

2005

Democratic Development and the Role of Citizenship Education in Sub-Saharan African with a Case Focus on Zambia

Ali A. Abdi
University of Alberta

Lee Ellis
University of Alberta

Edward Shizha
Wilfrid Laurier University, eshizha@wlu.ca

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholars.wlu.ca/brantford_yc

Recommended Citation

Abdi, Ali A.; Ellis, Lee; and Shizha, Edward, "Democratic Development and the Role of Citizenship Education in Sub-Saharan African with a Case Focus on Zambia" (2005). *Youth and Children's Studies*. 4.
http://scholars.wlu.ca/brantford_yc/4

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Laurier Brantford at Scholars Commons @ Laurier. It has been accepted for inclusion in Youth and Children's Studies by an authorized administrator of Scholars Commons @ Laurier. For more information, please contact scholarscommons@wlu.ca.

Democratic development and the role of citizenship education in sub-Saharan Africa with a case focus on Zambia

Ali A. Abdi

Department of Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta, Canada aabdi@ualberta.ca

Lee Ellis

Department of Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta, Canada lellis@ualberta.ca

Edward Shizha

Department of Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta, Canada eshizha@ualberta.ca

In addressing issues related to problems of democratisation in Africa, this paper attempts to relate the issue to the need for citizenship education and the role that can play in social development. Citizenship should be central to the formation of viable civil societies that claim a tangible stake in national public spaces in post-Cold War Africa. These and related topics are discussed relative to new possibilities that could lead to the full realisation of the concept as well as the practice of enfranchised citizenship and inclusive social development in aspiring democracies in the Sub-Saharan African context. The complexity of the development 'problematique' that Sub-Saharan Africa is facing is unique in that it is multi-dimensional, but above all else, politically located. It is, therefore, central to our discussions here that to correct the continent's current schemes of underdevelopment, pragmatic schemes of governance must be achieved. To do that, we are suggesting, new possibilities of citizenship education should be formulated for the general African scene in general, and for democratising but still both institutionally and economically weakened Zambia.

Citizenship education, democratisation, structural adjustment programs, civil society, sub-Saharan Africa, Zambia

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to discuss and analyse a number of concepts and their possible practices that would fall within descriptive parameters of education (or citizenship education), democratisation and social development in the Sub-Saharan African context. Education in its various expressions (formal, non-formal, and informal) is understood to be fundamental to the establishment and formation of a citizenry which recognises and values the importance of participatory engagement in the process of governance and institutions of government that would be relevant to particular societal arrangements (cf. Dewey, 1926). The first part of the paper engages select perspectives on the processes (and problems) of development, democratisation and the role of civil society in these and similar realities in the sub-continent.

The second part of the paper looks at, and discusses the concepts of critical citizenship and citizenship education, and the role they could play in re-routing depressed democratic and social development situations in the area. Selectively attached to our analyses of, especially, citizenship education is the notion that, beyond any direct political possibilities and interactions that might be attributed to it, it should also represent some means of what the Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire

(2000 [1970]) would call platforms of social ‘conscientisation’, which would entail, at least for us, not only a more enhanced and more active public political space, but also a critical and proactive understanding of the citizens as to why current governance arrangements are not instigating ameliorative mechanisms in their social and economic well-being. Here, citizenship education in places like Africa where oppressive regimes have justified their actions as the best available alternative, the transformative possibilities of citizenship education, in fact all education, would be sought so as to denaturalise highly uneven development realities between the elite and the masses. The final section introduces what may be described at this stage as a preliminary, limited focus on the principally established but still operationally underdeveloped case of Zambian democracy and the need to strengthen it through select possibilities of citizenship education. The Zambian situation in democratising Africa is important in that it represents a grassroots-instigated move to a more viable program of public governance.

PROBLEMS OF AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPECTS FOR DEMOCRATISATION

The social and economic problems facing twenty-first century Africa, including governance weaknesses and the now celebrated institutional mismanagement are complex, multi-furcated and, by-and-large, attributable to a number of issues that have both historical and political implications and ingredients. One could say that African problems of development emanate, more often than otherwise, from political ineptitude committed, over a long period of time, by the political elite. Even in what may seem like, at least partially, exonerating the European colonial project, which cannot be the case, it may be pragmatic to say that countries like Nigeria, Kenya and Zimbabwe inherited economic infrastructures that were relatively developed. That is, relative to current realities on the ground complemented by the betrayal of people’s expectations in the postcolonial period. In the midst of the current misfortunes, therefore, and based on the centrality of sound public policy for both development and democracy, we concur with other observers (see, *inter alia*, Museveni, 2000; Sandbrook, 2000) who emphasise the point that unless the political component in the Africa public space is corrected, problems of development would continue unabated in the foreseeable future.

It is also the case, that with oppressive systems of governments on the African landscape, Africa’s so-called ‘best and brightest’ have been out migrating in the last 25 years, which only made matters worse for the less educated and economically less endowed segments of the population. Contrary to the contemporary African case, one might suggest in other epochs and at different intersections of time and space, citizens might have organised more effectively using the available, counter-hegemonic of civil society, trade unions, student associations, religious organisations and opposition political parties and demanded good governance and accountability from their governments. Generally, and as Pinkney (1999) suggests, sound governance systems do not initially start with hastily organised multi-party elections and quasi-immature parliamentary debates, but are greatly influenced by actions that emanate from citizens themselves, which, in the long run, would strengthen civil society so that it can exercise a check on those who have political power. It is actually this form of pluralist and participatory democratic systems that are more likely, than say the current top-down management of democracy in post-Cold War Africa, to sustain public programs and relationships that are more transparent and more accountable to citizens’ desires and needs.

THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT: ENTRENCHING OR TRANSFORMING CENTRALISED DOMINATION?

It is the case that citizenship and democracy projects organised by grassroots associations and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), especially local NGOs, are blocked by the tendencies

and the practices of state leaders, despite their claim of being democrats, who demand absolute power and control over the activities as well as the rights of citizens. This is often accomplished through the same or similar structures used by colonial rulers of the imperial era. Unexpectedly, the hierarchical domination institutionalised by colonial powers, and appropriated by many postcolonial African elites is also promoted by the agents of the neo-liberal agenda of economic globalisation through the work and, indeed, management and development ideologies of International Financial Institutions (IFIs) or "global state economic governance institutions" (Van der Pijl, 1998).

One of the results of the management schemes by these global state economic governance institutions, in particular the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank, has been to neutralise, or re-direct, the activities of state as well as civil society organisations through the developmentally problematic Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) (Abdi, 2002). SAPs generally call for reductions in government spending on health, education, and welfare; trade liberalisation; privatisation of state enterprises and deregulation of government restrictions on acceptable allocation of resources; currency devaluation to promote export earnings to repay foreign debt; and weakening of worker protection in areas of wages and workplace conditions (Bello, (2002, p. 43). In the particular instance of Zambia, it has been reported that foreign debt has forced Zambia to divert scarce resources away from health, education and social services. So much so that continually the number of poor in Zambia has increased, with over 73 per cent of people living in poverty and over 58 per cent living in extreme poverty (KAIROS, 2002, pp. 2-3).

Further evidence of the underlying intent of SAPs and SAP-related policies, as strong counter-development realities in the African context and elsewhere, is manifested in the Heavily Indebted Poor Country Initiative (HIPC) purported to be a corrective to the global debt crisis by the World Bank and the IMF. In fact, KAIROS has stated that "The 'debt forgiveness' which, for example, Zambia received in 2000 merely clears bad debts from the creditors' ledgers and ensures an ever-increasing flow of resources out of Zambia in the form of debt servicing" (KAIROS, 2002, p. 4). Despite the stream of rhetoric from the World Bank and the IMF, therefore, "the current debt relief framework has failed Zambia, just as it has failed other highly indebted poor countries across Africa and the global South, affirming that the cancellation of Zambia's debts is the only rational response to the failure of the HIPC Initiative" (Booker in KAIROS, 2002).

Thus, in order to gain a more balanced perspective on the issues and problems faced by African states and civil societies in the quest for reliable platforms of development and, possibly, horizontally concretisable regimes of democratic governance, one may have to look beyond the borders of individual states, and focus on the transnational workings of global state economic governance institutions. To a large extent, the difficulties facing the states and the peoples of Sub-Saharan Africa find their roots in a global ethic of *sauve-qui-peut* (Boyle, 1999), an interesting expression that has some important meanings for the free market orientation of these transnational entities. Here, while Boyle (1999) principally focuses his argument on the development of private educational systems in major African urban centres that are managed by small numbers of privileged state or bureaucratic elites, the analogy has a clear and practical application in the wider African context. Behind the current move of local and regional urban elites to consolidate and extend their privileged positions for their offspring, which, by the way, is hardly anomalous to the basic philosophies and practices of globalisation, the rush to achieve class distinctions that attach local elites to the goodies of the global economy (Hoogvelt, 2001), the stage is set, actually established, for the gradual abandoning of viable public educational systems which are replaced by private ones, thus ushering the zigzagging of the transnational capitalist class manipulating the rules of international trade, finance and commerce (Oxfam, 2002).

Shortly before the implementation of SAPs and with the Reagan administration assuming power in the United States in 1981, as Bello (2002) notes, the perception became that America was not only to roll back communism, but also to discipline the Third World. Viewing the situation from this ideological plateau, one should realise that whatever it claims to represent, the neo-liberal agenda is not designed to improve quality of life for people, or to enhance conditions conducive to the establishment of lasting principles of democracy and participatory citizenship. To the contrary, as Bello (2002, p. 42) points out again, the genuine operationalisation of the neo-liberal paradigm would lead to the “dismantling of the so-called ‘state-assisted capitalism’ that was seen as the domestic base for southern national capitalist elites, and to the weakening the United Nations system as a forum and instrument for the South’s economic agenda”. In reality, therefore, as was concluded in a 1988 report of the UN Commission for Africa, “the essence of SAPs was the ‘reduction/removal of direct state intervention in the productive and redistributive sectors of the economy’” (cited in Bello, 2002, p. 44).

The projects of weak governance, complemented by the forces of globalisation and the specific demands of SAPs all weakened public education, and by extension, jeopardised not the general social development that would have resulted from this, but the critical awareness of citizens to demand full democratic rights that could have enhanced their lives in the two successive and bleak decades of the 1980 and the 1990s. Modern African education, as Boyle (1999) extensively discusses, followed three historical phases: (a) the colonial education with its false but still widely diffused civilising mission, 1910-1960; (b) independence education for the national development and institutional building; and (c) the current case which he describes as austerity education, *or the Sauve Qui Peut* program, which was in place from 1980 to the present and which mainly speaks for the period when "local elites endeavour to escape from failing public and denominational schools and use their new autonomy to create private educational services, mostly in cities" (Boyle, 1999 p. 15). In the new configurations of the case, the noble goals of universal literacy, and deliberate and expansive emphasis on the much-talked-about "Education For All" (EFA) project (UNESCO, 2000) and greater equity in the public education system have been largely abandoned.

These three phases closely parallel the stages in the development of the global state economic governance institutions with their emphasis on economic dominance, backed with the threat, and, increasingly, the use, of military force. In addressing factors which influence the quality of social provision in the African context, Osei-Hwedie and Bar-On (1999, p. 91).) also find

Three distinctive historical-ideological periods and their associated political-economic orientations... how community-based social provision in the pre-colonial era gave way to voluntary and non-governmental activities; how nationalist governments subsequently supplanted these modes of provision; and how in the wake of the structural adjustment programs, the trend has shifted again to community provision of social services.

The other side of this argument, with respect to community and regional initiatives in the civil society sector, is that, generally, the on-going realisation of the neo-liberal agenda of privatisation and trade liberalisation is seen in the emphasis on the “extension of the provision of outside services, such as education, health, and government-sponsored employment-substitution programs ... [rather than] realistic income-generating schemes with outputs that go beyond mere physical survival for participants” (Osei-Hwedie and Bar-On, 1999, p. 114). Likewise, the lack of encouragement of local authority participation, engagement and incentive continues to weaken initiatives in the absence of outside direction and control. Local control of social development institutions is often denied on the camouflaged basis that it takes time to build local organisational accountability and governmental capacity and that, in the short run, it makes more monetary sense

to import the required skills and expertise from outside the community. Consequently, “as providing for people is easier and politically more effective than developing their capacities, development remains the domain of technocrats, be they in government or in NGOs” (p. 115). Here, the current global *status quo* flourishes, with non-Africans, whether they be Western governments sponsored experts or selectively benevolent NGOs pour into the continent, bringing with them, disparate and fundamentally problematic views as to what should constitute the “modern, efficient and just society” (Morales-Gómez, 1999, p. 4). In a well-known paragraph, Lyes (1996, p. 195) likens this scenario to the “*de facto* recolonisation of Africa by [among others] aid consortia, World Bank structural adjustment teams, the UNHCR, and the UN food program.”

The case generally leads to social policy and programming issues in Africa and probably elsewhere, where things are implemented “with an almost total absence of systematic assessment of the outcomes... without a reliable knowledge base... [and] with little input from recipient countries” (Morales-Gómez, 1999, p. 6). In order to see more of this tragedy in African educational and socio-economic development, one can look at the so-called ‘newest kid on the block, i.e., the supposedly local-born New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). NEPAD has been characterised by some as an integral part of the African renaissance while others see it as a further refinement of the structural adjustment logic that so effectively transfers surplus capital into the hands of the world’s central bankers and those who control those banks. The official position is that NEPAD prefigures a new stage in Africa’s relationship with other global partners, where respect for human rights, transparency and accountability in governance will be the norm. At the same time, the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) and the African Regional Organisation of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (AFRO-ICFTU) reiterated, in July 2002, their “support for the objectives and principles informing NEPAD... [but] remain critical of the manner in which NEPAD was developed with the exclusion of civil society and trade unions” (www.icftu.org). This last point may actually define why NEPAD is no longer so stylish, as it has become, at the end of all the rhetorical promulgations, another good idea that could only be implemented when Western governments see it as serving their African agenda.

What we have, therefore, in the current configurations of African development, is what the late Nigerian political economist Ake (1996) has aptly called ‘a false and uncultured program that is basically the absence of development’. To counter these and similar trends, through, among other things, pragmatic and quality public programs of education, is the possible attainment of what Aina (1999) calls a new understanding of ‘development consciousness’, or “the ways people perceive, think of, and are conscious of development as a process intended to transform their lives in a positive and beneficial direction and of its contribution to the improvement of material and other well-beings” (p. 69). Here, there is a recognition and concern about the role of the international financial institutions in “the de-legitimisation of the African state and its forced withdrawal from the provision of basic services and other forms of direct social provisioning, but also the emergence of a kind of consciousness that denies the validity and relevance of social policy in the development process” (p. 69). This de-legitimisation or expropriation of responsibility must be reversed. Aina further notes that “Africa needs not only to reclaim development, but also to face the challenges of social reconstruction, that is, rebuilding social institutions and support systems eroded by years of neglect and the efforts of both internal and external forces to undermine them” (p. 70). Still, because of the bleak African situation, one should not give up on new initiatives including NEPAD, which, if configured with more meaningful input from the South, may address some of the concerns we are describing here.

THE DEMOCRATISATION PARADIGM: SELECT PERSPECTIVES ON AFRICA

We like to start here with the assumption that the introduction of a new paradigm in any analytical disposition in the social sciences and education could be dangerous, for it would expectedly involve, at least from a theoretical perspective, a new way of doing things. But again, as democracy was not a common practice in Africa, things have indeed changed in this case. Still, as Nzongola-Ntalaja (1998) says, there are controversies concerning the feasibility of democracy and democratic governance in contemporary Africa, which should not mean that democratic practices, beyond any labelling essentialities, are foreign to the continent, or more grotesquely, are the exclusive properties of Western societies. Democratic norms and principles are universal, but the institutions that inform democracy and the concrete forms of its political practice may vary in time and space. These are the spatial and temporal dimensions of democratic practices. African authoritarian rulers often argue that democracy is cultural and historical and should not be dictated from the West. They relentlessly argue that Africa has its own forms of so-called 'Africanised democracy'. The argument has been used to shift attention from all the human rights violations, political repression, economic mismanagement and failure mentioned above, or to account for corruption and bad governance that is rife in Africa. If we accept that democracy is a universal phenomenon, then we should be talking of democratising Africa rather than Africanising democracy. Ukpokodu (1997) observes that most African nations tend to shift back and forth between three types of government systems: democratic, semi-democratic, and authoritarian. The shift is normally caused by threats to their *status quo*. African governments, with the exception of a few like Botswana, become combative when civil society and opposition political parties challenge their governance and corruption. Political persecution, violence and treason charges are targeted at those threatening the *status quo*. For instance, in Zimbabwe from 2000 to 2003, opposition members of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), including its entire top leadership cadre, were arrested for non-existent treason charges. The charges were trumped up by the ZANU (PF) government in order to induce fear into those fighting for the democratisation of Zimbabwe. These are political tragedies that make participatory democracy elusive in Africa.

Democracy and the rule of law are dialectical and, by and large, contain within themselves the not so alien polemics of good governance. Osaghae (1999) explains democratisation or transition to democracy as a political process that has to do with the transformation of the state and political society. Democracy thrives in a nation where political rights and the rule of law supercede party politics and protectionism. Participation in political, social and economic decisions by the governed irrespective of their gender, political affiliation, ethnicity, race, and religion, and good governance that respects the rule of law, are more important than political control and protecting ruling class interests. In Africa, where state-centered politics is crucial to economic and social relations, the overriding imperatives are to strengthen state structures through democratic, accountable, and responsive forms of governance that are tolerant to alternative voices and dialogue. These ideals accelerate participatory democracy, which is a prerequisite to personal, social and economic development. Tragically, freedom of expression, alternative information, free and fair elections and freedom of association are anathema to African governments.

Nzongola-Ntalaja (1998) argues, for example, that democracy from a philosophical, historical, and comparative perspective is a universal principle of governance that is a moral imperative, a social process, and a particular type of political practice applicable to all human societies. Nyerere (1998, p. 27) also contends that "democracy means much more than voting on the basis of adult suffrage every few years; it means (among other things) attitudes of toleration and willingness to co-operate with others on terms of equality." Most African dictators reject democratic values based on equality and respect of alternative opinion. They resist both a political culture and ideology that empowers civil society. In addition, they frustrate demands for transparent and non-repressive political arena that enhance political, social and economic accountability. Thus, most of

these leaders are hostile to democracy, which could be achieved through democratic transitions. Hence, the need, not only to appreciate the pragmatics of citizenship and, through effective possibilities of citizenship education so as to educate the African public to take advantage of the current winds of democratisation that are, at different configurations and speed, blowing across this large, populous but harshly underdeveloped zone of the world. Next, we engage the conceptual and possible practical foundations of citizenship, complemented by a quasi-dense theoretical discussion of citizenship education and its relevance for contemporary African societies.

CITIZENSHIP AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

In general, citizenship is associated with national identity as affirmed by membership to a particular nation-state that is itself defined by globally recognised national boundaries. Generally, it is the state that packages and regulates the identities of its citizens and controls individual and social rights and responsibilities. In that setting, individuals or citizens carry identity cards, passports, and driver's licences that attest to national identity (or citizenship) within the confines of their country's frontiers or in other parts of the world. More often than otherwise, citizens do not partake in, or even influence this project of identity packaging. It is the reality of a given state's omnipresent power to legitimate citizen's legal and other statuses that actually gives it so much power to control the overall being of its so-called citizens. Generally, citizenship might have been historically seen as similar to membership in, and accompanying relationships with the nation-state. In these more complex times, though, Davies and Evans (2001) would be right when they note that currently, citizenship is a multi-dimensional construct and practice with a wide-ranging arenas and intersections of operation, and as such is characterised by a cluster of social and other elements that perpetuate different levels of contestations that are contiguous and continuous. And while they might talk about emerging world perspectives on global citizenship (cf. Dower, 2003), still, as Africans are fundamentally deprived *vis-à-vis* the rest of the world, their citizenship situation is also less fluid, politically disenfranchised, and, therefore, begging to be understood in both quasi-rigid historical and currently deprived (in terms of citizenship according fundamental inalienable right) realities.

Again, as Ndegwa (2001) observes, conditions that permeate African nations have changed very little from authoritarianism, and have been inimical to democratisation and consolidation of democratic rule. Any discussion on citizenship cannot be divorced or separated from the polemics of democracy, human rights, the rule of law and social justice. These areas, therefore, remain sites of struggle within the context of individual Africans and collectivities such as civil society associations with most still fighting for basic political rights, which, as mentioned above, would be the key for any effective reconfiguration of the present African condition. In fact, it is mainly that platform of unequal citizenship that has precipitated and, in many cases, sustained the disastrous primarily political or politico-economic upheavals in Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Rwanda, and Somalia.

Citizenship Education: Theoretical Perspectives with Reference to Africa

As Soltis (1988) noted, all education generally involves an element of citizenship training. Citizenship education and political education are, for the most part, similar (Torney-Purta, 1990), and we are using the two concepts interchangeably, but the former would subsume more into its sphere of analysis. As Cogan (1998) and Niemi and Junn (1998), note, the moral, ethical and social objectives and implications of citizenship would accord citizens the possibility of understanding why things are as they are. This is important, for in order to create citizens, one must identify with the whole political tradition and its derivatives so as "to make a claim about one's *moral identity*; [and] to commit oneself to continuing a particular story because one thinks

it is morally worthy of continuance” (Callan, 1997, p. 125). Generally speaking, though, a primary aim of citizenship education is to elevate the level of people’s participation in the political process (Quigley and Bahmueller, 1991). This participation is probably needed more today in Africa than any other continent or area of the world. But people, it must be understood, cannot acquire effective citizenship by simply being a part in the exercise of emerging democratic possibilities in the continent. Thus, we concur with the position that whether it is Africa or elsewhere, the viability of democratic development would greatly depend on citizens effectively taught about the mechanics, processes, values as well as virtues of democracy (Enslin et al., 2001; Hahn, 1998; Oakeshott, 1951; and Dewey, 1926).

Dewey’s *Democracy and Education* (1926) which, in its time, was an important watershed in understanding the relationship between democracy and education, and would undoubtedly remain a classic well into the twenty-first century, effectively emphasises how expansive programs of learning, albeit not exclusively in civic education, would help sustain national or possibly international projects of democracy. We can also see the work of the late Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire (2000 [1970], 1973) where, despite the primacy of educational philosophy in his works, are important works of citizenship education that provocatively analysed critical literacy and the resulting social conscientisation so the underclass could harness new and transformative programs of political awareness for development. In the Sub-Saharan African context, a unique program of education with clear political objectives (Education for Self-Reliance) was formulated by Tanzania’s first President, Nyerere (1968) with nationalist and periodically noble perspectives, but with limited initial success. In Nyerere’s case, especially, it is clear that, despite the continuing need of his ideas and projects, a combination of a global capital onslaught (McHenry, 1994), apparently aided by social class consciousness that permeated the Tanzanian public, with all eventually derailing his programs of rural and agricultural development-oriented education. In Freire’s case, on the other hand, there has been a remarkable consistency in how his program of grassroots citizenship has influenced past as well as current formations of popular consciousness. That is, even if the practical operationalisation of critical pedagogy may be limited, the continuing appropriation of his progressive philosophy of education for horizontal emancipation, by community and civil society associations in Latin America and elsewhere, is widely visible and conducive to possible projects of social and political enfranchisement.

With these points on citizenship and citizenship education, it is our understanding, in fact conditional agreement with Bishop and Hamot (2001) that democracy is, by-and-large, a cross-cultural construct and practice, complemented by the reality that despite any inherent weaknesses in the case, it would still be ranked above anything that Africans have experienced in the past 40 years of postcolonial existence. With the problems of development persistent in the African context, therefore, and full citizenship rights not yet bestowed upon the public, complemented by the long-term manipulation of both the language and politics by the continent’s metamorphosing elite, it is our contention that there is a great need to formulate and implement effective and, where needed, culturally sensitive programs of citizenship education that both formally and informally educate the public about political processes as well as their fundamental rights, complemented by the important virtues of democracy that could all enhance the viability of current life situations. Yet, this will not be an easy process, for the meanings as well as the operationalisations of democratic governance in the African context will, especially, remain contentious, for these have to deal with and address expansive transformations of citizenship and governance relationships, discourses and practices that must take shape and become entrenched. That being as it may, though, we submit that the long journey to use inclusive projects of citizenship education to achieve practical and accountable systems of governance in strategically de-linking Africa is worth the effort and should be prioritised. In the final section of the paper, we briefly look, relative to the preceding discussions, at the case of democratising Zambia, and

the need to undertake specialised programs of citizenship that should entrench the fledging but still underdeveloped democracy of the country.

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT: A BRIEF FOCUS ON ZAMBIA

This brief focus on Zambia examines the possible cases of educational programs that promote political participation in the country. Zambia in central Africa ended 27 years of one-party rule in October, 1991. With the rescinding of Kaunda's long reign in 1991, and the assumption of power by the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), Zambia embarked on the road to democratisation and was, in effect, one of few Sub-Saharan African countries where genuine and sustained domestic mobilisation led to democratic governance in the early 1990s. As Joseph (1998), Hutchful (1997), Ihonvbere (1996c, 1996b, 1996a) and Sandbrook (1996) note, in most other countries of the region, the so-called early 1990s wave of democratisation simply 'constitutionalised' already existing authoritarian regimes, thus, leading to a new rise of 'illiberal democracy' (Zakaria, 1997). Here, autocratic rulers simply re-aligned old structures and loyalties to stay in power. Some of the contributing factors to Zambia's more viable move to democracy might have been that, with a population estimated (in July 2000) at 10 million, Zambia is the second most urbanised country (after South Africa) in Sub-Saharan Africa. It has also one of the continent's highest literacy rates, which was expected to reach 88 per cent in 2000 (Mwansa, 1995). These factors are complemented by an above average (in regional standards) per capita income of US \$880.

The magnitude of the Zambian public's disengagement from political participation was described by Bratton (1999) who, in a comprehensive essay entitled, 'Political Participation in a New Democracy', affirmed that while "voter turnout in founding elections was high in many African countries in the early 1990s exceeding 85% of registered voters, in Zambia's case, it vacillated between a high of 46%... [and] a shockingly low 14%" (pp. 549 and 555). The continuing cases of weak political participation in post-1991 Zambia also attest to an electorate that is, beyond the practice of voting, disengaged from politics. When Zambians were, for example, asked to what extent they were active politically, close to 75% said they were either not politically active at all, or minimally involved in political issues such voting, organising electoral programs or registering voters (Bratton, 1999). On another and still important level, it is also the case that, besides the country-wide depressed levels of political participation, the problem is selectively gender and age-specific such that in all national and regional elections since 1991, women tended to vote less than men, and younger people had lower voter turnout rates than older folks. The gender and age-specific factors definitely represent serious problems for a country where women outnumber men, and where close to 50 per cent of the population is under 14 years of age. And if one would have thought, as was understood then, that the third national elections, which were held in December and which ushered in the presidency of the current leader Mwanawasa, would change the overall situation for the average Zambian, it is the case that in early 2004, both the current socio-economic situation and any dividend from democracy that might result from close to 14 years of open governance, do not represent tangible progress for the people. Even if the 2002 elections witnessed relatively higher voter turnout rates that were seen as responding to allegations of corruption against former President Frederick Chiluba who has since been acquitted, for us still, as elsewhere in the wider continental context, political participation, as a multidimensional construct and practice, would go beyond the simple act of voting, and involves citizens fully partaking in defining and acting within and through their country's political processes, objectives and results. To see this, one should look beyond the election-specific weaknesses of the case that show us how the collective effects of the overall political apathy in the Zambian public space could have endangered the general essence or even the existence of the country's emerging

democracy. With the new governance arrangements, regardless of how you label them, not improving the lives of the average Zambian, the possible disquiet among the populace might have exacerbated the occurrence of a number of democracy-endangering occurrences including opposition groups boycotting elections, one president attempting to change the constitution and run for a third term, junior army officers staging an unsuccessful *coup d'état*, all complemented by the continuing dissatisfaction with a worsening economy that many are blaming on democracy itself.

With Zambian democracy, by-and-large, not meeting the aspirations of the people and with hitherto political interactions potentially representing a clear danger to both the spirit and the corpus of this central country's new democracy, therefore, we were proposing more intensified projects of citizenship education that contribute to the open and more inclusive discourses and practices of democracy that might lessen the political apathy described above. It should go without saying that Zambia's problems of political and continuing economic underdevelopment should be contextualised within the core of the expansively discussed and still prevailing institutional and related livelihood weaknesses that contemporary Sub-Saharan Africa has become well-known for (on the overall African situation see, among many others, Abdi, 2003; Bayart et. al., 1998; Tsie, 1997; Ake, 1996; Monga, 1996). We also concur with the crucial point that in order for Zambia to achieve a long-term and viable situational turn up, it has to achieve, as other parts of Africa should also do (Sandbrook, 2000; Gyimah-Boadi, 1998), a fully-functioning and fair political space.

In order to realise a well-governed and inclusive political platform, one should understand that Zambians, with a long history of colonialism and a non-democratic extensive reign during the postcolonial period, cannot suddenly appreciate the intricacies as well as the virtues and valued practices of democracy. In that vein, we agree with Enslin et al. (2001) that in order for democracy to succeed, people need to be taught to become democrats. It is on this understanding, therefore, that we suggest that in order to achieve a viable, participatory democracy that is not culturally alienating in the post-Cold War Zambian social and political spaces, some potential points of policy and programmatic departure must include important citizenship education-related undertakings. The first of these could be investigating and critically understanding the institutional, informational and attitudinal problems that are hindering general political participation in this partially democratising country. The second will focus on designing and implementing specific educational programs that could especially target the raising of people's participation in all facets of the political process, and especially in the case of women and youth. And the third will undertake the formulation as well as the establishment of collaborative efforts that involve the Zambian Electoral Commission and the Zambian Ministry of Education, with the aim of developing ongoing programs of citizenship education that selectively permeate all levels of the schooling system.

While we are not prescribing specific methodologies to achieve these at this point, we can still state that the formulations of these citizenship education programs can either be formal and implemented within public school settings and/or conveyed informally through, for example, civil society-based forums or through the electronic or printed media. It is, indeed, the case that in Zambia and, undoubtedly, elsewhere in theoretically democratising Africa, the overall relationship that common people have with the governance arrangements have not changed that much since 1990, and if liberal democracy or its possible African versions should herald inclusive possibilities of social development for Zambia and other countries, the processes themselves must become inclusive, and citizenship education must be enlisted to contribute to that realisation.

Again, new citizenship education programs will not necessarily, we should know, cure all the development ills of Zambia, and, of course, would not establish or sustain fully inclusive practices

of the political space, That is not even the case in established Western democracies. What they could instigate, at least in the short run, on the other hand, is to rearrange people's relationships with their government, thus precipitating a new Zambian state that is more accountable, more transparent in its public policy agenda and public resources management and, therefore, more responsive to public demands and expectations.

CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, we engage in a theoretical and quasi-eclectic discussion of the continuities of African underdevelopment, the role new civil society forums could play in alleviating these problems and the need for new conceptualisations and practices of citizenship that should counterweigh the malaise of governance that has characterised this old continent in the previously promising postcolonial period. We are cognisant that with many decades, if not centuries of colonial and post-independence oppression, complemented by the failed but still circulating policies of SAPs, as discussed extensively above, Africa needs new formulations of enfranchised citizenship, which may be achieved through post-Cold war constructions of citizenship education that should strengthen current exhortations of democratisation that are, in many cases, more rhetorical than real. Finally, we have stated a limited discussion on the situation of Zambia, which, as things started in the democratic front in early 1990s, should have achieved better prospects on both political and economic fronts. But as desirable and highly needed progress (on all fronts) stalled even here, we are calling for an Africa-wide and Zambia-specific understanding that in order for citizens to become willing, informed and effective democrats, they must be minimally taught to understand democracy and, in the process, behave democratically.

Acknowledgement

The authors acknowledge the support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (Canada) for its support in researching and writing this article.

REFERENCES

- Abdi, A. A. (2003). The collapse of the Somali state, and the promise (and possible pitfalls) of federation. *Horn of Africa Journal*, XXI, 20-29.
- Abdi, A. A. (2002). *Culture, Education and Development in South Africa: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*. Westport and London: Bergin and Garvey.
- Aina, T. A. (1999). West and Central Africa: social policy for reconstruction and development. In D. Morales-Gomez (Ed) *Transnational Social Policies: The New Development Challenges of Globalization*. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre.
- Ake, C. (1996). *Democracy and Development in Africa*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution.
- Bayart, J., Ellis, S. and Hibou, B. (1998). *The Criminalization of the State in Africa*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Bello, W. (2002). *Deglobalization: Ideas for a New World Economy*. Halifax: Fernwood.
- Bishop J. and Hamot, G. (2001). Democracy as a cross-cultural concept: promises and problems. *Theory and Research in Social Education*, 29, 463-487.
- Boyle, P. M. (1999). *Class Formation and Civil Society: The Politics of Education in Africa*. Brookfield, Vermont: Ashgate.
- Bratton, M. (1999). Political participation in a new democracy: institutional considerations from Zambia. *Comparative Political Studies*, 32, 549-588.
- Callan, E. (1997). *Creating Citizens: Political Education and Liberal Democracy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

- Cogan, J. (1998). Citizenship education for the 21st century: Setting the context. In J. Cogan and R. Derricott (Eds) *Citizenship for the 21st Century: An International Perspective on Education*. London: Kogan Page.
- Davies, I. and Evans, M. (2002). Encouraging active citizenship. *Educational Review*, 54, 69-78.
- Dewey, J. (1926). *Democracy and Education*. New York: Macmillan.
- Dower, N. (2003). *Introduction to Global Citizenship*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University press.
- Enslin, P., Pedlebury, S., and Tjiattas, M. (2001). Deliberative democracy, diversity, and the challenges of citizenship education. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 35, 115-130.
- Freire, P. (2000 [1970]). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Seabury Press.
- Freire, P. (1973). *Education for Critical Consciousness*. New York: Seabury Press.
- Gyimah-Boadi, E. (1998). The Rebirth of African liberalism. *Journal of Democracy*, 9, 18-31.
- Hahn, C. (1998). *Becoming Political: Comparative Perspectives on Political Education*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Hoogvelt, A. (2001). *Globalization and the Postcolonial World: The New Political Economy of Development*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Hutchful, E. (1997). Militarism and problems of democratic transition,. In M. Ottaway (Ed.) *Democracy in Africa: The Hard Road Ahead*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- Ihonvbere, J. (1996c). The crisis of democratic consolidation in Zambia. *Civilisations*, XLIII, 83-109.
- Ihonvbere, J. (1996b). On the threshold of another false start? A critical evaluation of prodemocracy movements in Africa. *Journal of Asian and African Education*, XXXI, 125-142.
- Ihonvbere, J. (1996a). *Economic crisis, civil society and democratization: the case of Zambia*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- International Confederation of Trade Unions (2002). African trade union statement on New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) from the ICFTU/OATUU: Conclusions of the OATUU – ICFTU/AFRO Meeting on the 30 June - 02 July 2002. Retrieved 8 June 2003 from <http://www.icftu.org>.
- Joseph, R. (1998). Africa, 1990-1997: From abertura to closure. *Journal of Democracy*, 9, 3-17.
- KAIROS. (2002). *Zambia: Failed Policies Deepen Misery*. Toronto: KAIROS.
- Leys, C. (1996). *The Rise and Fall of Development Theory*. London: James Curry.
- McHenry, D.E. (1994). *Limited Choices: The Political Struggle for Socialism in Tanzania*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- Monga, C. (1996). *The Anthropology of Anger: Civil Society and Democracy in Africa*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- Morales-Gomez, D. (1999). Introduction. In D. Morales-Gomez (Ed.) *Transnational Social Policies: The New Development Challenges of Globalization*. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre.
- Museveni, Y. (2000). *What is Africa's Problem?* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).
- Mwansa, D. (1995). Perspectives on literacy, gender and change: a case for Zambia. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 16, 495-517.
- Ndegwa, S. N. (2001). A decade of democracy in Africa. *Journal of the Association of African Studies*, XXXVI, pp. 1-16.
- Niemi, R., and Junn, J. (1998). *Civic Education: What Makes Students Learn*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Nyerere, J. (1998). Governance in Africa. *Southern African Political and Economic Monthly*, 11, 26-28.
- Nyerere, J. (1968). Education for self-reliance. In J. Nyerere *Freedom and Socialism: A Selection from Writings and Speeches, 1965-67*. London: Oxford University Press.

- Nzongola-Ntalaja, G. (1998). The state of democracy in Africa. In G. Nzongola-Ntalaja and C. L. Maragaret (Eds) *The State and Democracy in Africa*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
- Oakeshott, M. (1951). *Political Education*. Cambridge: Bowes and Bowes.
- Osaghae, E. (1999). Democratization in Sub-Saharan Africa: faltering prospects, new hopes. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 17, 5-28.
- Osei-Hwedie, K., and Bar-On, A. (1999) Sub-Saharan Africa: community-driven social policies. In D. Morales-Gomez (Ed) *Transnational Social Policies: The New Development Challenges of Globalization*. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre.
- OXFAM (2002). Rigged rules, double standards: Trade, globalization and the fight against poverty. [Online]. <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/campaign/campaigner/camp44/trade.htm> [Accessed 23 February, 2005].
- Pinkney, R. (1999). Can, and should, Europe export democracy to Africa? *Democracy and Nature*, 5, 325-342.
- Quigley, C., and Bahmueller, C. (1991). *Civitas: A Framework for Civic Education*. Calabasas, CA: Center for Civic Education.
- Sandbrook, R. (2000). *Closing the Circle: Democratization and Development in Africa*. Toronto: Between the Lines.
- Sandbrook, R. (1996). Transitions without consolidation: democratization in six African cases. *Third World Quarterly*, 17, 69-87.
- Soltis, J. (1988) Foreword. In R. Pratte *The Civic Imperative: Examining the Need for Civic Education*. New York, Teachers College Press.
- Torney-Purta, J. (1990). From attitudes and knowledge to schemata: expanding the outcomes of political socialization research. In O. Ichilov (Ed.) *Socialization, Citizenship Education, and Democracy*. New York, Teachers College Press.
- Tsie, B. (1997). States and markets in Southern African Development Community (SADC): Beyond the neo-liberal paradigm. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 22, 75-98.
- Ukpokodu, N. (1997). Developing democratic citizens for emerging democracies in Africa. *Social Education*, 61, 93-96.
- UNESCO (2000). *The Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All – Meeting our Collective Commitments*. Paris: UNESCO.
- United Nations. (1995). *The Copenhagen declaration and programme of action*. World Summit for Social Development, 6-15 March 1995. New York: United Nations.
- Van der Pijl, K. (1998). *Transnational Classes and International Relations*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Zakaria, F. (1997). The rise of illiberal democracy, *Foreign Affairs*, 76, 23-43.