length of five years per stay, which has been in place until now, will be used, with the possibility of one- to two-year extensions and reentry after departing the country.

From this document, it appears that the intention of the South African government was to control Japanese labor migrants and their permanent residency in the country.

In contrast, comparing the position of the Chinese with that of Indians in 1914, South Africa's minister claimed that it was "obviously impossible to give to Chinese any greater rights, either of immigration or in other directions...than are accorded to His Majesty's Indian subjects" (Yap & Man, 1996, p. 176).

### **Gentlemen's agreement**

The negotiations were fruitful, and finally in 1930, an agreement was reached between the Japanese Consul and the Union of South Africa (“Notes exchanged between the Union Government and the Japanese Consul in the Union concerning Japanese Immigration into South Africa,” February 1931, [A1-31]). According to this agreement, Japanese tourists, researchers, merchants, and their families were permitted to enter the country. At the same time, however, it was stipulated that they were not allowed to take up residence within the Orange Free State, and any children born to them while they were in the Union of South Africa could not receive South African citizenship. The number of Japanese nationals in the country at this time, excluding members of the Consul, was 14, three of whom had entered South Africa prior to the Immigrants’ Regulation Act and had acquired permanent residency (Debates of the House of Assembly, 1931, p.1545–1546).

Part of the reason for South Africa’s concession in the form of the agreement can be found in the suffering the country experienced during the Great Depression of the preceding year. The South African economy was under pressure to develop new markets for its wool trade. However, government policies on the status of the Japanese generated negative attitudes within South African society. Newspaper articles referred to the agreement as the “Yellow Peril Agreement” (*Rand Daily Mail*, March 4, 1931), fanning the crisis in South African society. Among the reasons for opposition to the agreement were claims that special exceptions should not be accepted for the sake of other Asians; there was also a fear that an influx of inexpensive Japanese products would hurt local industry. The minister of the interior countered these objections by stating that Japan was a client who would bring wealth to South Africa’s wool industry (Debates of the House of Assembly, 1931,p. 1128).

### **World War II and after**

As Japan started invading China in the 1930s, the South African government’s attitude toward Japan hardened. Yamazaki commented, “Problems about races must never be forgotten, even in your dreams, ever since the Manchurian Incident, the seriousness of the problem between the Japanese and the Westerners has been growing beyond all imagination” (*Asahi Shinbun*, July 5, 1933). In 1937, Japan and South Africa signed a formal diplomatic relations agreement, and Japan established a legation in Pretoria. South Africa also planned to open an embassy in Tokyo, but the plan was terminated following the Marco Polo Bridge Incident. Relations between the two countries rapidly went cold when Japan entered into a Tripartite Pact with Germany and Italy

(Osada, 2002, p. 42–43). In 1941, on the eve of the outbreak of the Pacific War, nearly all Japanese nationals residing in South Africa were repatriated to Japan.

Japanese imperialism and World War II also had a substantial impact on the Chinese community in South Africa. Japan's invasion to China forced many Chinese to leave the mainland. As a result, South Africa received more Chinese migrants. When South Africa participated in World War II, China was regarded as an ally, and South Africa's white leaders actively accepted the Chinese. The Chinese were optimistic and expected to obtain a great degree of freedom and equality after the war. However, contrary to their expectations, after the National Party took power in 1948, racial inequality began to expand under the apartheid policy.

### **Japanese community during the apartheid period**

Next, I will describe the Japanese community and its experiences during the apartheid period.

In 1950, South Africa enacted both the Population Registration Act and the Group Areas Act; however, neither mentioned the Japanese. In 1961, South Africa's minister of the interior, de Klerk, while answering a question in Parliament, stated, "The Japanese are regarded and treated as members of the white group" (Debates of the House of Assembly, 1961, p.4532). In May 1962, the minister of the interior again issued a statement in Parliament regarding the treatment of the Japanese. The statement confirmed the following points: (1) the government recognized the 50 nonpermanent Japanese residents in South Africa; (2) the Japanese were residing in various areas in South Africa, and they had never formed a settled community; (3) they were allowed to live in the white residential areas; and (4) foreigners were allowed to stay in the white residential areas for business or diplomatic purposes as eminent visitors, regardless of the color of their skin (Debates of the House of Assembly, 1962, p. 4770).

At that time, under the apartheid policy, expatriates who were sent to South Africa by their companies formed the core of the Japanese community. In 1962, only 50 Japanese resided in South Africa. Although this number increased to 450–700 in the first half of the 1970s and to 600–700 in the first half of the 1980s, the Japanese community existed on an incredibly small scale.

### **Honorary whiteness**

As explained by the minister of the interior in the early 1960s, Japanese expatriates were treated as whites only in terms of their residence status; thus, they were often placed in ambivalent situations. A Japanese businessperson wrote his memories in a newsletter to the Nippon Club of South Africa concerning his experience with South African Airways. According to his account, despite his

“honorary white” identity, he was sometimes classified as nonwhite:

*On an airplane, I asked a cabin attendant, “Do you see where I am sitting?” She replied, “Yes, is there something wrong with it?” I answered, “Look! The 10 rows in front of my seat are all empty, but the last five rows are crammed with people.” I asked, “Is this seating based on racial discrimination?” The cabin attendant looked at my ticket and said, “Please enjoy the flight in this seat.” She added, “All the front seats have been reserved.” I said, “I’m Japanese. I am an honorary white!”*

This Japanese businessperson was angry to be categorized as “nonwhite” with regard to seating on the plane. Although he expressed objections against racism, he might be regarded as “almost the same but not white” with his desire to imitate the colonizer, as described by Bhabha (1994) with his concept of *mimicry*.

### **The Chinese community during apartheid**

Now, I will describe the Chinese community during apartheid with reference to pioneering research by Yap and Man, and Park.

After immigration was restricted by the Immigrants’ Regulation Act of 1913, Chinese immigrants began to settle in South Africa. In 1936, more than 1,000 Chinese people were born in South Africa. In 1946, the number of Chinese born in South Africa increased, exceeding the number of South African Chinese residents who were born in China. They gradually began to shift from a sojourner community to a settler community (Park, 2008a).

Around 1950, racist laws were passed one after another. Among these laws were the Population Registration Act and the Group Areas Act, which had a major impact on the lives of the Chinese. The Population Registration Act divided people into two groups: “European” and “Non-European.” Within the “Non-European” group, people were further divided into “Native” (later, Bantu, Africans, and blacks), “Indian,” and “Colored” (people who are neither European nor Native, including mixed race, Griqua, Malay, and Chinese). The Group Areas Act segregated the residential areas for different races. This became a major barrier for the Chinese because they not only worked as merchants but also valued their children’s education.

In 1962, when the minister of the interior explained the position of the Japanese in a speech, he also mentioned the position of the Chinese, stating, “In the case of Indians and Chinese, the position is quite different from that of the Japanese. The Chinese, who constitute a very



peace-loving community of high standing, nevertheless consist of more than 6,000 persons who are mainly located in a few centers as settled communities” (Debates of the House of Assembly, 1962, p. 4770). He emphasized that there were only 50 Japanese people, and they were not permanent residents, whereas there were 6,000 Chinese people.

The Japanese who lived in South Africa were mainly business expatriates. In comparison, what were the characteristics of the Chinese community at that time? According to Park (2008a), Chinese who were born in the 1920s and 1930s either managed family-based retail stores (such as clothing and grocery stores) or engaged in agriculture. By contrast, some people who were born in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s began to obtain college degrees. For these reasons, the Chinese in the 1960s have been considered “middleman minorities” (Blalock, 1967) in migration research. In other words, most of them were minorities who managed small family-based trading companies and retail stores.

### **Ambiguous position**

Throughout the apartheid era, the Chinese people rarely took part in the armed struggles against it. This is because the Chinese believed that the best way to break the racial barrier was to let the white society know that they too were human by closing the distance between the segregated societies through communication. The Chinese embassy in Pretoria also made a great effort to improve the standing of the Chinese community. The fact that the Chinese embassy supported the local Chinese community, who were South African born Chinese and not Chinese citizens is noteworthy.

A Chinese man named David Song was “recognized as an honorary white by other members of the society” and thus was reclassified in 1962 as a member of the “whites” group for the first time. However, his family members remained nonwhites and hence could not live with Mr. Song in his house.

In the mid-1970s, Taiwan and South Africa, both of whom had been isolated from the international community, deepened their relationship. In 1976, diplomatic relations between the two countries rose to the ambassador level. Trade increased and the two became important trading partners. The good relationship between Taiwan and South Africa led to an improvement in the position of the Chinese (Park, 2008a, p. 42).

The treatment of the Chinese improved, and in 1971, it became possible for them to purchase land in white residential areas, providing the local residents agreed. In 1985, they were officially allowed to have land ownership in white areas. According to the Human Science Research Council, in the late 1970s, most whites recognized Chinese residents as people similar to whites.

### **Comparison with the Japanese and their influence**

In 1962, the minister of the interior de Klerk mentioned the position of the Japanese in a speech, citing the Chinese as an example. Subsequently, *The Star* published an article with photographs focusing on the comparison between the positions of the Japanese and Chinese. There were captions beneath the photographs: “A Chinese woman, classified as ‘Colored’ in South Africa,” below the left photo and “A Japanese woman, classified as ‘Honorary White’ in South Africa,” below the right (*The Star*, February 8, 1962).

Apart from rare exceptions, there was no personal contact between the local Chinese and Japanese communities. However, soon after the statement regarding the treatment of the Japanese was issued by the minister in the 1961 and 1962, this ambiguity of the apartheid policy was target of many newspapers and caricature. Every time the news that the Japanese were admitted to be allowed entrance to white districts was seen in newspapers and aired on the radio, many Chinese felt inevitably humiliated. At the same time, the Chinese took advantage of the fact that whites could not distinguish between Chinese and Japanese and gradually began to enter whites-only facilities. A Chinese man recalled one such situation. When he was stopped at the entrance of a whites-only cinema, he said, “I am Japanese” and was allowed to enter (Park, 2008a, p. 42). Similar to this, since it was difficult to distinguish between Japanese and Chinese, whites-only public facilities and public transportation in different areas gradually began to accept Chinese.

### **Summary**

In South Africa, two important differences can be found between Chinese and Japanese communities. First, the Japanese were foreigners staying in South Africa temporarily, while the Chinese were South Africans born in that country. The Japanese were characterized by high mobility and an orientation toward nonpermanent residency. The Chinese, as South Africans, were subjected to various disadvantages under the racist system as they fought for even slight improvements in their conditions. Second, the lives and status of the Japanese expatriates were largely protected by their companies and the government, whereas until the 1960s the Chinese were more similar to the people known as “middleman minorities,” engaged in family businesses such as small trading companies and retail stores.

At the same time, there are similarities between the two groups. Both were often vulnerable—although they were more successful than other nonwhites in South Africa—not only because they were small in number but also because they were likely to be singled out for hostility.

The Japanese faced hostility around 1930, before the agreement was made regarding Japanese emigration to South Africa. The Chinese generated negative attitudes in 2008 when they became officially recognized as a historically disadvantaged group. In other words, both groups became the focus of criticism when they were regarded as a threat to the dominant class in South Africa.

Though the number of people with East Asian origins remained very small, they had a certain impact on the country's immigration and racial policies. To clarify the nature of that impact, further investigation is required into the experiences of these communities in South Africa.

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# FACTORS INFLUENCING BUSINESS FRICTIONS BETWEEN CHINESE MERCHANTS AND THEIR LOCAL WORKERS IN BOTSWANA

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## **Introduction: Research background**

The presence of Chinese people in Africa has become a hot research topic. The “China shop,”<sup>1</sup> regarded as the face of China, has played a crucial role in shaping Sino–Africa relations (Kalusopa, 2009; Dobler, 2009; Carling & Haugen, 2005). Not many Chinese people are familiar with the country of Botswana. It is surprising, then, that since the 1990s Chinese companies and merchants have been rushing into Botswana to seek business opportunities. China shops have increased in number and have expanded from the cities to the rural areas in Botswana. The China shop boom has created jobs for Botswana citizens and has lowered the cost of provisions for the daily needs of local people (Kalusopa, 2009). In recent years, however, the shops have not only been criticized for flooding the local market and for their conflicts with local people regarding labor and service issues, but have also faced strong regulations in an increasingly hostile climate.

Chinese merchants typically use family chains to expand their businesses; through this process, African markets rapidly become filled with China shops. This phenomenon immediately catches the attention of local governments, who then regulate the development of China shops to protect local business while allowing low-income consumers to benefit from such shops (Tanga, 2009).

These regulations prompt Chinese merchants to use various strategies to maintain their profit margins, such as tax evasion and manipulating connections with authorities (Carling & Haugen, 2005; Dobler, 2009). Extending business hours and paying low wages to local employees are also frequently mentioned as employment issues in China shops (Kalusopa, 2009). As such, the local regulations seem ineffective in controlling China shops. The more regulations are put into effect, the more Chinese merchants find loopholes, thus causing deteriorated relations between Chinese merchants and the local society.

This paper analyzes the relationship between trade frictions and Chinese merchants’ investment plans in Botswana. After introducing the general situation of China shops, the

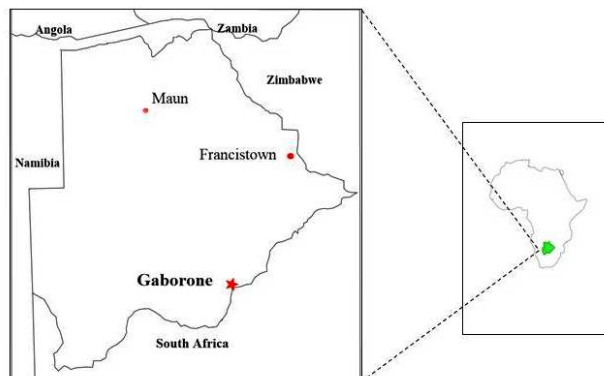
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<sup>1</sup> The term is used in Botswana, both by locals and Chinese merchants themselves, to refer to shops owned by Chinese people that sell merchandise made in China. In Botswana, 99% of such shops are owned by Chinese (Chinese immigrants).

investment plans of Chinese merchants, and the movement of China shops due to tightening regulations, the researcher explores the reasons behind the growing frictions in employment and trade relations between Chinese merchants and local societies. The author argues that Chinese merchants' investment plans and ambitions have direct influence on their business strategies, and the ever-tightening trade regulations play a crucial role in disturbing the embedment of Chinese businesses in local societies.

### **Overview of the research site**

Botswana is a landlocked country in Southern Africa (Map 1) with a population of 2,127,825(CIA, 2013). Gaborone is the capital of Botswana, with one-tenth of the country's population. Research data were collected from China shops located in shopping malls in Gaborone. The sites were selected to gain insight into China shop management and to understand the complexity of the relationships between Chinese and local people.



Map 1. Botswana

According to Gaotlhobogwe (2009), there is at least one China shop in every town in Botswana. The China shops in Gaborone are subject to greater regulations and trade polices than those in rural areas. In Gaborone, China retail shops are mainly found in shopping malls and storefronts. There are around 2,000 Chinese merchants in Botswana (Akhidenor, 2013). According to researcher's estimation, there are 80–100 China shops in Gaborone, and in most shops, there are one to two Chinese employer(s) and one to three local assistant(s).

### **Research methods**

Data were collected from a sample of 60 China shops in Gaborone from November 2011 to January

2012 and from September 2013 to November 2013. A qualitative anthropological approach was used where the researcher investigated interpersonal relationships, business strategies, business development processes, and trade policy changes concerning China shops. Mandarin Chinese was used during the interviews with Chinese merchants, and English was used when interviewing local people. Informal and in-depth interviews were conducted with Chinese merchants, and participant observation was mainly conducted in China shops by observing the interactions between Chinese merchants and local people and helping Chinese arrange goods during busy periods.

## Results

### Relations

The relationships between Chinese merchants and local people are shown in Figure 1. The “Chinese retailer” was chosen as the central character in the figure. The shadow covering “Chinese retailer,” “Chinese employee,” and “Local assistant” represents the relations inside retail China shops: Chinese retailers who own China shops invite their relatives from China to watch their shops

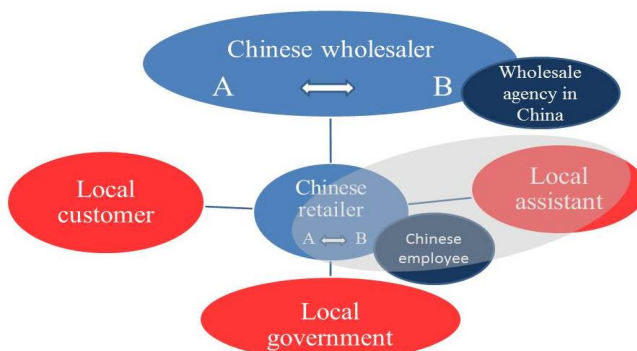


Figure 1. Relationships

as employees, and they are also required by local government to hire local people as assistants.

Chinese wholesalers are the ones who import Chinese merchandise from China through an agency or family members back in China and then distribute it to Chinese retailers who operate China shops. Local customers, especially low-income people, are the main customers who rely on China shops. The interaction between local government and Chinese retailers mainly concerns tax and regulation issues.

### Frictions

Lately, there have been frictions at various levels around China shops. Due to growing business

competition, China shops rival each other. Price wars are very common among China shops. However, when local governments issue strict regulations intended to drive out Chinese businesses, Chinese merchants tend to unite to maintain the momentum of the Chinese community.

The frictions inside of China shops mainly stem from communication problems and issues between Chinese employers and local assistants. Most Chinese employers only manage to acquire a simple English vocabulary, which is considered sufficient for running a China shop. Proper expressions and nuances are, therefore, beyond their abilities. As a result, miscommunication is common between Chinese employers and local assistants. Chinese merchants often complain about theft and truancy by local assistants, which hampers the development of trusting relationships. On the other hand, Chinese merchants are blamed for extending business hours and paying minimum wages to local assistants (Bule, E 2009). Chinese merchants consider such strategies necessary for survival in a competitive business environment; however, these tactics also generate complaints from local assistants and attract the attention of local government.

In recent years, local governments have issued many regulations to control China shops, leading to declining profits. To maintain profit margins, some Chinese merchants try to evade taxes or sell brand replicas. Such practices only bring stricter regulations from local governments and create a bad reputation for the Chinese community in Botswana. At the same time, the local society complains about the market saturation caused by the spread of China shops and the adverse effect on local business caused by the fierce price wars among Chinese merchants.

Despite the benefits China shops bring to local societies, the frictions they cause receive more attention, thus damaging their reputation and inviting tighter regulations.

### ***Ambitions and plans of Chinese merchants***

The Chinese merchants who came to Botswana in the early 1990s came as adventurers; however, the latecomers came through chain migration. The chain migration system among Chinese merchants observed in Botswana is very similar to the descriptions in other African countries, such as South Africa, Namibia, and Cape Verde (Larabee, 2008; Dobler, 2009; Carling & Haugen, 2005). When it comes to retail business, once the pioneers, usually men, settle and have stable businesses, they invite their wives and children to Botswana. When they open their second shops, they invite their trustworthy relatives and friends to help. In most cases, their relatives and friends hope to have shops of their own in the future. Several years later, therefore, when sufficient resources and experience are gained, they open shops of their own. Thus, chain migration not only multiplies the number of Chinese migrants but also increases the number of China retail shops.

Due to increased regulations and fierce competition in recent years, fewer people want to open retail shops in Botswana. Even those who already work as employees in China shops are contemplating going back to China. Because of the declining profit margins, shop owners, despite lacking Chinese employees, hesitate to invite their relatives or friends to become involved in such unfavorable market conditions. Even some pioneer Chinese merchants who have obtained Botswana citizenship are thinking of going back to China, considering that their citizenship can only benefit their current business but not their entire life plan.

In short, Chinese merchants reside in Botswana mostly for business purposes, with little tendency toward immigration; even their business plans tend to be short term due to the ever-changing regulations and falling profit margins.

***Transition process of China shops***

In the late 1990s and early 2000 before foreigners were allowed to open shops, Chinese merchants set up street stalls near shopping malls to sell Chinese merchandise. Within 10 years of the government granting Chinese merchants permission to open shops in the shopping malls, shops had spread to every town in Botswana.

During this 10-year development process, the number of shops grew rapidly, and the quality of merchandise improved; however, there were no obvious management changes until 2013. Because of the lack of trust between Chinese employers and local assistants, the rule in China shops was that “no cash should be touched by local assistants.” However, in 2013 the local government stopped issuing work permits.

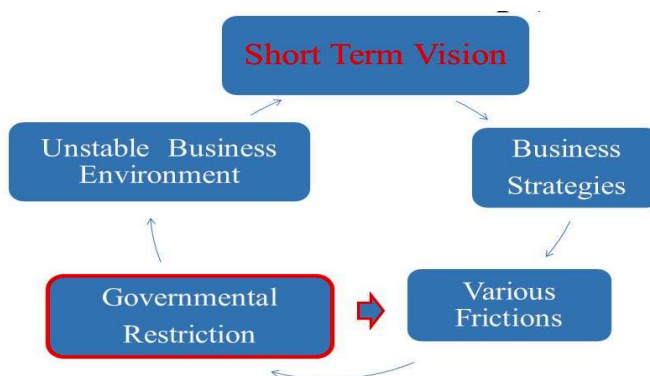


Figure 2. Vicious Circle

This caused Chinese employers to hand the management of their shops over to the local assistants.



Unfortunately, this did not restore trust between Chinese employers and local assistants. Some Chinese merchants were so anxious about their business conditions that they closed their shops and went back to China. The ones who remained either started to look for business opportunities in other countries or sought more loopholes to improve their profits in the short term.

### **Discussion**

Most Chinese merchants go to Botswana for business, and few intend to settle. Consequently, obtaining citizenship is considered nothing more than a business strategy. Therefore, their business strategies have a short-term pattern as they try to keep investment low while maximizing profits. Such short-term plans can be linked to their limited interest in developing language skills and their habit of paying low wages to local assistants (Kalusopa, 2009). Further, such motives direct Chinese merchants to seek loopholes in regulations, extend business hours, and even spread shops around the country (Carling & Haugen, 2005). Thus, frictions at different levels become obvious in the development of Chinese business. Although the Botswana government has issued more and more restrictions to control Chinese business, the results did not turn out as expected. Such regulations corner Chinese businesses and create an unstable business environment rather than directing them toward a better business model.

As seen in the vicious circle (Figure 2), frictions are rooted in the short-term vision of Chinese merchants, and government regulations only reinforce such an investment vision, failing to reduce frictions.

### **Conclusion**

The short-term investment vision of Chinese merchants could be the factor that produces friction in employment and trade relations. This vision has influenced business strategies, resulting in a growing bad reputation in recent years. While local governments have enacted regulations to direct and control Chinese businesses, such regulations have created an unstable business environment, consequently strengthening short-term investment plans. This has created various problems and has negatively influenced local people's perceptions of Chinese shops and goods.

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# THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL TRANSITION ON BOTSWANA: MATHEMATICS EDUCATION (TEACHING AND LEARNING) AS A VEHICLE FOR SOCIAL TRANSITION

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## **Introduction**

The world is becoming more globalized and homogenous in various ways. As a result, developing countries find themselves caught up in these changes. Change (transition) can have an effect on the socialization of citizens. It is the duty of the respective governments to ensure that their citizens are affected positively by social transition and to reduce the negative effects. Education is one tool that is used to empower people so they can cope with transition. The teaching and learning of mathematics can contribute to the social transition of a country because it equips individuals and communities with skills to survive in an ever-changing environment. The skills that the society is empowered with include analytical skills, problem-solving skills, and investigative skills. These skills are needed in modernized societies in which quantitative skills are the order of the day.

With the realization that dependency on agriculture and manufacturing alone is not sufficient, there is now a drive toward knowledge-based economies. Botswana adapted such a drive to augment its existing agricultural and manufacturing sectors (Republic of Botswana, 2009). This transition calls for the development of human resources.

To cope with social transition, Botswana has implemented policies and strategies to address the needs of its citizens. These policies include the Revised National Education Policy, Vision 2016, and the National Human Resource Development Strategy. Through these policies, the government empowers its citizens with relevant education and skills so they are able to cope with social transition. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate how the teaching and learning of mathematics and geometry contribute to social transition.

## **Background**

The issue of performance in mathematics dates back many years. This is because of the significant role mathematics plays in our lives. Mathematics is at the heart of every activity we engage in, be it formal or informal. As rightly indicated by Maliki, Ngban, and Ibu (2009) mathematics is increasingly being used in science, technology, and industry—hence its importance for any developing country. This interrelationship between mathematics and development “is more related to the scientific and technological facets of man’s world more than any other aspect as it occurs and re-occurs in the physical and natural sciences” (Maliki, Ngban, & Ibu, 2009, p. 131). As such, the

importance of performance in mathematics cannot be overstated. This issue will always be at the heart of all governments, especially in developing countries like Botswana. This is because such countries still need personnel in science-related careers where a solid mathematics background—especially in geometry—is a must. Areas such as mechanics, construction, and surveying make extensive use of geometry.

Mathematical activity is inherent in all cultures. Its study enhances the knowledge of the learners and equips them with skills to carry out mathematics-related activities that occur in daily life. These activities include estimations, calculations, measures, and budgeting. Furthermore, they are equipped with skills such as problem solving, analysis, and inquiry. These skills are needed in adult life to cope with the ever-changing environments they find themselves in. Mathematics also “facilitates understanding of and acquisition of modern techniques and technologies that are needed in managing change” (Republic of Botswana, 1996, p.1). In Botswana, the study of mathematics is compulsory for all students at both the primary and secondary school levels (Republic of Botswana, 2010, p.1996). Learning mathematics is a tool that is being used to equip citizens with relevant knowledge and skills as they experience transition within their communities.

The key drivers of the Botswana economy have been the mining sector, tourism, and economic incentives (Republic of Botswana, 1996). Upon reflection, the Botswana government realized that as the country moves into the twenty-first century, there is a need to develop a highly skilled labor force to meet an ever-changing environment that calls for more quantitative skills. This means developing a knowledge-based economy to augment the existing agricultural and manufacturing sectors. For this to be successful there should be an educational system that promotes the development of specialized skills like mathematics and science. The Botswana government recognizes the need for good performance in mathematics and science as stipulated by the Revised National Policy on Education (RNEP) of 1994. A developing country needs a workforce well equipped in mathematics and science-related fields. This means there is a need to ensure that students are well grounded in mathematics from a very early stage.

The Botswana Examination Council (2012) indicates that student performance in mathematics continues to decline at both the primary and secondary school levels. The majority of secondary school students are failing to reach the minimum grade of at least a C. This will have a negative impact on the development of a knowledge-based economy because secondary school graduates are the ones who have to go for tertiary education for specialized training. Moreover, Botswana students showed extremely poor performance in three international comparative studies: Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) (2003, 2007, 2011). On the other

hand, students from Asia top the world in these studies (Table 1). Similarly, in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009 and 2012, the top-performing countries in mathematics were also in Asia (Table 2). These results are indicative of a strikingly poor level of mathematical competency in Botswana.

**Table 1. TIMSS mathematics average scale scores, 2003–2011**

Year	Average scale score					
	Botswana	Chinese Taipei	Republic of Korea	Singapore	Hong Kong SAR	Japan
2011	397 (2.5)	609 (3.2)	613 (2.9)	611 (3.8)	586 (3.8)	570 (2.6)
2007	364 (2.3)	598 (4.5)	597 (2.7)	593 (3.8)	572 (5.8)	570 (2.4)
2003	366 (2.6)	585 (4.6)	589 (2.2)	605 (3.6)	586 (3.3)	570 (2.1)

Adapted from Mullis et al., 2004, 2008, 2012

**Table 2. PISA 2012 and 2009 mathematics results**

Year	2012	Year	2009
OECD average	494	OECD average	496
1. Shanghai-China	613	1. Shanghai-China	600
2. Singapore	573	2. Singapore	562
3. Hong Kong-China	561	3. Hong Kong-China	555
4. Chinese Taipei	560	4. Korea	546
5. Korea	554	5. Finland	541

Adapted from PISA 2012, 2009

TIMSS 2003, 2007, and 2011 indicate that out of five (in 2003) and four (in 2007 and 2011) mathematical areas assessed, students in Botswana showed the weakest performance in geometry, with an average of 335 (3.9), 324.55 (3.18), and 381 (3.0) for 2003, 2007, and 2011, respectively. These results are corroborated by the Teacher Education and Development Study in Mathematics (Tatoo et al., 2012), where Botswana student teachers were compared with other student teachers from 16 countries. The Botswana student teachers performed very poorly on questions that dealt with geometry. The country's students in junior secondary schools are being taught by teachers with

low competency in geometry. Ball, Hill, and Bass (2005) note that teachers' knowledge of mathematics is one of the most important factors affecting student achievement. It is necessary, therefore, to explore the problems students and teachers encounter in the teaching and learning of geometry.

Furthermore, Botswana students performed very poorly in the mathematics cognitive domain for TIMSS 2007 and 2011 (Table 3). In the domain of reasoning, the average achievement could not be accurately estimated in the TIMSS 2007, whereas in the TIMSS 2011 it was 1 (1.2). This is not a good state of affairs since the study of geometry needs students who can think "outside the box." Geometry as a subject has many abstract questions and therefore requires learners who operate mostly at the level of reasoning in the cognitive domains.

**Table 3. Botswana students' average achievements in the mathematics cognitive domains, 2011 and 2007**

Year	Average scale scores for mathematics cognitive domains		
	Knowing	Applying	Reasoning
2011	404 (2.6)	383 (2.8)	1 (1.2)
2007	376 (2.1)	351 (2.6)	++
TIMSS scale avg.	500	500	500

Adapted from TIMSS 2007, 2011 (Mullis et al., 2012)

N.B. ++ average achievement could not be accurately estimated

Poor performance in geometry is a major concern since it is foundational in areas that the country wants its students to take up careers in—such as engineering, construction, astronomy, surveying, mechanics, finance, and technology. This does not augur well for the pillar of an "Innovative and Prosperous Nation" as envisaged in the country's vision for 2016 (Republic of Botswana, 1996) and the intentions of the National Human Resource and Development Strategy (NHRDS) (2009). Given Botswana's underperformance in geometry and Asia's exceptionally good performance, I want to undertake a comparative study on the challenges and views of teachers and students in the teaching and learning of geometry in Botswana and an Asian country. Lessons learned from the research could help improve the teaching of geometry in Botswana. Preliminary research focused on Botswana was undertaken. The study was guided by the following research

questions:

1. What are the views of teachers and students in the teaching and learning of geometry?
2. What challenges do teachers meet when teaching geometry?
3. What challenges do students meet when learning geometry?
4. What actions, if any, do teachers think should be taken to alleviate the problems/challenges?
5. What kinds of support do teachers need in teaching geometry?

## **Methods**

Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews. The instruments were administered to both students and teachers. Different instruments were used for triangulation purposes. Triangulation ensures confirmation of the findings through the convergence of different perspectives (Jick, 1979). The interviews were conducted to understand the lived experiences of the participants with regard to teaching geometry. According to Salkind (2000), the validity of the instruments must be checked by experts within the research area. Thus, both the face and content validity of the instruments were checked by giving the instruments to a senior mathematics educator in the Department of Mathematics and Science Education as an expert in the research field and content area. The reliability of the instruments was also checked via a pilot test in a representative school. The participants in this research were 40 form-three students and four mathematics teachers. Interviews were conducted using three focus groups of four participants per group. The structured part of the questionnaire was analyzed using simple descriptive analysis. The data from the interviews and the unstructured part of the questionnaire were transcribed and reported thematically. The preliminary findings are presented and discussed below using specific headings.

## **Results and discussion**

### ***Teacher and student views of geometry learning and teaching***

Both teachers and students showed an understanding of the importance of learning geometry (Table 4). They indicated its importance in other subjects and for further study. Students indicated a lack of understanding of some topics.

**Table 4. Teacher and student views of geometry learning and teaching**

Teacher views	Students views
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important for use in the future in science-based subjects like engineering.</li> <li>• It is a foundation for other geometry-related topics to be taught in senior secondary school.</li> <li>• Students do not like mathematics and therefore are not really interested in learning it.</li> <li>• It can be used in other subjects like design, technology, and agriculture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is very difficult to understand.</li> <li>• Form-two and form-three topics are very difficult, especially transformations, bearings, plans, and elevations. The form-one topics we learnt some at primary school.</li> <li>• The teachers teach very fast.</li> <li>• It will be used in senior secondary school.</li> <li>• Some topics (constructions) are easy because we use them in Design and Technology.</li> </ul>

***Teacher and student challenges in learning and teaching geometry***

The teachers indicated many challenges as compared to the students (Table 5). This could have a negative effect on student learning. A lack of resources is detrimental because the study of geometry calls for the use of various teaching and learning aids as it has many abstract concepts.



**Table 5. Teacher and student challenges in learning and teaching geometry**

<b>Teacher challenges</b>	<b>Students challenges</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of resources—textbooks, mathematical sets, computers</li><li>• Topics difficult to teach, especially at the form-three level, include: plans; elevations and bearings; the derivation of theorems, like the converse of midpoint theorem; carrying out proofs</li><li>• Inability to teach due to a lack of knowledge in some topics, especially in using a computer</li><li>• Some students struggle with very simple concepts (e.g., they cannot use a protractor to measure an angle, let alone draw it)</li><li>• Language barrier leads to too much code switching—English is a second language</li><li>• Congested syllabus—lecture to finish</li><li>• Classes are too large—45 students—and it is difficult to assist them all</li><li>• Studied geometry at college but for a short period of time—only one semester</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We are given a formula to use like Pythagoras’s theorem— but teachers do not show us how to derive them</li><li>• Never go to the lab to learn mathematics using a computer</li><li>• Limited teaching aids brought to class (e.g., area and volume of prisms)</li></ul>

***Proposed teaching interventions***

1. The teachers suggested the following to help improve the teaching and learning of geometry:
2. For difficult topics, ask other teachers in the department for help.
3. Teaching aids are good but take too much time to prepare.
4. The methodology course in college was not very useful in equipping us with relevant knowledge for teaching geometry—more time must be dedicated to it.

5. Intensive workshops are needed for all teachers, especially in using technology since we never learned how to use it in college.
6. Automatic promotion must be stopped; students should repeat if they fail, especially at standard seven.

The results indicate that both students and teachers face challenges in the teaching and learning of geometry. This may contribute to the poor TIMSS results and declining student performance in mathematics, as reported by the Botswana Examinations Council. A more in-depth analysis of the responses needs to be conducted to fully address the root cause.

## **Conclusion**

Underperformance in mathematics, and geometry in particular, threatens the country as it aspires to augment its agricultural and industrial sectors with a knowledge-based economy. This transition requires people who are highly competent in mathematics since most careers in the knowledge-based economy Botswana seeks are mathematically oriented. The study of geometry improves, among other things, problem-solving and reasoning skills. These skills can be transferred to other mathematics topics, and the students' overall performance in mathematics can improve. Strong performance in mathematics will also enhance the ability to effectively carry out activities that require mathematics in everyday life.

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# NURTURING DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP IN MALAWIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: CONTEXT, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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## **Introduction**

Literature on democratic citizenship in Malawi has argued that despite the coming of democracy in 1994, the emerging democratic citizenship is characteristically passive as opposed to being active in the social and political governance of the country (Chinsinga, 2006, 2008; Chirwa, Kanyongolo, & Patel, n.d.). Passive citizenship in Malawi has often been seen as a legacy of the country's political history and traditional cultural practices. It is noted that both the colonial and postindependence political practices, as well as the authoritarian traditional practices, denied the general citizenry meaningful opportunities to participate in the governance of their society (Chinsinga, 2006, 2008; Divala, 2007). This lack of participation is seen to have continued into democratic Malawi. This is in contrast to what theorists of democracy argue that strong democracy thrives on the active participation of the governed in their own governance (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004; Barber, 1984; Carr & Hartnett, 1996). In this respect, the emerging democratic citizenship in Malawi poses a significant threat to the long-term sustainability and growth of democracy in the country.

Arguably, the apparent pervasive passivity of the emerging democratic citizenship may be indicative of the weak foundations upon which democracy in the country, and in Africa in general, is founded. It is clear, therefore, that a failure to urgently address this weak democratic foundation will result in significant losses in the progress of democracy (Tsoka, 2002; Haber, 1994). However, the extent to which passive citizenship in Malawi can conclusively be explained by past political history and culture is hard to establish in the absence of research examining and accounting for the contribution of other equally relevant social factors in the current society to the emerging democratic citizenship.

Formal education has been singled out as an important social institution that shapes and influences citizenship skills, values, and practices (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004; Barber, 1984). In view of the challenges facing the emerging democratic citizenship in Malawi, the education system needs to be questioned on what kinds of values and attitudes it represents and promotes regarding democratic citizenship. Consequently, this study explored the nature of school practices that students are exposed to in school and how these present challenges or opportunities for nurturing active and deliberative democratic citizenship in Malawi.

## **Review of related literature**

Political changes in the last half century have fueled debates about citizenship, democracy, and schooling. Questions about what constitutes good citizenship and proper civic education have been equally fueled by a widely perceived crisis in democratic life. Growing distrust in government and other key institutions, diminished trust in fellow citizens, eroding interest in public affairs, and declining voting rates have been documented by social scientists as evidence of this crisis (Rosenburg, 2006). Such challenges notwithstanding, nationalistic expressions combined with global ties to other peoples and nations have further intensified and complicated the interest in citizenship and the role of the school in shaping democratic citizenship (Kymlicka & Norman, 1994; Frazer, 1999 cited in Enslin & White, 2003; Rosenburg, 2006; Galston, 2003; Abowitz & Harnish, 2006).

According to Antal and Easton (2009, p.600), a democratic state “governs by the consent of the governed who have rights as well as responsibilities and who must be as active in defense of the former as they are in accomplishment of the latter.” Citizens need to develop some skills apart from political knowledge, and these skills require effective citizenship education to foster them. Wood, DeMulder, and Stribling (2011, p. 236) observed that “the quality of democratic life depends on a participatory engaged public and that such public is unlikely to emerge unless society supports the teaching of democratic ideals and practice.” These observations point to a close link between citizenship, democracy, and education. Education is identified here as having an important role in the survival of democracy and its associated form of citizenship. Through education, the knowledge, skills, and values for democracy are cultivated, and this contributes to the growth of democracy. In recognition of this connectedness between education and democratic citizenship, it may be argued that the observed challenges to democratic citizenship may to some extent be explained by considering the role of formal education in citizenship formation. In the context of Malawi, this raises questions regarding the role of formal education in fostering active democratic citizenship.

Commenting on the links between education and democratic citizenship, Friedman (1962, cited in Milligan, Moretti, & Oreopoulos, 2003, p. 1668) argued that “a stable democratic society is impossible without a minimum degree of literacy and knowledge on the part of most citizens and without a widespread acceptance of some common set of values. Education can contribute to both.” How can education make this contribution? Friedman further observed that cognitive skills provide for effective participation in a representative democracy. On the other hand, to increase participation among the citizenry, education needs to “improve citizens’ interests and knowledge of political issues, their involvement in the political process and ultimately the effectiveness of their political participation”(Friedman, 1962, cited in Milligan, Moretti, & Oreopoulos, 2003, p.1668). It follows

from these observations that school systems need to provide opportunities to increase knowledge and develop the capacity for broad-based participation. Thus, effective citizenship education in schools should involve the entire school experience both inside and outside the classroom—the relationships occurring within the school—to provide a comprehensive environment for learning active citizenship. Regarding the role of schools in promoting deliberative skills among citizens, Gutmann and Thompson (2004) underscore the importance of the school as follows:

The single most important institution outside government is the educational system. To prepare their students for citizenship in a deliberative democracy, schools should aim to develop the capacities of students to understand different perspectives, communicate their understandings to other people, and engage in the give-and-take of moral argument with a view toward making mutually justifiable decisions (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004, p. 61)

This view certainly cannot be limited to what happens in the classroom. It reflects the sum of school experiences as a means for developing these capacities for democracy. In the case of Malawi, one could ask what kinds of experiences students are having during school. To what extent are these experiences providing the appropriate learning opportunities for democratic behaviors among students?

In democratic theory, democratic deliberation is proposed by political theorists as a potent tool to address the challenge of citizenship participation in modern democracies. Deliberative democracy is seen as serving both the political and moral requirements of democracy. Morally, “persons should be treated not merely as objects of legislation, as passive subjects to be ruled, but as autonomous agents who take part in governance of their own society” (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004, p. 3). Politically, deliberation ensures that legitimate and better decisions are made through the input of the citizens. Thus, the practice of deliberative democracy is considered crucial in strengthening broad-based participation in modern democracies beyond simple voting. It may similarly be argued here that students must not be treated as objects of school decisions with no meaningful involvement in how they are governed. They ought to be given opportunities to exercise some freedoms and responsibilities in ways that inspire them to see this governing arrangement as desirable and worthy of participation.

Similarly, by practicing deliberative democracy, schools are likely to influence students’ values and beliefs regarding active participation in their own governance. “Values, attitudes, skills and knowledge of such political culture are not inherited genetically but must be learned socially”

(Haber, 1994, p. 258). It is the case that students' knowledge, values, and skills with regard to democratic culture are not influenced by school in isolation. There are many other agencies—of which the school is one—through which learners may develop democratic tendencies. However, “formal education is almost without exception the strongest factor in explaining what citizens do, and how they think about politics” (Nie, Junn, & Stehlik-Barry, 1996, cited in Mattes & Mughogho, 2009, p. 2). If this is true, then it may be clearly argued that school practices ought to provide some significant explanations on the nature of democracy, particularly in poor societies where the school is the major source of information for the majority of citizens. However, there is a need to verify this view through more research, especially in poor societies.

Antal and Easton (2009) examined research on the methods and effects of democratic civic education in industrialized countries (Niemi & Smith, 2001; Milner, 2002) and concluded—contrary to the investigations of school-based efforts in the 1960s and 1970s (Langston and Jennings, 1968)—that certain forms of civic education are more likely than others to be successful in developing the propensity to engage in civic behaviors and positive attitudes toward political processes. They observe that among the various approaches to nurturing democratic citizenship, evidence suggests that “the most effective formal civic education programs are those that seek to align medium and message by employing program practices and teaching methods that are more democratic in inspiration and use learner centered and participatory pedagogy” (Antal & Easton, 2009, p.600). This observation points out that not only the content of citizenship but also the methods used in its delivery and the general practices in the school environment are equally related to the nature of knowledge, attitudes, and values that students as citizens are likely to develop. In line with this view, there is a need to understand how open and inclusive school systems are as training grounds in projecting a democratic culture to their students.

In view of the discussion above, and the democratic challenges evident in the emerging democratic citizenship in Malawi, there is a need to understand the nature of school practices that students are exposed to during their time in school and how these present challenges and opportunities for nurturing active and deliberative democratic citizenship. This knowledge will contribute to the debate on the challenges facing the emerging democratic citizenship in Malawi by offering possible alternative explanations to the problem from one social institution recognized to have an important role in citizenship formation. The paper explores the following questions: How do secondary school teachers in Malawi understand the concept of deliberative democracy? Are there any practices perceived by teachers that significantly foster active democratic citizenship values and skills in schools? If so, how prevalent are these in their school practices? What opportunities and

challenges for democratic citizenship do school leadership and governance practices specially provide in the schools?

## **Methods**

A qualitative approach was selected for this part of the study. This was in line with the study's aim to capture a holistic picture of the school context from the teacher's point of view with a depth of understanding rather than numerical analysis (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Razavieh, 2010). This approach makes it easier to understand the opportunities and challenges inherent in the ways schools are organized and managed, and how this influences the democratic nature of the practices students experience in school. In addition to the fact that a basic interpretative design provides descriptive accounts targeted to understanding a phenomenon (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Razavieh, 2010, p. 29), this approach was seen to be consistent with the intentions of the study to describe the context of the schools and examine the challenges and opportunities for democratic citizenship learning within the schools.

## **Study site and participants**

The study was conducted in the South East Education Division (SEED) in Malawi. The SEED is one of the six education divisions covering the entire country through which secondary education is provided and administered. SEED covers four districts and has a total of 106 public secondary schools. Out of the 106 secondary schools, 84 are community day secondary schools (CDSS), and 22 are conventional secondary schools (CSS) (EMIS, 2011). Public secondary schools in Malawi fall under two main categories: conventional secondary schools (CSS) and community day secondary schools (CDSS). These two school types differ in that CSSs represent the better-quality schools in terms of teaching and learning resources and facilities, and most have a catchment area for students that extends beyond the immediate surroundings. On the other hand, CDSSs tend to be limited in their teaching and learning resources and facilities compared to CSSs, and usually their catchment area for students is focused on their immediate surrounding communities. Two secondary schools were selected from each category to allow for maximum variation in the views captured (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Razavieh, 2010, p. 429). A purposive sample of 20 social studies teachers was selected for participation in the study. Social studies teachers were selected because social studies is a principal subject in the current secondary school curriculum through which citizenship and democracy issues are covered; as such, teachers were likely to be more familiar with issues of citizenship and how these are reflected in school practices.



## **Procedures**

Data were collected from four schools—one school in each of the four districts of the SEED. The researcher personally conducted all the focus group interviews with groups of social studies teachers in each of the schools. Two trips were made to each school. During the first visit, the purpose of the study was explained to teachers, and self-administered questionnaires were distributed to all social studies teachers in the schools. Arrangements were made for focus group interviews during the second visit to the schools, where the completed questionnaires were also collected by the researcher. The focus group interviews lasted 45 minutes to 1 hour with each group of teachers. The interviews were recorded on a voice recorder and were later transcribed by the researcher for analysis.

## **Measures**

A questionnaire with four-point Likert-type questions was developed by the researcher and used to collect data on perceptions. The questions were based on the study questions of the research, focusing on how secondary school teachers in Malawi understand the concept of deliberative democracy, perceptions of school practices that significantly provide active democratic citizenship values and skills (and whether such practices exist in their schools), and leadership and governance practices. Similarly, a semi structured interview schedule was developed by the researcher based on the same study questions to triangulate the results from the questionnaires. Prior to using the instruments for data collection, both instruments were pilot tested with teachers in two schools that were not included in the four study schools. Following the pilot studies, some questions were rephrased to ensure clarity. Data from the questionnaires were summarized using frequencies while the interview data were transcribed and analyzed through cross-case analysis following preselected themes in line with the study questions (Barbie, 2010; Huberman & Miles, 1994). These themes included knowledge of democratic deliberation, opportunities available in the school to nurture students' deliberative values and attitudes, and leadership and governance practices. The use of multiple methods ensured data trustworthiness in the study.

## **Accessing research sites and the protection of participants**

Permission to conduct the research in the schools was requested and granted by the South East Education Division on behalf of the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology in Malawi. A letter permitting the researcher to access the study schools was written by the SEED to the head teachers of the study schools. At the research sites, permission was requested from the head teachers, and data collection procedures ensured minimum disruption of the normal programs of the schools.

Participants were told the purpose of the research as well as the use of the information gathered in the study. Their voluntary participation was equally requested. Participants were assured of the confidentiality of the views expressed and shared with the researcher during the research, and that the report would not contain any personally identifiable information for any of the participants.

## Results

### Sample characteristics

The following sections present the findings of the study starting with the respondents' characteristics. A total of 20 social studies teachers from four secondary schools in the SEED participated in the study as shown in Table 1 below. The sample varied in terms of teaching experience as well as teacher qualifications. The majority of the teachers (18/20 or 90%) had degrees in education, implying they were qualified professional teachers. About 14, (70%) of the teachers came from conventional secondary schools. This situation is explained by the relative size of conventional secondary schools that are mostly multi-stream and have more teachers compared to community day secondary schools. Similarly, only half of the teachers from the community day secondary schools had degrees in education, compared to 85% of the teachers from conventional secondary schools.

**Table 1: Sample characteristics**

Teaching experience in years	CSS (qualification)			CDSS (qualifications)		
	<i>Dip.</i>	<i>B.Ed.</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Dip.</i>	<i>B.Ed.</i>	<i>Other</i>
0–4	0	5	0	0	1	0
5–9	0	4	0	1	1	0
10–14	0	0	0	0	0	0
15–19	0	1	2	0	0	0
≥20	0	2	0	2	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

*N* = 20

A total of 12 teachers had teaching experience of less than nine years, suggesting that most had teaching experiences spanning the period after the country became a democracy; only five teachers could be said to have had teaching experience reaching back to the period before 1994 when the country became a democratic state. The diversity of experiences among the teachers allowed for a

broad picture of how teachers view schools as centers for citizenship formation.

### Teachers' conceptions regarding democratic deliberation

The study began by investigating teachers' conceptions regarding democratic deliberation and then examined whether teachers knew about democratic deliberation and what it meant to them. Teachers were asked if they knew about the concept of democratic deliberation as a democratic practice. As shown in Table 2 below, 18 of the 19 teachers who responded to the question indicated they were familiar with the concept of democratic deliberation as it relates to democratic citizenship practice.

**Table 2: Familiarity with the concept of democratic deliberation**

Teaching experience in years	CSS		CDSS	
	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>
0–4	5	0	1	0
5–9	4	0	2	0
10–14	0	0	0	0
15–19	3	0	0	0
≥20	2	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>

*N = 19*

Teachers' knowledge of democratic deliberation was further explored through interviews to understand what the concept meant to them. Teachers' explanations highlighted a number of elements of their conceptualization of democratic deliberation. Teachers saw democratic deliberation mainly in terms of the discussion of issues prior to making a decision by those concerned with the issue. In this discussion, issues are explained and clarified for the benefit of those involved in making the decision, even where voting is practiced. The following comments highlight teachers' understanding of deliberative democracy:

*People discuss first because there are issues that need to be clarified before voting can be done.*

Another teacher commented:

*When people discuss, they have a chance to know more about an issue.... When decisions are merely done through voting...sometimes people vote blindly on things they are not even aware of; if they discuss they will become more informed.*

Apart from the benefit of making participants in a decision-making process more informed and educated about an issue of concern prior to participating in making the decision, teachers also felt that discussion allows differences of opinion to be heard and discussed. Different views are duly considered when decisions are finally made. This process may lead to a possible resolution of the conflicts inherent in the different views discussed. It also contributes to making the outcomes of decision-making processes acceptable to the members. The following comments highlight these sentiments from teachers:

*Different views are heard before actual voting; when you just rush into voting, then you just force something on people without considering their take on the issue.*

*Because issues that would lead to conflict will be discussed before voting, the outcomes would be acceptable to people.*

The findings here point to a conception of democratic deliberation as a tool in decision making. Through such discussions, people become more informed about an issue, and different views and possible areas of conflict are highlighted and given a chance to be heard before decisions are reached. Finally, deliberation ensures that the outcomes of a decision-making process are acceptable to all; in other words, decisions are seen to be legitimate. However, it was not clear whether teachers felt this understanding applies to situations where their students are involved, or only where teachers themselves participate in school decision making.

### **Practices perceived to significantly contribute to students' democratic values and skills**

The study further explored teachers' perceptions of school practices that may significantly contribute to nurturing students' deliberative values and skills in relation to active citizenship. Teachers' perceptions of the following were explored: the importance of involving students in discussing current social and political issues in society, taking part in school governance through student councils, engaging in open discussion with school leaders on issues directly affecting students, being representatives on committees on various education issues in their local communities,

and being involved in community activities. Table 3 below presents the findings on teachers' perceptions.

**Table 3: Activities contributing to developing students' deliberative values and skills**

Item	CSS		CDSS	
	<i>agree</i>	<i>disagree</i>	<i>agree</i>	<i>disagree</i>
Classroom discussion of social and political issues affecting the society encourages active citizenship	12	1	4	2
Involving students in school governance through student councils encourages active citizenship	11	2	5	1
Open discussion between students and school authorities on issues affecting students encourages active citizenship	11	2	4	2
Involving student representatives on school boards when student matters are discussed encourages active citizenship	11	2	3	3
Involving students in school and community social issues encourages active citizenship	9	4	4	2

*N = 19*

Teachers generally agreed that involving students in discussing current social and political issues in classrooms, taking part in school governance through their elected student councils, engaging in open discussions with school leaders on issues affecting them directly, and being representatives on committees on various education issues in their local communities can significantly contribute to students' values and skills in relation to deliberative democratic citizenship.

Community activities had the lowest score compared to the other activities, with 68% (13 of 19) agreeing that this practice has the potential to encourage active citizenship through deliberation. The teachers' perceptions highlighted one important thing: that encouraging active citizenship through democratic deliberation is a process involving the whole school. Activities beyond the classroom are as important as activities inside the classroom when it comes to nurturing democratic values and attitudes. However, the interviews highlighted some challenges for effectively providing opportunities that will benefit students in this regard, as the following comment indicates:

*We should involve learners more in discussions, but we have limited materials to use, and students have no deeper understanding of what they discuss.*

Students are usually grouped to discuss different issues during lessons as part of learner-centered teaching. However, teachers noted that to effectively benefit from these discussions, students need to have more information of the subject of discussion. Usually this would require students to read and prepare for the discussions. Due to limited teaching resources, however, students come to discussions with no reference information. This creates problems for students to significantly participate, contribute, or form opinions. Apart from challenges in the classroom due to limited teaching and learning resources, teachers also considered opportunities beyond the classroom. Teachers felt that schools should demonstrate the values they are trying to foster in students. Students need to experience democracy at work in their schools for them to develop positive attitudes toward a democratic way of life, as the following observation suggests:

*Schools need to do more than just tell students that they are free to discuss or question. They should incorporate them when decisions are made and discuss changes with them, like when making changes to the cafeteria menu. This would make students feel involved and by and by get to talk about things concerning them.*

Another teacher also commented:

*The school should demonstrate through its activities, rather than just telling students that they are free, by allowing them to ask questions during assembly and not answering them harshly or frightening them.*

As the above comments indicate, students' direct participation in matters directly affecting them, like drawing up a menu at the cafeteria, were seen as occasions to encourage participation geared toward developing values and attitudes regarding democratic participation. It was suggested that schools need to demonstrate what they teach if they are to be relevant and effective in shaping students' values and attitudes.

Teachers also recognized the importance of extracurricular activities in providing spaces for active citizenship education in the schools. Through clubs and societies, students have the opportunity to demonstrate leadership and develop skills to communicate their views, which

contributes to their democratic skills. Such extracurricular activities include groups like the writers club, where students can express themselves on matters they could not otherwise discuss in school. As one teacher noted:

*We have a writers club, and students present some pieces during school assemblies. Some of these presentations are on controversial issues that they cannot just bring out to the administration directly, but they can present it in a form of a poem; thus, clubs do help.*

Teachers, however, noted that challenges exist in some of these democratic spaces that compromise their ability to train students in active citizenship. Teachers felt that sometimes schools were not as willing to open up on some of these activities for fear of encouraging indiscipline if students were to ask questions or raise issues of concern to them. As one teacher commented:

*We have clubs and societies, like the debate club and the democracy club, which can help, although they are not as active.*

In general, the study found that teachers believe that student involvement in the various aspects of school life, both inside and outside the classroom, provides opportunities to nurture active citizenship and deliberative values and attitudes. In class, participation in discussions was seen as one important approach. Extracurricular clubs and societies were seen as equally critical in developing active citizenship behaviors. However, teachers also noted some challenges that may make these avenues and opportunities less effective in the schools.

### **Opportunities for and challenges to democratic citizenship presented by school leadership and governance practices**

The study further examined teachers' views on what happens in their own schools to find out the extent to which the teachers' views on opportunities for students to develop active citizenship and deliberative values and attitudes are provided in their own schools. Teachers were presented with a series of leadership and governance practices and asked whether such practices exist in their schools. Table 4 summarizes teachers' responses regarding practices in their schools.

**Table 4: Inclusiveness and openness in school leadership and governance practices**

<i>Item</i>	<i>agree</i>	<i>neutral</i>	<i>disagree</i>
School authorities regularly provide students with clear reasons behind decisions taken when presenting these to students	12	3	5
Students in the school have clear opportunities to respond and voice concerns on decisions they feel are not favorable to them	15	3	2
Students are given opportunities to actively participate during teaching and learning activities	15	4	1
The school regularly consults or solicits students views when making decisions on issues that directly affect students	8	10	2
The school has clear plans for student involvement in community-related activities around their schools	8	6	6

*N* = 20

As can be seen in the table, 75% (15 of 20) teachers agreed that their schools are open to students' reactions to school decisions whenever students are not comfortable with the decisions, and they also agreed that students are actively involved during lessons. Similarly, 12 out of 20 teachers agreed that their schools regularly provide justifying reasons for decisions made when presenting these to students. However, 40% (8 of 20) of teachers said their schools consult their students or solicit student voices when making decisions affecting the students. About half of the teachers were noncommittal on regular student consultation occurring in their schools. Only 8 of the 20 teachers agreed that their schools had clear plans for student involvement in community activities. With the exception of student consultation and community involvement, the data seem to suggest that schools are relatively open and inclusive of students' voices and views in their leadership and governance practices. These findings were compared to the interview data to establish whether what was reported by teachers on the questionnaires was consistent with the descriptions of what occurred in their schools. During the interviews, teachers were asked about the roles students play in their schools in decision-making processes. Teachers indicated that generally students are on the receiving end with little or no opportunity to participate in or influence decisions made by the school authorities in any significant way. In other words, the teachers painted a predominantly authoritarian picture of leadership and governance in the schools. Students have little say in decisions, as the following comment shows:



*Many times issues are decided by the administration, and students are just told of the decisions. It's like the administration is at the top, and all arrows point downward with nothing much from the bottom to the top.*

Another teacher considered the limited involvement of students to be consistent with the normal operations of the society beyond the school—in a way justifying the school practice—as follows:

*If we look at our Malawian society, it's the same; discipline, respect, and things like that. It is like a conveyor belt—things move from one side going to the other, which is the same as in the adult world students will experience after school.*

On whether students have opportunities to provide feedback to school authorities on decisions and issues that affect them, responses indicated that apart from classroom interactions, schools are not very inclined to entertain students' views. Teachers' responses indicated that students may have opportunities to raise contrary views in the classroom, but not so much when it came to decisions handed down to them from school administrators. Students' contrary views were likely to be understood as challenges to school authority and insubordination, and therefore were punishable by school authorities, as the following comments seem to indicate:

*In class, it will depend on the topic; otherwise the values of this school do not give room for disagreement with authority.*

*Students are not given chance to express their views or question decisions made by the school management.*

On further inquiry as to why schools do not favor students raising concerns on decision making, teachers expressed fears of encouraging indiscipline. It was felt that giving students freedom to raise concerns on matters they are not happy with would make it difficult for administrators to maintain control and discipline in the school. Teachers expressed fears that as students get used to questioning things, it will diminish the power administrators have in maintaining control, as the following comment by one teacher highlights:

*Schools like to guard power; if people question about anything, you might lose power.... The school is scared of students learning what's provided in these freedoms as they will rise up*

*and begin to question everything.... This will make it difficult for schools to implement some things in future because of the questioning attitude.*

Apparently, schools seem to be interested in preserving order to the extent that it potentially does not matter how that discipline is established. Clearly, encouraging participation and open discussion on matters directly affecting students is not welcomed in the way schools are run or managed. Student questioning is considered an act of indiscipline or insubordination. These views project an image of a disciplined student as one who follows rules without question. Generally, the interviews did not provide evidence to support claims the teachers made on questionnaires about open and inclusive leadership and governance in schools. The interviews showed that schools are dominantly undemocratic in their leadership and governance practices. Authoritarian tendencies seemed paramount with an interest to maintain control and discipline.

## **Discussion**

This study explored three related questions: How do secondary school teachers in Malawi understand the concept of deliberative democracy? Are there any practices perceived by teachers that significantly foster active democratic citizenship values and skills in schools? If so, how prevalent are these in their school practices? What opportunities and challenges to democratic citizenship do school leadership and governance practices specially provide in the schools? The findings were presented in the previous sections. This section briefly highlights issues arising from the findings.

The study found that teachers conceived of democratic deliberation mainly as a practice where discussions are primary to decision making. Through such discussions, people become more informed about an issue. Different views and possible areas of conflict are presented and discussed before decisions are made. Such deliberation is a means to ensure that the outcomes of a decision-making process are acceptable to all; in other words, decisions are seen to be legitimate. The findings do show that teachers have a fairly consistent understanding of democracy and deliberation in this case. Generally, deliberation has been described as a “talk-based approach to political conflict and problem solving” (Mansbridge et al, 2012; Christiano, 2012). In such talk, the power of a better argument reigns. All have a chance to equally contribute. Suppression, oppression, and thoughtless neglect are replaced with persuasion. On the other hand, Gutmann and Thompson (2004, p.7) describe a deliberative democracy as “a form of government in which free and equal citizens (and their representatives) justify decisions in a process in which they give one another reasons that are mutually acceptable and generally accessible, with the aim of reaching conclusions that are binding

in the present on all citizens but open to challenge in future.” Teachers’ understanding clearly resonated well with these definitions of democratic deliberation. However, as pointed out earlier, it was difficult to establish whether teachers’ understanding of deliberation included deliberation with their students as well, or they simply considered deliberation between themselves and their superiors.

Teachers’ understanding and knowledge of democratic deliberation as an expression of active democratic citizenship is crucial in the ability of schools to positively contribute to the democratic citizenship formation of the students. If teachers have a poor or limited understanding, it is difficult to expect them to be catalysts for the students’ learning of various democratic practices or to provide opportunities for such practices within the school context. What teachers know or believe about democratic practices is therefore very important for the schools’ ability to carry out its civic mission.

Apart from teachers’ knowledge about democratic deliberation, the findings further suggest that teachers understood the processes through which students may be better helped to learn about democracy in school. Teachers recognized the importance of encouraging participation in classes where students learn to express their views among their peers and build self-confidence. Beyond the classroom, teachers regarded the involvement of students in leadership and governance, either directly or through representatives, as crucial in giving students practice in communicating views and contributing to decisions on how they are governed in the school. In other words, students’ meaningful participation in the classrooms and in the governance of their schools was perceived as a potential tool for nurturing active citizenship values and skills. Teachers’ views suggest that learning to deliberate and becoming active democratic citizens requires more than just the theoretical knowledge one may acquire in subjects like social studies. It requires blending the theories with opportunities to put into practice what is otherwise learned theoretically. In this regard, both the classroom and the school environment activities become important means for building values and skills for democratic participation. These views agree with Antal and Easton (2009), who state that “the most effective formal civic education programs are those that seek to align medium and message by employing program practices and teaching methods that are more democratic in inspiration and use learner centered and participatory pedagogy.”

In addition, teachers viewed extracurricular activities as providing democratic spaces where students develop the necessary knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes for active citizenship and deliberation within the school. In other words, a whole-school approach to nurturing democratic citizenship values and attitudes is revealed in the teachers’ views as instrumental in cultivating deliberative behavior. Not much emphasis, however, was placed on student involvement in

community activities. This probably reflected limited engagement between schools and their surrounding communities.

Teachers' knowledge of democratic deliberation and activities promoting the cultivation of attitudes and skills for active democratic citizenship was compared with the practices in their schools in terms of leadership and governance. The findings pointed out that schools to a large extent do not practice what teachers had highlighted as potential activities to nurture students' democratic citizenship values, particularly in the areas of governance and leadership. The findings suggest limited student involvement in this area, and elements of autocratic leadership are still evident in school practices. Essentially, this indicates a discrepancy between knowledge and practices as reported by the teachers. The concern of school with discipline was seen as one key issue causing schools to make limited progress in embracing a democratic culture. Although discipline is a prerequisite for effective teaching and learning—no serious learning would be expected without it—the question of how to balance discipline with promoting a democratic culture in the school remains unanswered.

The leadership and governance practices seem to suggest that schools to some extent feel that a democratic culture is incompatible with maintaining discipline. These questions necessitate a further inquiry into the disciplinary practices in the schools and how they fit in with a democratic and inclusive school culture. If schools do not fulfill their role in citizenship formation, the course of a democratic society is likely to suffer.

## **Conclusion**

This small-scale exploratory study highlighted the challenges regarding what teachers know about democratic citizenship and how school practices fail to encapsulate their understanding. The results suggest a perceived incompatibility between democratic practices and maintaining school discipline. In view of the recognized civic mission of the schools, this study points to the need for further investigation into the impact of current practices on student citizenship behaviors, to begin to understand the contributions of schools to the broader challenges facing the emerging democratic citizenship in Malawi. Although the results of this study cannot be generalized to all schools in Malawi, they serve as an important pointer to the need for broad-based research on how the education system is relating to the challenge of democratic citizenship formation in Malawi.

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