

An Investigation into the Status of the Teaching and Learning of the Concept of Democracy at the Junior Secondary School Level in Botswana

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SUMMARY This paper identifies the aims and contents directly linked to the teaching and learning of the concept of democracy at the junior secondary school level in Botswana. It examines the perceived extent to which the objectives of teaching the concept of democracy has been achieved by 72 social studies teachers, in addition to finding out the perceived challenges they face and their suggested solutions while teaching topics related to democracy. It was found that the majority of the social studies teachers believe that the level of the achievement of the teaching of the aims is either average or above average. The problems of defining the concept of democracy and the handling of mixed ability students were identified as major challenges to the teaching of the concept of democracy in social studies. The study found a moderate but positive correlation between the self-assessment of 36 purposively selected subjects from the 72 social studies teachers and the observed attributes on some traits on democracy while teaching a topic on democracy. A correlated t-test further indicates a significant difference between the ratings of the teachers and those of the investigator. It was concluded that a gap exists between theory (what teachers perceive as practicing) and practice (what they actually do in the classrooms).

Introduction

Social studies, which takes care of the teaching of democratic values, in Botswana is a relatively recent discipline in Africa. In the pre-colonial era, the traditional African education was responsible for the production of good citizens, according to some norms regarded essential for community development (Fafunwa, 1974; Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2002). With the coming of the colonial masters from Europe on the African scene, the traditional African form of education was influenced by the Western curriculum introduced from Europe. In the case of Botswana, the influence of the British administrators had a tremendous impact on the educational system of the country. Subjects such as

history, geography, civics, mathematics, and English were introduced into the curriculum of schools. Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2002) have demonstrated the similarities between the objectives of the African traditional education and the Western education.

The Republic of Botswana, which is located in Southern Africa, is a democratic country. It is a landlocked country that shares boundaries with Zimbabwe and Zambia in the north, Namibia in the east and South Africa in the south. Noted for her peaceful environment and her enviable position as the fastest growing economy in the world, the country derives its revenue mainly from the mining of diamond and cattle industry. Formerly known as the Bechuanaland Protectorate for 81 years prior to independence in 1966, the country has an estimated 1.4 million people. The education system was initially fashioned after the British education system with the introduction by the missionaries of Christian religious tenets, in which writing and the calculation of simple arithmetical processes were the key subjects. As a result of the missionary activities dating back to 1800, many inhabitants were converted from the African traditional religion to Christians with the mandatory naming of the new born child with names taken from the holy Bible such as Abraham, James, John, Mathew, Abigail, Hanna, Rebecca and the like.

The independence granted to Botswana in 1966 has had a tremendous effect on the curriculum of schools. Social studies, like in other African countries, was taught under various names by the time of independence, particularly under the umbrella of civics. Merryfield and Muyanda-Mutebi (1991), Mautle (2000), and Adeyemi (2000) have highlighted how social studies was introduced into the curriculum of schools in Botswana in 1968 to better cater for the needs of a dynamic society. As a result of the societal demands for a curriculum change that would better serve the interests of the country, the Government of Botswana set up a National Commission on Education in 1975 to review the education system in the country. The work of that Commission, with the main aim of setting forth the policy and strategy for educational development and review, culminated in the publication in 1977 of the famous document *Education for Kagisano*, or more explicitly 'Education for Social Harmony'. Put again for easy understanding by international readers, *Education for Kagisano* or Social Harmony refers to education for:

- (1) **Democracy**, which implies a voice for all the people in their future, not only in political elections but also in community, social and economic affairs as well;
- (2) **Development**, which involves the management and use of Botswana's physical resources to create a strong economy;
- (3) **Self-reliance**, which involves progress through self-help or individual initiative and bringing the economy under the control of the citizens;
- (4) **Unity**, which implies a greater awareness of national identity and

deeper national loyalty and pride. (Republic of Botswana, 1977, pp. 23–24)

In 1994, the National Policy on Education was revised in accord with the needs of a changing society. This revised document of 1994 further made some recommendations to improve the education system in Botswana. Only recently, the long-term vision for Botswana identified the fifth principle known as *botho*, which refers to the concept of a person who has a well-rounded character, who is well-mannered, courteous and disciplined, and realizes his/her full potential both as an individual and as a part of the community to which he/she belongs (Republic of Botswana, 1997).

Sections 2.09, 2.10 and 2.11 under the sub-heading of ‘*Education and Democracy*’ in the Report of the National Commission on Education are particularly relevant to this study. They stressed the following points:

2.09. Democracy involves giving each mature person a voice in the running of affairs and the chance to participate, directly or through representatives, in decisions affecting his life. If democracy is to work, then people must have sufficient information to make wise decisions, and their decisions must be respected.

2.10. In education the implementation of democracy will have several implications. As many decisions as possible must be left to those most closely affected by them ... the community and parents, professional workers in education, and the pupils themselves. Communities must have a direct voice through school committees, through parent-teacher associations and through the formal structure of government, in the way their schools are run. Teachers and other educational professionals must be consulted about changes in their conditions of service. They must be given the opportunity to comment on impending changes, and to participate in the work of syllabus change and curriculum reform.

2.11. The curriculum should include teaching about democratic institutions and the way they work, and education should incorporate practical experiences of democratic institutions through visits to *kgotla*, council or parliament. (Republic of Botswana, 1977, pp. 25–26)

Objectives of the Study

The study examines only one aspect of the national principles, i.e. democracy, and is therefore geared to:

1. identify from the junior secondary social studies syllabus the aims and contents directly linked to the teaching and learning of democracy at that level;
2. examine the extent to which the objectives of teaching the concept of

- democracy has been achieved by junior secondary social studies teachers;
3. find out the perceived challenges of the junior secondary social studies teachers in the teaching of topics on democracy;
 4. identify suggested solutions from the teachers concerning the constraints identified in (3); and
 5. establish the correlation between teachers' views and some observed attributes on the concept of democracy during the teaching-learning process.

Brief Literature Review on the Concept of Democracy

Democracy is a concept that does not lend itself to easy definition. In fact, it is a misunderstood and misused concept. It is a concept with many meanings and interpretations depending on the people and the different historical situations. *Longman's Dictionary of Contemporary English* defines democracy in three ways: (1) a system of government in which everyone in the country can vote to elect its members; (2) a country that has a government that has been elected by the people of the country; and (3) a situation or system in which everyone is equal and has the right to vote, make decisions, etc. (1995, p. 364). In a way, democracy denotes a government based on the acquiescence of the governed as opposed to dictatorship or oligarchy, or based on wealth, ascription or simple power (Chambliss, 1996, p. 139). Democracy, a word borrowed from two Greek words *demos* (people) and *kratos* (power), literally translates into the rule of the people (Roth, 1997, p. 469).

The link between democracy and education has continued to generate a lot of controversies since the time of Aristotle (384–22 BC) who has continuously defended democratic ideals because, according to him, 'the many were, on average, likely to be wiser than the few, and also because a state in which the majority are excluded would be, of necessity, full of enemies'. The Aristotelian state was based on the wisdom and the virtues of the rulers. Democracy demanded a widespread education that would ensure both the wisdom and the virtue of the next generation of citizens, both those called to specific office and those doing the calling (Chambliss, 1996, p. 139). One of the founders of the United States of America, Thomas Jefferson has provided a close link between democracy and education. An advocate of meritocracy, Jefferson defined democracy as a form of government in which all authorities derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. It was his view that democracy needed a new kind of education to prepare citizens fit for the new, free and democratic nation through illuminating, as far as practicable, the minds of the people at large (Chambliss, 1996, p. 140). Adeyemi and Asimeng-Boahene (2001), quoting Dewey (1963) while writing on 'experience and education', stated the need for the cultivation of intelligence as preparatory to freedom:

Since freedom resides in the operations of intelligent observation and judgment by which a purpose is developed, guidance given by the teacher to the exercise of the pupils' intelligence is an aid to freedom, not a restriction upon it. (Adeyemi & Asimeng-Boahene, 2001, p. 71)

Most countries of the world today are basically linking their education systems to the promotion of democratic ideals. Many eastern European countries, hitherto under the influence of socialism, are gradually becoming democratized. Democracy in Africa on one hand seems to be a new phenomenon with the granting of independence to African nations. Historically, democracy seems not to be new on the African scene. Empires and empires have risen and fallen with much of the power vested in the kings and subordinate rulers. Monarchy in form of kingdoms and empires sprang up in different parts of Africa. A few examples are Oyo, Benin, Mali, Songhai, and Zulu. Beneath the power enjoyed by the kings are some areas bordering on democratic 'checks and balance'. For example, in the old Oyo Empire were the *Oyo Mesi* whose functions include the balancing of the authority of the *Alafin*, or the king of Oyo kingdom. This to some extent, has provided a sort of democracy whereby the king is not absolutely powerful, but provided with advice when need be.

Democracy existed in most pre-colonial nations of Africa. This traditional African democracy was based on a constant search for consensus through open discussion. Mazrui (1986) describes this type of government where elders sat under a tree and talked until they agreed or disagreed on a community issue. A typical example of the traditional form of democracy in Africa relates to the choice and installation of a new king. This choice is vested in the king makers, who in turn represent the people in running the affairs of the settlement or ward. In choosing a new king, all prospective candidates are given equal chance of being selected or rejected. The king makers consult with the various wards within the settlement as to the eligibility of each candidate using certain criteria or standards. Each candidate is allowed to 'talk' to the king makers in the form of the presentation of his 'manifesto' on how, when finally chosen, he would be fair to his people, develop his community socially, economically and politically. Based on these and other spiritual considerations, a king finally emerges. To some extent, democracy seems not to be a new concept in the traditional sense of it in Africa. Botswana's type of traditional democracy, known to the citizenry as *kgotla*, is basically a location where members of a community can voice local problems and concerns and resolve issues (Adeyemi, 2000). It is like a judicial organ to discuss, consider and settle cases

In a classroom situation, the way a teacher teaches, the way the pupils react or behave, may also give an impression of how democratic a teaching-learning process may be. Do students choose their class head in a democratic manner? Do they tolerate one another in spite of their religious, ethnic and economic differences? Do they work together in harmony? Is their self-respect between and among them? How democratic is the class? Even though democracy is often linked with governance, its tenets exist under the classroom situation. The

classroom atmosphere that is democratic creates a healthy learning place, nurtures children's and parents' dreams and aspirations, stimulates teacher's creativity and enthusiasm, and elevates all of its members (Schaffer *et al.*, 1994; Ekholm & Kull, 1996; Fashola & Slavin, 1998). The basic teacher qualities, which manifest themselves in a conducive classroom environment, include fairness, firmness and flexibility. They tend to enhance democracy in the classroom situation (Henson, 1981; Creemers & Reezigt, 1999). Creemers and Reezigt (1999) further identify some attributes of the classroom environment that contribute to democratic activities. These include the physical environment of the classroom (its size and location within the school system), the social system (relationship and interactions between students, and relationships and interactions between students and their teachers), an orderly classroom environment (arrangement of the classroom, cosiness, functionality) and teacher expectations about student outcomes (positive expectations, feelings of self-efficiency, professional attitude as contributing to democratic activities in the classroom).

Rogers and Freiberg (1994) argue that students who are products of a class where democracy is practiced tend to explain why they love their schools with statements such as:

All my teachers show respect to all of the students in the classes, and so we show respect to them. They treat you like family. This is just really our home. I think our freedom is more freedom of expression than just being wild and having no self-control. It's like we have a purpose, and so our freedom is freedom to express ourselves. Most of the teachers want us to study and do well in school so that we can do well in life. If I dropped out of school, my teachers would be disappointed. (pp. 11–12)

A democratic classroom is therefore deemed to be a situation where the teacher and the students work hand in hand in an atmosphere devoid of hatred, fear, uncooperativeness, unfairness, inequality in any form, and other negative traits to achieve the goals of learning and the overall goals of the school and the society.

Sample and Population of the Study

The sample of study was made up of 72 social studies teachers drawn from 36 junior secondary schools in Botswana. It was often the case to send university teachers to schools about May to July of every year to supervise pre-service teachers posted to secondary schools on teaching practice as part of their requirements for graduation. The investigator, as a supervisor during the teaching practice period of June/July 2002, used that opportunity to collect data, interview and observe social studies teachers at work. The investigator was able to visit 36 junior secondary schools in Botswana during the teaching practice exercise. Two social studies teachers were purposively chosen from each school, making a total of 72 social studies teachers as the sample of study. The two

social studies teachers were purposively chosen from each school because not less than two or not more than three teachers were responsible for teaching social studies. Where the numbers of teachers teaching social studies were more than two, the first two to agree to fill the questionnaire and ready to cooperate through answering questions and making records of social studies materials available, in addition to being observed during the teaching-learning process, were chosen for the sake of convenience. Where the numbers of social studies teachers were exactly two, the two teachers were automatically chosen. Therefore, a total of 72 from a total population of 101 teachers in the 36 junior secondary schools visited by the investigator formed the sample of this study, although 36 of the 72 teachers were observed in the classroom situation.

The Instruments Used in the Study

The following instruments were used in this study.

- *The Three-Year Junior Secondary Social Studies Syllabus*, to identify the aims and contents linked to the concept of democracy.
- A questionnaire entitled '*Teaching and Learning of the Concept of Democracy in Junior Secondary Schools*' and subdivided into three sections. Section 1 of this instrument was constructed by extracting the topics, general objectives and the associated specific objectives from the *Three-Year Junior Secondary Social Studies Syllabus* and then providing a space for the respondents to write the degree of achievement or realization on a five-point rating scale: fully realized (5), substantially realized (4), averagely realized (3), minimally realized (2) and not realized (1). Section 2 was a continuation of Section 1 with blank spaces provided for the respondents to write as many problems or challenges they face in the teaching on the concept of democracy. Section 3 was also a blank space for the teachers to write, in relation to the identified constraints, how they are solving or coping with the problems identified in Section 2.
- An observation guide entitled '*Observation of Classroom Attributes Related to the Teaching and Learning of the Concept of Democracy*'. This guide was used for recording observations made on teachers' application of the attributes of democracy while teaching the topic titled '*Governance*'. Attributes sought included presence of excitement of learning, coupled with peace of mind and inspiration to learn on the part of the pupils, the general creation of the right classroom atmosphere, encouragement and not the discouragement of pupils, the use of the right textbooks dealing with the concept of democracy, cooperation among pupils, fairness/equality, and group work while finding answers to problems that depict elements of democracy in the classroom setting, etc. (Brembeck, 1970). These attributes, as observed by the investigator, were rated excellent (5) through very good (4), good (3), poor (2) or very poor (1). This instrument was a useful tool in correlating the

views of teachers on what they perceived as doing and what they were actually doing.

Procedure and Method of Data Collection

As mentioned earlier, the teaching practice exercise of June/July 2002 afforded the investigator the opportunity to administer the instruments of study. Through the permission granted by the various school heads, two social studies teachers from 36 schools filled in the instruments described earlier, making a total sample of 72 social studies teachers. Thirty-six of them were also observed during the teaching-learning process. The social studies teachers also responded to a questionnaire, answering some questions and providing the right atmosphere to observe documents relating to the teaching of social studies in their schools, and particularly on the investigator's observation of their teaching of a topic associated with the concept of democracy.

Data Analysis

For the identification of the objectives and contents of teaching social studies at the junior secondary level, the *Three-Year Social Studies Syllabus* was used for the extraction of relevant materials related to the objectives and contents. In the case of the degree of realization of the objectives of teaching and learning social studies at the junior secondary level, the general objectives related to the teaching of the concept of democracy were provided and teachers requested to write the relevant degree of achievement in the spaces provided. A score of 5 was assigned to fully realized, 4 to substantially realized, 3 to averagely realized, 2 to minimally realized and 1 to not realized during. On the perceived challenges and their solutions, blank spaces were provided for the respondents to write at length. Their frequencies of mention were noted for calculation. On the classroom observation that a topic on democratic traits may be difficult to measure accurately, the investigator used his discretion to award scores from excellent (5), very good (4), good (3), poor (2) to very poor (1). The average performance (score) for each observed trait for the 36 teachers was found and correlated with the average self-evaluation score of the 36 teachers using the Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson's r). A correlated t -test was further used to test whether a significant difference existed between the teachers' self-ratings and the investigator's ratings on some attributes of the concept of democracy while teaching a topic in a classroom situation.

Findings and Discussion

This section of the paper discusses the findings pertinent to the objectives of the study.

The Aims and Contents on Democracy in the Junior Secondary Syllabus

The extent to which the nature of democracy at the junior secondary level in Botswana is covered at the junior secondary level in Botswana is examined in this section. In response to the recommendation of the *Revised National Policy on Education (Government Paper 2)* (Republic of Botswana, 1994), the 1996 *Three-Year Junior Secondary Social Studies Syllabus* was designed for implementation starting with the student cohort of 1996. The contents to be learned spread through a period of 3 years. The contents generally focus on the development of skills, values and knowledge that students are to demonstrate if they are to become informed and empowered Botswana (citizens of Botswana) in the new millennium. The infusion of issues related to environmental education, HIV/AIDS education, population and family life education and concepts dealing with democratic issues and other related topics are noticeable. Approximately 20% of the instruction time is devoted to projects and applied social studies in the form of educational visits and tours.

The aims of the 3-year junior secondary social studies programme are linked to the production of students who will be able to:

1. understand and appreciate Botswana's environment, society, development and their accompanying cultural or societal change;
2. recognize the importance of culture within Botswana and the problems that accompany cultural or societal change;
3. understand the main development issues facing Botswana and the most serious social problems facing humanity;
4. appreciate Botswana's position within the African continent in terms of regional, political, and economical groupings and bi-lateral and multi-lateral relations with other countries;
5. understand the concept of governance and structure of government;
6. practice concepts of justice and good citizenship, and choose to participate in the growth and development of society;
7. analyse and use simple statistical information and maps;
8. collect and organize, evaluate and use data;
9. carry out investigations into social phenomena, report findings and take appropriate action;
10. understand the underlying principles that guide Botswana's foreign policy; and
11. understand their relative strengths and weaknesses for future learning and work opportunities (Republic of Botswana, 1996, pp. ii-iii)

An examination of the above aims shows that Aim 5, 'To understand the concept of governance and structure of government', and Aim 6, 'To practice concepts of justice and good citizenship and choose to participate in the growth and development of society', are directly related to the understanding of the concept of democracy in pedagogical terms. The two aims are worthwhile

and they depict the needs of the society and national development. Ehman *et al.* (1974) have highlighted that successful instruction requires teachers to have goals, although goals may be vague statements of long-range purposes, they tend to provide an overall orientation for teachers. No educational system can survive without objectives. For a system to progress, there should be some statements, directions or missions to which some targets must be set. The 17-page document on the *junior secondary social studies syllabus* includes 10 modules, which are broken down into units. Generally, the syllabus is divided into columns under the headings: Topics, General Objectives, and Specific Objectives.

An examination of the topics, and the general and specific objectives, indicates some relationship between them and education for democracy as found in Table I. For instance, pupils might visit the *kgotla* to witness how an issue is democratically settled. The *kgotla* is a place for democratic resolution of issues (Adeyemi & Asimeng-Boahene, 2001). It is traditionally a location where members of a community can voice local problems and concerns, and resolve issues (Adeyemi, 2000). The topics identified as family, ward, culture, family and citizenship, Botswana and region, and Botswana and the world are capable of being used to teach and learn the rudiments of democracy in order to achieve the general and the specific objectives set forth.

The Extent to which Objectives have been Met

This section discusses the findings related to the views of social studies teachers regarding the extent to which the objectives of teaching social studies at the junior secondary schools have been achieved in Botswana. In this section, it was the assumption of the investigator that the specific objectives have been subsumed under the general objectives whereby the respondents were to rate the level of achievement in terms of fully realized (5), substantially realized (4), averagely realized (3), minimally realized (2) and not realized (1). Table II shows the findings concerning the level of achievement of the general objectives as responded to in the questionnaire. The spread of the responses of the 72 social studies teachers concerning the degree of achievement of the three related objectives on the concept of democracy is presented in Table II.

Table II depicts the results of the extent to which the general objectives have been met through the teaching of the contents related to the concept of democracy using the specific objectives over a long period of time. According to the responses of the 72 social studies teachers, the overall percentages were as follows: 7% of them believe that the three general objectives have been fully realized, 49% think that the objectives have been substantially realized, 29% think the objectives have been adequately realized, 9% think the objectives have been minimally realized, while 6% of them are of the opinion that the objectives have not been realized at all. Although the findings depict a high level of achievement according to the social studies teachers' perceptions, an examin-

TABLE I. Related topics, general objectives and specific objectives on the concept of democracy

<i>Topics</i>	<i>General objectives</i>	<i>Specific objectives</i>
Family	Understand the purposes, composition, types of families and changes that are occurring	Describe sources of conflict at the family level and ways of avoiding conflict Describe how family disputes are settled and the ways in which the process is changing
Ward	Understand the organization of the ward and changes that are occurring	Describe the cultural attributes of the ward in terms of economic, social and political organization (<i>mafisa</i> , etc.) Organize through role-playing a <i>lekgotla</i> session to resolve a conflict between families based on the principles of ' <i>mafoko a kgotla a mantle otlhe</i> ' Describe the way in which they are members of a family and thus its citizens
Culture, family and citizenship	Understand the relationship between culture, family and citizenship	Describe the major features of Botswana's constitution that relate to basic human rights and responsibilities
Botswana and region	Understand and appreciate the basic principles of governing and the rights and obligations of the governed at the national and international levels	Describe the limitations of power of government in Botswana's constitution Explain with examples the separation of powers between the executive, legislative and judiciary as provided for in Botswana's constitution from 1966 to the present
Botswana and the world	Understand and appreciate the values of governance and impacts of population on it	Explain the principle of 'social contact' between the elected and the electorate in local, national government and regional, continental and international bodies

ation of the findings shows that 85% of the respondents think the level of achievement was either average or above average, while 15% think the level of achievement was below average. There is the indication that a vast majority of the social studies teachers are of the opinion that they are meeting with the expectation of achieving their objectives of teaching, going by the three identified objectives related to the concept of democracy in Table II.

TABLE II. Degree of realization of social studies objectives

Objectives	Degree of realization				
	Fully	Substantially	Averagely	Minimally realized	Not
Understand the relationship between culture, family and citizenship	3(4%)	48 (67%)	10 (14%)	6 (8%)	5 (7%)
Understand and appreciate the basic principles of governing and the rights and obligations of the governed at the national and international levels	12 (17%)	41 (56%)	17 (24%)	2 (3%)	1 (1%)
Understand and appreciate the values of governance and impacts of population on it	1 (1%)	18 (25%)	35 (49%)	12 (17%)	6 (8%)
Overall frequencies (%)	16(7%)	106(49%)	62(29%)	20(9%)	12(6%)

Data presented as frequencies (percentages).

Perceived Problems/Challenges of Social Studies Teachers

The 72 teachers identified some constraints or challenges while handling the teaching of topics related to democracy in their classrooms. The frequencies of mention and the corresponding percentages are presented in Table III.

Of the 72 teachers who wrote freely on the challenges faced by them while teaching topics related to the concept of democracy, 60 or 83% of them were of the view that democracy is a difficult term to define. Fifty-eight percent were of the view that instructional materials dealing with democracy are lacking, and 67% opined that their training did not adequately equip them with the necessary skills to effectively teach the concept of democracy. Furthermore, 78% complained of generally a large class of between 35 and 45 students, which makes individualized instruction difficult, while 80% had problems handling students of mixed ability as more intelligent ones finish their assignments in time and create confusion before the end of the lesson.

TABLE III. Perceived challenges of social studies teachers

Problems/challenges	<i>f</i>	%
The difficulty of defining democracy	60	83
Instructional materials	42	58
Training/skills of teachers	48	67
Class size	56	78
Mixed ability classes	58	80

TABLE IV. Suggested solutions by teachers

Perceived solutions	<i>f</i>	%
Pre-service/in-service education	58	80
Textbooks by African authors	47	65
Teacher/Pupil ratio	35	49
Guest speakers	40	56
Funds	46	64
Special attention to slow learners	25	35

Solving the Identified Problems

Table IV shows the frequencies and percentages of the perceived solutions to the identified problems by the teachers. Eighty percent of the 72 teachers perceived the inclusion of relevant skills to teach social studies in general, and the concept of democracy in particular, in the pre-service and in-service education of teachers. This is already happening but these teachers would want a review of the existing teacher education programme to better cater for the wherewithal of teaching social studies concepts, including that of democracy. Sixty-five percent of them thought the availability of textbooks written by African authors should be examined to take care of our environment and the way we should understand democracy in our context. Forty-nine percent of them complained of a high pupil to teacher ratio of between 35 and 45 students in a class, which makes effective teaching very difficult. This trend, according to them, should be reduced. Invitation of guest speakers, particularly politicians, into the classroom and the provision of funds by government are seen as a panacea to the problems by 56% and 64% of the teachers, respectively. Thirty-five percent of the teachers alluded to teachers paying special attention to slow learners as the slow learners are always not at pace with the fast learners in the teaching-learning situation. They are of the view that special classes be created for the slow learners and handled by specially trained teachers.

Observation of Democratic Traits During the Teaching-Learning Process

The investigator devised some democratic attributes for which a sample of 36 purposively selected teachers out of a total of 72 social studies teachers self-evaluated themselves as found in Table V from excellent (5) to very poor (1). The 36 teachers were then observed by the investigator to correlate the scores self-awarded by them and his scores during the teaching-learning process in the social studies classroom situation. The topic taught by each of the 36 teachers was 'Governance'. The focus of the investigator centred on democratic attributes as handled by the teachers (Table V). The average for the 36 teachers was found in each category of attributes. The Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (*r*) was used to determine the level of agreement between the average

TABLE V. Relationship between perceived and observed traits of social studies teachers

Democratic attributes	Average teachers' self-scores	Average observation scores	Correlation coefficient <i>r</i>	Correlated <i>t</i>
Teacher's handling of the concept of democracy	4.9	3.2	0.44	4.83 Significant
Cooperation among pupils/others	4.2	2.9		
Fairness/equality	4.4	4.0		
Relevant teaching materials/aids	4.1	3.0		
General classroom atmosphere	4.0	2.7		

*Tabulated *t*-value was 2.132 at the 0.05 level.

scores of each attribute and the average observation scores of the investigator. In interpreting the correlation coefficient, the following criteria were used by the investigator. A correlation coefficient falling within the range:

- 0.0 to ± 0.20 was deemed to indicate a relationship that was negligible;
- ± 0.21 to ± 0.40 was deemed to indicate a relationship that was low;
- ± 0.41 to ± 0.60 was deemed to indicate a relationship that was moderate;
- $+ 0.61$ to $+ 0.80$ was deemed to indicate a relationship that was substantial;
- and
- ± 0.80 to ± 1 was deemed to indicate a relationship that was high.

Table V shows the average for each category of attributes as evaluated by the social studies teachers and the investigator. A Product Moment Coefficient of $+ 0.44$ indicates a moderate but positive relationship between the self-evaluation scores of the 36 teachers and their observed scores. Although the relationship is moderate and positive, the expectation was that the relationship would be higher and more positive. The correlation coefficient of $+ 0.44$ indicates a moderate but positive relationship between the actual practice of junior secondary social studies teachers and the preferred or ideal situation the investigator would want it to be. The correlated *t*-test was further used to test whether there is a significant difference between the self-evaluation of the teachers and the ratings by the investigator. The obtained *t*-value of 4.84 (degrees of freedom = 4) was significant at the 0.05 level (tabulated *t*-value = 2.132). This means that a significant difference exists between the teachers' self-assessment and the investigator's assessment on the teaching of the topic on democracy using certain attributes as criteria. This is an indication that the ideal has not been met going by the observation of the investigator, although other extraneous factors might be operating. This result tends to answer the question of how well teachers are

doing. Invariably, there is a gap in the actual and the expected to which some improvements should be made.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Going by the findings of this study, the majority of the social studies teachers believe that the level of the achievement of teaching of the aims pertaining to the concept of democracy is either average or above average. Various problems militating against the teaching of the concept of democracy have been identified, with the difficulty of defining democracy and the handling of students with mixed ability topping the list. Furthermore, the salient suggestions made for improvement focus mainly on the review of the pre-service and in-service education of social studies teachers, among others. Finally, the teachers' self-rating of some attributes on democracy while teaching and the observed ratings by the investigator depict a positively moderate relationship that is lower than expected. A correlated *t*-test further indicated a significant difference between the teachers' self-evaluation and the ratings of the investigator on an aspect of the concept of democracy. A gap therefore exists between theory (what teachers perceive as practicing) and practice (what teachers actually do in the classroom).

The recommendations that stem from the findings and conclusions of this study are as follows.

Pre-Service and In-Service Education of Social Studies Teachers

A finding of this investigation denotes that social studies teachers favoured a re-visit of the concept of democracy in the pre-service and in-service education of teachers. Efforts should be made by the colleges of education and the Faculties of Education to further focus on the definition of democracy and how it can best be taught, with particular reference to our culture and what this entails in a classroom situation. It is necessary to organize workshops during weekends and long vacations on the aims, relevant topics associated with the concept, improvization of local materials that might help in the teaching of the concept, methods of effective teaching as well as evaluation strategies of the concept. The challenge of examining various strategies of teaching to enhance effective teaching is important so that teachers can be helped to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

Relevant Teaching Materials

There is an indication that instructional materials used in junior secondary schools are usually produced by foreign authors. For instance, the concept of democracy is explained in most textbooks as a 'foreign' concept, which is 'imported' from either the USA or the UK. Very few textbooks authored by Africans are available and so making an explanation in the local context is therefore limited. Reference should, as much as possible, be made to local

examples. Although this is an age of globalization, a situation where an African student understands more of the phenomena in the Western world in contrast to his/her immediate environment needs to be reviewed for relevance. The challenge is for African scholars to produce instructional materials that are oriented to the African environment, and employing activities that are related to our culture such as visiting the *kgotla* where issues pertaining to the society are democratically and amicably discussed and implemented.

Future Research

Future studies might examine or partially replicate aspects of this study with additional variables such as the relationship between knowledge of the concept of democracy possessed teachers and the college or university attended by them, attendance at workshops, location of schools in terms of rural and urban setting, availability of relevant teaching materials, and the use of various teaching strategies employed in the classroom. Such studies might employ both interviews and observations on the site, and the use of questionnaires comprising items related to these additional variables. The subjects might be on local regional or at national level to enhance the generalization of the results. A follow-up of the subjects of this study is also suggested. The area of interest might deal with a finding that was contrary to the investigator's expectation such as the gap between theory and practice in the observed teaching situation. Such future studies might respond to the question of whether this result occurred by chance or that some other extraneous factors were operating.

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