Botho – “I Am Because We are.”
Constructing National Identity in the Midst of Ethnic Diversity in Botswana’s Junior Secondary Schools

The Harvard community has made this article openly available. Please share how this access benefits you. Your story matters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Citable link</td>
<td><a href="http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:33052851">http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:33052851</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terms of Use</td>
<td>This article was downloaded from Harvard University’s DASH repository, and is made available under the terms and conditions applicable to Other Posted Material, as set forth at <a href="http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:dash.current.terms-of-use#LAA">http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:dash.current.terms-of-use#LAA</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For Depapa, Musa, Safiya, and Mwamba,
who have been my foundation from beginning to end
Acknowledgements

To the students, teachers, administrators, staff, and community members who welcomed me into your schools and communities, I express my deepest gratitude. You have opened a window into your lives, hopes, and struggles in the hopes that your stories may bring us ever closer to quality education for all.

To my research assistants – Moyagabo, Mosenodi, Bopelo, and Kelly. Your hard work, eagerness to develop new skills, and patience to translate, explain and contextualize added incredible depth to my understanding of each school and community.

To colleagues at the University of Botswana and the Botswana Educational Research Association, especially Nkobi Owen Pansiri, Lydia Nyati-Saleshando, and Kelone Khudu-Peterson; your locally-grounded perspectives yielded invaluable insights throughout the data design, collection, and analysis stages. Your passion for reaching and teaching all children in Botswana is my inspiration.

Members of my writing group, Vidur Chopra and Lizzie Adelman, as well as the Mowana Lab, thank you for keeping me accountable and asking all the important questions from across a table and later across the globe.

My dissertation committee chair, Sarah Dryden-Peterson, has advised me with warmth and constructive dialogue on issues dear to us both in African education and beyond. I am fortunate to have as a mentor someone who takes time to understand so well what drives her students in research, contemporary issues, and personal lives. My other dissertation committee members, Meira Levinson and Paola Uccelli deserve recognition for pushing my thinking in new directions and always supporting me to create my best work, before pushing me to make it even better.

I gratefully acknowledge the funding without which this dissertation would not have been possible: a Fulbright fellowship from the U.S. Department of State; a Sinclair Kennedy Traveling Fellowship and Dissertation Completion Fellowship from Harvard University; and National Academy of Education/Spencer Dissertation Fellowship from the National Academy of Education.
# Table of Contents

Abstract

List of Tables and Figures

List of Appendices

Introduction

Paper 1: Unity and diversity in national identity:
Social studies curriculum as a reflection of changing societal concerns in Botswana

Paper 2: National unity in local contexts:
School-level responses to multicultural student bodies in Botswana

Paper 3: Experiences of (Dis)Unity:
Students’ negotiation of ethnic and national identities in Botswana schools

Cross-Paper Conclusion

Appendices

References
Botho – “I am because we are.” Constructing National Identity in the Midst of Ethnic Diversity in Botswana’s Junior Secondary Schools

Bethany Mulimbi

Abstract

Multiethnic states globally face the dilemma of how to negotiate ethnic diversity while promoting a unified national identity. In Botswana, a remarkable example of peace and stability in Sub-Saharan Africa, two highly visible discourses around national identity – one constructing national identity around the majority ethnic group’s culture and language, and the other of a tolerant, multicultural nation – currently compete across public spheres.

Formal schools are key institutions through which to observe the nature and effects of these competing discourses. State leaders use mass education as a vehicle to transmit an authorized version of national identity, through centralized education policies and curriculum. Yet schools are also sites in which ordinary teachers and students actively participate in constructing the nation.

This dissertation reports on comparative case studies of four junior secondary schools that vary in the ethnic composition of their student bodies and surrounding communities. The work analyzes one overarching question: How does national identity, as currently constructed and experienced in Botswana’s public junior secondary schools, account for the reality of ethnic diversity in the nation-state and its schools? The three papers that together comprise this dissertation approach the inquiry through different lenses. The first paper analyzes social studies curriculum, as written in the syllabus and textbooks and as taught by teachers, to consider how national identity is officially
constructed. The second examines how Botswana’s schools respond to the multiculturalism of their student bodies, within the context of assimilationist and nationally centralized education policies and curriculum. The final paper considers how junior secondary schools shape the social identity development of adolescents as they negotiate how and why to enact ethnic versus national identities.

Overall, I find continuing dominance of majority Tswana language and culture in the content of public schools’ policies and curriculum in Botswana, which are then implemented with fidelity by teachers and administrators, regardless of the cultural composition and perceived needs of their student bodies. In each paper, I offer recommendations for how practitioners and policy makers might move forward in transforming multicultural discourse into multicultural school practices promoting the equality of all of Botswana’s students.
Tables and Figures

Paper 1

Figure 1: Indigenous ethno-linguistic groups in Botswana. 14
Table 1: Common Components of National Identity 19
Table 2: State Policies Toward Internal Cultural Diversity 20
Table 3: Data Sources 28
Table 4: Characteristics of Case Study Schools 29
Table 5: Interview Participants 30
Table 6: Instructional Content Observed in Social Studies Lessons 41
Figure 2: Excerpt from lesson observation notes showing strict adherence to textbook 42

Paper 2

Figure 3: Connections between education policy approaches to cultural diversity, school-level content and processes, and individual student-level outcomes 59
Table 7: Characteristics of Case Study Schools 66
Figure 4: Multiple embedded case study design of junior secondary schools 67
Table 8: Summary of Data Sources 69

Paper 3

Figure 5: Models for creating an inclusive national identity across pre-existing more and less-dominant ethnic groups 100

Conclusion

Table 9: State Policies Toward Internal Cultural Diversity 126
Figure 6: A mismatch between promised and realized national identity models 127
Appendices

Appendix A: JSS Social Studies Syllabus objectives selected for analysis 134
Appendix B: Selections from Textbook Codebook 137
Appendix C: Lesson Observation Protocol 142
Appendix D: Lesson Observation Codebook 147
Appendix E: Teacher Interview Protocol 148
Appendix F: Interview and Focus Group List 152
Appendix G: Case Study Protocol 155
Appendix H: Selections from Case Study Codebook 158
Appendix I: Student Focus Group Protocol 162
Appendix J: Student Interview Protocol 166
Appendix K: Examples of Line-by-Line Codes for Student Cases 172
Introduction

Taking the remarkably stable and peaceful Sub-Saharan African country of Botswana as an in-depth case, this dissertation examines how a state can use mass education to construct national identities with the purpose of unifying citizens of diverse cultural backgrounds, as well as how schools and individual stakeholders react to these state efforts. It further examines how the elements that make a particular construction of national identity salient for some citizens can be irrelevant or alienating to others. This study is of particular relevance at this time, as elections in Great Britain, the United States, France, Austria, and others reveal intense debate and conflict between citizens over definitions of their national identity and its implications for whom to include in their citizenry.

Botswana has just celebrated its 50th anniversary of independence and is taking stock of its progress to date and priorities for the future. Two highly visible discourses around national identity – one constructing national identity around the majority ethnic group’s culture and language, and the other of a tolerant, multicultural nation – compete across public spheres (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017). Now is a key moment to contribute a deep, contextual glimpse into the perspectives and experiences of school administrators, teachers, staff, and students, as they carry out the day-to-day business of teaching and learning while experiencing the reality of ethnic pluralism in the national and school populations.

The assimilationist versus multicultural discourses are particularly apparent in expectations placed on schools, which current policies simultaneously ask to a) promote unity through educating all students on Tswana (the majority group) culture and language (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006b; Tabulawa, 1997) and b) “recognise, support and strengthen
Botswana’s wealth of different languages and cultural traditions” (Presidential Task Group, 1997, p. 5). These largely contradictory policy directives stem from increasing political and legal pressure from minority rights advocates who claim that their treatment as second-class citizens threatens the unity and social harmony on which Botswana prides itself (Gulbrandsen, 2012; Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006a; Republic of Botswana, 2000).

Discourses of multiculturalism and calls for minority group recognition are growing not just in Botswana, but globally (Banks, 2008; Cornwell & Stoddard, 2001), and Botswana’s minority group advocates have situated their appeals in international discourses of “cultural,” “indigenous,” and “minority” rights (Werbner, 2002). Englund (2004) asserts that, “demands for recognition of minorities in postcolonial Africa… represent an effort to become a part of, and therefore to transform, the state” (as cited in Gulbrandsen, 2012, p. 222). Yet such a fundamental transformation of Botswana, as of other nations, will require a complicated reimagining of diverse citizens’ roles within the nation. The processes of negotiating ethnic groups’ positions within a nation have been drivers of armed conflict in other similar contexts, so the stakes are high (see, for example Keller, 2014; King, 2014).

This dissertation reports on comparative case studies of four junior secondary schools that vary in the ethnic composition of their student bodies and surrounding communities. The work analyzes one overarching question: How does national identity, as currently constructed and experienced in Botswana’s public junior secondary schools, account for the reality of ethnic diversity in the nation-state and its schools? The three papers that together comprise the dissertation approach the inquiry through different lenses, representing different levels of the education system and stakeholders who contribute to constructing Botswana’s national identity in varying capacities. I look first
at state-level policy and curricular responses, then school-level structures, content, and relationships, and finally individual student-level experiences negotiating their ethnic and national social identities.

To examine state-level priorities, I adopt a framework that lets us consider how a state’s policy toward integrating diverse groups might be reflected in specific components of national identity reflected in written curriculum. States have historically used a variety of policies to handle the potential for conflict between ethnic groups, on a spectrum from absolute elimination (e.g. genocide) to management of ethnic diversity (e.g. full territorial autonomy) (Kymlicka and Norman, 2000). The shift happening recently in Botswana’s policy discourse is from an assimilationist to a multicultural integration framework. Both approaches can support peace by building a national identity intended to include citizens of all ethnic backgrounds through civic elements such as national principles, symbols, and equal rights, and by not endorsing ethnic elements of race or ancestry to determine who is included in the nation. The approaches differ in that assimilation does not recognize or accommodate minority culture, religion, or language in public, while multicultural integration does.

Understanding the state-level approach to including multicultural content in the education system leads into the second paper, which questions whether a policy and curricular approach of tolerating minority ethnic identities in private but not recognizing them publicly allows schools to develop students of different ethnic groups into equal citizens. As Gutmann (1999, 2004) argues, recognition of cultural diversity enables discussion of ways in which diverse groups contribute to society and have different perspectives, historical and contemporary experiences, and languages, while toleration of diversity silences such discussion. When national policies and curriculum prioritize
toleration over recognition, a) schools face no incentive and sometimes disincentives to discuss ethnic diversity, b) these policies constrain how individuals can think and act on an issue (Ruiz, 1984), or c) encourage individual teachers to practice “loyal subversion” of the policies they deem to be harmful (Levinson, 2015), and d) can lead to a sense of isolation, disengagement, or conflict with the national collective among students who identify with unrecognized groups (Banks, 2008).

The third paper considers such potential student experiences in more detail, examining student experiences negotiating their social identities within the state and school contexts described in the first two papers. Researchers in social psychology have proposed different models of how cognitive representations of an overarching social identity – such as a national identity – can be manipulated to include or exclude subgroups – such as ethnic groups. First, some have proposed a recategorization model, in which everyone’s ethnic identities are replaced by a single, new national identity (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). In reality, such an approach frequently becomes assimilationist, whereby minority cultures and languages are expected to become irrelevant, but majority language and culture become central to the national identity. A dual-identity model, on the other hand, acknowledges distinct subgroups within an overarching group identity. This model is based on the assumption that sub-group identities will continue to be salient to individuals, but that social identity is multilayered, and individuals can enact different social identities as they are more salient in different contexts (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Kawakami, 2003). Empirical research has shown that majority group members frequently prefer recategorization representations, whereas individuals who identify with minority cultures tend to find their national identity more salient within a dual-identity approach (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Kafati, 2000; Lee &
Suarez, 2009; van Oudenhoven, Prins, & Buunk, 1998). The recategorization and dual-identity models – which focus on how individuals relate different social identities – run parallel to the assimilationist and multicultural integration models described earlier – which operate at the level of state policy (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2007).

From the preceding conceptual framing, it is clear that state-level approaches to managing cultural diversity can have tangible effects at the school and student levels. The case study design of my dissertation allows me to explore the connections between these levels through policy and curricular review, observations of daily life in public junior secondary schools, and interviews, focus groups, and extended interactions with individual teachers and students. The first paper analyzes social studies curriculum, as written in the syllabus and textbooks and as taught by teachers, to consider how national identity is officially constructed. I find that the written curriculum still describes national culture largely through the norms and language of the Tswana ethnic majority, yet it promotes civic values that cut across ethnic groups and emphasizes the importance of national identity over ethnic identity. Teachers overwhelmingly adhered to the curriculum as written, citing ideological and practical reasons for doing so. I call into question whether the elements of national identity that teachers found salient in the written curriculum are equally relevant for their students today, as the economic and political climate in Botswana has changed considerably.

The second paper builds off of the policy and curricular context established in the first paper and a paper I recently published with my advisor (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017). Taking three of the schools as cases, the paper examines how

---

1 For brevity’s sake, I did not discuss the case of Molapo School in the second paper. Teachers at this school were more reluctant to participate in interviews, so the case database was less complete at this
Botswana’s schools respond to the multiculturalism of their student bodies, in schools that vary in the ethnic composition of their student bodies and surrounding communities. The three schools responded differently to the reality of multicultural student bodies in their schools, with two following national policies closely, and one crafting school level policies adapted to its student population, yet tightly constricted by national policies and curriculum. In all three schools, students of ethnic minority backgrounds experienced varying degrees of shame, discrimination, and a sense of exclusion from the nation and found little recourse to discuss and address these experiences within the structures of their schools. I argue that schools could better develop students’ capacity for equal citizenship were they supported by national education policies and curriculum to recognize the cultural, historical, and linguistic diversity of Botswana’s ethnic minorities explicitly in schools, rather than tolerating this diversity only in private spaces.

The final paper returns to questions raised in the first and second papers about how students experience formal curriculum and education policies that promote assimilation to *Tswana* language and culture. The study considers how adolescents negotiate their understanding and enactment of national and ethnic identities, and the influence of their schools as authorized state spaces on their social identity development. I present in-depth contrasting cases of a minority and a *Tswana* student drawn from the school case study database, who were exceptional on several dimensions: their efforts and abilities put them near the top of their classes in academic achievement; they had vast knowledge of current events and historical facts learned outside of school, compared to most of their peers with whom I spoke; and they were unusually reflective in discussions.
of their social identities. Taking these students’ experiences to represent the upper limits of what is possible, rather than what is typical for junior secondary school students reflecting on their ethnic and national identities, I highlight differences in the value and attachment to school constructions of national identity for students who identify as members of majority versus minority ethnic groups in Botswana.

Overall, I find continuing dominance of majority *Tswana* language and culture in the content of public schools’ policies and curriculum in Botswana, which are then implemented with fidelity by teachers and administrators, regardless of the cultural composition and perceived needs of their student bodies. Based on the findings and implications presented in each paper, I conclude this dissertation with a discussion of the inter-related nature of policy, school practice, and student experiences related to the continuing lack of recognition of minority ethnic group experiences in Botswana’s schools. I offer some initial ideas of how practitioners and policy makers might move forward in transforming multicultural discourse into multicultural school practices promoting the equality of all of Botswana’s students. These suggestions are based on problematic aspects of current approaches for individuals’ ability to relate as equals across ethnic groups. I discuss areas for further research, as the state continues to face a dilemma of how to balance the need to maintain peace with increasing pressure to fully include minority groups in the nation. Insights from Botswana’s experience, as presented in this dissertation, have relevance theoretically and practically for education systems seeking to build national unity in the face of citizenries evolving through migration and changing political and economic conditions.
Limitations and Opportunities of the Research Environment

My role in the schools and the unique conditions that my research created beyond day-to-day school practices resulted in unique opportunities and limitations for this study. These special considerations stem from my position as a researcher sanctioned by the Ministry of Education and my foreigner status – in appearance, language, and mannerisms.

As a researcher, I entered my case study schools with more authority than I would have expected. Obtaining consent to research schools in Botswana is a very top-down process: I acquired a research permit from the Ministry of Education, sought approval from regional education offices, then approached administrators at my selected schools for permission to carry out the research. Administrators, teachers, and students who gave me their consent to be interviewed and observed did so within structures of power that expected their full participation. While providing me with excellent access to meetings, lessons, and day-to-day activities, this reality also set a tone of mistrust; some teachers and students gave consent but then withdrew from participation, and others were unsurprisingly guarded in our interactions.

While students and teachers are somewhat used to quantitative and local researchers collecting data at their schools, they were not accustomed to a qualitative approach that requires a researcher’s extended presence. I went to great lengths to convince participants that I a) wanted them to choose whether to participate, b) would make every effort to maintain confidentiality, and c) hoped they would share personal experiences and opinions rather than official policies or material they had mastered at school.
Because I do not speak any of the local languages in Botswana, a research assistant from the local community worked with me to translate for most students at each site. I trained these research assistants in the importance of confidentiality, maintaining an open mind, and allowing students to speak freely. The research assistants’ perspectives yielded invaluable insights into the community and school context at each site, but their presence sometimes made students more hesitant to share their opinions. Since students speak almost entirely in local languages in their interactions with one another outside of lessons, my insights into the content of these interactions are drawn from participants’ accounts or my direct observations only of focus groups and the research club.

I conceive of my focus groups, interviews, and the research club as “private spaces,” because of my assurance of confidentiality in these settings and because the small group or one-on-one interactions allowed more intimate conversations than staff meetings, lessons, or large school events. Yet these research contexts differed greatly from ordinary “private spaces” at the schools (e.g. small-group conversations between friends and colleagues), due to my role as an outsider who was authorized to ask questions in unusual formats and about unusual topics. Most notably, the private research spaces allowed conversations about ethnic diversity in Botswana’s schools and wider society that generally went unspoken.

Teachers often reminded me explicitly that issues of language of instruction, inter-ethnic relations, and recognition of minority ethnic groups remain sensitive and politically loaded. One asked me to turn off the recorder before explaining fierce political arguments that as yet left minority students’ language and cultural needs unmet in schools. Others described how “other people” might take issue with inequalities between groups, but that they, personally, didn’t see a problem. In hushed tones, some minority
teachers told me about their own experiences of discrimination as students or still as adults, even among their colleagues at the schools. Yet, they described how they had learned to keep their head down, laugh it off, disguise their accent, or remind themselves that things used to be worse.

Teachers’ experiences of ethnic relations warrant further research and analysis themselves. For my purposes, they served as a reminder to describe school practices and effects for students without assuming that the practices always matched teachers’ desires, personal experiences, and underlying beliefs. For this reason, I highlight in this dissertation how national education policies and curriculum served to constrain individuals’ public voice around issues related to Botswana’s ethnic diversity that many teachers, administrators, and students nevertheless voiced in private.

Student experiences, however, feature prominently in this dissertation, most notably in the final paper. My calls for recognition of ethnic diversity in Botswana are founded on students’ school experiences. First, they stem from my concern for students like Thato, who find little acknowledgement of their home languages and cultures in schools and often face discrimination as well as burdens accessing schools and understanding instruction. Second, they are based in hope from watching students like Thato, Onalenna, and many of their peers, who demonstrated determination in the face of obstacles to their learning and the curiosity and willingness to engage with new ideas, even when they challenged their prior conceptions.
Since independence from Great Britain in 1966, Botswana has been celebrated as an example of enduring peace and democracy. Yet Botswana is not unlike the many other multiethnic states in Sub-Saharan Africa, in that it has faced the dilemma of how to negotiate ethnic diversity while promoting a sense of national unity. Botswana has followed a particular path: post-independence education policies promoted a monocultural construction of national identity around the majority ethnic group’s culture and language. Currently, however, almost fifty years after Independence, this monocultural construction is being challenged by discourse constructing a tolerant, multicultural nation. How Botswana is negotiating ethnic diversity and national unity through education is instructive for other multiethnic states, particularly those where political stability and peace are tentative.

At present, there are competing constructions of Botswana’s national identity: a spectrum between monocultural, rooted in the only slightly numerically dominant Tswana ethnic group and multicultural, reflective of Botswana’s more than 20 ethnic groups (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017; Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006a). These varied constructions are particularly visible in expectations placed on the formal education system, which Botswana’s post-independence government has long regarded as “potentially the most important single instrument for nation-building” (Republic of Botswana (RoB), 1977, p.12). The first post-independence official education policy, Education for Kagisano (1977), embraced the majority indigenous language, Setswana, and promoted the Tswana ethnic identity as the identity of all citizens, including
members of the numerous ethnic minority groups (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006a; Tabulawa, 1997). Two decades later, Vision 2016, a document articulating national goals for the 50th anniversary of independence, drastically departed from this sense of a homogeneous cultural identity, stating, “The education system will recognise, support and strengthen Botswana’s wealth of different languages and cultural traditions” (Presidential Task Group (PTG), 1997, p. 5). As a longterm vision document, Vision 2016 – which was drafted in 1997 – remains the blueprint guiding national development policies (RoB, 2009).

The competing monocultural and multicultural constructions of Botswana’s national identity within the education system are not inconsequential for Botswana’s continued stability and students’ well-being. Policies promoting assimilation to a Tswana cultural identity as the basis of Botswana’s national identity may have contributed to national unity and Botswana’s avoidance of ethnically-based violence (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017; Gulbrandsen, 2012). On the other hand, ethnic minority children’s comparatively poor academic performance and high school drop-out rates have been attributed to these same monolingual and monocultural Tswana school policies and curriculum (Jotia & Pansiri, 2013; Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006b; Pansiri, 2012). Drawing on this research, minority advocacy groups’ calls for recognition and support within the education system resemble arguments promoting multicultural education globally. This paper examines Botswana’s comparatively lengthy experience negotiating ethnic diversity and national unity in its education policies and curriculum. Botswana has done so in a region where the stakes for stability and peace are demonstrably high. My analysis of this experience thus serves as an important contribution to the literature on
multicultural education, which has focused predominantly on more stable North American and Western European cases.

As Botswana marked its 50th anniversary of independence in 2016, the nation has been taking stock of its progress toward Vision 2016’s goals and charting the course forward. This paper contributes to this process by discussing the extent to which formal classroom instruction around Botswana’s national identity recognizes the cultural diversity of Botswana’s student body, as articulated in Vision 2016. Through an analysis of centrally-approved junior secondary (JSS) social studies curriculum, as both written and implemented in classrooms across the country, this paper considers how national identity is officially constructed in Botswana’s education system today, and with what rationale on the part of curriculum writers and teachers. It concludes by discussing potential and inter-related ramifications of the curriculum as implemented, for continued political stability and for diverse students’ sense of inclusion.

Background

Ethnicity in Botswana

Although the name of the country indicates that Botswana is the home of the Tswana people, there are in fact many ethnic groups within the national borders. Indigenous ethnic groups found in Botswana are illustrated in Figure 1, organized by their linguistic relationships. The Constitution recognizes eight “major tribes” who share the common language, Setswana, and who live mainly in the south and east of Botswana (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006a; Pansiri, 2012; RoB, 2000). As is customary in English, I refer to this numerical majority ethnic group as Tswana, reserving the term Batswana to connote all citizens of Botswana.
Botswana’s indigenous ethnic groups also include several non-Setswana-speaking minority ethnic groups who live throughout the country but are concentrated in the west and north (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006b; Pansiri, 2012). Each group (other than the KhoiSan) speaks a unique language that is mutually unintelligible with Setswana but in the same Bantu language family. These groups are not recognized in Botswana’s Constitution.

Social scientists have long cautioned against “groupism” – thinking of ethnicity as involving bounded groups whose members are homogeneous on various cultural markers,
language, and worldviews; they argue for conceptualizing ethnicity as dynamic processes of social interactions and ways of interpreting the social world (See, for example, Barth, 1969; Handelman, 1977; Brubaker, 2009). However, many of these same scholars have noted the natural human tendency and political usefulness of reifying ethnic groups (Brubaker, 2009), a practice that is common in policy rhetoric and school textbooks globally. Botswana is no different: curricular documents, stakeholder interviews, and lesson observations show a strong tendency toward such groupism, as opposed to more complex understandings of ethnic identity. Grounded in these data sources, this analysis takes references to specific, named ethnic groups as units of analysis.²

Policy-makers and minority rights advocates use widely varying estimates of ethnic proportions to represent Botswana as culturally homogenous or diverse, with claims ranging from 80 percent Tswana (RoB, 1977) to 18 percent Tswana (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006b; Nyati-Saleshando, 2011). The Afrobarometer survey is the only nationally representative data that includes self-reports of respondents’ ethnicity. In the three years that include data on ethnicity (2005, 2008, 2012), just over half of respondents identify as Tswana, and slightly under half identify as one of 21 other ethnic groups (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017). While numerical proportions of Botswana’s ethnic groups are not well-understood, the eight Tswana groups constitute the majority in political and legal terms, while numerous politically unacknowledged but self-identifying non-Tswana ethnic groups make up the minority.

The lack of official statistics on ethnicity has eliminated neither the salience of ethnic identification, nor the political import of estimating group proportions. Ethnic

² We acknowledge, however, that individuals in Botswana may think about boundaries between ethnic groups and the nature of ethnic identity very differently.
minority advocacy has grown in Botswana over the past two decades, and a Presidential Inquiry into certain sections of the Constitution concluded that, due to widespread public perceptions of discrimination against minority ethnic groups: “…the long-term stability of this country, and in particular, the sustainability of its unity, could not be guaranteed” (Republic of Botswana, 2000, p. 9). The sections of the Constitution found to be discriminatory have since remained unchanged (Nyati-Saleshando, 2011).

**Language Policies**

In the name of national unity, Botswana’s post-independence government banned the use of minority languages in public spheres including schools, the radio, the courts, and Parliament (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006b). *Setswana* was declared the “national language,” with English remaining the “official language” (Janson & Tsonope, 1991). Since Education for Kagisano (RoB, 1977), *Setswana* has remained the language of instruction for the earliest years of primary school, after which instruction is carried out in English, with *Setswana* a compulsory subject through the end of junior secondary school (RoB, 1994), around age 17. Language of instruction policy has been a particularly contentious issue. When the most current education policy was drafted in 1993, the committee included a recommendation to offer primary school instruction in minority languages, yet this recommendation was rejected in the final policy because it was “counter to national language policy” (RoB, 1994, p. 85). While *Setswana* is the home language of the vast majority of households in southeastern Botswana, in northern and western districts – historically minority areas – many children enter school knowing little or no *Setswana* (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006b).
**Teachers’ Roles**

By and large, teachers in Botswana’s government schools are dependent on the central government and Ministry of Education for their own education, sponsorship of their tertiary studies, employment, and content delivery. Most teachers have come of age in an era of a 10-year free basic education, since the government introduced universal, free primary school in 1980 and junior secondary school in 1987 (Tabulawa, 2011). For students who pass junior secondary school, the government then provides sponsorship for the two-year senior secondary education, and those who achieve high enough marks at this level receive approval and sponsorship from government to study at Teachers’ Colleges or the University of Botswana. Teachers have little choice over the program of study at college or university. Not one of the 11 teachers interviewed for this paper chose to become a teacher of their own volition; they based the decision on government sponsorship and future employment opportunities. Teachers have similarly little control over what and how they teach once they are employed through the Ministry of Education.

As a University of Botswana professor and scholar, Tabulawa (2009) sees it, the curriculum, and the national exams to which it is tied are rigid: “The highly specific content leaves absolutely no room for the teacher to determine what to teach” (p. 101). Although teachers have a strong union that has ensured they receive fair, timely pay and reasonable leave, teacher morale is generally low due to perceived lack of promotions and salary increases (Mhlauli, 2012). Teachers’ indebtedness to government for their education and livelihoods, as well as the limited choice they have over the content areas they teach or how to teach them together comprise factors that decrease the likelihood of their challenging or undermining the official, written curriculum during their classroom practice.
Conceptual Framework

Since independence, Botswana has used mass education to construct and convey notions of a common national identity that unites its multiethnic populace. In line with Anderson (1983), this paper defines national identity as a constructive act of imagination held collectively by citizens and perpetuated in official institutions, media, and public discourse. To construct national identity around which citizens will unite, nations have tended to focus on what is common for all members, rather than how its citizenry is diverse (see, for example Carretero, 2011; Kymlicka, 2001; Smith, 1991).

Among scholars of nationalism and ethnic relations, there is a longstanding distinction between civic and ethnic elements of national identity, and nations differ in which elements they emphasize in official constructions of national identity (Meinecke, 1919/1970; Brubaker, 1999). According to the civic/ethnic nation dichotomy, membership in a civic nation is seen as voluntary for anyone living within the national territory who ascribes to the nation’s political ideology, institutions, and rights, whereas membership in an ethnic nation is exclusionary, based on one’s ancestry or race. Other scholars have pointed out that the ethnic/civic dichotomy leaves cultural elements of national identity (i.e. language, religion, and traditions) in an ambiguous space (Brubaker, 1999; Shulman, 2002). Cultural characteristics tend to have specific ethnic origins, yet an individual can acquire them voluntarily. Table 1 (adapted from Shulman, 2002, p. 559) presents civic, ethnic, and cultural components of national identity.
Table 1

*Common Components of National Identity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Nationalism</th>
<th>Key Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Civic</td>
<td>Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will and consent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political ideology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political institutions and rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>Ancestry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Race</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Kymlicka and Norman (2000) point out, a state may adopt a range of policies meant to handle or eliminate ethnic diversity, as shown in Table 2. Two approaches, assimilation and multicultural integration, both manage internal cultural diversity by constructing a new “transcendent identity” that emphasizes “full, equal membership in the state” (p. 14) through the civic elements of national identity. Neither approach endorses ethnic elements of ancestry or race as central to membership in the nation, but assimilationist and multicultural integration approaches differ in how they manage the cultural basis of national identity. Assimilationist policies refuse to acknowledge minority cultural practices, religions, or languages or accord them recognition or support in public schools, institutions, national holidays, or other public spaces. Policies promoting multicultural integration, on the other hand, acknowledge that ethnocultural identities will continue to exist and “must be recognized and accommodated within these common institutions” (p. 14).
Table 2

**State Policies Toward Internal Cultural Diversity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eliminate Difference</th>
<th>Manage Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genocide</td>
<td>Hegemonic Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partition</td>
<td>Territorial Autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assimilation (defined below)</td>
<td>Multicultural Integration (defined below)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Civic:** full, equal membership in the state

**Ethnic:** Does NOT endorse ethnic elements of ancestry or race

| Minority cultural practices, religions, or languages not accorded recognition or support in public institutions | Minority cultural identities will continue to exist and must be recognized and accommodated within these common institutions |

One especially salient place in which this contestation over assimilationist versus robustly multicultural approaches to nation-building plays out is in public schools. Since its origins in Western Europe, mass schooling has accompanied the rise of nation-states and served as a key institution for constructing a sense of national identity and unity (Boli, 1989; Green 1990; Weber 1976, as cited in Uslaner & Rothstein, 2012). One key mechanism for disseminating national identity is through the use of historical narratives in the formal history curriculum (see, for example, Ahonen, 2001; LaSpina, 2003; Loewen, 2007; Nasser & Nasser, 2008). Billig (1995) reminds us that the nation is also continually flagged in schools through symbols that go largely unnoticed – the national flag, pictures of presidents, coats of arms, national maps – and through habits of speech in which “we” and “them” are not specified but understood to refer to the nation and foreigners. In the course of explaining what it means to be included in the nation, schools also teach students to attend to cultural identity markers that allow one to recognize members of a specific ethnic group, nation, religion, etc. (Bekerman & Zembylas, 2011).
Debates around the dissemination of national identity through formal schools often center on the role of such cultural identity markers, and critiques concern assimilationist constructions of national identity that promote majority groups’ traditions, language, and historical understandings to the exclusion of minority groups.’ Greater pluralism in curriculum, such as through multicultural education, aims to provide diverse children with an equal chance at school success (Banks, 2001). Some scholars within Botswana have called for multicultural education policies to combat the exclusionary construction of national identity they perceive in curriculum and to promote equitable educational outcomes for minority groups (Boikhutso & Jotia, 2013; Jotia & Pansiri, 2013; Lubinda, 2010; Nyati-Saleshando, 2011). Yet, as Banks (2001) points out, multicultural education encompasses a wide spectrum of practices, from simple acknowledgement of some contributions of minority group members, on the one hand, all the way to a social action approach that challenges assumptions of existing mainstream culture and encourages students to take action on social issues such as inequality and discrimination, on the other. It is these more intensive approaches to multicultural education that scholars argue will improve educational outcomes for students from minority groups, by allowing them to recognize their culture in the curriculum and feel empowered as equal members of the nation (see, for example, Banks 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay 2000).

Critiques of multiculturalism argue, however, that it may erode a strong national identity, increase ethnic identification, and lead to division and separatism (see, for example Ravitch, 1990; Salter, 2003; Schlesinger, 1991). The same social action-oriented multicultural education approaches that promise the most beneficial outcomes for minority group students would presumably be the most dangerous to national unity, from
these scholars’ perspectives. In Botswana, numerous politicians have similarly articulated fears of multiculturalism by warning that recognition and representation of minority groups amounts to “tribalism,” which can lead to the ethnically-based violence experienced by many neighboring countries (Lubinda, 2010).

Fears of violent tribalism contributed to assimilationist policies promoting Tswana culture and language for nation building in Botswana, reflected in the first post-independence education strategy, Education for Kagisano (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017). Vision 2016’s national goals – articulated in 1997 and expected to be attained by 2016 – demonstrated Botswana’s continuing commitment to building a unified national identity, but embodied a shift to a multicultural integration approach. This document included a goal of recognizing, supporting, and strengthening Botswana’s cultures and languages within the education system, while also envisioning that “Botswana will be a united and proud nation, sharing common goals based on a common heritage, national pride and a desire for stability” (PTG, 1997, p. 12).

As politicians and minority rights advocates in Botswana continue to debate the extent to which Botswana should integrate versus assimilate its numerous ethnic groups (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017), I look to government schools’ social studies curriculum to understand the construction of national identity that is currently being disseminated to citizens through this public institution. Social studies explicitly aims to teach students about the society in which they live and their role in that society. A required school subject charged with teaching students “the ideals upon which the nation of Botswana is built” (RoB, 2010, p. i), the social studies curriculum allows unique insight into the extent to which increasingly multicultural policy discourse makes its way into the construction of national identity being disseminated to students. It is particularly
important to examine the curricular construction of national identity at the JSS level. As the final three years of Botswana’s largely free ten-year basic education program, JSS marks the end-point of formal education for most of Botswana’s citizens (UNICEF, 2013). It also represents a developmental stage in which individuals are concerned with developing their identity in relation to a larger society beyond their family (Erikson, 1968).

I examine the writing style and content of the JSS social studies curriculum, perspectives of curriculum authors and teachers, and lesson observations in junior secondary schools to determine how Botswana’s school curriculum currently approaches constructing a unified national identity in the presence of cultural diversity. Does the curriculum adopt some form of a multicultural integration approach, recognizing and supporting students’ cultural diversity, or does it continue to promote assimilation to Tswana culture, language, and historical understandings? In particular, I focus my inquiry on sections of the curriculum essential to constructing a national identity through schools – the historical narrative, cultural identity markers of national citizens and specific ethnic groups, and national symbols and principles.

I further consider how the written curriculum in Botswana may be implemented by individual teachers serving in diverse schools. Sociologists have shown that ethnic and cultural elements of national identity hold more salience for individuals across nations than do civic elements (Jones & Smith, 2001), but that individuals of minority backgrounds favor civic elements (Kunovich, 2009). Individual teachers, therefore, may emphasize elements of the written curriculum or introduce content and perspectives from outside the textbooks based on those elements of national identity most meaningful to them. Teachers who enjoy considerable autonomy in implementing curriculum may be
more likely to adapt their construction of national identity in the classroom according to their own perspectives or their perceptions of their students’ needs than those teaching in contexts of more centralized curriculum or higher accountability to teach a curriculum with fidelity (Gozik, 2012). Which elements of national identity teachers in Botswana’s schools emphasize in classroom instruction may depend in part on their own ethnic background, their awareness of growing public debate about minority group recognition, the relative value they place on civic elements of national identity, and the amount of autonomy they hold over curricular decisions.

This paper examines how Botswana’s national identity is currently constructed in centrally-approved junior secondary social studies curriculum, as written and as implemented in classrooms. After outlining my methodology, I analyze how civic, ethnic, and cultural elements of national identity are emphasized, and with what rationale, on the part of curriculum writers and teachers. In the written curriculum I find continued Tswana dominance in the cultural elements of national identity, alongside a strong focus on civic elements of national identity that cut across ethnic groups. Irrespective of their own backgrounds or those of their students, teachers implemented the written curriculum with a high degree of fidelity. I conclude by discussing teachers’ reasoning for closely following the curriculum as written and the implications of this curricular construction for recent concerns about inequitable student outcomes.

**Methodology**

The data for this analysis comes from interviews with social studies syllabus and textbook authors, current JSS social studies syllabus and textbooks, and lesson
observations, fieldnotes, and interviews with social studies teachers in four case study schools (data sources summarized in Table 3).

To analyze the content of the written social studies curriculum, I coded the current (2010) JSS social studies syllabus at the learning objective level, identifying portions of the curriculum related to the historical narrative, cultural markers, or national symbols and principles (see Appendix A). These objectives guide the organization and content of the textbooks, as well as indicating which information is assessed on national exams. The textbook analysis focused on the social studies textbooks for the first two years of JSS, Forms 1 and 2, first published by Collegium Publishers in 2009 and 2010, respectively (Moswang, Tsayang, & Rampha, 2010; Tsayang, Rampha, & Mpitse, 2009). These are centrally-approved social studies textbooks for use at the JSS level across all districts of Botswana. The books are written in English and contain frequent Setswana translations of words and phrases.

Textbook sections analyzed correspond to the objectives identified when coding the JSS social studies syllabus. To compare how textbooks represent minority ethnic groups versus the majority Tswana, I analyzed sections discussing Botswana’s regional lifestyles, indigenous knowledge systems, cultural heritage, the origins of Botswana’s peoples, and more recent history of Botswana. To analyze how the books described ethnic identity vis-à-vis national identity, I coded sections of the civics units that discuss national principles and symbols and the roles of citizens in Botswana. I coded these textbook sections at the line level; I did not code other sections of the textbooks (See Appendix B for selections from the codebook).

---

3 The Department of Curriculum Development and Evaluation, within the Ministry of Education and Skills Development, is responsible for developing, selecting, and monitoring curriculum for government schools.
Following Selander (1990), I focused on the “(a) selection of facts and themes; (b) style of writing and composition and (c) the combination of cognems and explanations” in textbooks (p. 147). In the selection of facts included in the textbooks, I examined whose languages, traditions, and knowledge systems are present and whose are absent. I also looked quantitatively at the coverage of minority versus majority groups in the text and images, as well as references to national identity versus ethnic identity, as suggested by Pingel (2010). I further considered how the textbooks’ activities, chapter summaries, and practice questions orient the reader to which knowledge is most important to master. In style of writing and composition, I considered the extent to which the textbooks treat different ethnic groups with respect and tolerance, for instance whether the books offer description or judgment of lifestyles and perspectives. I also examined the importance the textbooks ascribe to ethnic versus national identities. In combination of cognems and explanations, I considered whether information or explanation is prioritized, as well as whether explanations take into account multiple perspectives. I specifically looked for explanations offered for why Botswana’s ethnic groups may hold different perspectives or practice different lifestyles, and what makes Botswana a ‘nation’ and its people ‘national’ citizens.

To illuminate how decisions about the current social studies curriculum were made, I analyzed two interviews with curriculum writers that my advisor conducted as part of a series of interviews with a wide variety of educational stakeholders in July 2013. A member of the social studies curriculum committee within Botswana’s Ministry of Education reflected on the process the committee follows when reviewing the curriculum every 5-10 years. A textbook author explained what guidance she receives and how much flexibility she has when deciding the content of the textbooks.
To gain an in-depth understanding of how the social studies curriculum is taught in schools across Botswana, I conducted case studies of four junior secondary schools between February and September 2015. The selected schools were located in four different districts, two in predominantly minority districts (Northwest and Northeast Districts) and two in predominantly Tswana districts (southeastern districts), in order to examine how curriculum related to ethnic diversity may be implemented differently in schools situated within communities that differ in their ethnic composition. The schools were further selected to represent a wide range of characteristics typical of junior secondary schools in Botswana, in terms of size, rural/urban location, and boarding/day facilities (see Table 4). Across the four schools, I conducted 25 observations of social studies lessons and semi-structured interviews with 11 social studies teachers, 8 of whom were female and 3 of whom were male, and documented daily informal conversations with teachers through fieldnotes (see Table 5 for teacher characteristics, Appendices C, D, and E for lesson observation protocol, lesson observation codebook, and teacher interview protocol, respectively).

Lesson observations were coded at the level of an utterance by a single speaker, qualitatively for content and quantitatively for the speaker, questions versus statements, and type of content, with a specific focus on understanding the alignment between the curriculum, textbook, and classroom instruction. From the teacher interviews and conversations summarized in fieldnotes, I thematically coded excerpts that discussed 1) which content teachers are expected to teach to students, 2) which content teachers usually present to students, 3) which content the teacher felt is missing from the curriculum, or 4) the speaker’s explanation or rationale of these content decisions and practices.
Table 3

*Data Sources*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>year</th>
<th>Analytic method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>interviews with curriculum writers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>transcribed, relevant excerpts coded at line level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSS social studies syllabus</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>coded at objective level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegium social studies textbooks</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>relevant sections coded at line level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interviews with social studies teachers</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>transcribed, relevant excerpts coded at line level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social studies lesson observations</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>coded at single-speaker utterance level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fieldnotes</td>
<td>one set per school (4)</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>relevant sections coded at paragraph level</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Characteristics of Case Study Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Metsi</th>
<th>Ami</th>
<th>Vula</th>
<th>Molapo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region</strong></td>
<td>southeast</td>
<td>northwest</td>
<td>northeast</td>
<td>southeast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>City size</strong></td>
<td>midsize</td>
<td>small</td>
<td>small</td>
<td>large</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Surrounding community ethnic composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>numerical majority</th>
<th>Bakgatla (Tswana)</th>
<th>Wayeyi</th>
<th>Kalanga</th>
<th>various Tswana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>numerical minorities</td>
<td>sizeable Herero, few Herero, KhoiSan, Tswana</td>
<td>Bangwato (Tswana)</td>
<td>wide variety of minorities &amp; non-citizens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Student ethnic composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>numerical majority</th>
<th>Bakgatla (Tswana)</th>
<th>Wayeyi</th>
<th>Kalanga</th>
<th>various Tswana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>numerical minorities</td>
<td>wide variety, very few</td>
<td>Hambukushu, Herero, KhoiSan, few Tswana</td>
<td>Bangwato (Tswana)</td>
<td>various minorities few non-citizens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Staff ethnic composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>regular teachers</th>
<th>mixed from across country, mostly Tswana and Kalanga</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>management</td>
<td>same as regular teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># students</td>
<td>400-600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boarding</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: City sizes: small (0-15K), Midsize (16K-50K), Large (51K+)*
Table 5

Interview Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview No.</th>
<th>Role or School</th>
<th>Ethnic background</th>
<th># years teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Social Studies syllabus committee member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Social Studies textbook author</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Metsi School teacher</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Metsi School teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Metsi School teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ami School teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ami School teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ami School teacher</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td>&lt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ami School teacher</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ami School teacher</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td>&lt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Vula School teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Vula School teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Molapo School teacher</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Although Molapo School was a large school, teachers at this school were much more reluctant to participate in interviews. Only one social studies teacher consented to be interviewed, although all sampled teachers allowed me to observe their classes.

Findings

Written Curriculum

Our curriculum and textbook analysis reveals a mainly assimilationist construction of Botswana’s national identity, albeit with some acknowledgment of contributions of minority ethnic groups. Tswana cultural norms and historical understandings dominate the cultural components of national identity as described in the textbooks, while the texts include a strong emphasis on civic components that transcend any ethnic group. In interviews, curriculum writers described the conscious decisions over decades, and still in force today, to emphasize civic national ideals for the sake of building a peaceful nation, and to focus on tolerance more than detailed knowledge of ethnic diversity. My research reveals the salience of curriculum and textbook-based
conceptions of national identity: in lesson observations, teachers demonstrated exceptionally high fidelity to the curriculum as written, regardless of their diverse backgrounds, with teachers offering a variety of pragmatic and ideological reasons for this choice during interviews.

**Cultural and historical bases of national identity.** Based on Vision 2016’s charge to the education system to recognize, support, and strengthen Botswana’s diverse ethnic groups, I would expect the social studies textbooks to include content drawn from across ethnic groups and a writing style that conveys to learners the equality of these ethnic groups within the nation of Botswana. Instead, through clear assumptions about the norms of Botswana society and inconsistent content coverage, the textbooks implicitly establish *Tswana* history, culture, and language as core cultural elements of Botswana’s national identity. Minority ethnic groups are sometimes singled out as ‘others’ that deviate from the *Tswana* norm, but generally receive scant attention. Moreover, textbook units focusing on history and cultural sites reimagine the heritage of distinct ethnic groups into a national identity dominated by *Tswana* perspectives.

Throughout the textbooks, readers encounter more direct references to *Tswana* culture and historical *Tswana* individuals and groups than to all other ethnic groups combined. Whereas the textbooks confine content drawn from minority ethnic groups almost exclusively to three chapters on cultural diversity and pre-colonial history, they integrate knowledge of *Tswana* groups and *Setswana* phrases into every chapter analyzed in this study, on topics as diverse as traditional initiation and marriage ceremonies, expectations for family life, environmental conservation practices, proverbs governing morality, and the roles of chiefs and traditional courts in present times.
In some cases, the elements of heritage referenced are sufficiently broad as to include all indigenous ethnic groups. For example, the book states, “The Batswana languages are rich in proverbs (diane) and some wise sayings (maele) meant to help people develop good morals and also meant to entertain” (p. 78). In most cases, the books do not make clear the specific Tswana origins of cultural heritage that they present as ‘common.’ For example, when discussing beliefs and practices that form cultural heritage, the Form 2 book avoids specifying ethnic origins and creates the impression of shared traditions by using the term for all citizens, Batswana. At other times, it creates a sense of common customs by dropping the subjects of its sentences, slipping into passive voice:

Traditionally there are foods that children are not supposed to eat, for example, domestic animals kidneys (diphilo tsa diruiwa) and chicken eggs (mae a dikoko). Bogwera and bojale (boys and girls initiation schools) are practiced by different groups of people. (p. 79)

Although bogwera and bojale are Tswana initiation practices, by dropping the subjects of these sentences, the textbook remains ambiguous about their origins.

This use of Batswana as the subject or employment of the passive voice fits a larger pattern across both textbooks. The textbooks frequently discuss how things were done in “the traditional society,” as opposed to in various different traditional societies. For example, the Form 1 book discusses a singular tradition when describing indigenous knowledge systems, traditional marriage, and traditional gender roles, respectively. The specific practices these chapters describe, as pointed out earlier, are overwhelmingly Tswana in origin and distinct from the practices of other ethnic groups, although this is masked by the ambiguity of the term Batswana, which can refer to the specific ethnic group or all national citizens.
In addition to promoting *Tswana* traditions as the traditions of all *Batswana*, the textbooks uphold *Setswana*’s status as the “national” language and norm from which other languages deviate. For example, when describing language as a characteristic on which Botswana’s ethnic groups differ, the Form 2 textbook reads: “Different ethnic groups speak different languages in Botswana…. The languages are different from *Setswana*” (p. 81). *Setswana* words or phrases are frequently included as translation for the predominantly English text, while no other indigenous languages are used. Neither textbook discusses how *Setswana* became the national language, treating it as a given that needs no explanation. Across both textbooks, highly unequal content coverage and the texts’ assumption of *Tswana* language and lifestyle as norms for all readers combine to form a JSS curriculum still dominated by *Tswana* culture.

Both the Form 1 and Form 2 books acknowledge a wide variety of ethnic groups living in Botswana. References to each non-*Tswana* Bantu ethnic group range from four (*Basubiya*) to ten (*Kalanga*) total excerpts, concentrated almost entirely in the fifth chapter of each book. The Form 1 chapter describes each environmental zone in turn, explaining which ethnic groups live in each environmental zone of Botswana and the traditional homes, food production, crafts, and clothing to be found in that region. For example, the introduction to the section on the deciduous forest zone (northern Botswana) reads:

> Various ethnic groups inhabit the deciduous forest environmental zone. Some of these groups are the Wayei, the Hambukushu and the Herero as well as some Batawana, Basarwa [KhoiSan] and the Basubiya. The traditional way of life of these various groups have been influenced by the environment … (p. 70)

The descriptions of lifestyles that follow each such introduction do not further distinguish between ethnic groups within each region, with the exception of the *Khoi* and *San*, whose
nomadic lifestyle is singled out as different from all other groups. While most ethnic
groups are named and given a regional location in this chapter, specific elements of
lifestyle or culture are not attributed to any ethnic group.

The Form 2 chapter, on the other hand, provides isolated information on cultural
practices specific to a wider variety of ethnic groups. For example, students learn that
Herero women wear a distinctive dress and pointed hat, seeing a photograph to illustrate
this point. The Kalanga, they learn, prefer to eat millet meal. In their cultural diversity
chapters, the texts provide extremely limited information about non-Tswana ethnic
groups, serving to illustrate the influence of the environment on human lifestyle and the
presence of cultural diversity, rather than to supply substantive knowledge about the
customs, beliefs, or languages of any of these groups. The textbook author explained the
decision to include some content drawn from these ethnic groups as follows:

We were looking at the fact that children are from different parts of the
country, so you can have a name of plant [from] that side, and then
somebody else will call it a different name, so we will try to bring in a
local flavor. Or even their livelihoods, how they live, what they live on. So
we try to bring in a little of the language of those people. (Interview 2)

While the textbooks do bring in some “local flavor” drawn from a variety of minority
ethnic groups, in their structural elements, the textbooks signal that knowledge of these
ethnic groups should be considered supplementary, not essential for mastery. Activities
and exercises within the text, available to be used at each teacher’s discretion, allow
students to share their prior knowledge of any ethnic group’s practices, as when they ask
students to “make a list of traditional dancing styles that you know about” (p. 84).

Conversely, the revision questions, which assess students’ knowledge of the main
objectives and prepare them for exams, focus on the need to conserve the environment
and the instrumental value of culture. Form 2 essay questions ask students to: “Discuss
how various elements of culture bring about individual and national identity” and “Discuss the importance of culture in a society” (p. 93). From these revision questions, students are reminded that culture is valuable for giving an individual or nation (but not an ethnic group) a sense of identity. While inculcating in readers these values of cultural diversity, the textbooks do little to promote knowledge of this diversity.

While Botswana’s social studies textbooks do give some acknowledgement of cultural diversity in Botswana, they fall short of Vision 2016’s multicultural goal to “recognize, support, and strengthen” ethnic groups. The scant attention devoted to non-
*Tswana* groups does not recognize and support these groups’ cultural characteristics as essential to Botswana’s national identity. *Tswana* culture, on the other hand, remains central to the national identity. The social studies syllabus committee member explained that “We have, over a period of time, accustomed to the *Setswana* practices” (Interview 1). Culture described in the textbooks as ‘common’ for Botswana’s citizens, such as traditional marriage, national language, chieftaincy, and traditional courts is, indeed, overwhelmingly reflective of *Tswana* practices.

As the textbooks construct Botswana’s national identity, their units on history and cultural sites recast potentially divisive ethnic histories into a singular history of a united *Batswana* populace. The chapters on Botswana’s history, found mostly in the Form 2 book, paint a picture of an internally harmonious nation threatened by a series of external enemies and led to independence and beyond by national heroes. While a chapter on the earliest, prehistoric interactions between the Bantu and *Khoisan* ends with “the Bantu driving the [K]hoesan people into the western part of Botswana ([K]galagadi desert)” (p. 164), nowhere in the five further chapters on Botswana’s history do the books mention any animosity between ethnic groups within Botswana.
Scholars in Botswana and historians have drawn attention to the extremely hierarchical nature of early Tswana merafe, or kingdoms, which placed the Khoisan, Bakgalagadi, and Wayeyi (Gulbrandsen, 2012; Tlou & Campbell, 1984; Kamanakao Association, 2009) in positions of serfdom to the Tswana. Moreover, minority ethnic groups have contested their subjugation under the Tswana frequently since pre-colonial times (Bennett, 2002; Tlou & Campbell, 1984; Werbner, 2002). However, the social studies textbooks do not mention these internal conflicts, instead focusing on a series of conflicts with external enemies. While insisting on a long history of internal peace may support the importance of peace and unity in Botswana’s national identity, these accounts fail to recognize minority groups’ historical perspectives well-documented elsewhere.

**Building a common civic national identity.** While the social studies textbooks encourage assimilation to Tswana norms and historical understandings as a common culture, they also devote great attention to civic building blocks of Botswana’s national identity. As a member of the social studies curriculum writing committee said in an interview,

> We are a diverse nation with many ethnic groups. At the time of independence, it is ethnicity in Africa that has actually led to a lot of civil wars. Our main task as a nation has been to try and bring the different people we have in Botswana together. Because without unity, development cannot be, democracy cannot be. (Interview 1)

The social studies syllabus, he explained, builds this type of unity upon national principles, the electoral system, and national symbols.

> The textbooks regularly call upon kagisano (social harmony) and Botswana’s five national principles (botho, democracy, development, self-reliance, and unity) as they

---

4 *Botho* is roughly translated as “humane behavior,” but is an all-encompassing moral code for how human beings should relate to one another through courtesy, respect, and compassion.
discuss elements of national commonality. Most of the focus on national symbols, values, and goals falls in the textbooks’ civics units, which ask students to conceptualize the world using national rather than ethnic frames of reference. One Form 1 objective asks students to “recognise the significance of national identities over ethnic identity” (p. 181). In their descriptions of national principles and the goals and some symbols to which they are connected, the books avoid making reference to ethnicity, only occasionally including Setswana phrases and traditional Tswana activities to support these elements.

Both books employ national principles to frame their discussion of the overarching national goal of kagisano (social harmony). When introducing kagisano and the five national principles in its civics unit, the Form 1 book explains how citizens should understand and use these principles:

Botswana has a set of principles which are used to guide every Motswana on what is expected of them.... The nation of Botswana expects every citizen to have a positive attitude towards his fellow men. A positive attitude brings about social harmony or kagisano amongst the people in any given community. This develops tolerance to the differences that exist between people. (p. 176)

This passage positions the nation, Botswana, as an entity capable of holding expectations for the behaviors and mindsets of “every Motswana” (individual citizen). Moreover, this paragraph aligns with Vision 2016’s assertion that “Botswana must rediscover a collective identity based upon shared values and a respect for ethnic or cultural differences, or differing views or religious beliefs” (p. 23). The textbook passage promotes the shared value of kagisano as the means by which to develop tolerance for difference.

Indeed, so essential is kagisano to Botswana’s national identity that an entire chapter of the Form 1 textbook is devoted to this concept. The introduction explains that
“Kagisano is the national principle that guides governance in the country” (p. 181), and the chapter relates each of the national principles to kagisano. The multiple passages that explain the national principles and kagisano serve to paint a picture of intimately interrelated national values, which individual citizens should embody. By focusing on Botswana’s broad national principles, the textbooks effectively convey civic ideals that do not privilege any ethnic group over another.

The Form 1 and Form 2 textbooks also describe how national symbols support a sense of national identity and pride. The Form 1 kagisano chapter explains:

Botswana has national slogans and symbols which identifies it to other countries in the world. The people of Botswana recognize the symbols and slogans because they give them a sense of belonging, identity and pride, protection, responsibility and loyalty and most of all the love for the country. (p. 184)

The chapter goes on to introduce the flag, passport, national language, currency, national anthem, and coat of arms as national symbols. The textbooks explain the meanings of these symbols and important public holidays not through reference to their origin with any particular ethnic group, but by again invoking the national principles. The Form 2 book describes the origins and content of the national anthem, highlighting the importance of cooperation for development, as well as peace: “[The national anthem] encourages citizens to be committed and to work cooperatively together towards the country’s development. The song encourages citizens to keep peace in the country” (p. 180). Both textbooks include activities asking students to demonstrate their evolving understanding of various national symbols. An activity in the Form 2 book, for example, asks students to sing the national anthem and then “Identify the key words which show the elements of national identity” (p. 88). In both the main text and included activities,
the textbooks provide opportunities for students to engage with important national symbols and understand their relationship to national principles and goals.

As another civic element of Botswana’s national identity, the textbooks celebrate the equal rights and responsibilities bestowed on individuals by virtue of being citizens of the nation. The textbooks very rarely position ethnic groups as actors and never as entities that could be granted group-level rights. Indeed, in its definition of “law,” Chapter 12 of the Form 1 textbook establishes the value of individual-level rights and highlights the dangers of law which could be construed as privileging any group:

The law defends the rights of all equally. If by any chance it is applied unequally to one class of people over the others, the law turns from being an instrument of protection to being an instrument of oppression. (p. 174)

In this instance and many others, this chapter praises Botswana’s liberal democracy in which “everyone is equal before the law” (p. 174) and every citizen “is regarded as an equal to all” (p. 177). In this respect, the textbooks are celebrating civic aspects of Botswana’s national identity and explicitly establishing citizenship, not ethnicity or race, as the basis of membership in the nation. Through their emphasis on individuals and nations as actors, the textbooks sideline ethnicity and its cultural signifiers as a potentially important source of identity.

Taking the social studies syllabus as their framework, the textbooks convey the overarching importance of Botswana’s national principles and especially kagisano, to Botswana’s national identity. These principles are broad enough in their scope to supersede value systems of individual ethnic groups (Gulbrandsen, 2012). Linking these principles to equally appealing goals of a harmonious, peaceful, and economically-developed nation, the textbooks then use these values and aims as the basis of civic national symbols (e.g. national anthem, flag, coat of arms), rather than historical symbols.
which are far less ethnically neutral. On the other hand, as described earlier, the cultural elements of Botswana’s national identity, as presented in these textbooks, are still predominantly Tswana in origin.

The question remains, how do teachers in Botswana’s junior secondary schools reconcile cultural and civic elements of national identity during formal classroom instruction? From sociological research on the variable salience of different components of national identity for individuals (Jones & Smith, 2001; Kunovich, 2009), one might expect that teachers would emphasize some elements of national identity more than others, or provide examples from their personal experience that supplement or contradict the curriculum as written.

**Curriculum Implementation**

Observations of 25 social studies lessons across four junior secondary school sites in Botswana revealed that teachers overwhelmingly adhered to the curriculum as written in the syllabus and textbooks. Neither teachers’ own backgrounds nor the ethnic composition of the student population that they served affected this consistently high level of fidelity. Table 6 presents the type of instructional content observed during these lessons, with a particular focus on how closely each statement or question aligned with the curriculum as written.

On average, just over half of all classroom utterances were direct reflections of the content found in the textbook or exam paper being used during the lesson. In these cases, the teacher or student was reading from the text or reciting the text verbatim. A further 19% of class utterances were explanations of what the text had stated, and 7.2% were examples that illustrated the text’s point but were not found in the text. In total,
approximately 75% of all lesson content observed directly matched or supported through additional examples, the written curriculum. This stands in stark contrast to instances in which a teacher or student brought up a concept not found in the text (3.2%) or offered an opinion on the content of the text (0.6%). These patterns largely held true across observations in different schools, with one exception being the comparatively large proportion of time in Metsi School spent on content unrelated to the curriculum (e.g. classroom management) or reflecting on the learning process (e.g. stating objectives and whether they have understood).

Table 6
*Instructional Content Observed in Social Studies Lessons*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>from curric.</th>
<th>explain text</th>
<th>add'l example</th>
<th>new concept</th>
<th>comment on curric.</th>
<th>non-curric.</th>
<th>reflect on learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metsi School (southeast)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>46.0%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ami School (northwest)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>49.9%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vula School (northeast)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>56.7%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molapo School (southeast)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An example of lesson observation notes showing typically strict adherence to the content of the social studies textbook is shown in Figure 2. The class was addressing the
syllabus objective to “discuss the activities and effects of early European traders/ hunters and missionaries among Batswana.” While the teacher explained most points in his own words, he did not offer additional examples, comments, or critiques on what the textbook presented. Student contributions consisted only of words taken verbatim from the textbook.

Figure 2. Excerpt from lesson observation notes showing strict adherence to textbook.

Because I visited the case study schools during different times in the 2015 school year, not all observed lessons focused on content related to Botswana’s national identity. Through teacher interviews and informal conversations I verified that the teachers’ close adherence to the written curriculum was typical of their instructional practice. All interviewed teachers claimed that their usual practice was to follow the objectives from the syllabus, using the prescribed textbook to guide their daily instruction. In addition,
teachers showed me their lesson plans, completed daily and signed off on by school leadership, which also closely followed the syllabus and textbooks.

**Teachers’ Perspectives on Curriculum**

In interviews, teachers described myriad ideological and pragmatic reasons for strictly following the curriculum. Many teachers offered perspectives that largely matched the curriculum they were expected to teach. In addition to these ideological explanations for closely following the written curriculum, teachers described practical concerns that encouraged them to implement the syllabus and textbooks as written, even in cases where they might take issue with the curriculum.

When describing how they taught students about Botswana’s national identity, teachers frequently echoed the written curriculum in the personal opinions they expressed. More often than not, they upheld the curriculum’s approach out of a desire for unity fueled by fear of ethnic conflict. A Tswana teacher from Molapo School explained the importance of teaching about kagisano as follows:

> You know, we are a nation, yes, formed by different ethnic groups. But kagisano is advocating for us to treat ourselves as Batswana, not identifying ourselves through our ethnic groups…. It is basically bringing the different ethnic groups together to become united and strive for the same goals as a nation. It does help a lot, because if there is unity there’s usually less problem of ethnic conflicts, where ethnic groups will think they are better than others. That is tolerance. (Interview 13)

According to both the curriculum and the personal perspective she offered, kagisano helps achieve the same goal described by the social studies curriculum writer – of

---

5 I describe each teacher as “Tswana” if he or she self-identified as a member of one of the eight Tswana ethnic groups recognized in the Constitution, or “non-Tswana” if he or she self-identified as one of the groups not recognized in the Constitution. I do not provide more specific ethnic identifications to protect the confidentiality of the teachers.
avoiding ethnic conflict by promoting tolerance. Another Tswana teacher at Ami School articulated similar fears of ethnic conflict when justifying the need to promote national identity over ethnic identity: “The reason why we have this one, nationality over ethnicity, is to promote this united and proud nation, to promote peace. Because if we promote ethnicity there’s going to be a problem of tribalism” (Interview 8). A non-Tswana teacher at Metsi School gave the following rationale for upholding Setswana’s status as a national language:

I cannot expect them as a nation to do what I do when I’m with my tribe…. When I’m with people who do not know me at all, who are from different ethnic groups, then … I cannot speak [my home language]… because nobody here knows it. I have to speak Setswana because most of us speak Setswana. We speak Setswana as a common language that we share amongst us all. (Interview 4)

In fact most interviewed teachers saw value in promoting Setswana as a common national language, for the sake of unity, although many expressed concern that not allowing other indigenous languages as languages of instruction was disproportionately hindering minority students’ school achievement.

Teachers also mentioned the same civic elements of national identity that they taught as part of the curriculum when they described enjoying rights and safety as citizens of Botswana, which they did not perceive other countries in the region offering. Teachers discussed citizens’ rights, kagisano, and tolerance for differences in their lessons; in interviews, Tswana and non-Tswana teachers alike described enjoying the right to freedom of movement and employment throughout Botswana and being welcomed, not discriminated against, when outside of their home regions. For example, a Tswana teacher at Molapo School described the value she placed on living in Botswana as follows:
I always tell my classes “I’m very proud of being a Motswana.” There are lots of things that we see happening around us, especially here in Africa. For example, I always give an example of apartheid in South Africa. I don’t know, if we had gone through that, what would have happened to us…. I am very proud of being a Motswana…. You go from here to [a different ethnic group’s region], you are just in Botswana, there is nothing wrong. We don’t have problems like in other countries where one ethnic group cannot go into the other area and all that. Ah, no. There is freedom of movement, freedom of speech, freedom of religion. These are things that we have in our country. (Interview 13)

This teacher’s perception that South Africa and other countries in the region experienced more discrimination and fewer freedoms was typical of views that teachers expressed across the interviews. Teachers also described benefitting personally from the free education and health care that they enjoyed in Botswana, as equal rights of all citizens, such as when a non-Tswana teacher in Metsi School said,

…there was also a government [primary] school there in that same town [where she grew up]. So I was there. And then my secondary … I was still being taken care of by the government. And then my tertiary as well, the government having paid for my tertiary. And for the government to have employed me again. For me, I feel the government has done a lot. (Interview 5)

Teachers cited crime, xenophobia, and civil wars as social ills common in neighboring countries but absent or extremely rare in Botswana, praising Botswana for some of the same civic values they taught in lessons: tolerance, kagisano, and equal rights.

In no cases did teachers directly oppose curricular content they were expected to teach related to national or ethnic identity, although in a few cases teachers felt the curriculum was missing valuable information. One Tswana teacher at Ami School felt strongly that the history curriculum needed to address historical power imbalances between ethnic groups:

One student … once asked me that question, “Why is it some cultures in Botswana seem to be much more powerful than others?” … They don’t often ask about it. But I think they have it in their minds. … But I know
it’s a burning thing, not even with students, even with adults. It’s still burning with them, that, “Why is it that my culture is not as powerful as that other culture, but we are all Batswana?” As an educator, I feel it’s a concept that should also be put into books. Not me being asked and then answer it. It should automatically be in books, whereby if someone asked themselves individually they can still answer themselves again by just looking. (Interview 9)

This teacher went on to describe how when the student asked him about some groups being more powerful than others, he took the opportunity to discuss the history of “major” and “minor” tribes. However, he claimed he did not usually discuss this history because it is not in the official curriculum.

As in the above situation, teachers did not always agree with the written curriculum, as they constructed Botswana’s national identity through classroom instruction. Yet even when they disagreed, they described pragmatic considerations that encouraged them to adhere to the curriculum despite private objections. First, in observations, informal conversations, and interviews across the four case study schools, teachers demonstrated great deference to the authority structures governing their schools. When describing different scenarios of how a decision might be taken within his school, a non-Tswana teacher at Ami School explained,

Sometimes you just compromise after a discussion because somebody with the power you just fear. There’s that element of fear, “Ah, this is the boss.” … After we have reached a decision, even those who thought otherwise will just support the decision that we took. (Interview 7)

Citing a similar awareness of the authority structures overseeing her work, one non-Tswana teacher in Metsi School described how, “Teachers are held accountable [for covering the full syllabus] to their senior teachers, then the school head, who is held accountable to the regional office, and ultimately to the Office of the President”
There was, therefore, very real pressure on teachers to cover the full curriculum – to avoid blame for students’ failure.

Just as teachers did not see how deviating from the established curriculum would serve them well, some expressed concerns about how it would affect students’ performance. A non-Tswana teacher at Vula School stated,

> We teach the prescribed curriculum because this is a transitional stage. We teach them for them to proceed to a higher level only… We teach them so that they can pass their exams and move to the next level. We have to teach them strictly the syllabus because they are tested on that…. it’s good to bring anything [supplementary], but learners need to know that this is not part of the objectives. It’s just examples. Because they may use that as an answer now, which is not allowed. (Interview 11)

This teacher’s concern for students’ exam preparation is well-founded. While all students in Botswana are entitled to education through the end of junior secondary school, fewer than half progress on to senior secondary school. A student’s performance in the national exams that the teacher referenced is the sole determining factor in whether that student is offered a place in a government senior secondary school.

Finally, in addition to concerns about how modifying the curriculum might affect their job performance and students’ exam results, some teachers expressed a fear of the political ramifications of presenting dissenting views on Botswana’s national identity and the integration of ethnic groups. A non-Tswana teacher at Vula School explained,

> We don’t usually talk about inequality among different groups. We just talk about different groups as equal groups, to avoid conflicts… If we can talk about “This one is a major tribe, while that one is a minor tribe,” we might be seen [as] fueling tribalism. That’s why we don’t have anything to do with tribalism at all in our curriculum. (Interview 11)

Related to the same topic, a Tswana teacher at Ami School acknowledged, “The curriculum is silent [on issues of historical power imbalances between ethnic groups]. But then the curriculum is also political” (Interview 9). The same concerns about
tribalism that caused some teachers to agree with the written curriculum served to keep other teachers from speaking out when they disagreed.

From lesson observations and teacher interviews, it is apparent that the teachers in my four case study schools deviated very little from the written social studies curriculum. Their adherence to the construction of national identity found in the curriculum often stemmed from its alignment with their own perspectives. Teachers did express some desire for greater multiculturalism in the curricular construction of Botswana’s national identity, as articulated in Vision 2016. Yet out of pragmatic concerns for their job security and their students’ performance, as well as fears of collective political repercussions, these personal views almost never led to modifications of the curriculum in formal classroom instruction.

**Conclusion**

Botswana’s first education policy, Education for Kagisano (1977), directed formal schools to construct a unified national identity around the majority *Tswana* culture and its *Setswana* language, in line with rhetoric established immediately following independence from Britain in 1966 (Tabulawa, 1997). Twenty years later, and following decades of pressure from ethnic minority advocates, Botswana’s government published a statement of goals, Vision 2016, which marked a clear divergence from seeking national unity through assimilation to *Tswana* culture (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017). Instead, this document highlighted the reality of ethnic diversity and called for multicultural integration of Botswana’s many ethnic groups, envisioning that the education system would “recognise, support and strengthen Botswana’s wealth of different languages and cultural traditions” (PTG, 1997, p. 5).
As the preceding analysis reveals, current social studies curriculum as written and taught in Botswana’s junior secondary schools largely maintains *Tswana* dominance in cultural elements of Botswana’s national identity. Some limited passages in the social studies curriculum describe a diversity of cultures within Botswana and promote tolerance of cultural differences, but the content related to cultural diversity is not essential for students to master and does not address issues of divergent historical understandings, power imbalances, or language rights. The current social studies curriculum integrates multicultural content at what Banks (2001) describes as the most basic level – acknowledging some contributions from minority groups without attending to the meanings of these contributions from their group members’ perspectives. The emphasis on tolerance of ethnic difference and historical forgetting of power imbalances and inter-ethnic tension does not create a space where intricacies of cultural and linguistic differences can be discussed meaningfully. More complex transformative or social action approaches to multicultural education (Banks, 2001) will be required in order to meet Vision 2016’s goal for Botswana’s schools to “recognize, support, and strengthen” diverse cultures and minority rights advocates’ calls to address inequitable student outcomes.

Yet Botswana’s national identity, as constructed in the JSS social studies curriculum, also builds upon civic elements that cut across all ethnic groups, emphasizing rights, principles, and symbols accessible to all *Batswana* citizens. The civic elements of national identity were clearly quite salient for teachers, particularly as they considered alternatives from their neighboring countries (apartheid, xenophobia, civil war, and limited rights). In interviews, teachers stated that they valued not only these common civic understandings and rights, but also *Tswana* cultural components of national identity.
to which they had become accustomed, for the unity and peace that they supported. Appreciation of Botswana’s relatively privileged position in the region and of their own indebtedness to the government, along with general pressure to follow authority and not incite tribalism created an environment in which teachers were unlikely to call for greater recognition of minority cultures.

The effectiveness of a particular construction of national identity lies in its ability to articulate commonalities among individuals within that nation – commonalities that a wide variety of individuals find salient (see, for example, Anderson, 1983; Smith, 1991). As sociologists remind us, the salience of different components of national identity varies for individuals of different socioeconomic, educational, and cultural backgrounds (Jones & Smith, 2001; Kunovich, 2009). Through the perspectives of teachers, I found that the construction of Botswana’s national identity found in the written curriculum was salient enough that they implemented it with fidelity. These teachers, regardless of their own cultural background, had successfully navigated the education system that required them to study Tswana cultural practices and gain competence in Setswana. They earned their living, and relatively high socioeconomic status, as servants of the state that has promoted such assimilationist policies.

Their students might place different value on the components of national identity taught in their social studies classes. On average, fewer than half of these students will progress even to senior secondary school, and many fewer to tertiary institutions that prepare them for gainful employment. The equal access to education so important to teachers may feel far less relevant to students who do not anticipate reaping tangible benefits from that education. As the educational performance of students in predominantly minority districts lags behind their peers’ in historically Tswana districts,
equal educational access clearly does not equate with equitable outcomes from schooling. Multicultural education researchers within and outside of Botswana fault curriculum that encourages assimilation to a dominant cultural group with alienating students from minority cultures and contributing to just such achievement disparities (Banks, 2008; Boikhutso & Jotia, 2013; Jotia & Pansiri, 2013; Lubinda, 2010; Nyati-Saleshando, 2011). Further research is needed to understand how the official construction of national identity in schools’ curriculum affect schools’ ability to serve student needs for learning, sense of belonging, and cooperation across groups in diverse settings, and to understand how students of diverse backgrounds and abilities make sense of their roles as ethnic and national citizens.

Teachers in case study schools across ethnically-diverse regions of Botswana accepted the Tswana basis of cultural components of national identity in the curriculum out of fear of ethnically-based conflict. Yet by emphasizing civic principles around which citizens can unite and demonstrating a commitment to such principles through democratic institutions and redistribution of resources, Botswana’s leaders have effectively mitigated the risk of conflict (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017). In a period of comparative peace throughout the region, power and resource imbalances between ethnic groups may be the more relevant “burning issue” and will require attention to transformative and social action approaches to education.
Paper 2: National Unity in Local Contexts:

School-level Responses to Multicultural Student Bodies in Botswana

-- Tsayang, Rampha, & Mpitse, 2009, p. 177

Introduction

The preceding passage describes a national principle, unity, to students in Botswana’s first year of secondary school, as part of the civics unit in their social studies class. Indeed, Botswana is widely celebrated as an exceptional case of a democratic, well-governed, and unified nation in Southern Africa (see, for example Alexander & Kaboyakgosi, 2012). Botswana has actively pursued national unity through equitable redistribution of diamond wealth into public services, including schools, which socialize students into national citizens through a centralized curriculum (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017). Schools’ required social studies curriculum promotes national unity through explicit teaching of liberal democratic ideals, including civic equality, and through assimilation to a national identity, the cultural components of which are built on the majority ethnic group’s practices, historical perspectives, and language (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review).

Situated in public schools – key institutions for developing students into citizens – this study examines how Botswana’s schools respond to the multiculturalism of their
student bodies, within the context of assimilationist and nationally centralized education policies and curriculum. To what extent are schools able to develop their students’ skills for equal citizenship – treating one another as equals regardless of ethnic background? I examine this issue through case studies of three junior secondary schools in three different districts of Botswana that vary in the ethnic composition of their student bodies and surrounding communities. In all of these schools, I find that individuals of ethnic minority backgrounds experienced varying degrees of shame, discrimination, and a sense of exclusion from the nation. The three schools responded differently to the reality of multicultural student bodies in their schools, with two following national policies closely and one crafting school level policies adapted to its student population. Overall, however, students had little recourse to discuss and address their feelings and identities within the structures of their schools. Building on Gutmann’s (1999, 2004) discussion of recognition versus toleration, I argue that a more appropriate response to supporting the development of equal citizenship among Botswana’s multicultural student population would be for national education policies and curriculum to recognize the cultural, historical, and linguistic diversity of Botswana’s ethnic minorities explicitly in schools, rather than tolerating this diversity only in private spaces.

**Background**

**Ethnicity in Botswana**

Approximately 30 different indigenous ethnic groups currently live in Botswana (Nyati-Saleshando, 2011), making it a highly multicultural state. Following Gutmann (1999), I use “multiculturalism” to refer to a condition of society characterized by having many cultures and individuals who identify with these cultures interacting with one
another. The “cultures” relevant to this study are long-resident national minority groups which I refer to as “ethnic groups,” as is common in Botswana. Of these groups, Botswana’s Constitution explicitly recognizes eight “major tribes” who share the common language, Setswana, and who live mainly in the southeast of Botswana (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006b; Pansiri, 2012; RoB, 2000). As is customary in English, I refer to these groups as Tswana. Botswana’s indigenous ethnic groups also include several non-Setswana-speaking groups who live throughout the country but are concentrated in the west and north (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006b; Pansiri, 2012). Each of these groups other than the KhoiSan groups speaks a single language that is mutually unintelligible with Setswana but in the same Bantu language family. As is common practice in Botswana, the ethnic groups not listed in Botswana’s Constitution are those I term minority, while those listed in the Constitution I describe as the majority.

Minority groups in Botswana are extremely varied in their cultural backgrounds, historical migrations into modern-day Botswana, and political and economic standing. For example, the Kalanga – the largest minority group at around 11% of Botswana’s population – have lived in the northeast of modern-day Botswana for at least five centuries and are well-represented in civil service and professional fields (Selolwane, 2004). Whereas the pastoralist Herero – who constitute about 1% of Botswana’s population – have lived mainly in the northwest of present Botswana only since the mid-1800s, with the largest influx fleeing the German genocide against them in modern-day Namibia around 1900 (Gewald, 1999). The historically nomadic KhoiSan have lived in Southern Africa for millennia, and some subgroups in Botswana have sought recognition

---

6 This paper does not discuss recent immigrant groups, border groups, or religious and racial minority groups, whose needs and demands on the state warrant their own research and debate. For a discussion of the ethical grounds for group-differentiated claims, see Kymlicka (2009).
as indigenous peoples in highly contentious legal battles (Hitchcock, Sapignoli, & Babchuk, 2011). Moreover, individuals’ and groups’ responses to their status as ‘minorities’ differ, with some assimilating to majority Tswana language and practices out of a desire for upward mobility, others asserting their marginality and demanding group-level rights and compensation for negative discrimination, and still others denying the relevance of the terms “majority” and “minority,” rather demanding the same group-level rights for all (Werbner, 2002).

Given some minority group members’ preference for concealing their background and assimilating, it is important to consider the particular importance of language as a characteristic that allows individuals to identify one another’s ethnic background in Botswana’s schools. Botswana’s different national ethnic groups are not recognizable through visible racial characteristics, with the notable exception of some KhoiSan communities that have not intermarried extensively with Bantu groups. In schools, where students wear uniforms, learn a prescribed national curriculum, and eat the same meals provided by the school, most common cultural markers of ethnicity (e.g. dress, historical understandings, folklore, music, dance, and cuisine) rarely become apparent in day-to-day interactions. In this context, the language that an individual speaks, or the accent that others can detect when he or she speaks Setswana, becomes the clearest marker of one’s ethnic background. While Setswana and English are the only languages sanctioned for use in schools (Nyati-Saleshando, 2011), an individual’s home language can be difficult to conceal; many individuals from minority backgrounds do not speak Setswana fluently, use regionally-specific vocabulary, or have a detectable accent.
Policy and Curricular Responses to Multiculturalism

Botswana is the longest continuously democratic state in Africa, having held free and fair elections every five years since independence from Great Britain in 1966 (Alexander & Kaboyakgosi, 2012). Recognizing the potential for interethnic conflict, as experienced by many neighboring Southern African countries, Botswana’s leaders have taken a consistent approach to mitigating this risk by equalizing access to resources such as education and embracing civic national principles – unity, self-reliance, democracy, development, and botho\(^7\) – that hold appeal across ethnic groups (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017; Gulbrandsen, 2012). Yet Botswana’s nation-building effort has been widely and increasingly criticized for its failure to recognize the many ethnic minorities within its borders, choosing instead to privilege the culture and language of the dominant Tswana ethnic groups (see, for example Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006a; Tabulawa, 2009; Werbner, 2002). Indeed, a Presidential Inquiry into sections of the Constitution concluded that, due to widespread public perceptions of discrimination against minority ethnic groups: “…the long-term stability of this country, and in particular, the sustainability of its unity, could not be guaranteed” (Republic of Botswana, 2000, p. 9). The sections of the Constitution found to be discriminatory have since remained unchanged (Nyati-Saleshando, 2011).

Botswana has long recognized the potential for public schools to “reinforce the aim of public unity” (Republic of Botswana, 1977, p. 12) through curriculum and education policies. Creating near-universal access to schools has been a hallmark of Botswana’s efforts to equalize resources for all citizens, and the vast majority of children

\(^7\) Botho is roughly translated as “humane behavior,” but is an all-encompassing moral code for how human beings should relate to one another through courtesy, respect, and compassion.
today complete a ten year basic education in government schools (UNESCO, 2011). The current school curriculum promotes unity by emphasizing equality of citizens’ rights and access to services and providing limited recognition of uncontroversial aspects of multiculturalism (e.g. dress, music, and foods). It does not address more contentious aspects of multiculturalism that minority advocacy groups have brought to the media, courts, and political forums (e.g. divergent historical understandings, economic and political inequalities between ethnic groups, or language rights) (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017; Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review). In school curriculum, these more contentious aspects of minority culture and experiences are unrecognized and treated as private matters to be tolerated. Setswana (the majority Tswana groups’ language) remains the only indigenous language of instruction in schools, alongside English (Mhlauli, 2012; Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review; Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006b). This paper argues that Botswana’s policy and curricular approach of promoting unity through assimilation to Tswana norms and language undermines schools’ ability to build unity through equal citizenship.

Conceptual Framework

The value of civic equality holds that “individuals should be treated and treat one another as equal citizens, regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, or religion” (Gutmann, 2004, p. 71). Civic equality is not only essential to most conceptions of democracy (see for example Gutmann 1999; Macedo, 2000), but also necessary for strengthening national unity by demonstrating to diverse citizens their full inclusion in the nation-state (Banks, 2008; Gutmann, 2004; Kymlicka, 2015). In this section, I examine what theorists suggest schools should do in the interests of developing equal
citizenship, specifically in response to multiculturalism, as well as challenges that schools and students will face if they fail to follow this approach. The relationship between national policies, school responses, and student outcomes, as suggested by the theorists and empirical research described below, is shown in Figure 3.

Recognition and toleration are two potentially justifiable responses to multiculturalism within public schools, although the extent to which each response should be considered acceptable has been the object of considerable debate among political and educational philosophers (see, for example Gutmann, 2004; Sardoč, 2010; Taylor & Gutmann, 1992). Recognition involves publicly acknowledging the contributions, perspectives, and experiences of groups, while toleration involves agreeing to disagree and privatizing differences (Gutmann, 1999). Some educational theorists and political philosophers argue for recognition out of a belief in minority groups’ rights to maintain their culture within a larger national and public culture (see, for example, Banks, 2008; Kymlicka, 1995). Yet, could schools not reach the goal of promoting the equal citizenship of individuals, by tolerating rather than recognizing the experiences and perspectives of minority ethnic groups, as has been Botswana’s policy approach thus far?
Figure 3. Connections between education policy approaches to cultural diversity, school-level content and processes, and individual student-level outcomes.
Gutmann (1999, 2004) has argued compellingly that, to develop equal citizens, public schools must recognize the experiences and contributions of historically oppressed minority groups when not to do so would be “disrespectful and discriminatory” (1999, p. 307). Disrespect and discrimination, in her argument, follow from the false assumption that because minority group experiences are absent from curriculum, they must not have contributed significantly to the nation. Gutmann further holds that individuals who identify with minority groups not only feel an important aspect of their social identity to be disrespected but also find it difficult “to be empowered to share as civic equals in shaping their society” (1999, p. 306). From Gutmann’s theory, I might expect that minority students whose cultures are not recognized in Botswana’s schools would express feelings of shame or describe experiences of feeling disrespected or discriminated against based on their ethnic background. In order to prevent such experiences of shame and discrimination and promote civic equality between members of different ethnic groups, Botswana’s schools should recognize concerns that have been increasingly present in other public forums in Botswana: a) perceived political inequalities between ethnic groups, b) not allowing or teaching minority languages in public schools, and c) historical and contemporary discriminatory interactions between ethnic groups (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017).

Choosing the appropriate circumstances in which to recognize rather than tolerate minority experiences, while necessary, is not sufficient for schools to develop their students’ capacities for equal citizenship. Like Gutmann (1999; 2004), Laden (2013) takes equal citizenship as the aim that schools should promote. Laden (2013) argues that equal citizenship requires that individuals act as equals, rather than simply believing that
they are equal as a natural state. Central to acting as equals is relational justice, “offering reasons to one another and evaluating the reasons others offer us” (Laden, 2013, p. 90), in cases where actions and decisions affect others in society. Equality, from a relational justice perspective, requires that those affected by decisions and policies find the reasons for those decisions and policies justifiable. It follows that schools must offer opportunities for students to develop their skills in offering and requesting reasonable justifications, such as by: listening to the perspectives of others, attempting to understand their reasoning, and employing critical thinking in evaluating these perspectives and the impacts of these perspectives on others.

How can schools provide such opportunities for students and staff to have open conversations, particularly around controversial topics such as multiculturalism? Hess (2009) provides case studies of teachers who effectively led class discussions of controversial issues. As she points out, inclusion of a controversial topic in the curriculum is only the first step. In order to be able to discuss the topic openly, present different perspectives, and evaluate them in a school setting, the topic must be presented in curriculum or discussed in meetings or events in ways that show it is open for debate and discussion – that there is not only one acceptable response to the issue. For example, current social studies textbooks in Botswana acknowledge that minority groups speak a variety of languages, but the choice of Setswana as the national language is treated as a closed issue, effectively impeding discussion around the value of using other languages in public spaces or as languages of instruction (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review).
However, national curriculum and policies are not the only determinants of how a school may handle a controversial issue. Teachers and administrators may exercise what Levinson (2015) terms “loyal subversion” – “maintaining their loyalty to their students, school, and profession by subverting unjust policies, institutions, or structures whenever they think they can get away with it” (p. 214). In Botswana’s public schools, such loyal subversion could, for example, consist of explaining material in minority languages to aid student comprehension, holding classroom- or school-level discussions about inequalities or discrimination between ethnic groups, or instituting policies meant to redress such inequalities. Laden (2013) suggests that in addition to modeling openness to questions and a willingness to give justifications in their own interactions, school staff can set aside times and structures for students to practice discussion and debate – such as through a student representative council, or debates in classes or clubs.

Finally, the ways in which schools discuss or remain silent on multiculturalism affect schools’ actions and students’ experiences in relation to that multiculturalism. Writing about the development of language policies, Ruiz (1984) famously categorized discursive responses to minority languages in schools as “problems,” “rights,” or “resources,” and argued that school language policies were curtailed by these discursive constructions. Pollock’s (2004) ethnography of the use of racial labels in one California school reminds us that choosing not to discuss controversial social categorizations – race in America, ethnicity in Botswana – does not make those categories less meaningful in schools or larger society. To address students’ needs that arise out of their diverse ethnic backgrounds requires acknowledging when and how ethnic identities are relevant in the effects of school policies, interpretations of curricular content, or relationships within
schools, rather than presuming ethnic identities to be irrelevant. My previous research shows that contemporary education policy and formal social studies curriculum in Botswana are largely silent on potential inequalities or differing perspectives between minority and majority ethnic groups (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review). This paper explores whether and how individual schools in Botswana are similarly silent or develop school-level responses to their multicultural student bodies.

**Methodology**

This paper is a comparative case study of three junior secondary schools. It examines how public junior secondary schools in Botswana respond to their multicultural student populations and with what implications for students’ development of equal citizenship across ethnic groups. I am particularly interested in how centralized national policies and curriculum play out in the practices of individual schools situated in varying regional contexts. I explore how these schools respond to the multicultural reality of their student populations, with particular attention to the similarities and differences between schools that vary in the ethnic composition of their student bodies and surrounding communities. By attending to student experiences, I also examine whether students in these schools are developing skills and attitudes of equal citizenship. Through these analyses, I identify factors that enable and impede schools from promoting equal citizenship between students of different ethnic backgrounds.
Research Design

The research for this paper involved a multiple, embedded case study of three junior secondary schools across regions of Botswana that vary in the ethnic composition of their student bodies and surrounding communities. Case study methods are appropriate for investigating “a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (Yin, 2014, p. 16). The paper investigates the phenomenon of schools’ responses to multiculturalism, intentionally observing this phenomenon in the context of junior secondary schools. Moreover, I attend to context through comparative case studies in different regions precisely because I am interested in how responses to multiculturalism might vary in schools situated within community contexts that differ in their ethnic composition. Following Yin’s essential components of case study research design (2014, p. 29), I explain my propositions, delineate my units of analysis, link my data sources to the propositions outlined above, and outline my approach to interpreting the findings.

The case studies in this paper should be considered “revelatory cases” (Yin, 2014, p. 52), because they illuminate a phenomenon – school-level responses to multiculturalism – in an underexplored regional and institutional context. Therefore, from the literature above, I have derived tentative propositions that guide the analysis and discussion, rather than detailed hypotheses for the research to test. First, given the assimilationist centralized education policies and curriculum in Botswana, I expect that individual schools will do little to recognize ethnic minority experiences. Relatedly, should staff within a school attempt to deviate from national policies or curriculum, I
expect this may cause dissent from colleagues who support the national policies or believe recognition of minorities is not open for discussion and debate. I further suspect that schools with larger proportions of minority students will be more likely to develop school-level policies aiming to respond to the experiences and needs of these students. Finally, I expect that schools that do little to recognize ethnic minorities will not effectively promote equal citizenship across ethnic groups; rather, students who identify with minority groups will express feelings such as shame or embarrassment or describe situations in which they felt disrespected, discriminated against, or excluded in schools.

Units of Analysis

**Cases: Public Junior Secondary Schools.** Because I expect the ethnic composition of the student body and surrounding community to influence schools’ responses to multiculturalism, the school sites were situated in three different regions of Botswana, including:

- Southeast: the most densely populated area of the country, predominantly *Tswana* (majority)
- Northeast: the ancestral home of the *Kalanga*, the largest minority ethnic group in Botswana, whose leaders have actively sought language rights and cultural recognition
- Northwest: a remote district, home to sizable populations of *Wayeyi*, *Hambukushu*, *Herero*, and *KhoiSan*, some of the smallest ethnic groups in Botswana
These sites include ethnic groups whose culture, languages, and historical perspectives are most recognized (southeast) and least recognized (northeast and northwest) in national, assimilationist education policies and curriculum (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review). The schools were further selected to represent a range of characteristics typical of junior secondary schools in Botswana, in terms of size, rural/urban location, and boarding/day facilities (key characteristics in Table 7).

Table 7

*Characteristics of Case Study Schools*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Metsi School</th>
<th>Ami School</th>
<th>Vula School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Region</td>
<td>southeast</td>
<td>northwest</td>
<td>northeast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village size</td>
<td>midsize</td>
<td>small</td>
<td>small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrounding community ethnic composition</td>
<td>Bakgatla (Tswana)</td>
<td>Wayeyi</td>
<td>Kalanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>numerical majority</td>
<td>Bakgatla (Tswana)</td>
<td>Wayeyi</td>
<td>Kalanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>numerical minorities</td>
<td>sizeable Herero, various minorities</td>
<td>Hambukushu, few Herero, KhoiSan, Tswana</td>
<td>Bangwato (Tswana)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student ethnic composition</td>
<td>Bakgatla (Tswana)</td>
<td>Wayeyi</td>
<td>Kalanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>numerical majority</td>
<td>Bakgatla (Tswana)</td>
<td>Wayeyi</td>
<td>Kalanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>numerical minorities</td>
<td>wide variety, very few</td>
<td>Hambukushu, Herero, KhoiSan, few Tswana</td>
<td>Bangwato (Tswana) KhoiSan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff ethnic composition</td>
<td>mixed from across country, mostly Tswana and Kalanga</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regular teachers</td>
<td>mixed from across country, mostly Tswana and Kalanga</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>management</td>
<td>same as regular teachers</td>
<td>higher proportion from northwest</td>
<td>higher proportion of Kalanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># students</td>
<td>400-600</td>
<td>800-1,000</td>
<td>400-600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boarding</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>&lt;50%</td>
<td>&gt;50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Village sizes: small (0-15K), midsize (16K-50K), large (51K+)*
**Embedded sub-units.** Over approximately six weeks at each school site between February–July 2015, I collected data on several sub-units and the interactions within and between them: school administrators, teachers and their individual classrooms, and students (design shown in Figure 4; data sources summarized in Table 8). At each site, my sample included administrators with a variety of responsibilities (e.g. staff development and supervision, student guidance and support, liaising with families) and teachers from two core subject areas that have content most relevant to multicultural recognition: social studies and moral education.

![Figure 4](image)

*Figure 4.* Multiple embedded case study design of junior secondary schools.
For lesson observations, staff interviews, and student focus groups and interviews, I focused on students in the middle year of junior secondary school, Form 2, who were aged 14-17 years old (see Appendix F for a list of participants in all interviews and focus groups). In the smaller schools, I collected data from all Form 2 classes (Metsi = 4 classes; Vula = 5 classes). In Ami School, which was much larger, I randomly selected four Form 2 classes from among the nine classes. After classroom observations and through conversations with teachers who knew the students well, I purposively sampled students to participate in focus groups of 4-6 students, seeking groups that were diverse in terms of sex, ethnicity, and observed classroom engagement level.

In the final two weeks at each school, I conducted semi-structured one-hour interviews with students who I deemed to be illustrative cases of themes emerging from the first month of data collection. Students were selected from among focus group participants, because their interaction with me in the earlier small group setting increased students’ comfort level for being interviewed individually. Interviewed students again represented a range of sex, ethnic backgrounds, and school engagement levels. At each school, I continued interviewing students until I reached a point of data saturation (when I was no longer hearing new information) and/or when I could not identify students from a relevant sub-group who would consent to be interviewed. Due to such consent considerations, I regretfully could not interview students from two sub-groups whose perspectives might have greatly enriched this analysis: KhoiSan students at Ami School and students from a low-SES area feeding into Metsi School.

While English is the official language and used for the majority of lessons and meetings at schools, Setswana and, to a lesser extent, minority local languages were often
used by students, community members visiting the school, support staff, and, at times, teachers. In all schools I worked with a local research assistant who could translate between English and the dominant language(s) of that region. I conducted teacher interviews one-on-one in English, without the translator. The translator and I co-led all student focus groups, with the translator asking all questions in the local language after I asked them in English, and translating student responses when they were in the local language. Student interviewees chose whether to do the interview in English with me alone, in a combination of English and the local language with me and the translator, or in a local language with only the translator. I also relied on the translator or school staff to summarize the content of staff meetings, assemblies, PTA meetings, or other school events when local languages were used. After I completed data collection, I worked with a separate local research assistant to translate into English and transcribe from recordings all student interviews that were conducted in local languages.

Table 8

Summary of Data Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field notes</th>
<th>Admin. Interview</th>
<th>Teacher Interview</th>
<th>Lesson Obs.</th>
<th>Student focus groups</th>
<th>Student Interview</th>
<th>Student Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metsi School</td>
<td>daily</td>
<td>n=1</td>
<td>n=6</td>
<td>n=12</td>
<td>4 groups (n=17)</td>
<td>n=6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ami School</td>
<td>daily</td>
<td>n=3</td>
<td>n=9</td>
<td>n=18</td>
<td>4 groups (n=19)</td>
<td>n=9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vula School</td>
<td>daily</td>
<td>n=1</td>
<td>n=6</td>
<td>n=14</td>
<td>5 groups (n=28)</td>
<td>n=11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3 sets</td>
<td>n=5</td>
<td>n=21</td>
<td>n=44</td>
<td>13 groups (n=54)</td>
<td>n=26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Most school administrators were unable to schedule a semi-structured interview at Metsi and Vula Schools, so their perspectives are captured in conversations recorded in fieldnotes; Fieldnotes covered a wide range of school activities and contexts (school assemblies, conversations on grounds, PTA and staff meetings, extracurricular activities, etc.)
Data Linked to Propositions

The data I collected from each sub-unit in the school cases were intended to address the research questions and propositions detailed above. I first ask how schools respond to their multicultural student bodies and posit that schools will largely follow the national assimilationist policies and curriculum. In interviews with administrators, teachers, and students I asked specifically about the implementation of national policies (e.g. language policies and curricular content) at the school level. Through detailed fieldnotes, I also documented the implementation and adaptation of national policies and curriculum as observed across school contexts (assemblies, school grounds, PTA meetings, staff meetings) and as described in informal conversations. I compared data from the various contexts within each school and across the three schools to explore my propositions that a) deviations from national policies would create dissent among staff, and b) schools with higher proportions of minority students would develop school-level policies in response to the needs of their minority students. Interviews, focus groups, and informal conversations with students provide insight into the effects of school-level responses to multiculturalism on students’ feelings in relation to their ethnic background (e.g. inclusion, shame, discrimination, pride). I triangulated across all data sources to identify those factors at each school that enabled or impeded schools from promoting equality between students of different ethnic backgrounds.

Framework for Interpreting Findings

The aims of this paper are twofold: to provide a strong descriptive analysis of how junior secondary schools in Botswana respond to their multicultural student bodies and to
identify factors that enable or impede schools’ development of equal citizenship among their students. To accomplish these goals, I developed a uniform case study protocol for all schools (see Appendix G). The protocol detailed questions to answer for each school, based on the research-based propositions and my previous analysis of the national curricular and policy context in which Botswana schools operate. After translating (where necessary) and transcribing all digitally-recorded focus groups and interviews and typing hand-written lesson observations and fieldnotes, I uploaded them into Atlas.ti to create a case study database. I aligned relevant codes for qualitative coding in Atlas.ti to each question from the case study protocol and thematically coded all data sources from each school (selections from codebook in Appendix H). From this thematic coding, I triangulated across data sources within each school to write an individual case report of each school, following the protocol questions. Finally, I examined each protocol question in turn across the three schools, looking for similarities and differences in the schools’ responses to their multicultural student bodies, in the process identifying school- and national-level factors that enabled or impeded schools’ development of equal citizenship in their students.

I checked the validity of my emerging findings through repeated and extensive feedback and discussion with others. First, as I collected data at each school, I discussed my interpretation of patterns with my translator, whose knowledge of the local community and language(s) served to better contextualize my understanding. Through informal conversations with staff and students, I collected additional perspectives and data on themes that emerged from my observations, focus groups, and lesson observations. Secondly, following data collection and a preliminary holistic analysis of
all data sources from each school, I presented findings to students and/or teachers at each school and solicited their feedback through discussion between October 2015 and July 2016. My presentations to students took place in the context of follow-up participatory action research (PAR) clubs at Metsi and Ami schools. I held data sharing presentations for teachers while I was leading the PAR club at Ami School and through a scheduled return visit to Vula School. Teachers and students did not voice disagreement with my findings, although the student discussions and further data collection through the PAR clubs yielded additional insights into issues of discrimination and disrespect for minority students. During the follow-up visits at all schools, students who were in Form 2 in 2015 also completed a survey developed by the PAR clubs. Since the schools do not collect data on students’ ethnic background, this survey provides the most comprehensive data available on the self-identified ethnic backgrounds of students in the three schools.

**Findings**

The three case study schools responded to their multicultural student populations with varying degrees of toleration and recognition. At Metsi and Vula Schools, students’ ethnic diversity was unspeakable in public settings (assemblies, staff meetings, and lessons), whereas it was a more open topic of discussion in Ami School. Ami School was also the only school to implement policies designed to address effects of students’ cultural diversity, with Metsi School denying the relevance of multiculturalism and Vula School withdrawing from responsibility to address its effects. Regardless of the school-level responses to multiculturalism, however, students at all schools described

---

8 Due to scheduling difficulties, Vula School declined my offer to conduct a PAR club with their students but welcomed a data sharing presentation for teachers.
experiences of disrespect and discrimination along ethnic lines at school and found little recourse within their schools to address these experiences. In this section, I describe these findings in detail, before discussing how national policies may better support schools’ efforts to develop equal citizenship across ethnic groups.

Talking about Multiculturalism

While all three schools were multicultural – serving students from numerous different majority and minority ethnic groups – only Ami School publicly acknowledged this multiculturalism, in assemblies, staff meetings, and with student representatives. Because public schools in Botswana do not collect data on ethnic background, all three schools based their assumptions of the student bodies’ ethnic composition on their knowledge of the “catchment area” – the communities that feed into the school. Ami School not only contained the most obvious ethnic diversity from its catchment area, but also recognized longstanding patterns of division between students of different ethnic groups and home languages at the school. The other schools’ tendency not to discuss their students’ multiculturalism rested on assumptions of cultural homogeneity and less notice of pressing student needs related to cultural diversity.

Metsi School is located in a majority Tswana area and has no boarding students from distant communities. Situated in a major village of the Bakatla (Tswana) group, teachers and students alike frequently described the students’ backgrounds in terms such as, “we are in Kgatleng region. So most of us here are Bakatla” (Class 1 Focus Group). In reality, the student survey showed that only 52% of respondents self-identified as Bakatla, with 12 other groups represented and 14% of respondents coming from
minority groups. However, based on the assumption of Bakgatla homogeneity, the school did not openly discuss students’ ethnic backgrounds or consider how they may be relevant for students’ experiences at the school. In the six weeks I spent at the school, the multiculturalism of the student body was never mentioned in public spaces (assemblies, lessons, staff meetings, or PTA meetings), nor did any respondent describe situations in which there was public discussion of the school’s multiculturalism.

For an individual – student or teacher – to self-identify as a minority group member even in more private interactions (among friends, in a small group discussion, or private conversation) was rare. When I asked class teachers\(^9\) to identify ethnic minority students as I was selecting focus group participants, only one out of four teachers could identify a single student from a minority ethnic group (Fieldnotes March 2, 2015). During the focus groups, however, four students self-identified as members of minority groups. The three minority students whose class teachers did not know their ethnic backgrounds, moreover, surprised their peers when they disclosed their ethnic background in these groups. Students in the focus groups had already spent more than a year in class together and covered a “cultural heritage” unit in their first year social studies class. Among the exercises in this unit, students are asked to share practices from their ethnic group with their peers. When I asked why individuals at this school did not discuss their ethnic backgrounds, most teachers and students reported that there were too few non-Bakgatla students at the school to share knowledge of other groups (Class 4 Focus Group, Interviews 4, 5, 11). However, in one-on-one interviews four out of six students said that

---

\(^9\) Class teachers act as the main teacher responsible for a given class of students for the three years they spend at the school. As such, they tend to know the students in their class better than any other staff member at the school.
students are ashamed to reveal their ethnicity for fear of being teased (Interviews 8, 10, 11, 12).

Like Metsi School, members of Vula School tended to describe the school as mostly homogeneous, although in this case homogeneously *Kalanga*, Botswana’s largest minority ethnic group. The school is situated in the heart of the *Kalanga* homeland, fewer than 30 kilometers from the Domboshaba Hills, an important historical site containing ruins of their ancestors’ homes. While about 80% of students boarded at the school, most came from *Kalanga* villages near the school but too far to walk daily. The school had also been assigned by the Ministry of Education to receive *KhoiSan* students from a village about 200 kilometers away for the past five years. Also like Metsi School, I never heard public discussions of the school’s multicultural composition. However, students and teachers in Vula School were well aware of each other’s ethnic backgrounds, with the most important markers of ethnicity being ancestry (*KhoiSan* versus others) and home language (*iKalanga*\(^{10}\) versus *Setswana*). In interviews and focus groups, students openly discussed problems of bullying between *KhoiSan* and *Kalanga* students (Class 10 Focus Group; Interviews 41, 43, 44, 46). Teachers and administrators described to me how *KhoiSan* students were failing exams and dropping out of school in large numbers (Interviews 34, 35, 40). Yet, however relevant these issues may have been for teachers and students, they were not discussed publicly at the school. Staff meetings were rare and dealt with exam scheduling and other logistics; they did not offer opportunities for teachers to raise emerging issues (Interview 39; Fieldnotes June 2, 2015). Students explained that they had told school officials about being bullied because of their ethnic groups, but the school officials did not address this in staff meetings or assemblies.

\(^{10}\) *iKalanga* is the language of the *Kalanga* ethnic group.
Instead, they instructed the reporting students to ignore the bullies and treat one another equally (Interviews 43, 44).

Like at Vula School, teachers and students at Ami School spoke often about the school’s multiculturalism and problems that they saw arising from students’ ethnic backgrounds. However, Ami School did not confine their acknowledgement of multiculturalism to private conversations but discussed it openly in staff meetings and assemblies with the full student body. Located on the western side of the Okavango Delta, half of the school’s students are Wayeyi (a small ethnic group from the interior of the Delta), but there are sizable populations of Hambukushu (a border group from Angola), Herero (a pastoralist border group with Namibia), and KhoiSan (historically nomadic indigenous groups), in addition to a few students from a wide variety of other groups. The school has a very large catchment area, with some students boarding from villages over 100 kilometers west on gravel and sand roads. Many students choose not to board at the school, but instead live in the village on their own or with siblings, either because they are orphaned or their parents are caring for livestock on distant “cattle posts.”

Staff and students at Ami School frequently raised two concerns about what they saw as problematic aspects of the school’s multiculturalism: students’ separating into language groups, and KhoiSan students’ failing and leaving school. Staff and students discussed how KhoiSan and Herero, and to a lesser extent Hambukushu, students would group themselves during free time (e.g. tea break, lunch, at the boarding hostels) and speak in their home languages. During my time at the school, administrators raised the concern in a staff meeting, teachers discussed the issue, and they agreed that they must
encourage the students to break out of the same-language groups and integrate. The staff on duty then reiterated this point in a full-school assembly the same week (Fieldnotes May 5 & 7, 2015). Students from the school’s village, who usually speak Setswana at home, described how they would voice the same concern amongst themselves, as in the following case,

Some students group themselves by ethnic groups. If you join them you find them speaking a language that you don’t understand and when you ask them to speak Setswana they refuse…. Mostly there are the Herero and [KhoiSan] who group themselves from others. (Interview 25)

The public conversations about students’ language grouping were dominated by teachers and Setswana-speaking students, who voiced only problematic perspectives on this issue. They decried the practice as “isolating,” “discriminating,” or “insulting” (Classes 6, 7, & 8 Focus Groups; Interviews 25, 27; Fieldnotes May 5, 2015). They also linked it to students’ difficulty achieving mastery of Setswana and English (Interviews 15, 22-24), as when a Setswana-speaking student stated, “[A KhoiSan student in our class] doesn’t know Setswana very well, and he’s not open. He’s just passive. He speaks to [KhoiSan students] only. And they speak in their language. So he struggles in English and Setswana, and they are taught in school” (Class 7 Focus Group). Teachers similarly described KhoiSan students’ participation in school more generally in problematic terms during staff meetings, where they voiced frustration over these students’ poor academic achievement, reluctance to speak to others, and habit of running away from school to return home (Interviews 20, 22, 24).

While Ami School acknowledged its multicultural student population to a far greater extent than Metsi and Vula Schools, teachers described the existence and perceived enforcement of national policies as severely constricting the ways in which
schools discussed multiculturalism. Formal curriculum does acknowledge the presence of many ethnic groups in Botswana but does not explain minority groups’ practices, discuss current or historical contentious relationships between ethnic groups, or acknowledge debates around language of instruction policies (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review). In private conversations, interviews, or focus groups with me, the majority of teachers and students discussed knowledge of historical or current discrimination between ethnic groups that they had gained from discussions with family, media, reading non-curricular books, or everyday experiences in their communities. Yet I never observed a discussion of inequality or discrimination between ethnic groups in any lesson observation, meeting, or assembly in the three schools, marking a clear distinction between the kinds of conversations that happened in private spaces such as homes and interviews and those that took place in public spaces such as school lessons and meetings.

Participants at Ami School were also well aware of the controversial nature of language of instruction policies. The national policy, implemented with fidelity at the three schools, is that the Setswana language should be used to teach the required Setswana course, and English should be used for all other subject areas and encouraged across school settings. In focus groups and interviews, most teachers and students agreed that minority languages received no recognition in schools. Many also described legal or political advocacy for recognition of minority languages or described difficulties that students of minority language backgrounds faced acquiring Setswana and English. Yet I observed no public conversation in any of the schools mentioning language rights or connecting language policies to inequitable outcomes for students.
Doing something about Multiculturalism

Schools’ actions in response to the multicultural nature of their student bodies corresponded to how they discussed or remained silent about their multiculturalism. Metsi and Vula Schools did not develop any school-level policies to address this multiculturalism, relying on national policies for language use, curriculum, and student life. Both schools promoted the Setswana and English language of instruction policies described above. Vula School used the local iKalanga language in students’ free time, on written memos for parents and community members, in parent teacher association (PTA) meetings, and even to provide additional explanations during lessons. The use of iKalanga, however, was not a formal policy, but more a widespread “loyal subversion” (Levinson, 2015) of national policy by teachers from the region in response to the regional majority population (Fieldnotes June 1, 2015; Interviews 34, 35, 40, 51).

Taking their cue from formal curriculum in social studies, Setswana, and moral education classes, the schools promoted similarity and integration over difference and division among their students. Teachers highlighted to me and their students the importance of building unity by speaking Setswana as a common language, wearing the same uniform, eating the same food, and mixing students of different backgrounds in classes and boarding hostels (Interviews 1, 3, 5, 35, 41). At Metsi School, no teacher voiced concerns publicly or in interviews or informal conversations with me that these policies of uniformity were failing to promote their students’ equal citizenship. At Vula School, on the other hand, every teacher I interviewed acknowledged that the school was struggling to meet the needs of its KhoiSan students, and that many of these students were struggling with a sense of inferiority compared to their peers. One KhoiSan student
stated that she wished the school would call a meeting of all the students to discuss the poor relations between ethnic groups at the school and call for students to cooperate across ethnic lines, but that the school had taken no such actions (Interview 44). Faced with a dearth of national policies to discuss historical inequalities between ethnic groups at the school or address ongoing tensions between students from these groups, the school also did not develop school-level policies to support the needs of its multicultural student body. Rather, an administrator, frustrated that he had received no special preparation for receiving *KhoiSan* students at his school, joyfully reported that he had convinced the Ministry of Education to stop sending these students to his school in future years (Interview 40).

Ami School presents a contrasting case. While it also promoted national approaches of integration and uniformity of the student body, school administrators supplemented these national policies with school-level practices meant to develop teachers’ knowledge of the school’s cultural context, redress disadvantages of *KhoiSan* students, and encourage students to cooperate across ethnic lines. The senior administrators driving these school-level approaches were from Northwest District, and they relied on their local knowledge and experience to develop relevant policies for their student body. Moreover, these policies supplemented or reinterpreted national policies, rather than directly undermining them. The current national education policy, for example, places the responsibility of “sensitizing teachers to cultural differences” with school administrators (Republic of Botswana, 1994, pp. 6, 16). Following this directive, the school head (principal) in Ami School held an orientation meeting for new teachers each year, in which,
We orientate them about our students, orientate them about our environment, parents, and everything, even the locations… We talk about how the San look at things. We talk about the Hambukushu. We talk about the BaHerero. Because here we have a very large number of ethnic groups. So we talk, “Oh no, this is how these people behave. This is how they interact.” (Interview 22)

While the national education system provides material resources to equalize KhoiSan and other rural students’ access to school (e.g. transport from their villages, boarding facilities, school uniforms, an allowance for school sports trips), Ami School took several additional actions to attempt to equalize KhoiSan students’ participation at school, a step toward realization of equal citizenship. The school instituted quotas for representation of different ethnic groups among class monitors, prefects, and student representative council members (Class 6 Focus Group; Interviews 15, 20), brought a social worker from KhoiSan students’ home community and a KhoiSan teacher from a nearby school on separate occasions to try to motivate the students and understand their school experiences (Interview 24), and allowed students who had dropped out of school to re-enroll at any time during the year (Interviews 20, 22).

Ami School’s policy of allowing students to re-enroll throughout the school year provides useful insights into the pressure school administrators face within the current national education policy environment. When the administrators instituted their flexible re-enrollment policy, they met with dissent from teachers, who cited a national policy allowing students who had left school for 20 days or more to re-enroll only at the start of a new school. A senior administrator insisted that he found the Ministry of Education flexible in allowing school administrators to craft school-level policies as long as they justified these policies to the regional education office: “The Ministry actually can allow us to be flexible… You are empowered. But of course you will meet a lot of resistance
from teachers” (Interview 22). One such teacher explained his resistance as stemming from the national policies that encouraged uniformity across all schools:

“I feel the purpose of our education system is for children to all be addressed equally, irrespective of their backgrounds… It is the very same government that said something of that nature. But we as teachers are instructed [by our school administration]… The way we treat other children from different cultures is supposed to be different from how we treat the [KhoiSan] children. (Interview 20)

Ami School’s senior administrators’ personal knowledge of the region and confidence in instituting policies in the face of teacher dissent allowed the school to respond with more recognition of its multicultural student population than Metsi and Vula Schools. Yet the policies only addressed student actions that the school openly discussed as problematic (e.g. leaving school, isolating themselves from other students), rather than issues of inequality between ethnic groups that may have been driving these actions but were not open to public discussion in schools.

**Students’ experiences of multiculturalism**

While the three schools responded to their multicultural student populations differently, similar student perceptions of and experiences with unequal inter-ethnic group relations indicate a need for deeper recognition of multiculturalism across all schools. Students acknowledged and were grateful for policies that promoted equal treatment in schools. At Metsi School, 86% of students responded that they agreed or strongly agreed that “At school I learn that it is important to treat all ethnic groups fairly”; at Ami School, it was 92%; at Vula School, 85%. Despite feeling that they learned the importance of treating all ethnic groups fairly, they brought up concerns and unanswered questions about the hierarchy of ethnic groups they perceived in their schools.
and communities: the eight constitutionally recognized Tswana groups were the most superior; the local majority culture was dominant over others in the school community; and those who were both constitutionally and numerically the minority they perceived to be the most inferior.

Despite schools’ attempts to promote equal citizenship through equal treatment regardless of ethnicity, students perceived clear hierarchies between ethnic groups, with some affecting them directly at schools and others being issues that they were more likely to face at the community or national level. In Metsi School, where the numerical majority was a Tswana group, minority students often masked their ethnic backgrounds and assimilated to the majority Bakgatla norms and dialect out of fear of being teased. At Vula School, where Kalanga students were the majority, students tended to describe how Kalanga were treated as inferior to Tswana in the country at large but not in their school. As one Kalanga girl said, “Mostly in Botswana they consider … all the ethnic groups that are in the south [Tswana groups], they take them as they are the most important [sic] than the ones that are from the Northeast [District]” (Interview 41). Students at Ami school similarly recognized that the Wayeyi were the largest ethnic group in their school and the school’s village, and that they faced discrimination outside of school but not within it.

When I asked one Wayeyi student whether she felt her ethnic group was treated equally at school, she responded,

Most people here in [Ami School] are Bayeyi, so there are small numbers of other people from different cultures. So mostly the Bayeyi tribe are the ones who don’t treat others equally. They treat the [KhoiSan] unfairly and the Herero because of their language… They condemn their language and their lifestyle. (Interview 27)
Although, as this student notes, the Wayeyi often asserted their superiority at school through their better command of Setswana as compared to other minority ethnic groups, some Wayeyi students highlighted how their dialect of Setswana acted as a signal of their inferiority to Tswana groups. Discussing how the Wayeyi were treated by other groups outside of school, one boy stated, “We in Northwest [District], we are discriminated from other parts because we usually speak this Setswana that is not perfect. They see us as people who belong to lower classes” (Interview 33). Individuals of minority ethnic backgrounds who spoke Setswana as their first language, such as many of the Wayeyi students at Ami School, still perceived that their inclusion as equal citizens of Botswana was undermined in relationships with their Tswana compatriots.

For students who identified with ethnic minority groups at the school and national level, particularly those who spoke minority languages at home, equal citizenship felt even less attainable. One student at Metsi School who said she proudly named her Kalanga background in class described how students responded by calling her Zimbabwean¹¹: “Some people say that Kalanga people are not Kalanga, they’re Zimbabwean… Most of the tribes [Tswana ethnic groups in Botswana], they come from South Africa. So they think that when they come from South Africa they’re superior to these other tribes” (Interview 8). At Vula School, a student focus group that contained a mix of Kalanga and KhoiSan students discussed how they saw the KhoiSan as “not recognized in the nation.” When I pressed for them to explain more, each of the students chimed in, saying that they felt this ethnic group is ignored and treated as though it does not exist, by the government and community members (Class 10 Focus Group). In a one-

¹¹Zimbabweans are looked down on in Botswana, because there is a perception that most are illegal immigrants who bring crime and violence.
on-one interview, one of the *KhoiSan* students reiterated this idea and described how it affected her at school, asserting, “When we are [at Vula School] we are looked down [on]. Some they are treated superior” (Interview 44). She went on to describe how other students and teachers would generalize to all *KhoiSan* students if a single one made a mistake in class, and how students at the boarding hostels would accuse *KhoiSan* students of isolating themselves from others if they sat and talked together. At Ami School, as described earlier, teachers and majority *Wayeyi* students similarly accused *Herero, KhoiSan*, and some *Hambukushu* students of “isolating” themselves when they spoke their home languages in small groups during their free time. When members of these groups felt free to explain their perspective in one-on-one interviews, they described grouping themselves in order to learn about their ethnic groups’ language, culture, and history. One *Herero* student stated, “We as *Herero* like to speak our language. We like to promote history… We like to promote our culture, as *Wayeyi* in the schools don’t know how to speak *Shiyeyi*, because their culture has loosened” (Interview 33). She asserted that there was no other forum at Ami School in which *Herero* students could learn about their ethnic identity.

In focus groups and interviews with me, students raised many concerns about unequal relations between ethnic groups in their schools and communities, yet none of the schools provided them with opportunities to address these concerns. In theory, the schools could have provided such opportunities for students to ask questions through participatory structures such as the student representative council or structured classroom discussions and debates (Laden, 2013), even though formal school curriculum treats these topics as closed (Hess, 2009). While each school had an active Student Representative
Council (student government) as well as class monitors and prefects who were responsible for reporting student concerns, I found no evidence of students discussing inequalities between ethnic groups through these structures.

One required school subject, moral education, provides an opportunity for students to practice skills necessary for relational justice (Laden, 2013) – to ask questions and offer justifiable explanations to others. Learning objectives in this class regularly ask students to debate the advantages and disadvantages of various decisions, and the course includes an objective to “analyse inequalities in Botswana.” Yet when I observed this objective being taught in Vula School, the students only discussed examples of inequalities already mentioned in the textbook used in all three schools – those related to gender and disability. This text treats equality between ethnic groups as a closed issue, stating, “everyone living in the country is protected by the law regardless of one’s sex, race, ethnic group, or place of origin” (Fieldnotes June 11, 2015). In interviews, teachers also explained that on the rare occasion that students raise concerns about inequalities between ethnic groups in classes, teachers describe it as a historical issue, rather than recognizing any of the continuing effects described by students. For example, one social studies teacher at Metsi School said, “[Students] are aware that in the past there were these eight major groups. And they are aware of these other minority groups. But I should think now they know that all people are equal in Botswana” (Interview 3). Like all other interviewed teachers, she said she teaches her students that all ethnic groups are equal today.
Discussion

As a longstanding democracy, Botswana has committed to promoting the equality of all its citizens, regardless of ethnic group, in the interests of establishing national unity. In the first 50 years since Botswana’s independence, education policy and curriculum have taken a distributive justice approach to promoting equality through equalized access to schools and uniformity – of dress, language, and understanding of the majority Tswana culture – alongside toleration of minority ethnic groups (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017). Yet educational philosophers and theorists have raised serious doubts as to the effectiveness of toleration alone for supporting students’ development of civic equality – treating one another as equals regardless of ethnic background (Banks, 2008; Gutmann, 1999; 2004; Kymlicka, 2015; Laden, 2013). The limited responsiveness of the three case study schools in this study to their multicultural student bodies, and students’ continuing experiences of discrimination and disrespect along ethnic lines, demonstrate the limitations of developing equal citizenship through Botswana’s current policy approach.

All three schools worked within rather than subverting national education policies, and they represent a range of possible, acceptable school-level responses to multiculturalism in the present policy environment. From these schools’ responses, we can identify policy-level factors that enable or impede schools’ ability to develop students’ equal citizenship. First, the Ministry of Education allows school heads to develop school-level policies that respond to the unique needs of their student body as long as they do not undermine national policies. Ami School’s senior administrators capitalized on this flexibility to train their teachers in cultural norms of regional ethnic groups and encourage greater student participation in student leadership positions and
through allowing re-enrollment in school. Yet their responsiveness to multiculturalism was not required by national policies and imposed additional burdens on the school’s administrators, who had to develop school-level policies, convince the regional education office to allow them, and justify the policies to dissenting teachers. Under national policies, simpler and equally acceptable responses to the flexibility given to school heads were Metsi School’s denial of the reality of multiculturalism among its students, and Vula School’s choice not to develop school-level policies to address its effects.

Second, school heads’ jurisdiction to establish school-level responses to multiculturalism is extremely limited in its scope. Despite high-level recommendations to teach minority languages in schools, language of instruction policies have remained rigid in their exclusive promotion of Setswana and English (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017; Nyati-Saleshando, 2011). Similarly, despite a national goal for public schools to “recognise, support, and strengthen Botswana’s wealth of different languages and cultural traditions” (Presidential Task Group (PTG), 1997, p. 5), the formal curriculum in junior secondary schools provides only superficial recognition of uncontroversial aspects of multiculturalism (e.g. dress, music, and foods) and does not address more contentious issues such as alternative historical understandings, economic and political inequalities between ethnic groups, or language rights (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review). The curriculum describes unquestioned language policies and equality of ethnic groups as closed topics, not open to question or debate. Taking their lead from this curriculum, teachers and administrators did not invite discussion of these issues in any of the case study schools, although many teachers and students revealed knowledge of these issues gained outside of school. Moreover, despite teachers’ overwhelming awareness of the
burden students faced under the national language of instruction policy, only Vula School very rarely used the local *iKalanga* language to aid student comprehension. Teachers’ use of *iKalanga* there represented “loyal subversion” of explicit school and national policies, not a school-level response to students’ learning needs.

Schools’ silence on controversial aspects of multiculturalism had tangible negative effects for their students. Students from unrecognized, minority ethnic groups in all case study schools described feelings of shame and embarrassment or treatment as inferior citizens, as compared to the eight recognized *Tswana* groups. Although many students revealed knowledge of and pride in their ethnic group when they were the numerical majority in their school, or when they associated with students of their same ethnicity, they had few opportunities to discuss their background openly in lessons or assemblies. They were also extremely reluctant to raise concerns about discrimination, disrespect, bullying, or feelings of exclusion based on their ethnicity in their classes or through student representative councils. Many students who spoke minority languages at home described struggling to gain proficiency in the two languages of instruction, *Setswana* and English, but heard no acknowledgment of this struggle from teachers. As schools maintained silence on the legal and political battles surrounding languages of instruction, within their grounds students were accused of isolating themselves, discriminating against others, and being primitive when they spoke minority languages. Yet students who spoke these minority languages at school often did so out of a desire to maintain an integral aspect of their social identity. As Gutmann (1999) points out, schools’ inability to respect some individuals’ emotional need to identify with their ethnic group while respecting others’ right to do so undermines civic equality (pp. 305-306).
Finally, education policies have established structures in junior secondary schools that support open student discussion of some issues relevant to their lives and provide opportunities for students to practice justifying responses to those issues. Students elect class monitors, prefects, and Student Representative Council members and then raise pertinent issues through these representatives. The required moral education class asks students to consider ethical dilemmas and identify advantages and disadvantages of various courses of action. Such structured opportunities for discussion, debate, and reasonable justification are necessary for relational justice, as Laden (2013) argues. Were controversial aspects of multiculturalism (e.g. language policies, inequalities and disrespect between ethnic groups, and alternative historical perspectives) to be treated as open topics in schools, students and teachers would already have structures through which to debate them and practice carrying out respectful and reasonable discussions.

**Conclusion**

There are two potential paths for schools in Botswana to recognize the multiculturalism of their student bodies and support students to develop the skills and practices to act as equal citizens regardless of ethnic group. The path available to schools at present requires that an individual school recognize the multicultural nature of its student body and relevance of ethnicity for students’ experiences, and to put in place structures to address these realities *despite* national education policies and curriculum that equate equality with uniformity and downplay the relevance of ethnicity. A preferable path for Botswana’s schools would account for students’ lived experiences in multicultural schools and prepare them to promote equal citizenship in society. In this
path, schools would be supported by national education policies and curriculum to recognize that all schools are multicultural, acknowledge contemporary effects of historical inequalities, recognize the salience of multiple ethnic identities, and invite discussion of these issues, their effects, and how best to redress them.

In a country like Botswana, where education policies and curriculum are centrally-decided and implemented with fidelity at the school level (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review), this latter path requires national policies that embrace recognition of diverse ethnic groups both in rhetoric and expected practice. This recognition would acknowledge and explain diverse historical perspectives, ethnic identities, and cultural norms and accept the use of home languages in public spaces including schools, further allowing these languages to be offered as supplementary lessons where there are resources and requests from schools’ communities to do so. If these policies of recognition were in place at the national level, all schools in Botswana would be expected to implement them. Such policies of recognition would signal that the state views the topic of how best to ensure equal citizenship for members of all ethnic groups, in light of historical inequalities, as open for discussion and action.
Paper 3: Experiences of (Dis)Unity:

Students’ negotiation of ethnic and national identities in Botswana schools

Introduction

Botswana has been celebrated as an example of enduring peace and democracy since gaining independence from Great Britain 50 years ago (Dalley et al., 2013). Botswana’s case is particularly striking because many of its close regional neighbors have struggled to control “ethnic cleavages” (Smith, 1991, p. 119) that frequently erupt into internal armed conflict. Botswana’s leaders have observed these examples and recognized that their nation-state faced the same dilemma as other multiethnic states in Sub-Saharan Africa: how to manage ethnic diversity while promoting a sense of national unity. Over time, Botswana’s leadership has gradually changed its model for building unity. In the first three decades after independence in 1966, Botswana promoted assimilation of ethnic groups to a superordinate national identity constructed around the majority ethnic group’s culture and language; over the most recent two decades, as individual and group advocacy to recognize minority ethnic groups has grown, the government has begun introducing multicultural discourse into national policies (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017).

Public schools are a key institution for socializing subjects into national citizens globally (see, for example Boli, 1989; Green 1990; Weber 1976, as cited in Uslaner & Rothstein, 2012) and act as a particularly powerful state intervention into individuals’ subjectivity in Botswana (Gulbrandsen, 2012). Yet, multiculturalism in Botswana’s education policies and the content of teaching and learning in schools remains
conspicuously absent (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review; Nyati-Saleshando, 2011). A highly publicized 1997 national vision statement with no policy implementation powers, Vision 2016, included a goal that “The education system will recognise, support and strengthen Botswana’s wealth of different languages and cultural traditions” by the year 2016 (Presidential Task Group, 1997, p. 5). Government schools in Botswana have been a battleground between advocates and opponents of multiculturalism, particularly on the issue of language of instruction. Proponents have fought to include minority languages as languages of instruction and opponents have repeatedly struck down policy recommendations to this effect; Setswana (the Tswana majority groups’ language) remains a required language of instruction for all students, alongside English (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017; Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006b). Indeed, by most accounts, Botswana has made no progress toward recognizing minority languages in schools and recognizes minority cultures only at a superficial level (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review; Vision 2016 Council, 2010).

Within the context of conflicting messages about the role of ethnic identity within Botswana’s national identity, this paper considers how adolescent students in a key developmental stage of identity formation (Erikson, 1968) understand and enact their ethnic and national identities. Scholars who study inter-group conflict remind us that nation-states can build and maintain peace by promoting national identities that are inclusive rather than exclusive of sub-groups, such as ethnic groups (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Kawakami, 2003; King, 2014; Tajfel, 1982). At the same time, the persistent salience of ethnic identification in Sub-Saharan Africa is well-documented (Robinson, 2009; Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2015). This paper examines to what extent students of
majority and minority ethnic backgrounds experience the national identity constructed in their schools as inclusive of their ethnic groups, and for what reasons they enact their national identity.

To understand students’ experiences of national identity as inclusive or exclusive of their ethnic identities, I first present portraits of two adolescent students, one who identified with a majority Tswana ethnic group, and one from a minority ethnic background, both of whom were exceptionally successful in their schools in terms of academic achievement and recognized leadership skills. I examine their experiences and understandings of developing and displaying ethnic and national identities in different spheres of their lives. I then discuss how structures, content, and relationships in their junior secondary schools (JSS) shaped their social identity development.

While both students valued their national identity as a path toward a future good life – including higher levels of education and employment – enacting this national identity required only the minority student to sacrifice other desired “goods” – connections to family heritage and equal inclusion in the nation-state as an individual who identified with a minority ethnic group. Given that these students were exceptional in their school success, a more typical experience for students of ethnic minority backgrounds may well be to find that the education and employment values of their national identity were inaccessible, undermining for minority students the salience of the Tswana-based national identity conveyed in schools.
Conceptual Framework

Although the name of the country indicates that Botswana is the home of the *Batswana* people, there are in fact many ethnic groups within the national borders. The Constitution recognizes eight “major tribes” who are sometimes considered separate ethnic groups but share the common (national) language, *Setswana*, and tend to be distinguished from one another by family lines and historical territory (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006b; Pansiri, 2012; Republic of Botswana, 2000). As is typical in English, I term these groups *Tswana*. Together, they comprise approximately 50% of Botswana’s population, while approximately 25 other groups, who are not named in the Constitution, make up the other 50% (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017). This ethnic composition – one group numerically dominant and numerous other ethnic groups – combined with economic and social factors created a strong possibility of violent conflict in post-independence Botswana (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017).

King’s (2014) analysis of links between education and conflict point to two processes that Botswana’s state leadership has actively tried to manage since independence: horizontal inequalities and social identity development. King (2014) defines horizontal inequalities as “severe social, political, and/or economic inequalities” (p. 23) perceived to exist between groups. Botswana’s government has worked unceasingly to avoid horizontal inequalities between ethnic groups by rapidly expanding access to schools of similar quality throughout the country. The government’s efforts to equalize access to and quality of public schools have paid off; thus far Botswana has avoided widespread perceptions that inequalities in educational access and outcomes exist between ethnic groups, rather than simply between individuals (Dryden-Peterson &
Mulimbi, 2017). This public perception that inequalities between individual students are more pertinent than those between ethnic groups may find support in the facts that a) within-school variation in exam results is larger than between-school variation in Botswana (Marope, 1996) and b) the Ministry of Education does not collect data on students’ ethnicity or analyze and publicize disparities in school achievement by ethnicity (Jotia & Pansiri, 2013).

The second key role for schools in building peace is to construct an inclusive national identity in such a way as to manage the effects of ethnic identification, so that these differences do not undermine national stability. The importance of ethnic and national identification to peace-building efforts stems from a basic psychological tendency to categorize individuals as ingroup or outgroup members, as articulated in Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). According to this theory and many empirical studies that have tested it, individuals tend to have more positive affect toward, be more willing to help, and retain more detailed information about ingroup members than outgroup members (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Kawakami, 2003). Ethnicity is a key line of demarcation between ingroup and outgroup members in Sub-Saharan Africa (Robinson, 2009; Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2015) and is more predictive of conflict than religion or regional categorizations (Østby & Urdal, 2010). Social categorization, including ethnicity, is malleable (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000), and many peace-building efforts focus on creating inclusive identities – social identities that emphasize similarities and tolerance rather than rigid binaries (King, 2014).

Since independence, Botswana’s central government has sought to construct such an inclusive national identity through its public schools. The state exerts an especially
strong authority over individuals’ subjectivity in Botswana through the pervasive reach of government services into every corner of the country (Gulbrandsen, 2012), including the provision of near-universal access to a 10-year education (UNESCO, 2011). Schools bring to every community primarily non-local teachers, economically dependent on the government (Gulbrandsen, 2012), who transmit a nationalized curriculum that they follow with great fidelity (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review). The formal curriculum conveys the benevolence of the state, through assurances of equality for all citizens and redistribution of resources for national development (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review). At school, students hear through the curriculum and see through the example of their teachers that mastery of this nationalized curriculum represents a path – accessible to all – to paying jobs and inclusion in the modern nation-state (Gulbrandsen, 2012).

The education system in Botswana has taken a particular approach to creating an inclusive national identity for all students. This approach, adopted through the first education policy, Education for Kagisano (RoB, 1977), and unchanged in the current policy, the Revised National Policy on Education (RoB, 1994), promotes national identity as more important than ethnic identity and bases cultural aspects of the national identity on the majority Tswana groups (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017; Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review). School curriculum encourages toleration for different ethnic groups – accepting that differences in arts, languages, and lifestyles exists between them and should be treated as private matters – rather than publicly recognizing minority group experiences and perspectives (Gutmann 1999; Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review). As such, Botswana has adopted a recategorization approach to managing social
identities, known in psychology as the Common Ingroup Identity Model (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). This approach attempts to eliminate dangerous ethnic cleavages by “promot[ing] the creation of a [national] group identity at a higher level than existing [ethnic] groups” (King, 2014, p. 30).

Yet, numerous empirical studies have suggested that the recategorization approach, which encourages homogeneity in place of long-standing self-defining sub-groups, may not be sustainable or effective at avoiding inter-group conflict in the long-term, due to the continuing salience of ethnic identity and a tendency for recategorization to involve assimilation to a dominant group’s identity (Dovidio, Gaertner, Shnabel, Saguy, & Johnson, 2010; King, 2014). Indeed, ethnic minority advocacy has grown in Botswana over the past two decades, and a Presidential Inquiry into certain sections of the Constitution concluded that, due to widespread public perceptions of discrimination against minority ethnic groups: “…the long-term stability of this country, and in particular, the sustainability of its unity, could not be guaranteed” (Republic of Botswana, 2000, p. 9). The sections of the Constitution found to be discriminatory have since remained unchanged (Nyati-Saleshando, 2011).

Social psychologists have proposed alternative approaches to building inclusive identities that acknowledge the continuing existence and salience of sub-groups, such as ethnic groups. The Mutual Intergroup Differentiation Model (Hewstone & Brown, 1986) encourages positive, cooperative relationships between groups, in the interest of reaching common goals. Such a pluralist approach has shown some promise in Botswana’s neighboring country, South Africa, since the end of apartheid (Ross, 2007, as cited in King, 2014). Because this model emphasizes the distinctiveness of original sub-groups, it
is less appealing to leaders in a country like Botswana, who have sought to minimize the salience of ethnic identification. Between the pluralistic approach of the Mutual Intergroup Differentiation Model and the assimilationist tendencies of the Common Ingroup Identity Model lies what some have termed a “dual-identity model,” in which a superordinate (national) identity and a sub-group (ethnic) identity coexist (Dovidio et al., 2010). Empirical research has demonstrated that the assimilationist inclusive identities of a recategorization approach tend to be more salient for majority group members, while those who identify most strongly with minority groups tend to prefer dual-identity representations (van Oudenhoven, Prins, & Buunk, 1998). These various models of inclusive national identities are shown in Figure 5.
Pre-existing ethnic groups

Recategorization Model
(in theory)

Pluralist Model

Dual-Identity Model

Figure 5. Models for creating an inclusive national identity across pre-existing more and less-dominant ethnic groups.
What would be the indicators that the effectiveness of Botswana’s recategorization approach is mediated by individuals’ identification with majority or minority ethnic groups? Tajfel (1982) famously defines social identity as: “that part of the individuals’ self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance of that membership” (p. 24). Applying this definition, three components are essential to an individual’s enactment of any social identity: a) an awareness of membership in a group, b) some value placed on that membership, and c) emotional investment in that membership. Of particular importance in Tajfel’s definition is the fact that individuals belong to multiple social groups concurrently, and expected ways of enacting one aspect of one’s social identity may conflict with another aspect. I argue that the Tswana-based national identity conveyed through the recategorization model in Botswana’s schools may cause just such conflict between ethnic and national identification for minority students, but not for Tswana students. Students of minority ethnic backgrounds in Botswana may value their national identity similarly to Tswana students if they perceive their rights, access to institutions, and mobility to be equitable. On the other hand, the Tswana-dominated monocultural and monolingual aspects of national identity call into question the ‘commonality’ of the national culture (Mulimbi & Dryden-Peterson, under review; Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006a; Tabulawa, 1997). If ethnic minority students in Botswana consider their common cultural heritage to be the histories, proverbs, stories, and languages they hear at home and within their ethnic communities, they might invest emotionally in their ethnic identities more than in the Tswana-dominated national identity they hear at school.
Language is a particularly powerful indicator of social identity that operates to convey membership in and allow access to valuable goods tied to a particular social group, as well as providing emotional connection to a group. Scholars in sociolinguistics and foreign language education have long acknowledged language as “a central feature of human identity … [and] a powerful symbol of national and ethnic identity” (Spolsky, 1999, p. 181; see also Preece, 2016; Joseph, 2004). Language development and use in multilingual societies are embedded in power relationships. Certain languages tend to be associated with higher prestige or status, particularly when they are given “official language” status in society (Holmes, 2006; Phipps, 2003). Minority language speakers are often viewed in terms of their skill deficiencies when learning a language of instruction in schools (Cummins, 2000; Ruiz 1984). Individuals who face discrimination because of their minority background may choose not to speak their home language if it signals their minority group membership to others (Shin, 2013). Kramsch and Whiteside (2008) argue that individuals nevertheless hold agency within these power relationships through the development of symbolic competence – the ability both to learn languages well and learn to shape the context in which language is used to turn the power relationships inherent in linguistic interactions to their advantage. Language does not simply hold instrumental value for communicating within a group and accessing goods and services as a group member. One’s home language provides a deep emotional bond with fellow speakers, and individuals who have had the opportunity to develop proficiency in their mother tongue alongside a dominant language are more likely to embrace dual identities, such as a national and ethnic identity (Lee & Suarez, 2009).
A recent body of literature on ethnicity in Africa considers “national identity salience” and “ethnic identity salience” fixed variables for predicting such social ills as conflict, corruption, and inequality (Robinson, 2009; Michalopoulos & Papaioannou, 2015). This paper seeks a deeper understanding of elements and perceived outcomes of enacting national and ethnic identities that make them more or less salient for individuals at particular times and in particular contexts. For that reason, in my investigation of students’ negotiating their roles as ethnic and national citizens, I take a sociocultural perspective, holding that students’ social identities develop in myriad forms through day-to-day experiences in diverse contexts (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Epstein, 2000; Rubin, 2007).

I focus on processes of identity construction that occur through structures, content, and relationships in schools, the micro-context in which adolescents in Botswana spend the majority of their time outside of home. The structures of schooling include policies and processes that affect students’ access to schooling, such as school fees, school buildings and qualified teachers in one’s community, segregated versus integrated schools, or languages of instruction that students can comprehend. The content of schooling includes formal curriculum, which transmits authorized knowledge from the state (Apple, 1979; Selander, 1990) and day-to-day pedagogical practices through which teachers transmit values and dispositions through their words and actions (King, 2014). It is critical to examine students’ relationships with teachers and peers at school, in addition to the content and structures of schooling. Students’ need for belonging is a fundamental human need (Osterman, 2000), and the need for connectedness to others – through relationships – is strongest during early adolescence (Chapman, Buckley, Sheehan, &
Shochet, 2013), the age of most junior secondary school students in Botswana. Students may enact aspects of their ethnic or national identity not simply based on curricular and structural expectations in their schools, but also out of desire to establish meaningful relationships within or outside of their ethnic group at school.

**Methodology**

This study explores the extent to which students of majority and minority ethnic backgrounds experience the national identity constructed in their schools as inclusive of their ethnic groups, and their reasons for enacting a national identity in certain contexts. In their everyday interactions in schools, adolescents learn how to identify along national or ethnic lines, the ramifications of enacting certain identities, and how they are identified by others. Through in-depth presentations of data from two students, I identify what signaled membership in ethnic versus national communities to them and to others, what value and emotional investment they placed on each identity, and how the structures, content, and relationships in their junior secondary schools affected their understandings and decisions of how to enact their social identities.

**Student Cases**

The students I present as cases here were drawn from two different schools – one in an important village of a major Tswana group, and the other in the remote and sparsely populated Northwest district, home to several of the smallest ethnic groups in Botswana. Each student participated in two phases of research. In the first phase of the study, I spent six weeks at each school between February-September 2015, during which the students
took part in a focus group of 4-6 students, a one-on-one semi-structured interview, and regularly-scheduled lessons and school events that I observed. Focus groups were comprised of students who had been in the same class together for one full year already. I sought a balance of male and female students, with high and low performance, and representing a range of ethnic groups similar to the student body on the whole. Focus group questions aimed to generate discussion between students about a) expectations of “good citizenship” in Botswana, b) sources of pride and shame in their national identity, and c) Botswana’s progress on national goals related to unity and recognition of ethnic diversity (protocol in Appendix I). Individual student interviews lasted approximately an hour and solicited information on a) the students’ home background and early school experiences, b) structures, curricular content, and interactions in their current schools, and c) their reflections on the meaning of citizenship, ethnic and national identity, and school experiences (Protocol in Appendix J).

In the second phase of the study, I returned to the students’ schools to run an action research project with 10-15 students at each school who chose to participate in a research club. This club reinforced students’ knowledge of the research process, as taught in their social studies classes, as well as asked them to apply the process in a follow-up study of themes that emerged from the first phase of the study. Students in the club a) discussed their perspectives on relations between ethnic groups and the meaning of national identity at their school and in the community, b) developed and administered a survey for their peers at school, to quantify other students’ feelings related to these issues, and c) deepened their understanding of the survey results through interviews with fellow students and community members, before d) preparing posters to publicly display their
findings at their schools. From the students’ research club participation, I draw on written fieldnotes, digitally recorded and transcribed club discussions, and one-on-one interviews conducted by the students with family members; in all of these data sources, the students reflected on national identity and ethnic group relations in their junior secondary schools.

**Study Context**

I collected the data for this paper in the context of comparative case studies (Yin, 2014) of four junior secondary schools in regions of Botswana that vary in the ethnic composition of their student bodies and surrounding communities. The initial six-week phase of the full study (February-September 2015) included participant observation of varied contexts across each school, lesson observations (n=53), interviews with teachers and administrators (n=29), and focus groups (n=17) and interviews (n=34) with students. I later returned to three of the schools to run the research clubs and share results of the first phase of the study with school staff. The larger case study database serves to contextualize the student experiences analyzed in detail here, as well as to inform themes I discuss as pertinent to the many students involved in the study.

**Analytic Approach**

For the two case study students I developed individual databases in Atlas.ti consisting of a) transcriptions from their digitally recorded focus group discussions, interviews, and research club contributions and b) typed fieldnotes of informal discussions.

---

12 Due to scheduling difficulties, one school declined my offer to lead a research club with their students but welcomed a data sharing presentation for teachers.
conversations with them and my observations of them in lessons, assemblies, the school grounds, and the community (where applicable). I coded all data sources in these student case databases thematically at the paragraph level, using the codebook developed for the school case studies, for comparison purposes with other students in the study. This thematic coding provided the contextual understanding of the structures and content of schooling at the two students’ schools. I followed this with line-by-line coding focused on a) the students’ articulation of membership in an ethnic or national group, b) the value and emotional attachment the students described from such group memberships, c) relationships with family members, teachers, and peers that influenced their knowledge of or emotional attachment to the national or ethnic group, and d) characteristics of the students’ disposition (samples of codes in Appendix K). All data was originally in English, with the exception of portions of the focus groups and one student’s interview, in which students spoke in Setswana or English, according to their preference. In these cases, a research assistant from the local community translated during the conversations. I later worked with a separate research assistant during transcription and initial analysis, who checked the original translations.

The two students presented in detail here were exceptional on several dimensions: their efforts and abilities put them near the top of their class in academic achievement; they had vast knowledge of current events and historical facts learned outside of school, compared to most of their peers with whom I spoke; and they were unusually reflective in discussions of their social identities. As such, they represent the upper limits of awareness and resources that students may draw from when negotiating ethnic and national identities within the confines of public junior secondary schools in Botswana.
Their experiences and reflections illuminate not what is typical, but what is possible for those students most adept at enacting and reaping promised rewards of multiple social identities. This sampling was purposeful in order to more clearly demonstrate the interplay between how non-school influences and school structures, content, and relationships can shape social identity development, with the goal of identifying themes relevant to students of minority and majority ethnic groups in Botswana more broadly.

I present the two students’ experiences in the form of narrative portraits in order to provide a holistic understanding of the student as a unique individual situated within a particular family, community, and school context. By discussing similar and contrasting patterns in their experiences after the narrative portraits, I illuminate how the students’ identification with and geographical location within majority and minority ethnic groups influenced their experiences negotiating their social identities. Through this cross-case analysis of two exceptional students, I also highlight how their school success may mediate the value that they attached to ethnic and national identities, differentiating their experiences from those of many fellow students who identify with diverse ethnic groups.

Findings

Onalenna

“I’ve never seen anyone being that disadvantaged,” Onalenna said the first time I spoke with her, as her focus group discussed language of instruction policies in Botswana’s schools. I had asked for the group’s reactions to a national goal that no student should be disadvantaged in the education system because they spoke a home language that differed from the two languages of instruction – English and Setswana.
Scholars and minority rights advocates outside of schools have contended that these language of instruction policies account for large regional discrepancies in exam results (Nyati-Saleshando, 2011; Pansiri, 2008). Onalenna likely never had witnessed minority language speakers be disadvantaged in her schools in this longstanding village of the Bagkatla, a major Tswana group. Yet Onalenna was not the sort to limit her understanding to her immediate environment and interactions, but to read widely and reflect. As she later told me, “At home I’m told, ‘If you are asked a question, answer it like you’ve been thinking for a long time.’”

Onalenna was a studious, thoughtful young woman. Whenever I observed her classroom, I found her studying at her desk, midway up the room, next to a window. Even if there was no teacher present – an opportunity many of her classmates took to goof off inside the classroom or rough-house on the dusty grounds between buildings – Onalenna would be working quietly with one or two other girls sitting near her. When a teacher was in the class, Onalenna eagerly participated and led group work, earning her recognition and praise from her teachers. Her family was also well-recognized at the school – where her father was active on the PTA – and in this village – where her ancestors were close to the paramount chiefs. Onalenna also saw her ethnic group, the Bakgatla explicitly recognized in schools, saying,

Knowing that the school is named after the district and the chief, it shows us… Not offending the people who come from other ethnic groups, they know that this is a school from Kgatleng [Bakgatla district] … So that gives the students a sense of knowing that, “I belong in Kgatleng.” Even my school shows me that I do belong in a certain ethnic group.

The largest ethnic group in Onalenna’s school was, indeed, Bakgatla, at just over half of the student body. Still, there were students from at least 12 other ethnic groups, and
around 15% were non-Tswana. Students of minority ethnic groups at Onalenna’s school told me in private that they quickly adapted to Bakgatla ways of speaking, and most avoided openly displaying their ethnic backgrounds at school, for fear of being teased. Although Onalenna understood that her familiarity with the Setswana language of instruction as her home language might provide certain advantages over “people who come from other ethnic groups,” she believed that these advantages were less relevant in her region of the country because, “we’re not using the [minority] language down here.” While in private spaces, other students from Onalenna’s school used these minority languages, in public spaces in the community and at school, Onalenna did not hear them.

Onalenna was comfortable at school, not just because she felt her ethnic group belonged there, but also for the opportunities it provided for her future. From a young age, she said, “I knew that I have to go to school to become like my mom or dad, to be educated.” Citing rising unemployment, she understood from school and home that even successfully completing school would not necessarily lead to a career. As she explained,

At school they’re telling us, if you’re not serious here at junior [secondary school], you know that your aunt or your cousin has a degree, and she or he is sitting at home. He’s not working. She’s not working. What about you, in the next five years or ten years, where will you be?

Yet this awareness simply led to Onalenna’s greater determination to use her education wisely. With her parents’ guidance, she was considering which courses she should take based on “where people are really needed.”

Onalenna’s material resources from home exceeded those of most students in her class, and her family channeled them toward increasing their knowledge of current events. She described how her family would spend their evenings each on their own laptop, “browsing the internet, watching something,” and sharing what they had learned
with one another. From these family interactions around media, Onalenna had learned about Botswana’s water crisis and a promising pipeline to address it, the need to diversify Botswana’s economy as the diamond reserves dwindled, and legal battles over nomadic *Khoisan* groups’ land rights, among other issues not covered in her school curriculum.

Onalenna’s family resources also extended her knowledge of Botswana’s cultural diversity. Despite their long roots in her home village, Onalenna’s family defied easy categorization along ethnic lines, causing her to wonder, “After being a *Mokgatla*, what am I? I’m still trying to figure out what I am.” She spoke *Setswana* with most of her relatives but had spoken *Sesotho* with her mother at an early age and now conversed predominantly in English at home. Her father had a British grandfather and had travelled extensively; her mother had lived with relatives in Lesotho, where she learned *Sesotho*; her aunt was marrying a man from the *Kalanga* minority ethnic group; and her great uncle had married a minority *Herero* woman. She had gained – and actively sought – deep knowledge about each of these groups through interactions with her relatives. Such knowledge was not expected by, or available within the curricular content of her school.

Yet, Onalenna was content with how her school approached ethnic pluralism in relation to Botswana’s national identity. Along the lines of the recategorization approach, she appreciated the priority given to national identity over ethnic identity in the interests of equality across ethnic groups. She described what she had learned in social studies as follows: “When it comes to nationality or the nation, we say all people are equal. So if we would say that ethnic identity is more important than the national identity, some people would be left behind.” Her school’s promotion of toleration for different ethnic groups

---

13 *Sesotho* is the national language of nearby Lesotho and is mutually intelligible with *Setswana*
also fit with messages from her church, where she said, “We’re taught if you don’t tolerate that other person, then you don’t tolerate God.”

Yet when I asked her in an interview to imagine how she might feel about school if she came from an ethnic minority and spoke a minority language at home, she spoke at length, finally concluding:

And also in school, I can’t understand anything the teachers say, so there’s no reason for me to be in school. There’s no reason for me to be here at all. I would feel like I’m not accepted, I’m not tolerated here.

I noted from Onalenna’s apparent ease with reflecting on this scenario that she must have contemplated such ideas before. Yet when I asked her, “Have you thought about this before?” she replied, “Never.”

**Thato**

“Mrs. Mulimbi?” I turned around to see a tall young man, with a serious face that broke into a wide smile as he saw I recognized him. Thato had grown an inch or two in the eight months since I had seen him last, and he now proudly displayed a badge that marked him as a student leader on the lapel of his impeccably clean but worn school jacket. I was equally excited to see Thato. It was my first day back at his school in the remote Northwest District of Botswana, where the sands of the Kalahari to the west must constantly be swept back from the concrete walks, and there is little sign that the lifeline of the region, the Okavango River Delta, lies just a few kilometers to the east. The previous year, when I spent six weeks collecting data at his school, Thato had taken a particular interest in my family, spending hours at our home sharing stories of his life and asking about ours. Thato seemed to have a foot in multiple worlds. He was deeply rooted
in his Wayeyi ethnic heritage while embracing an education that drew him toward national and global communities and away from those roots – both geographically and culturally.

The Wayeyi, the ethnic group that calls the interior of the Okavango Delta home, is one of the smallest ethnic groups in Botswana. They had limited contact with Tswana groups – who are historically concentrated in the southeast of Botswana – until one Tswana group, the Batawana, split from another and relocated to the northwest in the early 19th century (Tlou & Campbell, 1984). Since its formation in 1995, a Wayeyi advocacy group, the Kamanakao Association, has prominently asserted the Wayeyi economic and social subjugation under the Batawana and advocated for the group’s right to teach Shiyeyi language in schools and have their chief recognized at the same level as Tswana chiefs nationally (Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006a; Nyati-Saleshando, 2011).

Thato felt his Wayeyi ethnic identity most strongly in relation to his family home deep in the Delta, where he lived with his maternal grandmother as a child. Thato spoke of home with a mournful nostalgia:

I liked where I grew up, because everybody there speaks Shiyeyi, even the kids. You hear Setswana here and there, but most of the time they only speak Shiyeyi. That is the only ethnic group there. I enjoy being there, because we are able to preserve our culture so that it doesn’t die. At school we learn that culture is dynamic, not static, but there, there is nothing like that. It feels like nothing is changing.

He tried to impress upon me the magic of the place, telling me you could lie in bed at night and hear the lions and elephants just outside the village. Botswana’s government has also recognized value in the un-paralleled nature of Thato’s childhood home and has leased the area as a private concession for luxury safari operators. As a result, there are no schools there. Thato started school at age eight, as opposed to the more common five
or six year starting age. Even then, he began school only at his mother’s hard decision that it was worth his leaving home to become educated. His connection to the family village had faded since he left, and since his grandmother’s passing three years prior. He described returning with his sister two years ago for the first time in many years: “After my grandmother died I hadn’t gone there. Then I took time to go and just see [where I used to stay].”

In the school’s village, where Thato had spent most of his time since leaving his grandmother’s home, he found few opportunities to maintain and develop his Wayeyi identity. As a regional government administrative center with civil servants from throughout the country and residents from all of the region’s ethnic groups, the village’s lingua franca is Setswana. Although 50% percent of students in his school identified as Wayeyi, Thato believed himself to be the only student who spoke the Shiyeyi language. The experience of living in a predominantly Wayeyi village but hearing almost no Shiyeyi had instilled in him both a responsibility to maintain his Wayeyi culture and pride and great value in his singularity as a Shiyeyi speaker among a generation widely believed to have lost the language. Although he lived with his sister, he preferred to spend as much time as possible with more distant relatives in the village, who could teach him “deep Shiyeyi language.” As he told me in an interview, “Shiyeyi, I speak it so that I cannot forget and to show that I belong to Wayeyi.”

In line with a dual-identity model, Thato desired to develop his Wayeyi identity alongside, not to the exclusion of his national identity. Thato’s national identity and the Setswana language served to connect him to fellow citizens as well as educational advancement and future employment. He felt his national identity most concretely in
interactions at school. As he pointed out, *Setswana* “helps me to communicate with other people than *Wayeyi*, because it is not all *Batswana* who can speak *Shiyeyi*.” It was through his interactions in *Setswana* with teachers and students who had come to the school’s village “on transfer” in civil servant posts that Thato learned about life in other parts of Botswana and felt connected to the larger nation. In a research club discussion about some students’ tendency to separate into same-language groups on the school grounds, Thato advocated for using *Setswana* as a national language in these situations, reasoning, “there’s no [way] you can learn about [each other’s] cultures” when students separate and will not speak in a language that others can understand.

Yet, through such interactions with students and staff from other parts of Botswana, he came to understand the marginal place that his home Northwest District and its ethnic groups occupied in the national imagination. He had heard that other regions “almost have everything [material resources] in schools compared to the schools here,” which served to build his perception of existing horizontal inequalities. He also described his constant awareness of how ethnic groups from the Northwest District were treated as inferior by teachers, students, and community members from other regions, particularly if they spoke minority languages: “Sometimes when you speak your own language they look down on you, thinking that maybe you’re inferior or you don’t understand some things. You’re still not advanced.” Connecting back to this idea in a later interview, he reflected, “For [*Tswana* ethnic groups] when they speak *Setswana* it is their ethnic group language and also national language. It’s like they have double language.” Thato neither described feeling an emotional connection to *Tswana* language and culture nor resented the expectation to adopt them. Yet he chafed under the
knowledge he had gained from his own experiences that these bases of national identity allowed citizens from *Tswana* ethnic groups to feel they were superior to others.

Although he associated *Setswana* language and culture with others’ ethnic identity, Thato understood them as aspects of his national identity that were instrumental to his educational and career success, alongside English. He explained, “In school, we spend a lot of time speaking *Setswana*, and there is a *Setswana* subject. We don’t have a *Shiyezi* subject.” He further explained, “[My family] encouraged me before I started school that I should keep on speaking *Setswana* and English, because that is the only language that you are taught at school.” Thato believed wholeheartedly in the importance of education for his future, and he took his family’s advice. Although he found it difficult to express himself in English, often stuttering or pausing to search his mind for the word he meant, Thato practiced speaking English at every opportunity. Yet not all teachers recognized the hurdles that he had faced to access education and the unceasing effort with which he approached learning. The first time I observed a lesson with his class, Thato’s hand shot up in response to every question from the teacher. The third time he spoke, he struggled to make a point in English about the moral implications of abortion. The teacher, growing impatient, told the class, “Maybe Thato is saying something, but we don’t know what.” Turning to Thato, he said, “You shouldn’t *try* to say something. I told you, if you want to say something you should just *say* it.” Fully confident in his academic effort and abilities, despite such comments, Thato expected to earn a place at senior secondary school and beyond. Hearing teachers discuss the link between education and employment, and seeing the example of numerous aunts and uncles employed as civil servants, he also expected that this education would lead to a job and security.
Thato was adept at navigating school expectations to speak English and Setswana and acted on the belief that his equal rights as a citizen would allow him to continue his education and find gainful employment. Yet, he imagined how his equality could be more fully realized if his schools adopted a pluralistic model for building Botswana’s national identity that would recognize his equality not just as an individual citizen, but also as a member of the Wayeyi group. In a focus group, he asserted that Botswana could follow the example of Namibia and South Africa by promoting multiple indigenous languages of instruction. When students in a research club discussion insisted that speaking minority languages prevented a person from communicating with a national or global community, Thato used his own experience to argue back, “How can we say that a person who speaks Shiyeyi cannot communicate with Americans? For example, me, I can speak Shiyeyi, but I can communicate with an English [-speaking] person.” In an interview, he cited the lengthy advocacy campaign in which the Wayeyi had been petitioning to have their chief recognized in the national traditional leadership body, the Ntlo ya Dikgosi (House of Chiefs), an issue well-known in the community but not taught in schools. While recognizing that “no country is 100% good,” he argued that the government could do more to treat all ethnic groups equally. As Thato saw it, the quest for equality was not yet complete: “They try, but it’s not enough.”

---

14 The Wayeyi are one of the numerous ethnic groups in Botswana that are not named in Botswana’s Constitution. Only the chiefs of the eight named groups, the Tswana “major tribes,” have the rank of “paramount chief” in the Ntlo ya Dikgosi, which has jurisdiction over any matter deemed to be “cultural” in Botswana. The Wayeyi tribe first took their case to Botswana’s High Court in 1999 (For an extended discussion, see Nyati-Saleshando, 2011). After my fieldwork was completed, in May 2016, Government informed the Wayeyi that their paramount chief would be recognized in accordance with the 2008 Bogosi Act (Segokgo, 2016).
Discussion

As Tajfel’s (1982) influential definition of social identities reminds us, the salience of national versus ethnic identity and the various ways of enacting these identities depends on one’s belief in their membership in a group as well as the value and emotional attachment that an individual places on these identities. In the following sections, I first analyze how content, structures, and relationships in their schools shaped Onalenna and Thato’s interpretation of their membership in, value associated with, and emotional attachment to their ethnic and national identities. I then draw insights from these two exceptional students’ experiences to understand how the education system’s recategorization approach may be less effective than a dual-identity approach for building a national identity inclusive of students who identify with minority ethnic backgrounds in Botswana more generally.

Onalenna and Thato’s experiences demonstrate that schools effectively convey to students of all ethnic groups their equal status as legal members of the nation in the eyes of the state. In terms of educational structures, both students were free, and indeed expected, to attend schools accessible to students of any ethnic group. In content, their social studies teachers taught them that all citizens of Botswana enjoy equal rights, regardless of ethnicity. Yet, within his school Thato sometimes experienced his membership in the nation, as an individual who identified with the Wayeyi ethnic group, as inferior to Tswana individuals.’ This became clear as he cited a) relations with peers and teachers in which they “look down on you, thinking that maybe you’re inferior” when he spoke a minority language; b) educational content that failed to recognize his Shiyeyi language or knowledge he had gained outside of school about advocacy for
Wayeyi rights; and c) educational structures that made his access to schools comparatively difficult by forcing him to learn in Setswana without second-language supports and requiring him to leave his home village and guardian to enroll in school.

Both students attached instrumental value to their national identity – most notably through their mastery of Setswana and English and their legal equality as individual citizens. Their schools’ curricular content and teachers’ advice and examples demonstrated to them that national identification – speaking Setswana, attending public school, and mastering national curriculum – provided the path to higher education and employment. Through their teachers’ advice, and supported by knowledge of relatives who had successfully completed school, Onalenna and Thato came to believe that by embracing their identity as national citizens they would someday enjoy employment without discrimination on the basis of their ethnicity. Whereas Onalenna’s home language was also the national language, Setswana, Thato experienced first-hand the necessity of speaking Setswana only when he entered school – where it was the language of instruction – and the school’s village – where it acted as the lingua franca for residents who originated in all corners of Botswana. Communicating in Setswana in schools accessible to citizens of all ethnic groups allowed Thato to form relationships with and gain knowledge of individuals from other ethnic groups; although the tendency for students to assimilate to Bakgatla norms at Onalenna’s school denied her such an opportunity to expand her multicultural knowledge at school. Thato believed speaking Setswana and English was useful as a means to communicate with other national citizens but did not necessitate abandoning Shiyeyi. However, his school experiences taught him that he could only pursue knowledge of his ethnic language privately.
The students also described a greater emotional attachment to their ethnic identity than their national identity. Although both students gained most of their deep knowledge of elements of ethnic identities outside of school, Onalenna recognized large areas of overlap between her ethnic identity and the national identity constructed through school curriculum and language policies, as when she noted that the school’s name and dominant language were taken from the Bakgatla group. Thato, on the other hand, described with great sadness aspects of his ethnic identity that he found completely absent from school. Moreover, Thato had to physically leave the land of his childhood and ancestors in order to attend school at all. It was with a heavy heart that he remembered the language, home, and family traditions he left behind in order to fully access the goods promised by his national identity. Yet his reasonable expectation that he would access higher levels of schooling and find gainful employment motivated Thato to sacrifice the emotional connection to his ethnic identity while attending school, as required by the recategorization model he encountered there.

**Conclusion**

Thato was not alone in feeling that the state space of his school asked him to sacrifice his ethnic identity in favor of a national identity. Students of minority backgrounds across all case study schools described structures, content, and relationships in their schools that a) pressured them to speak only Setswana or English, b) stigmatized or discriminated against them when they identified with their ethnic group, c) did not accord recognition of their ethnic group’s contributions, language, or history, and d) in many cases forced them to leave their families and home villages, relocating as far as 200
kilometers away to attend school. Yet for Thato, meaningful membership as a valued individual member of the nation was feasible and worthy of some sacrifice. Accessibility of further education and future employment mediated the relationship between a) the salience of an unrecognized minority ethnic identity largely excluded from the state space of the school, and b) his willingness to enact a national identity in the school context.

The mediating effect of school success for Thato calls into question the effectiveness of the recategorization approach to building an inclusive national identity for Botswana. It is unlikely that a homogenizing national identity built on Tswana culture and language, as presented in Botswana’s government junior secondary schools, will succeed in taking precedence over ethnic identities for the majority of students who identify with minority ethnic groups. Thato’s school, like many in predominantly ethnic minority regions (Pansiri, 2008), achieves consistently low passing rates for students hoping to progress to senior secondary school. In each year between 2009-2011 (the most recent years with school level data publicly accessible), approximately 50% of students in Thato’s school failed the JSS leaving exams with a grade of D or worse; whereas the national rate was around 25%. Most passing students did so with an overall C grade (40-46% each year), and not a single student earned a grade of A or merit in those three years. Onalenna’s school, on the other hand, nearly matched the national average rates at each letter grade in all three years. The student surveys administered by the research clubs show that 86% of students in Onalenna’s school self-identified as belonging to one of the Tswana ethnic groups; At Thato’s school, Tswana students made up only 9%. Because disparities in JSS pass rates disproportionately disadvantage students of ethnic minority backgrounds, students whose school experiences demonstrate that identifying with their
ethnic group will exclude them from full membership in the nation, are, on average, also less likely to access the educational and employment outcomes promised by enacting a national identity.

Thato and Onalenna further reveal that students in Botswana’s junior schools are accessing knowledge of campaigns for minority rights and recognition in their homes, media, and communities, despite their schools’ silence on these issues. As public discourse increasingly highlights inequalities in recognition of ethnic groups, it seems likely that the public will begin to perceive disparities in educational achievement as horizontal inequalities between ethnic groups. Such belief in group-level inequalities has been shown to undermine social stability and predict the violent conflict that Botswana has so successfully averted to date (King, 2014).

The dual identity model presents hope, reinforced by empirical data in Botswana, that individuals can embrace both ethnic and national identities, even when the language, history, and cultural practices of these two social identities are distinct. Thato’s willingness to embrace Setswana but desire to maintain Shiyeyi as an important aspect of his ethnic heritage echoes Cook’s (2003) findings in research among minority KhoiSan groups, that they expressed a preference for speaking and learning Setswana when phrased as either/or choice but for home language when given an option of speaking both (as cited in Nyati-Ramahobo, 2006b). Furthermore, Werbner (2002), an anthropologist who carried out research among the Kalanga minority ethnic group, argues that, in Botswana those groups that have most actively sought recognition have done so out of a desire to redefine the national identity as heterogeneous, not to recede into an ethnic enclave or to secede from the nation. Advocates for multilingual and multicultural
education in Botswana have suggested that the education system could more fully include individuals who identify with minority ethnic groups by offering instruction in minority languages and recognizing historical perspectives and cultural practices of non-*Tswana* ethnic groups (see, for example, Boikhutso & Jotia, 2009; Jotia & Pansiri, 2013; Nyati-Saleshando, 2011). These findings suggest that Botswana’s education system could build an inclusive national identity more salient to students who identify with minority ethnic groups by recognizing diverse ethnic identities within the nation, rather than continuing efforts to erase them.
Cross-Paper Conclusion

State leaders and individuals alike in Botswana agree on one value that is overwhelmingly important to Botswana’s national identity – Kagisano, or peaceful social stability. Policy documents, curriculum writers, administrators, teachers, and students offered up the preservation of peace as a fundamental justification for policy and curricular decisions described in this dissertation. Botswana has approached peace-building through its education system conscientiously by a) equalizing access to integrated schools with remarkably equal material resources throughout the country, b) reinforcing, through curriculum and equal treatment in schools, students’ equal standing before the law as citizens, regardless of ethnicity, and c) promoting a superordinate national identity – the cultural components of which are drawn from the majority Tswana culture, language, and historical understandings – over ethnic identities. Despite high-level policy recommendations, prominent advocacy campaigns, and increasingly multicultural policy discourse, Botswana has so far rejected calls for recognition of the contributions, historical understandings, and languages of minority ethnic groups in its education policies.

In this conclusion, I synthesize across my three papers to consider how national policy and curriculum relate to actions at the school level and student experiences, in light of the education system’s efforts to construct a unified national identity across diverse ethnic groups. Following this analysis, I lay out tentative hypotheses from my work in need of further research and public discussion. After identifying promising approaches to peace-building across ethnic groups that Botswana has already put in place, I highlight evidence from my research that these existing approaches are not used
to their full potential for encouraging students to act as equals or cooperate across ethnic groups. I propose actions suggested by research and theory that the education system could consider to more fully realize these goals.

**National Identity Construction from Policies to Students through Schools**

There is a mismatch between the national identity model promised by increasingly multicultural policy discourse, and that realized in current curriculum and education policies. It is helpful at this point to refer back to the spectrum of possible state policy approaches to ethnic diversity and note Botswana’s recent shift in discourse from assimilation to multicultural integration, highlighted in the first paper (see Table 9). The key difference between these approaches lies in the degree to which the state allows diverse cultural practices, historical understandings, and languages to co-exist and be accommodated in public spaces and official representations of the national identity. Botswana now acknowledges diverse ethnic groups as central to its identity in numerous official documents outside of the education system, including its statement of national goals, Vision 2016 (PTG, 1997). Yet this shifting discourse has not led to substantial changes in minority groups’ recognition within national education policies, through language of instruction policies that would acknowledge minority language speakers or by including more multicultural content.
Table 9

*State Policies Toward Internal Cultural Diversity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eliminate Difference</th>
<th>Manage Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genocide</td>
<td>Hegemonic Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partition</td>
<td>Territorial Autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assimilation (defined below)</td>
<td>Multicultural Integration (defined below)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Civic:** full, equal membership in the state

**Ethnic:** Does NOT endorse ethnic elements of ancestry or race

- Minority cultural practices, religions, or languages not accorded recognition or support in public institutions
- Minority cultural identities will continue to exist and must be recognized and accommodated within these common institutions

Research in social psychology and sociology has noted that state policies toward managing internal sub-groups parallel models of social identity formation at the individual level (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2007). Assimilationist state policies promote a recategorization model of social identities at the level of individual cognition. Multicultural integration policies promote a dual-identity model. When Vision 2016’s national goal for education says that schools will “recognize, support, and strengthen” diverse ethnic groups, it promises students a dual-identity model, where individuals can freely and equally embrace both ethnic identity and national identity. As shown in my third paper, Thato desired this model – which would allow him to understand and develop his home language and culture even as he grew into a national citizen. What he and other students of minority ethnic backgrounds encountered in their schools, however, was a recategorization model (mismatch in models shown in Figure 6). In this model, *Tswana* ethnic identity overlapped so fully with the cultural bases of national identity that...
other cultural identities, languages, and historical perspectives found almost no acknowledgment in the state space of public schools.

Botswana’s National Identity Model

as promised in Vision 2016

| Ethic Identity (Majority) | National Identity | Ethic Identity (Minority) |

as realized in schools

| National Identity |

| Ethnic Identity (Majority) |

*Figure 6. A mismatch between promised and realized national identity models.*

The process by which Botswana’s education policies translate into lived experiences for students occurs within schools. I hypothesized at the outset of this study that individual teachers and school leaders might deviate from official policy and curricular representations of Botswana’s national identity, based on their personal experiences or the perceived needs of their students. National identity construction is not just a top-down process, as individuals take up and adapt the discourse of what it means to be included in the nation (Fox & Miller-Idriss, 2008). In my deep, contextualized observations in day-to-day practices in these four case study schools I did, in fact, find pockets of adaptation at the school and teacher level, most notably when Vula teachers periodically explained material in the local, minority *iKalanga* language and in Ami
School administrators’ policies encouraging teachers’ cultural awareness and deeper school engagement among the most marginalized KhoiSan students.

What was most striking, however, were not these isolated instances of teachers’ adapting to schools’ multicultural reality, but the pervasive nature of Tswana cultural dominance in all case study schools. Even in schools serving mainly students who identified with minority ethnic groups, public displays of non-Tswana culture and especially language were treated as problematic, deviant, and inferior. As interviews with social studies teachers revealed in my first paper, teachers were less inclined to modify the prescribed curriculum due to their own fears of violent interethnic conflict and sense of indebtedness to the state, combined with practical considerations for job performance and student exam results. The second paper highlights factors that constrained schools from responding to their students’ diverse ethnic backgrounds, including a lack of data on students’ ethnic diversity, language of instruction policies that only allow Setswana and English, and explicit national value placed on uniform treatment and toleration rather than recognition. Schools’ conspicuous silence around contentious aspects of ethnic group relations – which students and teachers nevertheless discussed in private and outside of schools – misses an opportunity for teaching students the skills they need to act as equal citizens.

**Promising Approaches to Peace-Building in Botswana’s Schools**

Botswana’s leadership continues to face a dilemma of how best to balance their desire for a unified national populace with citizens’ needs for inclusion as individuals who identify with diverse ethnic groups. The education system has already put in place
structures that can promote peace-building across ethnic groups, namely integrated schools, equalized educational inputs, and participatory spaces. First, Botswana has established integrated schools, rather than segregating students by social identity categories (e.g. race, religion, or ethnicity). The value of integration for promoting inter-group understanding and equality is well-established in the field of social psychology, where it has a fifty year history articulated through the Contact Hypothesis: that contact between groups decreases the likelihood of conflict, particularly under a set of prerequisite conditions (to which I will return) (Allport, 1954; Dovidio, Gaertner, & Kawakami, 2003). Botswana’s education system has two policies that promote integrated schools: 1) Educating all students from a geographical area in the same school together and 2) Centrally allocating teachers from any ethnic group and region to fill posts throughout the country. For teachers and students in this study, the result was that they gained personal interaction with individuals who identified with a wide range of ethnic groups. Structurally, this provides an opportunity for individuals to learn about one other’s cultural practices, historical understandings, and languages, despite a dearth of such knowledge in formal school curriculum, as I found in the first paper. Further research is needed to quantify how frequently and deeply individuals engage in such cross-cultural learning takes place, and in which contexts.

Second, dispatching teachers wherever they are needed is but one example of ways in which Botswana has sought to equalize material inputs to schools nationwide. Relatedly, in addition to treating students of all ethnic groups as equal citizens in the allocation of educational resources, the education system encourages students’ understanding of their equality through formal curriculum that asks teachers to explicitly
describe government’s commitment and efforts to distribute resources equitably, as I
found in the first paper. Thus far, Botswana has avoided a widespread public perception
of horizontal inequalities in the quality of schools between ethnic groups or regions.
Further research should examine the assignment of teachers to schools in more detail, to
determine whether schools receive teachers with similar levels of experience and
qualifications. Moreover, national teacher training policies could consider whether
teachers being sent to remote areas need specialized pre-service or in-service training in
multicultural education or multilingual environments. Ami School’s administration found
it helpful to institute a school-level training of this sort, and one teacher at Vula School
lamented taking a class in multicultural education only after he had returned from a
remote school teaching contract.

Finally, Botswana’s junior secondary schools already include structures that invite
student input and leadership in raising issues of concern. These structures include the
required moral education class, student representative councils, prefects, and class
monitors (student leadership positions). When such structures invite meaningful student
participation, they support students to a) act as civic equals who may request and provide
justification for decisions (Laden, 2013), and b) practice employing democratic, peaceful
mechanisms rather than violence to solve social problems (Flanagan, Martinez, Cumsille,
& Ngomane, 2011). However, students in this study said they had not raised their
concerns about discrimination and teasing between ethnic groups in these forums.
Schools may want to consider raising this topic explicitly for discussion in student
councils, or the education system could include the topic in units in the Guidance and
Counseling or Moral Education subjects.
Suggested Modifications to Reinforce Kagisano in the Future

Although Botswana has prioritized peace through equitable distribution of resources and legal protections for all citizens, equality of educational resources does not necessarily result in equity of educational outcomes, particularly where there has been historical inequality and oppression (Banks, 2008; Gutmann, 1999). Moreover, students do not necessarily act as equals simply because they are told that they are equal as a natural or legal state (Laden, 2013). Perceived stigma, discrimination, and inequality between ethnic groups in their schools and communities featured prominently in student discussions and interviews in this study. As I have argued in previous work (Dryden-Peterson & Mulimbi, 2017) and throughout this dissertation, Botswana has laid a strong foundation for peace across ethnic groups through equitable distribution of resources, civic ideals, and toleration of differences. Yet a “burning issue” that remains is the lingering perception of exclusion from full membership in the nation, which occurs when individuals who identify with different ethnic groups fail to act as equals. Nearly twenty years ago, a Presidential Inquiry into sections of Botswana’s Constitution concluded that, due to widespread public perceptions of discrimination against minority ethnic groups: “…the long-term stability of this country, and in particular, the sustainability of its unity, could not be guaranteed” (Republic of Botswana, 2000, p. 9).

Research in other contexts, as well as the voices of students in this study, suggest that recognition of Botswana’s ethnic diversity holds great promise for addressing this “burning issue.” Most conflicts that students described between different ethnic groups in their schools were based on incomplete or incorrect understandings of one another’s habits or languages, or of historical facts of power imbalances (which students rarely
knew) that accounted for some groups’ treatment as inferior (which many more students referenced). Should Botswana’s leadership wish to introduce more a more multicultural approach to its education system, policies and curriculum could take several actions to begin the task of recognizing minority ethnic groups more fully. First, history education should make explicit the authorship of a given a historical narrative, include alternative narratives and their authors, and include exercises that encourage students to understand the differing perspectives, as distinct from condemning or accepting them (Carretero, 2011). Second, contemporary issues of discrimination and socio-economic disparities between ethnic groups that have arisen from historical events should be acknowledged openly (Pollock, 2004). Students could discuss such issues through analysis of current events in newspapers, radio, television, or the internet, since at least one of these resources is available even in the most remote schools. Third, language of instruction policies should cease to describe minority languages as problems to be overcome by abandoning them in favor of dominant languages; this would open a debate of how schools could include minority languages of instruction as a right for all children or a resource to be developed where there is a will to do so (Ruiz, 1984).

Allport’s (1954) Contact Theory, and the hundreds of studies and meta-analyses that have built upon the theory, hold that four prerequisite conditions should be in place in order for contact between groups, as occurs in Botswana’s public junior secondary schools, to reduce intergroup conflict: equal status within the contact situation, intergroup cooperation, common goals, and support of authorities (as reviewed by Dovidio, Gaertner, & Kawakami, 2003). Botswana is well on its way to meeting the latter three conditions in its public schools. The education system should now take heed of prominent
minority advocacy campaigns and the voices of students who identify with minority ethnic groups in this study to acknowledge these students’ continuing experiences of “[un]equal status within the contact situation” of their schools. By first acknowledging students’ unequal standing and then engaging in discussion about localized solutions, Botswana can continue to chart its course toward national unity across ethnic diversity.
## Appendix A: JSS Social Studies Syllabus objectives selected for analysis

### Form 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>General objectives (educational standards)</th>
<th>Specific objectives</th>
<th>Form 1 Textbook Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit 1.2: Environment and Humanity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2.2 Environment and Humanity</td>
<td>1.2.2.1 Understand the interrelationship between humanity and the environment</td>
<td>1.2.2.1.1 assess the influence of the environment on traditional lifestyles in different environmental zones &lt;br&gt;1.2.2.1.3 analyse the role of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) in the management of natural resources in Botswana</td>
<td>Chapter 5 – Environment and Humanity, pp. 70-90 &lt;br&gt;Chapter 6, pp. 91-95 – Indigenous Knowledge Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit 1.3: Social and Cultural Environments</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.1 Family in Botswana</td>
<td>1.3.1.1 Appreciate the importance of family and marriage</td>
<td>1.3.1.1.2 analyse the implications of customary, civil and religious marriages on the rights and responsibilities of married couples</td>
<td>Chapter 7, p. 104 – Customary (traditional) marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3.2 Gender Issues</td>
<td>1.3.2.1 appreciate the importance of gender equity</td>
<td>1.3.2.1.2 discuss the role and status of men and women in a traditional society and the changes thereon &lt;br&gt;1.3.2.1.3 discuss cultural practices that discriminate against men and women</td>
<td>Chapter 8, pp. 119-123 – Roles and Status of Women and Men in the Traditional Society; Cultural Practices that Discriminate…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit 1.4: History and Foreign Relations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.3 Origins of the Nation</td>
<td>1.4.3.1 trace the origins of Batswana</td>
<td>1.4.3.1.1 locate the settlement and distribution of the people of Southern Africa around 1800 &lt;br&gt;1.4.3.1.2 compare and contrast the lifestyles of the San and the Khoe around 1800 &lt;br&gt;1.4.3.1.4 discuss the migration of the Bantu speaking people into Southern Africa and their subsequent interaction with the khoisan &lt;br&gt;1.4.3.1.5 describe the way of life of Southern Bantu before contact with Europeans &lt;br&gt;1.4.3.1.6 describe the movement of different Batswana groups into modern Botswana</td>
<td>Chapter 11 – Origins of the Nation, pp. 161-169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit 1.5: Civics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.1 Governance in Botswana</td>
<td>1.5.1.1 understand the government system in Botswana</td>
<td>1.5.1.1.5 discuss the importance of the national principles</td>
<td>Chapter 12, pp. 176-177 – Importance of the National</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Principles to Botswana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Form 1 Textbook Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 – Kagisano (Social Harmony)</td>
<td>pp. 181-189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.5.2 Kagisano</th>
<th>1.5.2.1 show appreciation of kagisano</th>
<th>1.5.2.1.1 explain the concept kagisano</th>
<th>Chapter 13 – Kagisano (Social Harmony), pp. 181-189</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.5.2.1.2 suggest ways of promoting kagisano in a community</td>
<td>1.5.2.1.3 recognise the significance of national identity over ethnic identity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.5.2.1.4 suggest ways of nurturing and protecting Botswana’s image as a peaceful country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Form 2

#### Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>General objectives</th>
<th>Specific objectives</th>
<th>Form 1 Textbook Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit 2.3: Social and Cultural Environments</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 Botswana’s Cultural Heritage</td>
<td>2.3.1.1 understand cultural diversity in Botswana</td>
<td>2.3.1.1.1 locate some important cultural sites in Botswana</td>
<td>Chapter 5 – Cultural Diversity in Botswana, pp. 73-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3.1.1.2 identify some of Botswana’s cultural heritage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3.1.1.3 discuss how various elements of culture bring about individual and national identity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3.1.1.4 discuss the economic potential of culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3.1.1.5 identify both protective and harmful cultural practices to the environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3.1.1.6 evaluate the importance of culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit 2.4: History and Foreign Relations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 The Mfècane / Difaqane Wars</td>
<td>2.4.1.1 understand the importance of the Mfècane in the history of Southern Africa</td>
<td>2.4.1.1 discuss the causes of conflicts among the Nguni that led to the wars of the Mfècane</td>
<td>Chapter 7 – The Mfècane/ Difaqane wars, pp. 107-125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.4.1.1.2 describe the basis for the rise of the Zulu Kingdom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.4.1.1.3 explain the spread of the Mfècane in Southern Africa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.4.1.1.4 discuss the effects of the Mfècane in Southern Africa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2 Colonial Threats to Botswana</td>
<td>2.4.2.1 know the events leading to the declaration of the protectorate</td>
<td>2.4.2.1.1 discuss the activities and effects of early European traders/ hunters and missionaries among Botswana</td>
<td>Chapter 8 – Colonial threats to Botswana, pp. 126-142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>References</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2.1.4</td>
<td>discuss the relations between the Boers and Batswana between 1835 and 1895</td>
<td>Chapter 10 – The Boers and the Batswana between 1835-1895, pp. 150-156</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2.1.5</td>
<td>analyse the factors leading to the British declaration of a protectorate over Bechuanaland</td>
<td>Chapter 10 – The Boers and the Batswana between 1835-1895, pp. 150-156</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.3 Period of Colonial Rule</td>
<td>2.4.3.1 Understand the major socioeconomic and political developments during colonial times</td>
<td>Chapter 11 – The period of colonial rule, pp. 157-167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.4.3.1.1 discuss the attempts and subsequent reactions to the transfer of Bechuanaland Protectorate to British South Africa Company and the Union of South Africa</td>
<td>Chapter 11 – The period of colonial rule, pp. 157-167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.4.3.1.2 discuss the reasons for and the effects of the 1934 Native Administration and Native Tribunals Proclamations introduced by the British in Bechuanaland</td>
<td>Chapter 11 – The period of colonial rule, pp. 157-167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.4.3.1.3 explain the purpose, formation and composition of the advisory and legislative councils</td>
<td>Chapter 11 – The period of colonial rule, pp. 157-167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.4.3.1.4 discuss the development and effects of the rise of nationalism in Bechuanaland</td>
<td>Chapter 12 – Nationalism, pp. 168-178</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.4.3.1.5 outline the road to independence from 1963 to 1966</td>
<td>Chapter 12 – Nationalism, pp. 168-178</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 2.5: Civics</td>
<td>2.5.1 Citizenship in Botswana</td>
<td>Chapter 13 – Rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic Botswana, pp. 179-193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.1</td>
<td>understand citizenship in Botswana and display a sense of patriotism</td>
<td>Chapter 13 – Rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic Botswana, pp. 179-193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.1.1</td>
<td>explain relationship between rights and responsibilities in a democratic society</td>
<td>Chapter 13 – Rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic Botswana, pp. 179-193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.1.2</td>
<td>discuss the rights and responsibilities of citizens</td>
<td>Chapter 13 – Rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic Botswana, pp. 179-193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.1.6</td>
<td>describe the significance of national symbols and important public holidays of Sir Seretse Khama Day, Presidents' Day, Botswana Day</td>
<td>Chapter 13 – Rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic Botswana, pp. 179-193</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix B: Selections from Textbook Codebook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>equity</td>
<td>equity – regional</td>
<td>equity or fairness among regions within Botswana</td>
<td>The distribution of educational resources throughout the country at the primary level is at present inequitable, and this poses a threat to the principles of national unity and Kagisano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>equity – ethnic</td>
<td>equity or fairness between ethnic groups (may be described as &quot;linguistic&quot; or &quot;cultural&quot; groups)</td>
<td>In any consideration of language policy, the rights and needs of the linguistic minority groups must be considered carefully, together with educational and national unity factors. The issue of language, although less complex in Botswana than elsewhere, is important and sensitive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>equity – other</td>
<td>equity or fairness between other categories of people</td>
<td>With the rapid economic and social change of the last few years, however, there is clearly a danger that the unity of the country may be threatened by a new kind of cleavage, on socio-economic lines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>citizenship</td>
<td>citizenship - knowledge or mindset</td>
<td>Connecting particular mindsets or knowledge with being a Botswana citizen (or a Motswana, when used generally, not specifically)</td>
<td>Every Motswana is guided by the national principles of Botho, Self reliance, Development, Democracy and Unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>citizenship – rights</td>
<td>Discussing the rights of Botswana citizens</td>
<td>The people are free to belong and form political parties that will represent them in governance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>citizenship - responsibilities</td>
<td>Discussing the responsibilities, duties, or obligations of Botswana citizens</td>
<td>Civil rights of citizens are complimented by various responsibilities which people have to perform if they want to enjoy their rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>context</td>
<td>context – economy</td>
<td>references to the economic context within which events occur or decisions are made</td>
<td>Culture promotes tourism and creates employment opportunities for Botswana. People work in national parks and game reserves as tourist's guides. Some work in hotels, lodges and camp sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>context - international</td>
<td>references to the international context in which actions occur or decisions are made</td>
<td>The laws written in the constitution on human rights protects peace in the country. The country observes the human rights signed in agreement with the United Nations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>context - national goals</td>
<td>references to goals, aims, or objectives at the national level</td>
<td>Unity means togetherness or oneness of the people as they work together to achieve the same goals of their community and the country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>context - national principles</td>
<td>references to one of the five national principles (Democracy, Development, self-reliance, unity, botho); if the specific principle is named, code it as such (See</td>
<td>At the beginning Botswana came up with four national principles of democracy, development, self reliance and unity. But later another principle of Botho was added to make them five.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National principles</td>
<td>'national principles' family)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unity</td>
<td>Using the terms &quot;unity,&quot; &quot;united,&quot; or another derivative of this root to reference a unity of attitude, value, way of life, etc.; can be used to categorize &quot;national identity&quot; coded excerpts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self reliance</td>
<td>using the term &quot;self-reliance&quot; (or a derivative or synonym) or describing communities, individuals, or larger groups completing projects/actions without relying on others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>use of the term &quot;development&quot; or a derivative; description of the government working to improve people's living standards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>referencing &quot;democracy,&quot; &quot;democratic&quot; process, principles, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botho</td>
<td>use of the term &quot;botho&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identity – ethnic</td>
<td>referencing an ethnic or &quot;ethno-linguistic,&quot; or &quot;cultural&quot; identity; describing what it means to &quot;be&quot; or &quot;have&quot; an ethnicity (or culture)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>identity – national</td>
<td>referencing a national identity, or describing what it means to be a Botswana/Batswana citizen (general, not specific)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity – other</td>
<td>referencing an identity based on something other than ethnicity/culture/language group or nationality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ideal of unity has also led us to put great stress on the national culture, and on the role of education in inculcating in the citizens of the country a greater sense of national identity and pride. They have responsibilities to manage their resources and multiply them so that they do not rely on their children and government rations when they are old and retired from service. Botswana as a nation opted for a system of democracy to rule itself. In a democratic state, the government is chosen by the people and therefore upholds the wishes of the people. People usually make their wishes known through their elected representatives. Both civil rights and responsibilities taken by the society display humane behaviour or (Botho) to uphold the right for people to be protected from any form of degrading and inhuman treatment. Ethnic groups have identities that differ from national identities. They have language which may not be national, for example Seherero, Sesarwa, Sebirwa and Sekgalagadi. The nation of Botswana expects every citizen to have a positive attitude towards his fellow men. A positive attitude brings about social harmony or kagisano amongst the people in any given community. They are responsible for protecting their identities as they adopt the family name, and nationality through upholding families and national values. They have to conduct themselves well at all times. Their
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batswana general</td>
<td>Using 'Motswana' or 'Batswana' to describe all people within Botswana (assume this code unless clearly Tswana-specific)</td>
<td>Ambiguous example (code as Batswana general because not explicit about being specific to Batswana as an ethnic group): The customary law on the other hand was developed from the traditional culture of Batswana. It is administered at the Kgotla by the Kgosi in the presence of morafhe. Clear example (meant to refer to all national citizens): Development is important to the existence of any country and Botswana is committed to the development of its entire people. The living standards of people are improved through Botswana’s development effort. The government builds schools, hospitals, roads and many other services to improve the lives of Batswana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batswana specific</td>
<td>Discussing 'Motswana' or 'Batswana' as a specific group, not the full national population (also: Batawana, Bangwato, Bakwena, Bangwakete, Babirwa, Bakgatla, Barolong, Bamalete/Balele, Batlokwa, Bakaa, Bahurutse)</td>
<td>Various ethnic groups have different totems (direto). The Bangwato have a duiker (phuti) as their totem while Bakwena have kwena (crocodile) as their totem for example.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayeyi</td>
<td>Wayei, Wayeyi, Bayei, or Bayeyi</td>
<td>There are some distinctive dresses that are found in these areas. These include the Wayeyi's traditional Mujamburo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hambukushu</td>
<td>Bambukushu, Ovambukushu</td>
<td>The Tsodilo Museum preserves some old pottery made by the Hambukushu people from hundreds of years ago.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herero</td>
<td>Baherero, Ovaherero</td>
<td>Some ethnic groups can be easily identified by the way they dress, for example, Baherero, Basotho and Basarwa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basarwa</td>
<td>Basarwa, Khoisan, San, or bushmen</td>
<td>Coded as both “Basarwa” and “Khoe”: The Khoe and the San were already living in many parts of Southern Africa as early as 6000BC. Most people believe that the San and the Khoe represent the last group of people who used stone technology (Stone Age people). Coded only as “Basarwa”: discuss the migration of the Bantu speaking people into Southern Africa and their subsequent interaction with the Khoisan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basubiya</td>
<td></td>
<td>Various ethnic groups inhabit the swampy environmental zone of Botswana. Some of these groups are the Wayei, the Hambukushu as well as some Batawana, Basarwa or the San and the Basubiya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bakalanga</strong></td>
<td>Bakalaka or Bakalanga</td>
<td>The Kalanga ethnic group has decided to put a restriction not to plough the soil immediately after heavy rains lest the gods may be annoyed and never to bring rain anymore. The practice is called Nsi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Batswapong</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>There are various ethnic groups found in the eastern margin environmental zone. These include among others Bakalaka, Batswapong, Bakgatla …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bakgalagadi</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Khoe and Bakgalagadi’s traditional shelter is a hut whose wall is constructed from thin poles from the bush savanna vegetation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bantu</strong></td>
<td>Use this code when Bantu are distinguished from other groups (especially Khoisan)</td>
<td>The Bantu speaking people moved into Southern Africa because they needed more land to suit their lifestyle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Khoe</strong></td>
<td>Also Khoi; Specific references to the Khoe, when not being subsumed under the general heading of Basarwa or San</td>
<td>The Khoe and Bakgalagadi’s traditional shelter is a hut whose wall is constructed from thin poles from the bush savanna vegetation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other ethnic group</strong></td>
<td>Any ethnic group not mentioned in the previous codes</td>
<td>Some ethnic groups can be easily identified by the way they dress, for example, Baferero, Basotho and Basarwa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diversity</strong></td>
<td>explicit reference to any type of human diversity (gender, religious, ability, sexual orientation, ethnic, etc.); can be used to categorize &quot;national identity&quot; coded excerpts</td>
<td>The country will still possess a diverse mix of cultures, languages, traditions and peoples sharing a common destiny. We will harness all of that diversity. We will have achieved ethnic integration and full partnership to create a nation in harmony with itself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definitions</strong></td>
<td>Apply this code whenever a key term is explicitly defined in the text.</td>
<td>1. Democracy means government of the people for the people by the people. This means involving the nation to participate in the governance of the people in the country and peoples participation in the development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kagisano</strong></td>
<td>direct use of the term 'kagisano' or reference to peace, social harmony</td>
<td>Botswana has enjoyed many years of political stability, and has a sound public policy making machinery. It has a long tradition of internal peace, and peaceful relations with its neighbours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>references to the use of English (i.e. in government, schools, daily life)</td>
<td>There are many languages spoken by the different groups of people found in Botswana. This in itself brings out national identity. Out of the many languages two are used officially, Setswana and English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>language – English</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Government of Botswana has adopted the Setswana expression which is “Mmu a lebe, o a bo a bua la gagwe” to promote peace (p. 187) and the belief “Mokodue go tgoswa o o itekang and a re ipelegeng” to promote self reliance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>language – Setswana</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>language – other</td>
<td>references to the use of any language other than English and Setswana (i.e. in government, schools, daily life); phrases in other languages</td>
<td>Education must be used to enrich Botswana’s cultural diversity. All of the nation’s languages must be taught to a high standard at primary, secondary and tertiary level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix C: Lesson Observation Protocol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observer</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus of lesson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher name/ID</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of children</td>
<td>_____ TOTAL _____ BOYS _____ GIRLS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If known: _____ Batswana _____ Non-Batswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specify students’ ethno-linguistic backgrounds (and evidence) to extent possible:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Configuration of classroom</td>
<td>(make quick sketch, showing benches/desks, chalkboard, seating arrangements by sex and ethnic group, any other furniture)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of the room</td>
<td>(eg. physical construction, what is on the walls, quality of furniture, anything that is remarkable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is a textbook in use?</td>
<td>☐ yes ☐ no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If YES, title &amp; year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the pupil: textbook ratio?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**QUESTION TALLY**: mark how many of each type of question you hear with hashes (ie. `####`). If possible, keep a tally of the gender and ethnicity of students being called on to answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions with a yes/no answer:</th>
<th>Examples related to national or ethnic identity:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addressed to / called on:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl</td>
<td>Boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batswana</td>
<td>Non-Batswana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions with a clear correct answer, but the answer isn’t yes/no:</th>
<th>Examples related to national or ethnic identity:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addressed to / called on:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl</td>
<td>Boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batswana</td>
<td>Non-Batswana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions that require higher order thinking (analysis, synthesis, or interpretation):</th>
<th>Examples related to national or ethnic identity:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addressed to / called on:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl</td>
<td>Boy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batswana</td>
<td>Non-Batswana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Narrative Lesson Observation Notes

**Write a “time stamp” every 5 min.**

**Use as many sheets as you need.**

Take particular note of:

- When, how, and who deviates from the content of the official curriculum (offering opinions to support or challenge content; bringing in additional, related content)
- When, how, and who uses languages other than language of instruction (English), and which language(s): Setswana (nat’l lang) or other (minority lang)
- Responses (and from whom) to either of the above situations
- How specific national, ethnic, racial, locality, or family group/members are described and by whom (how group identities are being constructed)
- How and who addresses issues related to students contributing to society (careers, social responsibility, “citizenship”)
- Ways in which issues of dissent or resolving conflicts are discussed
- Ways in which dissenting views are treated in the classroom
- Ways in which inequality is discussed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Speaker/Mode (lecture, seatwork, partner/groups)</th>
<th>Language (when not English)</th>
<th>Deviation from curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Classroom Elements
Complete immediately after the lesson. Questions should guide your observation fieldnotes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of lesson</th>
<th>Yes or No</th>
<th>Evidence (be as detailed as possible)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher demonstrated strategies to promote ethno-linguistic equity, such as calling on students of different ethnic backgrounds equally or avoiding negative or disparaging statements about specific ethnic groups</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children of different ethno-linguistic backgrounds were engaged in the lesson</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher was patient with the students.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher rewarded or praised students during lesson</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers demonstrated respect for what students had to say.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students demonstrated respect for what other students had to say.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students demonstrated respect for what teacher had to say.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher’s deviations from the curriculum supplemented (rather than contradicted) the official curriculum.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix D: Lesson Observation Codebook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>from text/other curricular paper</td>
<td>Information matches exactly what is presented in the textbook, syllabus, exercise, or test in use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explanation of text</td>
<td>Information re-explains a concept found in the text, but does not offer further examples or a new explanation or opinion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>example beyond text</td>
<td>Information presented gives a new example (not found in text) of a concept presented in the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new idea/concept</td>
<td>Information presented gives a new explanation or new idea beyond anything offered in the text (which can include ideas directly counter to those in the text)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comment/ judgment on curriculum</td>
<td>Information presented offers an explicit judgment of or comment on what is found or not found in the text/curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-curricular content</td>
<td>Anything not relate to the content being covered (e.g. behavior management, classroom procedures, announcements, off-task behavior).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reflection on learning</td>
<td>Anything not related to curricular content, but the teacher or students reflecting on/learning about the learning process or their progress in the curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>question asked</td>
<td>Can be used in combination with one of the above codes; record if the utterance was a question directed at others in the room; do not include test questions being reviewed, but can record spontaneous questions as part of discussion during test corrections; do not include &quot;do you understand?&quot;, &quot;a gere?&quot;, &quot;any queries?,&quot; or other very vague questions gauging student understanding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E: Teacher Interview Protocol

Teacher Assent (consent form already filled out, before conducting classroom observations)

Thank you for speaking with me today. As you know, I am trying to learn more about how junior secondary schools teach students what it means to be a citizen of Botswana. I am going to ask you questions about your experiences teaching diverse students about what defines Botswana as a nation, what is expected of citizens of Botswana, and how to resolve conflicts when they arise.

With your permission, I would like to audiotape our conversation. No one but me, my doctoral supervisor, and a research assistant will listen to the recording. It’s just to help with note taking. Also, I want to assure you that your name will be kept confidential and that I will not share anything that you say to us with your school head or other teachers. Do you have any questions for me before we get started?

Part I. Background Information

I’d like to start by hearing a bit more about your background as a teacher.

- How many years have you been teaching?
- When did you start teaching at [current JSS]?
- Tell me about the training you received to become a teacher.
  
  Where did you train?
  What subjects are you trained to teach?
  How long and how long ago did you train?

How did you come to teach at [current JSS]?

Did you ever live in this region before teaching here?

Did you choose to come here?

How were you assigned to this school?

Where is your home area?

What language(s) did you grow up speaking?

Have you ever/always taught in your home area or in an area where the language spoken in the community was your home language?

How did you come to teach [current subject area]?

What made you choose this subject area?

Why is this subject area important to you?
Part II. Personal Perspectives on National Identity and Citizenship

Different people feel more or less strongly that they are a member of the country they live in. How strongly do you feel you are a member of the country of Botswana?

*What makes you feel like a member of the country of Botswana?*

*What makes you feel like you’re not a member?*

What makes Botswana a unique nation?

How can a person show that he or she is a good citizen of Botswana?

*Why do you think [xxx] is important to being a good citizen?*

One of the pillars of Vision 2016 is a “United, Proud Nation.” *(put paper with this quote written out in front of teacher)* This pillar says that “By the year 2016, Botswana will be a united and proud nation, sharing common goals based on a common heritage, national pride and a desire for stability.”

- How do you feel about this goal?

  *How important is this goal to you?*

  *Do you have any questions or concerns about this goal?*

  *Do you agree or disagree with this goal?*

- How do you see Botswana sharing common goals based on a common heritage?

- How much progress do you think Botswana has made towards this goal? Why?

- What stands in the way of Botswana being a united nation?

- Tell me more about this “desire for stability.” What do you think about that?

  *Is Botswana stable?*

  *In what ways yes or no?*

Part III. Views on Curriculum

What do you teach students about what defines Botswana as a nation?

- Where do you get these components of what defines Botswana?

- On this topic, how much do you follow the national curriculum?

- Do you use the textbooks to guide your teaching of these ideas?

- Do some of these ideas come from your own beliefs?

- Are there places where you think the textbooks are missing important ideas, or not teaching the right things?

If you could tell your students three things about how to be a good citizen of Botswana, what would they be?

*After each: Tell me more about that. What makes this important for good citizenship?*
How would you tell students to demonstrate that?

- Where do these goals come from?
- How much do you follow the national curriculum when you teach about good citizenship?
- Do you use the textbooks to guide your teaching?
- Do some of these ideas come from your own beliefs?
- Are there places where you think the textbooks are missing important ideas, or not teaching the right things?

What lessons have been effective at teaching students about what defines Botswana as a nation, or how to be good citizens?

- What has made these lessons effective?
- How do students respond?

Do your students bring up ideas about the nation of Botswana that are different from the ones you have? How do you address these differences?

(If these did not come up in the previous responses)

- What do you teach students about kagisano?
- What do you teach students about botho?
- What do you teach students about cultural diversity in Botswana?

Are there any lessons that don’t feel effective in teaching students about their national identity or how to be good citizens?

- What makes these lessons ineffective?
  Any lessons where you find that you disagree with the curriculum?
  Any lessons that students disagree with?
  Any lessons that really fail to engage students?

What kinds of inequalities do you see among your group of students?
Do you see groups of students who feel less a part of the class?

How do you talk with students about equality and inequality of different groups within Botswana?

Gender? Different language or cultural groups?
Rural/urban? Wealthy/poor?
Part IV. Views on Teaching Diverse Students

Do you find that there are students who are easier to teach than others?
*Are there certain types of students who you find easier to teach?*
*Boys or girls? Linguistic groups? Poverty level?*

- Why do you think [xxx] are easier to teach than other students?

Do you find that there are students who are harder to teach than others?
*Are there certain types of students who you find easier to teach?*
*Boys or girls? Linguistic groups? Poverty level?*

- Why do you think [xxx] are easier to teach than other students?
- How do you approach trying to engage [xxx] more in the lessons?
- How do you feel about trying to teach [xxx]?

Do you find that [xxx] respond similarly or differently than other students to lessons about what defines Botswana or how to be a good citizen?

One of the “Educated and Informed Nation” goals set out in Vision 2016 reads *(put paper with this quote written out in front of teacher):* “Botswana’s wealth of different languages and cultural traditions will be recognised, supported and strengthened within the education system.”

- What do you think about this goal?
- How do you think the education system can do this?
- Do you find it hard to do this in your classroom?
- What stands in the way of you recognizing, supporting, and strengthening different languages and cultures in the classroom?

It goes on to say, “No Motswana will be disadvantaged in the education system as a result of a mother tongue that differs from the country’s two official languages.”

- What do you think about this goal?
- How do you think the education system can do this?
  *How has the education system has done this? How well has this JSS done this?*
- Do you find it hard to do this in your classroom?
- What stands in the way of you ensuring that minority language speakers are not disadvantaged?

**Conclusion:**
Thank you for speaking with me today. Your experiences and perspectives are helping me to better understand how students are learning about what makes Botswana unique and how to be good citizens of Botswana, as well as some challenges of teaching these ideas. What there anything else you wanted to say but didn’t get a chance to talk about?
Appendix F: Interview & Focus Group List

Table F1

Staff Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview No.</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Ethnic background</th>
<th># years teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td>&lt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td>&lt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td>&lt;5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table F2

*Student Interviews*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnic background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>non-Tswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Hambukushu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Wayeyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Herero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Wayeyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Herero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Wayeyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Wayeyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Herero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Kalanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Tswana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>KhoiSan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>KhoiSan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Kalanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Kalanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Kalanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Kalanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Kalanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Kalanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>not identified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Students’ ethnic background reflects how the student self-identified during the focus group and/or interview. The level of detail for students’ ethnic background differs by school, in order to reflect the group dynamics most important at each school while protecting students’ confidentiality.
Table F3

*Student Focus Groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class No.</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Total Students (n)</th>
<th><em>Tswana</em> (n)</th>
<th>Non-<em>Tswana</em> (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Metsi</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ami</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Vula</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Not all students self-identified an ethnic background. They are included in the Total Students, but not in the *Tswana* or non-*Tswana* count.
Appendix G: Case Study Protocol

Overall aim: These questions are meant to drive the analysis of the paper’s research questions, comparing across schools. RQs:

1. How do these schools respond to the multicultural reality of their student populations?
2. How does the school-level response to multiculturalism vary across school contexts that vary in the ethnic composition of their student bodies and surrounding communities?
3. What factors enable and impede schools from promoting equal citizenship between students of different ethnic backgrounds?

Specific Questions: In order to address these RQs I will write a case report of each school that answers the following questions. Under each question, I will describe evidence from different data sources in order to triangulate within the school. Relevant codes and any non-coded data sources are listed under each question.

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the students, teachers, and surrounding community of this school?
   - gender proportions
   - age break-down
   - SES
   - home language backgrounds
   - ethnicity

   Codes: ethnicity (family); context – home, home community, school community;
   Other data sources: PAR student survey

2. How visible is ethnicity at this school?
   - Is ethnicity discussed/revealed in meetings, assemblies, lessons (other public spaces)
   - Is ethnicity discussed/revealed in private, small group conversations and settings?
   - Do participants seem to be aware of each other’s ethnic backgrounds when asked directly (even if the answers to the previous 2 questions were “no”)?

   Codes: ethnicity – assumed; ethnicity – unknown; ethnicity – hidden;
   response – recognize (For this code examine the “context” family of codes. How does this recognition take place? Is it through written curriculum, from students but invited/expected by the formal curriculum or teacher, or brought up by students of their own volition?)
3. What markers of ethnicity are relevant at this school?
   - What do participants bring up as evidence or determinants of ethnicity?
     *Codes: Signals of ethnicity (family)*
   - Do they vary by the ethnic group?
     *Codes: ethnicity (family)*
   - Do they vary by the context in which a person is speaking or some characteristic of the speaker (role, age, gender, etc.)?
     *Codes: context (family)*
   - How frequently do these markers become apparent in day-to-day school life? (e.g. Do students wear any clothing or jewelry from particular ethnic groups, speak home languages, eat specific foods, discuss their history?)
     *Codes: Signals of ethnicity (family) in combination with context (family) and ethnicity (family)*

4. Which languages are in use at this school?
   - When and where is each language used?
   - What meanings do participants attach to different languages’ use?
   - Is a given language seen as a problem, a right, or a resource? (Ruiz, 1984)

   *Codes: language policy (family); signals of ethnicity – language (use in combination with “ethnicity - …” to indicate which specific language is referenced); language meaning (family); context – home, home community, school community; school structures (family)*

5. What meanings do participants express about the ethnic and linguistic diversity of this school? (All 4 schools are culturally/linguistically diverse, even if ethnicity is less visible at some schools than others.)
   - Types of “meanings” of diversity I am expecting: celebrated, tolerated, conflict-generating, encouraging discussion & critical thinking
   - What strengths and opportunities do participants articulate about this diversity?
   - What challenges do participants describe, related to this diversity?

   *Codes: response to multiculturalism (family) – recognize, tolerate, conflict, stigma/disrespect, other*
6. What policies are in place in this school to address / manage the meanings that actors have attached to the ethno-linguistic diversity?
   - What processes brought the school-level policies into existence? [including simply adopting country-level policies at this school]
   - How far-reaching are the policies in daily practice?
   - In what ways have these policies created dissent, and how has it been handled?
   - What processes have occurred when actors attempt to reconcile school-level with country-level policies? [many fit well, but others come into conflict]

   *Codes:* language policy (family); non-language policy (family); identify context and process through school structures (family); identify nature of policy through response to multiculturalism (family)

7. What structures in the school allowed individuals to express their perspective on issues or ask for changes? (Laden, 2013; e.g. participatory staff meetings? SRCs or other student participation mechanisms? Pastoral system/HODs, class teacher, & G&C roles? Boarding matrons/masters who are responsible for students’ well-being in hostels?)
   - Who is supposed to participate in these structures? How much flexibility is there for others to participate?
   - When (if ever) did ethno-linguistic diversity arise as an issue through these structures?
   - What reactions or actions occurred if/when ethno-linguistic diversity arose through these structures? (dissent/agreement, policy change/actionable step vs. discussion)

   *Codes:* school structures (family); in combination with equity – ethnic, meaning of language (family), response to multiculturalism (family), ethnicity (family)

8. For all questions above, how homogeneous is this school on the given question? Is there a clear, dominant answer to the question, or lots of dissent or ambiguity?

   *Analytic approach:* Identify the type of data sources that provide the evidence for each question, including demographic characteristics of the speaker(s).
## Appendix H: Selections from Case Study Codebook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>location</td>
<td>context – use these codes to indicate the location that the speaker shows is relevant to his/her comment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>country</td>
<td>country – Botswana</td>
<td>national level, or “society” in general</td>
<td>Res: Like Botswana recently just gave Malawi food ‘cause they had a flood. That’s like working together, kagisano.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>country</td>
<td>country – other (non-regional)</td>
<td>foreign countries outside of Southern Africa</td>
<td>Res: For example, Boko Haram. Such gangs are not allowed in Botswana. [other students laugh] Int: Boko Haram from Nigeria? Res: Yes, ma’am.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>country – other (regional)</td>
<td>foreign countries within Southern Africa</td>
<td>Res: But in South Africa there’s a lot of xenophobia. People open up shops there. The next thing, South Africans will come and say, “You’re taking away our jobs.” The next thing, you give the South African the job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>location – church</td>
<td>a church or religious organization</td>
<td>Res: In our church, we’re taught if you don’t tolerate that other person, then you don’t tolerate God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>location – home</td>
<td>a private family home that the speaker belongs to</td>
<td>Res: We lived in an extended family so my grandparents are the ones who liked history, so they always told me about history and when I come to social studies I enjoy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>location – community</td>
<td>the community (village, ward, city) where the speaker's home is located</td>
<td>Trans: He’s saying that his experience on that side, in [home village], most students, they were not serious about their schoolwork. They were just playful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>location – school</td>
<td>the speaker’s current or previous school</td>
<td>Res: Here in this school, a gere, in [Village] here, mostly they speak Sekgatla. So most of the times the teachers, when they try to explain things to the students, especially the foreign ones, they only use English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>location – school community</td>
<td>the community in which the (current or previous) school is located</td>
<td>Fieldnotes: [Teacher] gave me his perspective on students and families in this region. He said that students from the North, especially “this side, Ngamiland” are different from us from the South. They rely more on the extended family to raise the child together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethnicity</td>
<td>ethnicity – assumed</td>
<td>use when the speaker makes it clear they are assuming, rather than know for sure, someone's ethnic background</td>
<td>Fieldnotes conversation: Me: I’m surprised how many students in our groups have turned out to be from minority groups. While I asked teachers to select students who spoke a minority language, most weren’t able to provide me with minority language speakers intentionally. Trans: It’s because most students here are Bakgatla, the teachers don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Meaning</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Example</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethnicity – [each named group] (e.g. ethnicity – Kalanga)</td>
<td>apply the code with the specific group name when a speaker references that group</td>
<td>Trans: This one, she is Kalanga, but she doesn’t know seKalanga. Res: I know! I don’t know how to speak Kalanga. I know when someone talks Kalanga. I can understand.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethnicity – hidden</td>
<td>the speaker references individuals masking/ hiding/avoiding disclosing their ethnic background or some signal of their ethnicity</td>
<td>Res: The Bambukushu sometimes get ashamed of what they are. Sometimes when you ask what language they speak they may not tell you because they are ashamed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethnicity – unknown</td>
<td>use when the speaker indicates they do not know a person's ethnic background</td>
<td>Res: Even myself I don’t know their social backgrounds. It’s only a few that I know their social backgrounds. We only say, “If you are a young Hambukushu boy, or a Herero girl, you must learn to live together because you are all Batswana.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lang – national</td>
<td>the speaker refers to Setswana as the national language or describes Setswana as being used as the lingua franca in Botswana</td>
<td>Res: They like us to know Setswana because this is the language that we mostly use in Botswana, so they think speaking language is also part of our culture in Botswana. Everyone has to know how to speak Setswana because it’s part of their cultural identity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lang – official</td>
<td>the speaker refers to English as the official language or describes it as being the language of politics, law, public institutions, etc.</td>
<td>Res: English is the main language that is used in our subjects that we do. Every subject is taught in English and Setswana is the only one which is taught in Setswana.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lang – problem</td>
<td>the speaker describes problems that arise from someone speaking a given language</td>
<td>Int: They told you that when you get to school you are going to be beaten because you don’t understand Setswana? Res: Yes, when I have done something bad they will say we will leave you at school so that they can to you because you don’t know how to speak Setswana.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lang – resource</td>
<td>the speaker describes the usefulness of a given language</td>
<td>Res: But with my new friends I would speak Setswana. I spoke both at the same time. It was just okay, because learning a new language makes you smarter.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lang - right</td>
<td>the speaker asserts the right (or describes a situation where someone did) of a person to speak a particular language</td>
<td>Res: There was a feud between the tribes, when the Kalanga people wanted Kalanga to be a written, to be a taught subject in schools. So the other tribes said, “If Kalanga is taught, then include all ours.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Transcript</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy – experience</td>
<td>speaker describes their memories of going through these NON-language policies themselves or speaker describes a specific person's personal experience with the NON-language policy</td>
<td>Res: So as teachers we should inform ourselves of these Acts [legislation like the <em>Children’s Act</em>]. So that as we deal with students we are well informed about what is wrong and what is good. Int: And also, it seems, what the government is expecting you to do in terms of these children’s needs and rights. Res: Yes, exactly. Sometimes when there is a conflict, like what happened last time during the briefing, I referred the school head to this one, and he understood me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy – national</td>
<td>NON-language policies created at the national level or at any Ministry of Education level above the school, such as regional office</td>
<td>Int: And am I right in thinking that there are programs in place to provide uniforms to needy students? Res: Yes, there is SACD, social and community development, that caters for such students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy – opinion</td>
<td>expresses an opinion on NON-language policies</td>
<td>Res: Yes, we are all Batswana. So even if they look at the fact that Basarwa are not people who have went to school, or people who have not really clever in other types of things, but I think that if a Moherero and a Moyeyi, and a Mosarwa are going to the sports competitions at least give all of them 50 pula. Don’t just give the Mosarwa because his ancestors didn’t go to school.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy – rationale</td>
<td>discusses why they think the NON-language policy takes the form it does</td>
<td>Int: During the staff meeting they had talked about sending students home if their uniforms aren’t… Was your concern with that out of a similar issue, that they were singling out students? Res: That one, it’s very, very sensitive. And it’s like they have reversed it. They are no longer sending the students back home because of the uniform. They have changed their mind, because after the meeting I went to the school head’s office and informed him that the Children’s Act does not allow that.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy - school</td>
<td>NON-language policies created at the school level</td>
<td>Res: Every time when we ask [KhoiSan students] they say “No, it’s okay, it’s okay.” But you can actually see that there is something that they are hiding. That is why we had that exercise, where we invited a social worker to come and motivate them so that they accept who they are.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Type</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>church</td>
<td>participant interacts with someone from another ethnic group or nationality at church</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neighbor</td>
<td>… with a neighbor</td>
<td>Res 1: Even their attitudes will change. Res 2: Because of the people they are living with. Int: When they are surrounded by people from other groups? Group: Yeah.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marriage</td>
<td>… through marriage (own or a family member’s)</td>
<td>Res: Like she said, her dad is a Mokgatla, and her mom is a Mokalaka. There is a difference between them, and they are married. That is what brings them together. They are married from different ethnic groups.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relocate</td>
<td>… due to moving within the country (or outside)</td>
<td>Res: Let’s say for example at Rural Administration Center (RAC) there are different people who work there from different ethnic groups, so I think they are given different opportunities equally without looking that this one is a Moyei, Moherero or Mosarwa.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td>… at school</td>
<td>Res: Yes, there are more ethnic groups in school, some are Baherero and they like to talk about their culture. We have some boarders in our school. They came with their staple food, Maere, Baherero, Baere, So that reminds me my ethnic group, my ethnic identity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I: Student Focus Group Protocol

Introductions, Group Norms, & Ice Breaker (10 minutes)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research. My name is Bethany Mulimbi, and I’m leading the research. Also joining us is [name and role of local research assistant/translator]. At any time during this conversation, if you would rather speak in Setswana, or it’s easier to say what you mean in Setswana, please do so. [xxx] will make sure I understand what you’re saying.

We are interested in learning more about how junior secondary schools in Botswana teach students about what it means to be a citizen of Botswana. We especially want to hear your ideas about what makes Botswana and its people unique.

During this conversation, there are no right or wrong answers. We expect that you will have different points of view on some things we talk about. Please feel free to share your ideas even if they’re different from what others have said.

We’re tape recording this conversation because we don’t want to miss any of your comments. We might share things that you talk about during this conversation, but we won’t share your names with anyone outside of this room.

I am here to ask some questions to get the conversation going, but do not feel like you have to respond to me all the time. Feel free to have a conversation with one another about these questions. If you want to agree, disagree, or give an example about something someone else says, feel free to do that. We’re interested in hearing from each of you. So if you’re talking a lot, I may ask you to give others a chance. And if you aren’t saying much, I may ask you what you think.

Let’s find out some more about each other by going around the room one at a time. Please tell us your name and one thing you’ve been learning about in one of your classes this week.

Individual Reflection/Writing (15 minutes)

Before we talk more as a group, I’d like you to think about the people of Botswana. On the paper I’ve given you, I’d like you to draw or write about who belongs in Botswana and why. Let’s take about 5 minutes to do this.

Ensure that all students have paper and a pencil or pen. Allow the students about 5 minutes to work on this, answering any clarifying questions they may have.
Thank you. In the next 5 minutes I’d like you to think about what represents people who don’t belong in Botswana, and why. Please draw or write about these people.

Ensure that all students have paper with the third prompt written at the top and a pencil or pen. Allow the students about 5 minutes to work, answering clarifying questions they may have.

Group Discussion of National Identity and Citizens’ Roles (30 minutes)

1. Thank you again for working hard on these ideas. I’d like to hear some of your thoughts about what stands for Botswana or represents the people of Botswana. Is there someone who would like to start by telling us one thing they wrote?

Take a volunteer to begin, or choose someone who seems less shy from the group. Allow other students to respond, and invite others to share from their writing/drawing. Move on when conversation becomes too forced, few new ideas are coming up, or after 10 minutes.

2. Tell me about a school lesson that made you feel proud of being a citizen of Botswana. Allow this conversation to take its course. Prompt with:
   - Who is your favorite person from Botswana’s history that you’ve learned about in class?
   - Are there national principles or goals you’ve learned about? If they respond with one, How do you feel about [the principle or goal]?

3. Have there been times at school when you felt ashamed to be a citizen of Botswana?

4. What makes a “good” citizen of Botswana? Allow the conversation to take its course. But probe for where they might have learned about the characteristics they bring up – at school, on the radio or t.v., from family, etc.

5. What makes a “bad” citizen of Botswana? Allow the conversation to take its course. But probe for where they might have learned about the characteristics they bring up – at school, on the radio or t.v., from family, etc.

Ask questions 6 & 7 only if they did not come up already in the conversation.

6. What is the importance of kagiso / kagisano to Botswana?

7. What is the importance of botho to Botswana?
**Vision 2016 – National Goals**

Have you heard about Vision 2016? What can you tell me about it? *(Allow students to explain Vision 2016 if they seem to know about it.)*

So Vision 2016 was written almost 20 years ago, and people from all over Botswana sent in their ideas or went to kgotla meetings, or talked over the radio… And the country decided on several goals for what they wanted Botswana to be like in the year 2016, which is 50 years after Botswana became independent from Great Britain.

We’re going to look at two of the goals from Vision 2016 and hear your thoughts about these goals.

8. One of the pillars of Vision 2016 is a “United, Proud Nation.” *Put quote from pillar in front of students so they can see it as you read.* This pillar says that “By the year 2016, Botswana will be a united and proud nation, sharing common goals based on a common heritage, national pride and a desire for stability.”

What does it mean to “share common goals based on a common heritage”?

Tell me more about this “desire for stability.” What do you think about that? *(Prompts: Is Botswana stable? In what ways yes or no?)*

Now that it’s getting close to 2016, how well do you think Botswana has met this goal?

*Probe with:* Do you agree with this goal? What would you change about this goal?

9. One of the pillars of Vision 2016 is an “Educated and Informed Nation.” *Put quote from pillar in front of students so they can see it as you read.* One goal from this pillar says that “Botswana’s wealth of different languages and cultural traditions will be recognised, supported and strengthened within the education system.”

Do you see languages and cultures recognized, supported, and strengthened in your school? In what ways yes or no?

“No Motswana will be disadvantaged in the education system as a result of a mother tongue that differs from the country’s two official languages.”

How well do you think Botswana has met this goal?

*Probe with:* Do you agree with this goal? What would you change about this goal?
Conclusion (5 minutes)

We wanted to hear your ideas about what you’ve learned in school about Botswana’s national identity and what it means to be a citizen of Botswana. Is there anything you wanted to say about these ideas but didn’t get a chance to say?

Thank you again for a great conversation today. We are also interested in speaking with some of you a few times by yourselves, to hear more about some of the things you talked about today. If you participate in that part of the research, I will want to speak with you three times, for about an hour each time. I’ll be asking each of you if you are willing to consider participating in that part of my research. I would really enjoy the chance to speak more with you!

Speak to students individually as they leave, to see if they agree or decline to be considered for follow-up interviews.
Appendix J: Student Interview Protocol

Student Assent (full assent form gone over before conducting focus group)

Thank you for speaking with me today. As you know, I am trying to learn more about how junior secondary schools teach students what it means to be a citizen of Botswana.

If it’s all right with you, I would like to audiotape our conversation. No one but me, my doctoral supervisor, and a research assistant will listen to the recording. It’s just to help with note taking. Like with the small group discussion, I might share things that you talk about during this conversation, but I won’t share your name.

Do you have any questions for me before we get started?

Part 1: Focused Life History

First, I am going to ask you questions about some of your school and home experiences.

Think back to when you were first starting school. How did you feel about beginning school?
- What did you expect school to be like?
- What did your family tell you about school?
  what you had seen of schools or students before you started;
  thoughts about the experience, content, or purpose of schooling

Tell me about the schools you attended before [current JSS].
  What schools have you attended?
  When did you start school?
  If a student transferred to a different school at some point, ask them why.

Tell me about a good memory from your time at school.
  If necessary prompt with:
  - Tell me about a teacher you really liked.
  - Tell me about a time when you felt proud of yourself at school.

Tell me about an unhappy memory from your time at school.
  If necessary prompt with:
  - Tell me about a time when you felt ashamed at school.
  - Tell me about a time when you felt like a failure at school.
  - Tell me about a teacher who you really didn’t get along with.

How did you come to attend [current JSS]?
  - Probe for whether there were other JSS’s they could have attended
Are there ever things that keep you from coming to school when it’s not a school holiday?
   *Something that makes you uncomfortable at school*
   *Something going on at home that keeps you from coming*

Have you skipped or repeated any grades?
   *If yes: How did you come to [skip/repeat] that year?*

How well would you say you do in school, compared to the rest of your class?
   *If necessary, probe for whether they pass and make the “quality” level (A-C, versus D, E, or U) in most subject areas*
   - *If they indicate that they struggle*, What do you think causes you to struggle in your classes?
   - *If they indicate that they perform well*, What do you think has helped you to do well in your classes?

How old are you now?

Who do you stay with at home?
   - parents/guardians
   - other adults
   - other children in the house

What do your parents [or other adults guardians they stay with] do for work?

What language(s) did you speak at home as a child?
   - How well do you understand and speak [home language(s)] now?
   - Can you read or write in [home language(s)]?
   - Were you ever taught in [home language(s)] at school? *Pre-school?*

*If they didn’t speak Setswana or English at home*, How did you learn Setswana? (probe for when, and who taught them)
   - What were you told about why you were being taught in Setswana [or English, if an English medium school]?
   - Do you ever use your home language at school? (Prompts: with teachers, friends?) Why or why not?
   *If never taught in home language*: Tell me about the experience of being taught in [language of instruction] when you started school.
   - What did your family think about you being taught in Setswana and later English at school?
Part 2: Experiences at JSS

Now that we’ve talked about your background, I’d like to focus on these last couple years, your time here at [current JSS].

Tell me about a typical school day for you, from the time you wake up until you go to sleep at night.
- What time do you get up?
- How do you get to school? (clarify if they are a boarder or day student)
- Who do you eat lunch and spend break time with?
- What do you do at school after period 10?
- What do you do in the evening?

I’m interested in learning more about your experiences in social studies class.
- Are there any things that you enjoy about this class? probe for detail
- Are there any things that you dislike about this class? probe for detail

One important topic in social studies is kagisano, or social harmony. I’d like to look at a section from your Form 1 book that talked about kagisano and then hear some of your ideas. Turn to p. 173 - Read “The meaning of Kagisano”
Turn to p. 174 – Read “By solving conflicts peacefully”

Like the book says, “conflicts happen within communities.” And it’s very rare to find a school, with students your age, where there’s no conflict between students. Can you tell me about a conflict that you’ve seen between students at this school?
If necessary, prompt by asking about:
- bullying
- theft
- jealousy or competition

When there are conflicts like these at your school, how might they get handled in a way that still promotes peace or kagisano?
- How do other students deal with it?
- How does the class teacher approach it?
- Who else in the school might get involved?

The textbook also asks “How is Kagisano being promoted in your school?” (p. 174). How would you say [current JSS] promotes Kagisano?

Now I’d like to read one more section of the textbook you used in Form 1, about ethnic and national identity.
*p. 174 - Read first short paragraph under “Ethnic Identity” and under “National identity”*
At [current JSS], what reminds you of your ethnic group?

Probe for:
- language use
- history or content specific to ethnic group

How much do you talk about your ethnic background at school? *Tell me more about that.*

Thinking about the friends you spend most of your time with, what ethnic groups are they from?
- *What language do you usually speak when you’re just hanging out together?*

At [current JSS], what reminds you of your national identity, of Botswana as a country?

Probe for:
- national content or history they are taught in class
- language use
- flag, anthem, national colors, other symbols
- President’s picture

Outside of school, who do you talk with about your ethnic background?

Outside of school, who do you talk to about what’s important for Botswana, and how to contribute to Botswana’s future?

The textbook also says that:
*p. 175 – read full section of “Importance of national identity over ethnic identity”*

How do you feel about this section?
- How important do you feel national identity is, compared to ethnic identity?
  
  *Can rephrase as: Which do you **feel** more strongly, your ethnic or national identity? What makes you feel that so strongly?*

What do you think it means when it says that “A national identity can help the country avoid problems caused by tribalism?”

How do you think [person(s) mentioned above] would feel about what the book is saying here?
- *Would they consider national identity more important than ethnic identity?*
- *Would they be concerned about tribalism?*

**Part 3: Making meaning around previous two sections & focus group**

Thinking about what school has been like for you, what would you tell a younger sister or brother to expect school to be like?
For students from another region (or whose family village is in another region):
You’ve told me that you grew up in [region, village] until [standard].
- In what ways do you think your school experiences have been similar to the [local students / students from the local ethnic groups]?
- In what ways do you think your school experiences have been different from these students”?
- For those who moved from another region partway through school: In what ways do you think your school experience might have been different if you had stayed in [home region, village]?
- For those whose family village is in another region: In what ways do you think your school experience might have been different if you had grown up in your [family’s village, speaking that group’s language]?

For local students whose families are from this region:
You said that you’ve always lived in [this region] and have gone to school in this area since standard 1.
- In what ways do you think your school experiences have been similar to students from the South of Botswana?
- In what ways do you think your school experiences have been different from these students”?

If necessary, Do you have any siblings, cousins, or close friends who have moved between different regions of Botswana while they were in school?

If so, How do you think your school experience (staying around this area all the way through) has been similar to theirs?

pp. 83-84 of the Collegium Form 2 textbook

Later this year, you’ll have a unit in Social Studies on the different cultures of Botswana. This exercise (show p. 83, exercise 5.3) asks Form 2 students like yourself, to find out information about a few different ethnic groups from Botswana.
- Which of this information could you fill out if I gave you this exercise now?
  Probe for the answers they would give to any they say they can fill out.
- What if I added Hambukushu to this chart?
- What if I added Batawana to this chart?
- Where did you learn [each piece of information they were able to supply]?
- If your social studies teacher gave you this exercise, where would you go to find the answers?

In the small group discussions, I asked you and other Form 2 students to write about who belongs in Botswana and why.
- a lot of you wrote that people need to have legal status (citizenship, omang, or permits) to belong in Botswana
- But today I’d like to focus only on those who are legally in Botswana and not worry about any foreigners.
- Many of you wrote about the many different ethnic groups that belong in Botswana, such as the Bakagatla, Babirwa, Bangwato, Basarwa, Bakalanga, Bahurutshe, Bakgalagadi, and others,
- and many of you said that an important part of belonging in Botswana is being able to speak the same language, Setswana.

So now I’m curious about something… In some parts of Botswana, most people are from Setswana speaking groups, the “major tribes” with the eight paramount chiefs. And in other parts of Botswana people’s families don’t speak Setswana at home, and their ancestors came from other countries like Namibia, Angola, and Zimbabwe.

- Do you think people from these different ethnic groups belong in Botswana equally? *Tell me more about that.*
- Do you feel like your own ethnic group is treated equally to other ethnic groups in Botswana?
- Do you feel like your own ethnic group is treated equally to other ethnic groups at this school?

Thinking about some of the things that we’ve talked about as important for Botswana, *kagisano*, respect, peace, *botho*, speaking Setswana, obeying the laws of the country…

- How important do these things feel to you? *probe on kagisano, respect Setswana*
- Are there other things that you wished were more important to Botswana?
- Which of these things make you feel like you belong in Botswana? *Probe for why*
- What would make you feel more like you belong in Botswana?

Given what you’ve learned at school about what it means to be a ‘good’ citizen of Botswana, how do you feel about being a Botswana citizen?

How do you feel about being a [student’s self-identified ethnic group] living in Botswana?

**Conclusion**

Thank you for telling me so much about your background and school experiences today. Was there anything else you wanted to say but didn’t get a chance to tell me?
Appendix K: Examples of Line-by-Line Codes for Student Cases

Arranged by Focus Area

a) membership in ethnic or national group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>member - ethnic</td>
<td>Res: So that gives the students a sense of knowing that, “I belong in Kgatleng.” Even my school shows me that I do belong in a certain ethnic group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>member - national</td>
<td>Res: I respect my country. I respect my school. Because my school is situated in this country. I am a citizen, and this is the way we behave.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b.1) values associated with membership in an ethnic or national group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cultural preservation</td>
<td>Res: I enjoy being there, because we are able to preserve our culture so that it doesn’t die</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social welfare</td>
<td>Res: If I don’t get that omang [national identity card for citizens] at all, how am I going to get certain services? For you in Botswana to get certain services you have to have that omang card.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communication</td>
<td>Setswana (national language) helps me to communicate with other people than Wayeyi, because it is not all Batswana who can speak Shiyeji.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b.2) emotional reactions to their being identified with ethnic or national group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>belonging</td>
<td>Res: Shiyeyi, I speak it so that I cannot forget and to show that I belong to Wayeyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pride</td>
<td>Res: I am actually happy to see that Batswana people are not being affected by that kind of thing and for them and I am proud of what they are doing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c) relationships and other influences on knowledge and emotional responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>parent</td>
<td>Fieldnotes: We asked the students for any further reflection on themes that [xxx] presented yesterday, and it seemed many of them had thought more about it and [xxx] had even spoken with her father about them, seeking his opinions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| peers  | Int: Who tells you that, or shows you that it’s not okay?  
Res (through translator): Mostly students. Sometimes when you speak your own language they look down on you, thinking that maybe you’re inferior or you don’t understand some things. You’re still not advanced. |
| teacher | Fieldnotes: [xxx] brought up again, as she did in her interview, the example of one of her teachers who answers the phone and speaks in “her language,” which is iKalanga. |
| church | Res: In our church, we’re taught if you don’t tolerate that other person, then you don’t tolerate God |
d) characteristics of individual’s disposition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>seeking knowledge/skills</td>
<td>I asked for a student volunteer to be my interviewee while I modeled the consent and interview process. Thato volunteered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reserved</td>
<td>[xxx] seems less at ease in large groups of her peers during unsupervised times, preferring to read and study at her desk, midway up the room, next to a window.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


