

EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP AND COSMOPOLITANISM: THE CASE OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses some of the major education policies in Namibia since the introduction of a democratic government in 1990. The analysis reveals that democratic participation through stakeholder representatives is an ideal framework to promote democracy in education discourses, that is, in policy formation, school governance and teaching and learning. However, there is a dilemma of a lack of inclusion, which is incommensurable with modern democratic theorists' conceptions of democratic citizenship (both Western deliberation and African *ubuntu*). The thesis asserts that Namibia's historical and cultural background has to be taken into consideration if a defensible democratic citizenship education is to be engendered and advanced.

An examination and interpretation of the three phases of Namibia's historical background, its pre-colonial, colonial/apartheid and post-apartheid education systems, were carried out in order to understand the current state of education and the type of citizens the country is developing through its education system. Central to this investigation were different conceptions of democratic citizenship, which indicate that deliberation, inclusion, equality, reasonableness, publicity, belligerence, hospitality, compassion and African humanness (*ubuntu*) are the features of a defensible democratic citizenship education. The exploration of the distinction between deliberation and *ubuntu* shows that Namibia's context requires a minimal democratic citizenship framework with *ubuntu* if a lack of inclusion is to be eliminated.

The discussion on democratic conceptions also draws on a minimalist and maximalist continuum of democratic citizenship education. The thesis argues that a minimalist form of democratic citizenship education, in conjunction with African *ubuntu* – which constitutes less deliberation and non-belligerence with more compassion, careful listening, respect and dignity – engenders

conditions for an inclusive policy framework, school governance, and the cultivation of democratic citizenry through teaching and learning in Namibian public schools, and may eventually promote a defensible democratic citizenship education. This framework may create a favourable environment and potential for all participants to co-exist, and for the marginalised groups to also contribute to conversations. This framework is also considered plausible because it takes into account the local people's historical background and cultural practices.

Complementing the argument of this thesis is the exploration of the link between Namibia's education system, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Moreover, an appeal is made for the Namibian citizenship education system to consolidate the idea of cosmopolitanism, that is; hospitality and forgiveness, if the NEPAD initiative is to be successful and if certain Millennium Development Goals were to be achieved by 2015.

Key words: Democracy, Citizenship, Education, Deliberation, *Ubuntu*, Africa, Namibia

OPSOMMING

Hierdie tesis ontleed sommige van die hoof onderwysbeleide in Namibia sedert die instelling van 'n demokratiese regering in 1990. Die ontleding onthul dat demokratiese deelname deur rolspelerverteenwoordigers is 'n ideale raamwerk om demokrasie in onderwysdiskoerse te bevorder, dit is, in beleidmaking, skoolbeheer asook onderrig en leer. Nietemin, daar is 'n dilemma van 'n gebrek aan inklusiwiteit, wat nie vergelykbaar is met modern demokratiese teoretici se konsepsies van demokratiese burgerskap (beide Westerse beraadslaging en Afrika *ubuntu*) nie. Die tesis voer aan dat Namibië se historiese en kulturele agtergrond verreken moes wees, indien 'n verdedigbare demokratiese burgerskap voortgebring en ondersteun sou word.

'n Onderzoek en interpretasie van die drie fases van Namibië se historiese agtergrond, haar pre-koloniale, koloniale/apartheid en post-apartheid onderwysstelsels, was uitgevoer om te verstaan wat die huidige stand van onderwys en die soort burgers is wat die land daardeur voorberei. Sentraal tot hierdie ondersoek was verskillende konsepsies van demokratiese burgerskap, wat aandui dat beraadslaging, inklusiwiteit, gelykheid, redelikheid, openbaarheid, strydlystige interaksie, gasvryheid, meelewing en Afrika-menslikheid (*ubuntu*) die eienskappe van 'n verdedigbare demokratiese burgerskaponderwys is. Die ondersoek van die onderskeid tussen beraadslaging en *ubuntu* toon dat die Namibiese konteks, indien 'n gebrek aan inklusiwiteit geëlimineer moet word, 'n minimale demokratiese burgerskapsraamwerk met *ubuntu* benodig.

Die bespreking van demokratiese konsepsies is ook gebed in 'n minimalistiese en maksimalistiese kontinuum van demokratiese burgerskaponderwys. Die tesis argumenteer dat 'n minimalistiese vorm van demokratiese burgerskaponderwys in samehang met Afrika *ubuntu* – wat minder beraadslaging en nie-strydlystige interaksie met meer meelewing, versigtige

luister, respek en waardigheid veronderstel – toestande vir 'n inklusiewe beleidsraamwerk, skoolbeheer en die kweek van demokratiese burgerskap deur onderrig en leer in Namibiese publieke skole bevorder en mag so uiteindelik 'n verdedigbare demokratiese burgerskaponderwys bevorder. Hierdie raamwerk mag 'n gunstige omgewing en die potensiaal vir alle deelnemers om met mekaar saam te leef asook vir gemarginaliseerde groepe om tot gesprekke by te dra, skep. Hierdie raamwerk kan ook as aanneemlik beskou word, omdat dit die plaaslike mense se historiese agtergrond en kulturele praktyke verreken.

Die argument van hierdie tesis word ondersteun deur die ondersoek van die verband tussen die Namibiese onderwysstelsel, die 'New Partnership for Africa's Development' (NEPAD) en die Millennium Ontwikkelingsdoelwitte. Meer nog, 'n beroep word gemaak vir die Namibiese burgerskap onderwysstelsel om die idee van wêreldburgerskap, dit is, gasvryheid en vergifnis te konsolideer, indien die NEPAD-inisiatief suksesvol en sekere Millennium Ontwikkelingsdoelstellings teen 2015 bereik wil word.

Sleutelwoorde: Demokrasie, Burgerskap, Onderwys, Beraadslaging (deliberasie), *Ubuntu*, Afrika, Namibië

DEDICATION

To a woman I owe greatly, my grandmother (meekulu) Rakkel Koukulunhu Mukwashivela waNdaedele, for all the hardship endured during my upbringing, and for my lack of support while in pursuit of knowledge.

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MAY THY ALMIGHTY GOD RICHLY BLESS YOU ALL!

PREFACE

1. Introduction

As part of my journey through this thesis, I wish to reflect on all aspects (my upbringing, educational background and other events) involved in my pursuit of knowledge. I shall begin with a personal account of my life history. I shall also recount my struggle with methodological issues, which provided me with the analytical lenses to understand and analyse Namibian education policy documents. These are the lenses that informed me and created the possibilities to think about democratic citizenship education anew and consider the otherness of others. My encounter with academic writing and its various challenges, for instance paper presentations, will also be included in my reflection. Moreover, I shall focus on the influences of lectures, presentations and conferences, as these are some of the events that contributed to my academic development and the writing of this thesis. In this account I shall also provide possible responses that my potential critics may have to my thesis. I consider it vital to look back and reflect on the journey that shaped my life.

2. Personal Narrative

To authenticate the importance of narrative, I want to begin with the words of Young (1996:131-132) when she states that “narrative reveals the particular experiences of those in social locations, experiences that cannot be shared by those situated differently but that they must understand in order to do justice to the others”. It is a primary way in which they make their case through telling stories of their physical, temporal, social, and emotional obstacles. In other words, narrative exhibits subjective experience to other subjects. The narrative can evoke sympathy while maintaining distance because the narrative also carries an inexhaustible latent shadow, the transcendence of

the other, that there is always more to be told. Narrative reveals a source of values, culture, and meaning. When an argument proceeds from the premise to conclusion, it is only as persuasive as the acceptance of its premises among deliberators. Narrative can also serve to explain to outsiders what practices, places, or symbols mean to the people who hold them. Through narrative the outsiders may come to understand why the insiders value what they value and why they have the priorities they have. Narrative not only exhibits experience and values from the point of view of the subjects that have and hold them. It also reveals a total social knowledge from the point of view of that social position. Each social perspective has an account not only of its own life and history but of every other position that affects its experience (Young, 1996:131-132).

Considering the above perspective, I deem it necessary to reflect on the journey of my life, since there are untold stories that influence my educational journey. I was born and raised in a remote village in northern Namibia as a member of an extended Ovambo family. I was brought up by my grandmother, who worked hard by growing Mahangu and beans, and breeding pigs, chickens and goats to pay my school fees, with assistance from my aunts and uncles. During my primary and junior education under a colonial system, I attended the Oshatotwa Combined School, which was one of the disadvantaged schools in the country. The language of instruction was mainly Oshiwambo (my mother tongue), with limited use of English. Despite this school arrangement, our teachers – products of an education system that promoted Afrikaans – used their respective vernaculars to explain most of the subjects to us. As a result, we struggled to express ourselves in English during classroom activities. My early years of schooling were what Paulo Freire (1972:46) calls a “banking concept of education”, in which learners are regarded as empty vessels wanting to be filled with the knowledge imparted by their teachers. Learner participation only extended as far as receiving, filling and storing the deposits.

My 13 years of colonial education ended when Namibia gained independence on 21st March 1990, and shifted to democratic education. In 1993, I was one of the intakes who wrote the first Grade 10 examination of the newly introduced democratic education system – the Junior Secondary Certificate (JSC) from Cambridge, Britain. This system focuses on the active participation of the learner, rather than on rote learning and memorisation. Even though my entire primary education was under a colonial education system, I managed to pass Grade 10 with average marks. In 1994, I attended Onesi Secondary School, where I was introduced to a new examination system (International General Certificate Secondary Education: IGCSE). It was a joyous moment to have access to tap water, electricity and educational facilities (laboratories and a library). In 1995, I finished my Grade 12 with average marks.

In 1996, my dream to work and help my grandmother became true when I gained admission to Ongwediva College of Education (OCE), an institution that offers a Basic Education Teachers' Diploma (BETD). Although I applied for Social Sciences and English, I was placed in Home Economics and Needlework as major subjects for Grades 8 to 10, and English for Grades 5 to 7 as a minor subject, without prior knowledge of these subjects. It was a major challenge to shift from the school way of learning to teaching new modules for the first time. I had to master the contents to be able to teach learners. As student teachers, we were expected to participate actively, to contribute to classroom debates and to present lessons to other students. It was very challenging to me to engage and take part in classroom discussions due to my poor educational background and lack of proficiency in English. The other challenge was that assignments were given in groups and individually, hence needed to be submitted handwritten, because the institution lacked computers. However, in spite of many challenges, I completed my teaching diploma in 1998.

I experienced a new setback when I applied for a teaching position in my area of specialisation. Because of my lack of Afrikaans, I struggled to find a job as a teacher. In a way, I felt excluded and marginalised – thoughts that eventually came to shape this thesis. My desire was to teach in a town school so that I could have access to a computer to improve my qualifications. Left with no choice and because I was desperate to work and earn money, I accepted a teaching position at Malangu Primary School, in a remote area 200 km away from my home town. I had to teach young Grade 3 learners using the vernacular as language of instruction. I found it very difficult to cope with small children and to teach these learners without any prior knowledge. Nonetheless, I tried to adapt to the system until I started to teach Social Studies and English to learners in Grade 5. Despite all my efforts to motivate the learners to participate, most of the learners, especially the girls, just observed quietly and took notes without contributing to the classroom. The same year, I got a transfer to a town school, Oshitayi Primary School, which offered Oshindonga as a first language, and English and Social Studies in Grade 5. After several consultations with the principal, I managed to pioneer Home Ecology as a subject at the school from Grade 5 to Grade 7. It was a triumphant experience in my education career.

In 2004, I completed my Further Diploma in Educational Management (FDM) at Potchefstroom University (now North West University) through Namibia Open Learning Group Distance Education. In the same year, I accepted the post of Hostel Officer at the education regional office. The change from a school environment to the regional office was an achievement on the one hand, and a challenge on the other hand. Among my duties were that I had to manage the division, administer the office, plan and budget, coordinate, and submit progress reports to the regional and national offices. Planning, budgeting and reporting were some of the activities that challenged

my capability and ability to work as effectively and efficiently as required. As a requirement for this job, I had to acquire a driver's licence within a short period, since my job description involved visiting and inspecting schools with hostels, suppliers' warehouses and so forth. With very little knowledge of driving, I registered for driving lessons to get a licence. Other challenges – such as a lack of confidence to articulate and express myself fluently and eloquently, as well as the inability to use a computer – forced me to seek assistance from colleagues to acquire the basic skills needed for the above-mentioned occupation. I decided to register for evening computer classes, which bestowed in me some confidence to use the computer in the office. Notwithstanding the numerous challenges, I continued to further my studies. Most importantly, my poor education background and life experiences, as well as seeing how my grandmother struggled to support me and my siblings, inspired me to pursue new knowledge that could help to improve Namibia's education system, especially for the disadvantaged groups.

Because of a burning desire to acquire new knowledge and to contribute to my country's education system, I applied for further study and gained admission to the University of Johannesburg in 2007. At the same time, the management of the regional office granted me study leave on a 50/50 basis. However, the university informed me at a later stage that the Bachelor's in Education (Honours) would not be offered in 2008. For this reason, I applied to Stellenbosch University. Unfortunately I was rejected because my application was submitted late. Eager to study, and despite all the negative stories of xenophobia, rape, murder and the lack of a good public transport system in South Africa, I decided to travel to South Africa on February 4, 2008. Luckily I obtained my admission letter on February 5, 2008, and travelled back to Namibia the following day to sort out my study permit. The process of obtaining a study permit took long, thus I decided to return to South Africa on February 22, 2008 to commence classes at Stellenbosch University, since the other students had already started in January. On my arrival, many modules were already being taught and the students were submitting their first

assignments. As a student with a poor educational background and a woman from a traditional African family, my first encounter with the BEd (Hons) modules was somewhat frightening, to say the least. The assignments, articles readings and engagement with lectures challenged my capabilities and raised questions about my preparedness to read and understand articles and to write academically. My incapacity to present cogent arguments led to self-doubt. Despite these setbacks, I benefited greatly from studying different disciplines, such as Philosophy of Education (especially the concept of deliberative democracy), Core Modules, Educational Management, Educational Research, Environment Education, Didactics and Comparative Education. All these modules equipped me with the knowledge to see how diverse education is and how different disciplines aim to provide solutions – through social science paradigms – to the current educational dilemmas.

In conversations with other colleagues, I realised that my educational background (primary, secondary and tertiary) did not prepare me sufficiently to survive the rigors of university life. However, through extensive reading and writing and regular visits to writing laboratories, I was able to complete my assignments on time. However, I struggled to write lengthy assignments – with substantiated arguments – and to submit them in a typed format. To improve my typing skills, I decided to register for computer classes at the Stellenbosch Community Development Centre. The major challenge was that, even though the lecturers encouraged students to actively engage in lectures, the use of Afrikaans in many lectures, particularly by students, made it difficult for me to participate freely.

Nevertheless, because of my inability to speak Afrikaans I made an effort to speak to my lecturers and colleagues, which then led them to use both Afrikaans and English. The lectures on policy studies and philosophy of education, especially critical thinking and public reasoning, inspired me to further my studies. The challenging part of Philosophy of Education and other modules was the continuous call for sound and justified reasoning and argumentation in assignments.

Even though I struggled with a mini-research project, which needed to be conducted in the surrounding schools for the Educational Research module, thorough readings and consultation with fellow students helped me to do tremendously well in this major assignment.

The above encounters boosted my confidence and encouraged me to work hard for the examinations, which made it possible for me to complete my BEd (Hons) degree successfully. My good marks in the Philosophy of Education module allowed me to enrol for a Master's in Philosophy of Education. My search for an excellent and hardworking supervisor was challenging, since I was requested to present a paper if I wanted to study with my current supervisor. Because of my desire to do Master's in Philosophy of Education, I wrote and presented the paper successfully. It was on this basis that I re-applied for the extension of my 50/50 study leave at my workplace, which my employer granted. A reflection on the journey of my thesis will be incomplete without an exploration of the methodological account. The journey of this thesis, fused with "epistemology" (theory of knowledge) and a methodological struggle, became meaningful when I came across the work of Waghid (2005c:239), in which he calls for an active democratic citizenship, cultivating compassion and human flourishing through processes of engagement and dialogue. My further reading of democratic citizenship theorists such as Benhabib (1996) (discursive democracy), Gutmann and Thompson (1996) (deliberative democracy), Young (1996) (communicative democracy), Callan (1997) (belligerence) and Nussbaum (2001) (compassion), Gyekye (1997), Assie-Lumumba (2007) (African indigenous knowledge system and traditional and cultural practices and experiences) and Waghid (2005a) (African *ubuntu*) enhanced my understanding of democratic citizenship, which I endeavoured to explore in Namibia. This is the understanding that opened my thinking to the concept of democratic citizenship.

One of the unforgettable moments is the writing of my research proposal, which I began at the end of 2008 upon completion of my BEd Honours examinations. It took me time to precisely identify the problem regarding democratic citizenship education. Since I lack theoretical knowledge, it took

me time to conceptualise the problem in Namibian education regarding policy, and I took time to read different theses conducted in Namibia. I also had a concern that it would be impossible to grasp and complete this study without MEd course work. Through different drafts and submissions of my proposal, my supervisor accepted it in June 2009, which then enhanced my morale and enthusiasm to proceed with my studies. I proceeded with my struggle with methodological issues during this study.

3. My Struggle with Methodological Issues

As regards my journey, I wish to mention the words of Popper (1999:3) in his volume, *All life is problem solving*, when he states that, “to solve problems, sciences employ the method of trial and error ... It is a method of trying out solutions to our problem and then discarding the false ones as erroneous”, which seems to imply that we learn from our mistakes. My struggle with methodological issues was not an easy task to bear. To embark on research one has to choose an appropriate methodology to answer the question of the study. The philosophical paradigms are as follows: the first paradigm is Empiricism and Positivism, which entails that knowledge, is acquired from sensory experience of the world and our interaction with it. Knowledge is testable. The second paradigm is Interpretive, in terms of which Wittgenstein proposed that understanding and interpreting involve how we use words and how we recognise that we use them in the right way, but follow a rule. In Gadamer’s words, history (culture and tradition) is primary, meaning we first come to understand ourselves through and as part of the social units in which we live, before we understand ourselves as individuals. The third paradigm is Critical, a *Habermasian theory* that rests on the notion that human interest works towards the emancipation and transformation of the oppressed from all dominions. The fourth paradigm is Post-structuralism (deconstruction), Derrida’s idea of

looking beyond the margin of what was not said, muted or silenced by the policy, and so forth (see also Waghid 2008a:2-9).

I am interested in ideas that focus on interpreting people's lived experiences, and historical and cultural backgrounds to help them understand and make sense of their lives. The point is that, to get meaning and understanding is not sufficient, but rather requires improving people's lives by empowering them to emancipate themselves from all forms of oppression. I regard it pivotal to evolve towards discovering what remains unsaid, what is silenced, muted by looking beyond the margins to explain reality. I find myself using mixed theories, which to my view are necessary to address the dilemma. My reading of the book *The Blackwell guide to the philosophy of education*, edited by Blake, Smeyers, Smith & Standish (2003), helped me to appreciate different views related to the philosophy of education that guided my research until completion. My reflection cannot go without mentioning my grappling with academic writing.

4. My Encounter with Academic Writing

According to Dixon (2004), "nothing is worthwhile to be taught but needs to be learnt". One of the crucial moments in the journey of this thesis was during my proposal writing, which commenced at the end of 2008 after I had completed the BEd (Hons) examinations. I became determined to improve my academic writing skills and to proffer sound and substantiated arguments. I also started to utilise Paulo Freire's idea of a "pedagogy of hope", since my supervisor constantly encouraged me that "one needs to fight against un-philosophical argumentation, complexities and ignorance" if one wants to complete a Master's. I remember a time when I wanted to quit, but my

supervisor's words that "writing is art" and one requires to write, read and think until one gets it right. Because of my struggle with academic writing, I decided to register for a course in English for academic writing at Stellenbosch University, which improved my writing skills and facilitated my progress towards writing in a coherent, logical and lucid way. My continuous reading of a book by Dowden, *Logical reasoning*, taught me that "arguments are based on justifiable reasons from research findings" and for readers to be convinced by your argument, it must be substantiated with researched information, since an "argument is a conclusion backed up by one or more reasons" (Dowden 1993:16). Apart from writing systematically and providing substantiated arguments, there were other challenges that confronted my walk through this thesis.

5. Different Challenges

One of the most challenging and pleasant moments of my journey, which motivated me to continue with my MEd, was a conversation with my supervisor at the end of my BEd (Hons), during which he stated that I have the potential to pursue a Master's in Philosophy of Education. However, in order to work under his supervision, I had to write a paper and present it at the 8th Education Students Regional Research Conference (ESRRC) held at the University Of Cape Town (UCT) in 2008. I must add that the task of writing and presenting my first paper was challenging and daunting indeed. Nonetheless, I accepted the challenge and, with some assistance from my colleagues, wrote a paper and read it at the aforementioned conference. This was one of the noticeable achievements and unforgettable occurrences during the journey of my thesis. If it were not for my supervisor's instruction to present a paper, I would not have had the privilege to learn through that process. Through this

presentation, my confidence was uplifted and I presented my MEd proposal to the 9th ESRRC conference held at Stellenbosch University in 2009, where I learned a great deal from the participants' and lecturers' critical questions and comments, which allowed me to rethink and ultimately hone my argument for this thesis. I also benefited greatly from the opportunity granted to me to serve in the ESRRC organising committee for 2009 and 2010. I became courageous and my enthusiasm to present more encouraged me to present my findings and possible solution for this thesis to the 10th ESRRC conference, which took place at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in 2010, where I received excellent feedback.

In the journey of this study, various challenges surfaced unexpectedly. I had to submit chapter by chapter and was required to send my work to language editors before submitting to my supervisor, and this was a problem because I had no scholarship. Although my supervisor supported me financially, it was not sufficient to sustain me. The fact that one chapter could be edited up to four to five times was a difficult process for me. Nonetheless, I promised myself to work hard and produce good work. There were moments when I experienced stressful and discouraging emotions that led me to a point where I wanted to quit, but the support of my colleagues and positive feedback from my supervisor encouraged me to press on toward the completion of my study. Other events that expanded my intellect were various lectures, presentations and conferences by various scholars in the field.

6. Influences of Lectures, Presentations and Conferences

Attending numerous presentations and lectures by my supervisor, Professor Waghid and Dr van Wyk on the philosophy of education helped me to get a better understanding of what a philosopher of education ought to do, which then increased my eagerness to engage in a philosophical study. Attending the postgraduate presentations in the Department of Policy Studies, Faculty of Education created a platform for me to grow academically. Listening to other students' presentations during the monthly postgraduate meeting, organised by the Department of Educational Policy Studies, in which lecturers guided and motivated postgraduate students on the path of research, boosted my confidence. I was very fortunate to attend a presentation by one of the leading scholars in the field of philosophy of education, Professor Paul Smeyers, during his visit to Stellenbosch University, "on what philosophers ought to do in philosophy of education", which opened my intellect to what philosophy of education entails. Attending quite a number of lectures by Prof Waghid, in which he made a call for deliberative democracy in education, raised an interest to explore how this concept of democratic citizenship in Namibia and the concept of deliberation could possibly assist the country in educating a democratic citizenry.

The above concept of deliberative democracy guided my thinking with reference to my lived experiences throughout the journey of education. Examples of my experiences are of being a student-teacher who felt excluded in my college lecturing activities due to my poor English proficiency, as well as my inability to find a suitable school due to my lack of Afrikaans. These experiences triggered my craving to strive toward exploring how citizens were educated before independence and after independence, and to relate it to my inability to engage in educational conversations. It is on this basis that I

decided to embark on an investigation of whether the Namibian democratic citizenship is a defensible democratic citizenship or not, which is the main research question of this study. This is the question that guided my epistemological journey through this thesis. Glancing back on my journey of life informed me of the exclusion of the marginalised groups from participation in education in Namibia.

Central to this reflection is my comprehension that it is indeed worth re-examining and re-evaluating one's journey by looking back at the steps that one had to take to arrive at one's current position. I recall my supervisor's unremitting emphasis that "the study is about you, you are part of the study, where is your voice?" I could not understand what it meant at the time until I started to conceptualise the argument of my thesis and my contribution to the field of study. I realised that this study speaks to my lived experiences and my cultural and education background. I am a Namibian learner, a girl, a woman and a teacher who was deprived of my democratic rights due to my inarticulateness and lack of participatory skills to engage in educational debates.

This study introduced me to what Paulo Freire calls a "pedagogy of hope: reliving the pedagogy of the oppressed". The above view relates my early education which aimed to cultivate an uncritical thinker and encouraged memorisation of different subjects' content as oppressing. Although there was a shift towards a democratic education system that can transform the unfavourable practices in Namibia, the voices of the masses – especially the marginalised groups – are still excluded from educational discourses. I can say that being exposed to this "pedagogy of hope" has allowed me to express my views. My supervisor's constant reminder of rising against "hopelessness" liberated my intellect and made it possible for me to navigate the fear and ignorance, and equipped me with "hope" toward acquiring the possibility to make my voice heard and consider the otherness of others. This is the education of hope to which Fataar (2010:14) refers as the "pedagogy of hope

in a capacity to aspire”. In the process of writing this thesis, I came to view things differently. I want to close the preface to this thesis with the words of Baldwin, who reminds us to be:

indefatigable in our efforts to move forward in being socially just: the paradox of education is precisely this – that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he [sic] is being educated (Miller *et al.*, 2008: foreword).

7. Summary

In the preface to this thesis, I reflect on my journey to new knowledge. I have recounted my upbringing, early education, tertiary education, and my professional/intellectual experiences that led to the completion of this study. I also focused on my struggle with methodological issues, my encounters with academic writing, and different challenges faced in presentations and conferences, as well as lectures. This study has helped me to understand Philosophy of Education and its analytical paradigm. The analytical lenses have guided me and created the possibility to identify what is at stake and how to empower the marginalised to make their voices heard and free themselves from the shackles of exclusion in the Namibian education system. Through this means, I became conscious of my background and life experiences in a democratic Namibia as Freire’s idea of *Conscientizacao* meaning “consciousness-raising” which asserts that; “in discovering myself being oppressed, I know that I will be liberated only if I try to transform the oppressing situations in which I find myself. And I cannot transform that situation just in my head (that would be idealism)-a way of thinking, which believes that conscience (consciousness), could transform reality just by thinking. The structures would go on the same and my freedom would not begin to grow” (cited in Reuke & Welzel 1984:27). Thus, a research on

education for democratic citizenship and cosmopolitanism is necessary to transform thinking into reality. In view of this, the research effort documented in this thesis entitled “education for democratic citizenship and cosmopolitanism: the case of the Republic of Namibia” could be a tool towards transforming thinking into reality.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 Introduction

For democracy to prosper, citizens have to be taught to be democrats, especially in the countries where there have been shifts from non-democratic to democratic governments (Enslin, Pendlebury & Tjiattas, 2001: 47). In the context of a country such as Namibia, which fought for liberation and democracy, the aspiration to transform their citizens to become democratic is central. Although citizenship education is a prominent concept in the international literature on developed countries, Enslin and Divala (2008:215) argue that less is known about the state of citizenship education in developing countries. Namibia is no exception to this state of affairs. Hence, it is crucial to investigate whether the Namibian education system and programmes have a defensible democratic citizenship education agenda, which will lead to the transformation of the oppressed people of Namibia. The concept of “the oppressed people of Namibia” will be explained in detail later in this work.

In this thesis I endeavour to examine the state of citizenship education in Namibia. This analysis focuses on two key issues. One of these is the theories that form the core or centre of democratic citizenship, and the implications of these theories on education in general. The second element under consideration in this thesis is the context of education in Namibia. The latter refers specifically to the context within which democratic citizenship education policy and curriculum materials are developed in the Namibian educational system. The thesis will also show how the Namibian educational system links with the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) of the African Union and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Considering the background to the research, this approach is important for the current project because one of the most essential goals of education is the preparation of young people for their role as citizens. For this reason, the current study is vital to the Namibian context because it aims at determining whether the education system has a defensible democratic citizenship education programme. This thesis will focus particularly on the educational policies and curriculum materials, which play a significant role in imparting the knowledge and skills with which to prepare future generations. It further contends that democratic citizenship education within the framework of deliberative democracy is imperative with regard to a transformational process and the development of citizens who are able to recognise their values, rights and responsibilities, as well as deliberate freely on public issues. Thus, citizens in possession of such knowledge and skills will demonstrate the ability and willingness to act as rational and critical thinkers on issues concerning their life and that of others.

Citizenship education is of great importance to a democratic country and its education system, if that system can meaningfully promote deliberative democracy. This thesis contends that, for the nation-state to have citizens who are responsible, accountable and aware of their rights and that of others, the education system has to be framed in a deliberative democratic form of citizenship education (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:35). Democracy cannot succeed in the absence of a “well-educated citizenry” (Kymlicka, 2002:285). The crucial part of democratic education is learning how to deliberate well enough to be able to hold the representatives’ accountable (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:35). Therefore, the school system in a democratic nation-state is an appropriate setting to prepare children to become free and equal citizens, as the school is an important place of practise and preparation for deliberation (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:35). The same sentiment is shared by Kymlicka (2002:307), who argues that public schools in a modern democratic nation-state serve as the ‘best’ place to educate and cultivate

citizens with the civic virtue required for democratic citizenship. It therefore is vital for public schools in Namibia to teach future generations the knowledge, values and skills required for deliberative democracy to enable them, as citizens, to live with others and solve the visible societal ills in Namibian society. According to Gutmann and Thompson, children need the same knowledge and (understanding of political systems, world history and economics) and skills (literacy, numeracy and critical thinking) to become effective citizens in a modern world. Moreover, they argue that “if schools do not equip children to deliberate, other institutions are not likely to do so” (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:36).

For the above reason, the historical account of education in Namibia is very crucial for this study in order to explore how the colonial non-democratic government and the postcolonial democratic government strived to prepare its citizens through their educational policies. The exploration of the educational policies and materials that aimed at bringing transformation addresses the issue of democratic citizenship education. What follows is the historical context of education in Namibia before and after 1990 to show how the colonial and democratic governments nurtured its citizens.

1.2 Namibia’s education system: historical context

Addressing the task of citizenship education in Namibia before and after the introduction of the democratic and multi-party system of government in 1990 requires an understanding of the country’s historical context. Namibia is a nation-state in Southern Africa bordering the South Atlantic Ocean, and is situated between South Africa and Angola. Its population is approximately 1 954 033 (Ministry of Basic Education, Sports and Culture (MBESC), 2004:1-3). The country was first under German colonial rule for 30 years (1884-1915), at which time it was called German South-West Africa. This was followed by 75 years of South African colonial governance (1915-1990), during which the

country was known as South West Africa (USAID, 2005:3). The Namibian people fought a struggle for liberation against the South African mandate and gained independence on 21st March 1990. Before independence, Namibian society was characterised by the effects of apartheid policies. The colonial education system made different provision for the schooling for the Namibian learners. There were eleven semi-autonomous political entities and each had responsibility over different issues, including education administration (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:7).

The education policies were unequal and the treatment of citizens was based on race and the unequal distribution of resources to different ethnic groups. This meant that the society and education were deeply divided along racial and tribal lines. There was no equal access to education. There was visible inefficiency, evident in the low progression and achievement rate of pupils. The education and training policies were irrelevant to the needs and aspirations of all citizens (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:7). The system was highly oppressive, authoritarian and autocratic, and there was no consideration of basic human rights and freedom for all Namibian citizens. Namibia's colonial patterns of life were enforced predominantly on the black majority, who were oppressed by the white minority group (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2004:5). The colonial education system made different provision for the schooling of black, coloured and white learners. There were separate schools for coloured, black and white learners. For each racial group, education was considered separate, unequal and aimed at maintaining colonial ideological control (Harber, 1997:116). The colonial government was characterised by a single National Party ideology, the aim of which was to separate people along racial lines. Citizens were expected to respect the rule of law and to adhere to colonial policies, such as separate racial development. Decision-making processes about governance took place without the inclusion of all citizens. Black people, for example, were not involved in policy development and governance.

This historical situation, as it was unfolding in Namibia, did not create enabling conditions for democratic citizenship education. It did not lead to the development of a form of citizenship education that could enable people to participate meaningfully in deliberations about issues affecting them in their particular circumstances. Therefore, this background necessitates the cultivation of an active and deliberative citizenship.

After independence in 1990, the newly elected democratic government of Namibia aspired to emancipate its citizens from all forms of oppression. The different education authorities, which were classified according to race, were merged into one unified, democratic, national department of education, which is based in Windhoek. The democratic government formulated and introduced educational policy reforms to transform the education system in Namibia and, in so doing, to address the past imbalances in education. The first education policy introduced by the new government was *Towards Education for All*, formulated in 1993. The major goals of this policy were access, equity, quality, democracy, justice, democratic participation, respect for human dignity, and lifelong learning (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:8). These objectives were aimed at creating equal access to quality education and resources. This policy also integrates the basic principles and goals of education for all (EFA), which was based on the World Declaration on Education for All, of which Namibia is a signatory (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:8). The aims articulated in the abovementioned policy are also stated in Article 20 of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, adopted in 1990. Article 20 asserts that “all persons have the right to education. Primary education shall be compulsory and the state shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia, by establishing and maintaining State schools at which primary education will be provided free of charge” (Constitution, Act No. 34, 1990).

This provision offers rights and equal access to quality education for all children between the ages of seven and 16 years. Notably, the *Towards Education for All Policy* remains a guiding document for the formulation of other policies (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:11). However, according to the report by the Presidential Commission on Education in 1999 states that, of all the abovementioned goals of the policy of *Towards Education for All*, only the goal of access have largely been met. The Commission indicated that the education sector needs to be reorganised if Namibia wants to address these challenges in the twenty-first century, especially the concept of “globalization and the contemporary ideas of international competition and trade” (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:9).

In 2006, a government policy called *Vision 2030* was formulated with the intention of working towards the preparation of citizens who will be able to compete in the world labour market through the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP). Another policy, entitled National Standards for Teachers and Schools, was formulated in 2007 to fulfil Vision 2030 and other educational programmes. The report by the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) of 2003 indicates that education is one of “change in continuity” as it is meant to improve learning; there is a need to change but not be stagnating to old ways of doing (National Institute for Educational Development, 2003:4). For this reason, many textbooks were designed to oversee and facilitate the implementation of the transformational goals aimed at promoting equality, quality, access and democracy in education. The subjects that implicitly manifest democratic values in education are Life Skills, Environmental Studies, Social Studies, History and Geography. These subjects focus more on the teaching of rights and knowledge about government structures. Furthermore, they highlight the different parts and functions of government, the duties and responsibilities of a good citizen, and the differences between local government and national government.

The transformational goals were to prepare citizens to know their basic human rights, freedom, and democracy, and to respect that of others irrespective of status, gender and ethnicity. In Namibia, democracy focused more on citizens' rights to vote and service delivery. Citizens are expected to abide by the law, to be tolerant and respect the rule of law and government policies. The general citizenship picture of this period shows that many citizens did not have the opportunity to participate in and deliberate on their own social and political affairs. The aforementioned historical background illustrates that Namibia seriously needs an appropriate form of citizenship education if democratic citizenship engagement is to be developed.

The case for democratic citizenship education is also made more imperative by additional factors, such as Namibia's demographics. While a large number of the population dwells in rural areas, a small number resides in urban areas. The labour force totals 725 000; the unemployment rate is at 35%; the illiteracy rate is at 62%; and 50% of the population lives below the poverty line (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2004:5; also see Government of the Republic of Namibia, National Planning Commission, 2003:37). Given these demographic features, it is difficult to expect the citizens to be active and deliberative on issues that affect their daily lives and that of others. Emphasising the above observation, Ramphela (2001:4), using the example of South Africa, points out that, with the illiteracy rate in some communities being as high as 60%, it is difficult to expect all citizens to understand what their rights and responsibilities are under the Constitution. On the same note, Assie-Lumumba (2007:472) asserts that, with African people, especially women, living in poverty and having poor access to education, it will not be easy to deal with the evils plaguing the contemporary African society (in this context Namibia), and for the country to thrive, as in the case of Namibia's economic development. Sharing the same perspective, Meena (2007:90) affirms that literacy levels (especially for the less privileged groups, such as women and girls) have a greater impact on the nature and level of participation in education generally, and in discussions concerning education

in particular. It can be said that illiterate and unemployed citizens might find it difficult to engage actively in educational debates and make contributions to decisions concerning their daily lives.

Thus, the Namibia's background shows that, despite democratic governance after 1990, many citizens were denied and kept away from active citizenship engagement. Citizens were ill-prepared and ill-informed to participate actively and effectively in the new democratic process before 1990. This further limits the ability of citizens to deal with problems in society and to make a meaningful contribution to the national development of their country. This thesis argues that government efforts to develop and promote democratic citizens through transformational goals are more favourable to develop passive citizenship than the active citizenship that Namibia requires. As such, it proposes a deliberative democratic citizenship framework for the new democratic dispensation. Given the background of Namibia, this study investigates whether Namibians are prepared to be active and deliberative citizens with respect to their social, political and civil rights, as well as the skills to deal with problems affecting their life.

1.3 Motivation for the study

The abovementioned overview shows that the transformation goals based on the historical background of Namibia's education system require collective efforts towards deliberative democratic citizenship education if democracy is to be advanced and protected. In other words, democratic institutions and principles on their own are not enough for a democratic society unless there are democratic values. Educating citizens for deliberative democracy will also help to cultivate other democratic values, such as a respect for the rule of law, tolerance, open mindedness, commitment, flexibility, responsibility, sharing and communication. As such, deliberative democratic conditions are required in citizenship education towards the attainment of the transformational goals

and the cultivation of democratic citizens of Namibian society. At the same time, it is not easy for people to become democrats all of a sudden, despite the introduction of a democratic government in Namibia.

There is a need to move away from a citizenship education with its basic ideas of constitutional rights, attainment and exercise of power, political decision-making procedures and structures, to a concentration on the identity and conduct of citizens in relation to their responsibilities, loyalties and roles (Kymlicka, 2002:285). It should be noted that "... the virtues and identities of citizens are an important and independent factor in democratic governance..." (Kymlicka, 2002:285). Therefore, democracy will remain incomplete without the consideration of deliberative democratic citizenship education.

Although the democratic government made efforts to introduce education policies to cultivate citizens who are democrats, societal ills still beset the Namibian society. For example, the major concern is a visible increase in cases of women and children being murdered and an escalation in armed robberies. Other social problems confronting Namibians include increasing rates of domestic violence; women and child abuse, rape and suicide, as well as alcohol and drug abuse (Ekongo, 2009:7). The same sentiment is shared by Hartman (2008:2) and Wenges (2008a:2, 2008b:3). The above reports awoke an interest to explore whether the Namibian education system has a reasonable citizenship education process to produce citizens who are responsible and who recognise their rights and those of others. Apart from the abovementioned societal ills, the Namibian people, especially the poor and minority groups like women, children and people with disabilities, are also deprived of free and equal participation in decision making related to public goods. Thus, all these societal ills raised my concern and motivated me to explore whether the Namibian education system and policies on transformational goals have indeed achieved the objectives set by the government.

As such, one can see that, although the transformational goals were aimed at creating access, equality, quality and democracy, the shift to democratic governance has not promoted active citizens. Thus, there is a need for deliberative democratic citizenship education to instil in citizens democratic values, skills and knowledge concerning the attainment of their rights. Deliberative democratic citizenship education is a model that has the potential to help the Namibian people to recognise their rights, respect others and enable them to deal with problems confronting their society. Through this process, Namibian citizens will be able to claim and exercise their rights and entitlements from the government, and solve their problems through deliberation.

Hence, the aforementioned challenge leads one to conclude that the Namibian education system does not present deliberative democratic citizenship education in its educational policy and programmes to cultivate democratic citizens effectively. Due to a lack of democratic citizenship education in Namibia during the colonial era before 1990, as well as in the postcolonial era after 1990, citizenship education in this country needs to be revisited to improve democratic citizenship education and align it with policies intended to promote such a form of education. For this reason, it is essential to propose democratic citizenship education by incorporating deliberative democracy into the Namibian education system. Through deliberative democracy, citizens may give each others reasons and question others' reasons on the basis of the given argument, and without discrimination. In a democratic society, men and women are treated as equals and are expected to live with respect and dignity. The voices of all people (children, the young and the old, and those with disabilities) are considered in debates and decision-making processes to solve the problems in society. Apart from participation and inclusion, citizens are regarded as equal members with basic human rights, liberties and freedom. Thus, it is necessary to examine how the educational policy and materials embody democratic citizenship education, and to explore the conception and underlying factors of democratic citizenship education in the Namibian context.

1.4 Methodological considerations

This study will use philosophy of education as a method. Philosophy of education is an approach and an activity that helps to address and eliminate social problems in society. It seeks to provide an analysis and critique of education programmes that are supposed to cultivate citizenship identities, skills and values. In this section, I will clarify how this research will utilise policy documents in Namibia and examine other educational materials to answer the research questions posed in this study. The methodology of the philosophy of education will be used to embark on educational research. I will use a mixed-methodological approach. These methodologies can be labelled as interpretive, critical and also a touch poststructuralist (deconstruction). I have chosen these methodologies because the background to this research comprises two key issues: a theoretical consideration of theories on democratic citizenship and an analysis of how democratic citizenship education is addressed within Namibian educational policies.

Due to the nature of the educational materials and policy documents that can be regarded as the main sources of democratic citizenship programmes in Namibia; my study will use an interpretive framework as one of the first methodologies. I chose this method because the curriculum materials and policy documents that I am interested in need to be given meaning within the context of the Namibian educational process. Most of the policy frameworks on education in Namibia represent a particular tradition that speaks to the political and historical background of Namibia as a nation. In this regard, I consider an interpretation of such an education system as incomplete if it does not endeavour to narrate the story of education and the forms of life that such policies are believed to have. In my view, the interpretive theory implies that the understanding, meaning and interpretation of citizenship education policies and materials involve the way we use words, and how we recognise that we are using them in the right way as if we were following a rule (Wittgenstein, 1958:50e). Rule-following within the interpretive framework

shows that human beings belong to different societies with different historical and cultural backgrounds that specify the values that may be adhered to. In other words, no meaningful deliberation on citizenship education will occur if one does not gain an understanding or knowledge of one's place and interest in the process of improving or empowering human lives. Therefore, we first have to understand ourselves through the past, long before we can come to understand ourselves. In this regard, the Namibian people, the history of the country's educational system, and its traditions will enable me to determine the meaning of democratic citizenship education. In this sense it becomes true that "meanings of democratic citizenship education are constructed in relation to other meanings, that there is no one truth; and that there are various ways to create meaning in life" (Waghid, 2008a:9).

This thesis will be constructed within a critical analytical framework. In my view, critical analysis connects interpretive theory and critical theory. Habermas (1978) maintains that critical considerations on citizenship education should prioritise "human interests". In this regard, critical theory seeks to liberate human beings from all forms and circumstances of repression. This study will employ critical analysis to clarify the meanings of educational policies and forms of democratic citizenship education embedded in curriculum materials. Since I argue for a form of democratic citizenship education that involves deliberation and hence the transformation of the way Namibia prepares its citizens, a critical framework will be appropriate. Critical theory clearly presents a different way of thinking about democratic citizenship education, being concerned primarily with solving particular social problems. This theory intends to solve the problems faced by human beings by liberating them from all forms of domination, which are best understood as what occurs when goals and means of achieving them are given to them (Waghid, 2008a:10). Furthermore, Waghid (2002:2) indicates that "critical inquiry will assist us to get a deeper, clear, more informed and better reasoned understanding about issues affecting all citizens either socially or politically".

The thesis will also use an element of deconstruction theory in terms of which the meanings of democratic citizenship education are regarded as absent or not clarified yet. According to Derrida (1978), deconstruction entails a continuous questioning and dismantling of contained or unconcealed notions of presence and focuses on the roles of the meaning that concepts and language signify. Waghid (2008a:14) emphasises that deconstruction is a framework that tries to open up the system in the name of which cannot be thought of in terms of the system and yet makes the system potential. Another point is that deconstructive affirmation is not simply what is identified to be excluded and unheard by the system, but also what is unpredictable from the present (Biesta, 1998:140). Democratic citizenship theories will help me to adopt and propose a particular form of democratic citizenship education within the framework of deliberative democracy which may open up the system to the possibility of the issues that are muted and unheard of. This framework will also help me, as a woman, to discover meaning that is always absent, and identify what is not revealed or said by the educational policy documents and curriculum materials about the inclusion of women and minority groups in policy debates. Burbules and Warnick (2003:19-29) state that deconstruction includes developing meanings of the concepts that claim to have a final or unified meaning by dismantling them to show that there is always more to be said. For Derrida, meaning is always somewhere else, never in the words we use; it is always “absent” (1978: x). There is still a need to get the meaning of what is has been “hidden, forbidden or repressed” by the Namibian education system by looking for “meanings beyond the text or margins” (Derrida, 1978:4). In my view, the assumption is that the meanings of democratic citizenship education as an alternative form of transformation and emancipation of the oppressed need to be continually critiqued to discover new meanings.

1.5 Programme of the study

This chapter provides the orientation to the research and the historical context of the Namibian education system before and after independence and the need for democratic citizenship education. **Chapter 2** will explore the theoretical perspectives of democratic citizenship education; as in the four Western theorists, namely Nussbaum, Benhabib, Gutmann and Thompson, Young, and two African theorists, Gyekye and Assie-Lumumba. Drawing on the contributions of these theorists, I shall craft a form of democratic citizenship to examine the Namibian democratic education system and its intention of preparing democratic citizens. This framework may prepare citizens with the ability to recognise their identity and culture while deliberating on issues related to their social and political rights. By so doing, they are able to respect the human rights of others and deal with those problems that affect their daily life.

In **Chapter 3** I shall look at the plans of the Namibian democratic education system toward democratisation and transformation over the past 20 years, especially what it aimed to achieve. In this regard, I shall give a historical account of education in Namibia. The analysis focuses on three periods: pre-colonial, colonial/apartheid and post-colonial, leading to the transition from apartheid to democratic rule. The analysis centres on the exploration of goals aimed to transform the lives of divided and underprivileged citizens. **Chapter 4** will focus on McLaughlin's (1992) interpretations of the minimal-maximal continuum of democratic citizenship to determine which view is likely to assist the Namibian education system towards advancing an appropriate democratic citizenship education. The chapter will propose a suitable framework for Namibia. **Chapter 5** shows the implications of the proposed framework for the Namibian education system and emphasises how this framework can be achieved in schools and in society. **Chapter 6** elucidates the possible links between Namibian democratic citizenship education and the Millennium

Development Goals (MDGs) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) of the African Union. An analysis of some of the major goals in the proposed frameworks is given in order to show how my proposed framework for democratic education may assist the country to achieve some of the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs. In **Chapter 7** I will provide a summary of the main findings and recommendations for future research.

1.6 Summary

This chapter serves as an introduction and orientation to the research. It provides a brief overview of the background to and context of the Namibian education system, which reveals a need for investigation to find out whether the country is indeed promoting defensible democratic education. Central to the discussion is the methodological considerations that clarify the framework and methods which inform the research.

I shall now explore the conceptions of democratic citizenship from the Western and African perspectives.

CHAPTER TWO

DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION: EXPLORING DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I have argued that, in order to deal with the challenges confronting citizenship education in Namibia and to understand how best the concept of democratic citizenship can be enacted, it is necessary to examine different theoretical meanings of democratic citizenship. In this chapter I shall focus on different conceptions of the term by drawing on the seminal ideas of the Western theorists of democratic citizenship, namely Seyla Benhabib, Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, Iris Marion Young, Martha Nussbaum and Eamon Callan, along with African theorists of democratic citizenship such as Kwame Gyekye and N'Dri Assie-Lumumba. The purpose of using the two conceptions of democracy is to balance and harmonise the Western notion of democratic citizenship education with African thought. This consideration is done on the grounds that the reconsideration of the democratic citizenship education debate has become a prominent theme in modern democratic theory (Kymlicka, 2002:284; Enslin & White, 2003:110; Waghid, 2008a:31).

Firstly, I shall briefly explain the concept of democratic citizenship before exploring some of its constitutive meanings in a detail according to the four proponents of democratic citizenship theory mentioned above. Such an approach is necessary because it can provide a deeper understanding of what democratic citizenship entails. In doing this, I shall discuss democratic citizenship as deliberation that creates public spaces to promote active and engaging citizenship. The deliberative democratic notion of citizenship aims to create a community and an environment in which decisions are reached

through a process of open discussion and debate. Specifically, I shall argue for a continuum conception of democratic citizenship education that underpins and encompasses less to more deliberative encounters. I contend that deliberative forms of democracy with a cosmopolitan flavour, as well as the traditional African practice or experience, are better positioned to promote deliberative citizenship. Thereafter, I shall elucidate other related meanings of democratic citizenship education, focusing on the latter's link with compassion, cosmopolitanism and the achievement of social justice.

2.2 Theoretical meanings of democratic citizenship

This section aims to explore the Western theoretical meanings of the concept of democratic citizenship, based on the views of four democratic theorists, namely Young, Benhabib, Gutmann and Thompson, and Nussbaum. Before looking at their theoretical meanings, I shall provide a brief overview of the concept of democratic citizenship.

2.2.1 A brief overview of the concept democratic citizenship

The term democracy is derived from the Greek *demo* (the many) and *cracy* (rule), and it simply means the government, of the people, for the people and by the people (Crick, 2008:13). In other words, leaders of a particular government of a nation-state are elected by the masses to rule the people according to their will. According to Crick (2008:13), "democracy is both a sacred and promiscuous word". It means different things to different groups of people. On the one hand, it can suggest certain instructional arrangements, while on the other hand it can suggest the democratic behaviour of authorities or individuals. In ancient Greece, some philosophers defended democracy, while others attacked it. For instance, the Greek philosopher Plato once criticised democracy as "being the rule of the poor and ignorant over the educated and the well-versed, ideally philosophers", whereas Aristotle

defended democracy, arguing that a “good government is a combination of a rule by the small number of educated citizens with the authority of the ignorant masses” (Crick, 2008:13).

In his book, *Citizenship and National Identity*, Miller (2000:43) sketches two distinctive conceptions of citizenship, that is, the liberal view of individual rights and entitlements on the one hand, and the republican (communitarian) view of membership with attachment to a particular community on the other. The liberal conception regards citizenship as a set of rights and corresponding obligations enjoyed equally by every person who is a member of the political (educational) community. To be a citizen is to enjoy the rights to personal security, freedom of speech, voting, etc. In addition, citizens are expected to uphold certain obligations, such as the rule of law, and not to interfere with the enjoyment by other people of their rights. In other words, each person has equal and free rights to engage in public debate, own facilities, exercise their religion, and have cultural values. Apart from the enjoyment and benefit of their rights and entitlements, there are also some responsibilities to be fulfilled by all in a democratic society.

In contrast, the republican (communitarian) conception considers citizenship as rights, but accentuates the idea that citizens need to engage actively with others in determining the future of society through educational deliberation. The communitarian understanding of citizenship is that the responsibility of the citizens is to promote the common good through participation in community life. Apart from the fulfilment of citizens’ rights, there is an important obligation to participate and actively engage in educational discussion and dialogue for the benefit of all people in the society. According to Miller (2000:83), the communitarian conception exemplifies a citizen as a person who is actively involved in shaping the future direction of his/her society. The communitarian view of citizenship portrays an active person who is expected to participate with others in shaping the future path of their society

through political debate. Miller further categorises the central elements of communitarian citizenship: equal rights among all citizens to carry out and fulfil his or her private aims and purpose, as well as a public role, such as rights to property and free speech, i.e. the right to speak one's mind freely. One also has an obligation to respect the rule of law, to pay taxes in the interest of social justice, to serve as a judge, to be willing to take active steps to defend the rights of other members of the political community, and to promote common interests. A citizen is also a person who is prepared to volunteer for public service when there is a need. This view also calls for an active role in both the formal and informal spheres of politics. In this way, citizens as individuals will be free to express and devote their commitment to the community. Citizens are also expected to set aside their individual interests and be involved in other aspects that promote public interest and democratic consensus (Miller, 2000:85; Van Wyk, 2003:153-155).

Thus, the concept of democracy is identified with citizenship to show that citizenship is one aspect of the democratic system in which citizens are expected to act and behave as democratic citizens of a certain nation-state. The distinctive aspect of citizenship is that, to be a citizen, one is required to act in a certain way, that is, according to the given "public virtues" (Miller, 2000:82). From the above it is clear that there are distinct conceptions of what democratic citizenship ought to mean to different theorists in political theory. Some take account of the liberal perspective of civic rights (individual and private freedom), whereas others defend a more communitarian view. The following section will focus on the theoretical meaning or conceptions of democratic citizenship based on the four theorists in democratic theory.

2.2.2 Seyla Benhabib's conception of democratic citizenship

In the book *Democracy and Difference: contesting the boundaries of the political*, Benhabib (1996) argues for a discursive democracy model in the chapter, *Towards a deliberative model of democratic legitimacy*. This model invites people to deliberate on problems that are of concern to the public. The whole volume maintains that the task of a modern democratic society is to secure three public goods, namely legitimacy, economic welfare and a viable sense of collective identity, and shows that these three public goods will ideally exist in some form of equilibrium when such a democratic society functions well (Benhabib, 1996:67). In this particular chapter, Benhabib focuses on the idea of legitimacy, this is viewed as engendering democracy. The understanding is that legitimacy needs to result from the free and unconstrained public deliberation about all matters of common concern. Benhabib's notion of discursive democracy in the political (educational) community is that people will feel free and actively engage in deliberation on the matters that concern them in such a way that their decisions comply with the legitimacy rule for promoting democracy. In order for a decision to be considered legitimate, the space for deliberation by all members of each group (including the minority and marginalised such as women, children and the less affluent) must be provided.

All the participants will thus come to a clear and reasonable understanding of the preference of others based on persuasive and convincing arguments to support their choice. Benhabib posits that, in a model of deliberative democracy, any conflict or disagreement may arise during political debate; hence, these discussions must be approached in a free and unforced manner with the aim of reaching an agreed outcome:

Democracy is best understood as a model for organizing the collective and public exercise of power in major institutions of a society on the basis of the principle that decisions affecting the well-being can be viewed as the outcome of a procedure of free and reasoned deliberation among individuals considered as moral and political equals (Benhabib, 1996:68).

In a democratic process, the public use of power is practised in schools on the basis of the idea that the decisions to be taken by all concerned people have to be for the common good and that they can be attained by a process of collective effort. Such decisions are also viewed as the product of a process of free and reasoned deliberation among individuals regarded as equal beings. Benhabib points out that a public sphere of deliberation on matters of shared and common concern is pivotal to the legitimacy of democratic institutions and schools. This simply means that public schools and institutions should be arranged in a way so that what is considered to be in the common interest of all results from processes of collective deliberation conducted rationally and fairly among free and equal individuals. The deliberative model maintains the openness of the agenda of public deliberation. According to Benhabib (1996:68), legitimacy in a complex democratic society must result from the free and unconstrained public deliberation by all citizens on matters concerning constitutional issues and questions of basic justice. She further argues that, as a process, public reasoning must provide spaces for all affected people to deliberate and give justifiable reasons for their arguments during deliberation. For instance, all women, children and the least affluent groups should be able to participate in a public debate and offer their reasons without fear of being rebuked or ridiculed. This deliberative model of democracy is a necessary condition for the attainment of legitimacy and rationality with regard to collective decision-making processes in a public space. Benhabib (1996:69) further states that, when more decisions are made through a collective process, the potential of the deliberative democracy

model will be maximised and, at the same time, the presupposition of its legitimacy and rationality will be increased.

Benhabib's discursive view of democracy reveals that the deliberative democratic processes must be guided by the norms of equality and symmetry, thus: (a) all participants have the same chances to initiate speech acts, to question, to interrogate, and to open debate; (b) all have the right to question the assigned topics of conversation; and (c) all have the right to initiate reflexive arguments about the rules of the discourse procedure and the way in which they are applied and carried out (Benhabib, 1996:70). Based on these principles, all citizens are expected to have equal opportunities and to feel free to take part in public discussions and debate with rational, reasoned and reflexive arguments. Benhabib's notion of democratic citizenship is in favour of educating people about their rights as democratic citizens, to deliberate on and be involved in decision making, as well as of their attachment to each other, which forms a collective identity and membership in the nation-state. All these need to be nurtured strongly and practised in educational premises, especially in the classroom, and with consideration for the students' ages and their levels of responsibility. In this process, no person has preconceived information regarding the decisions to be made and no individual predicts another participants' views on moral and political matters.

Through deliberation, the citizens are introduced to a clear understanding of diverse perspectives. They develop the capacity for attaining informed decisions, which creates opportunities for the participants to learn how to reflect critically on their own ideas, communicate their views to others openly in public, and support their arguments with good and persuasive reasons. For Benhabib, public deliberation processes can be exercised not only in formal classrooms, but also in other, informal programmes, such as debate clubs and societies. In this way, these diverse spaces can cultivate a reflexive and critical understanding, as well as an appreciation for procedural norms. The

norms of equality and symmetry are fundamentally practised in the educational realm and purpose, and students engage in deliberation, give their point of view, and listen to others with respect with a view to decision making. In this practice, each person has the opportunity to open discussion, propose a topic or subject and get equal chances to deliberate. All the participants have access to a deliberative environment that is conducive for self-clarification, and in which to learn how and when to question topics of conversation. Thus, a model of discursive democracy embraces a broadened matter of debate and includes a variety of participants in different forms of association underpinned by a vigorous public discussion.

Furthermore, in her book *The claims of cultures: equality and diversity in the global era*, Benhabib (2002) expands her conception of democratic citizenship by showing that the two concepts of democracy and citizenship can co-exist. According to Benhabib (2002:169), “democracy is a form of life which rests upon active consent and participation”, whereas “citizenship is distributed according to passive criteria of belonging, like birth upon a piece of land and socialisation in that country or membership in an ethnic group”. This means that democratic citizenship entails three public goods/facets for a democracy to prosper. These three interrelated facets of educating citizens are a) collective identity, b) privileges of membership, and c) social right and benefits (Benhabib, 2002:162-164). They are amalgamated and need each other to cultivate democratic citizens. The first facet, of *collective identity*, entails that members of a political community who want to educate people to be democratic citizens have to pursue an approach that takes into account people’s linguistic, cultural, ethnic and religious commonalities (Benhabib, 2002:162). This implies that collective identity can happen with the creation of civil spaces in which people learn to live with other people from different backgrounds and contexts, while respecting diversity or differences. The second facet, of *privileges of membership*, involves educating people to be democratic citizens so that people are aware of their right to political

participation, right to hold office, and right to deliberate and be part of decision making (Benhabib, 2002:162).

Benhabib (2002:130) notes that another important argument is educating people to be able to deliberate, to make themselves heard and to give reasons in civil public spaces without fear of intimidation or domination. The third facet, of *social rights and benefits*, is based on T.H Marshall's study is categorised into three groups, that is civil right, political right and social right (Benhabib, 2002:163-164). *Civil right* deals with people's right to protection of life, liberty and prosperity, the right to freedom of right or wrong, and the right to contract and marriage. *Political right* has to do with educating people about their right to self-determination, to hold office, freedom of speech, hold opinions, and join political associations. *Social right* deals with how people may join trade unions, enjoy professional health care, and have access to unemployment compensation, old-age unions, child care, housing and educational subsidies.

In essence, Benhabib's (2002) notions of democratic citizenship education strive to set up spaces for education, namely schools, universities, religious sites and clubs, in which people are educated about other's shared values, meanings, justice, signs and symbols. It is also deals with the way people are educated to deliberate, offer own reasons, listen to others' reasons and recognise and respect other people's civil, political and social rights, as well as question injustice without being ridiculed and rebuked by anyone (see also Waghid, 2008b:4). In my view, active consent and participation can only occur when people have a sense of belonging and attachment to such a deliberative group. Democratic citizenship seeks to promote active participation, whereas citizenship works toward people with a sense of belonging when participants engage in deliberations. Thus, Benhabib's (2002:133-134) active participation is advanced through citizens' engagement in deliberation as free and equal moral beings, in which process they try to persuade others of their point of

view, examine and critique each others' positions, while at the same time explaining individual reasons in an understanding manner.

In her recent volume, *Another Cosmopolitanism*, Benhabib (2006) extends and endorses her conception of democratic citizenship with the idea of *democratic iterations*. Benhabib (2006:177) points out that “democratic iterations is a struggle within a global civil society and the creation of solidarities beyond borders, including a universal right of (hospitality) that recognizes the other as a potential co-citizen, anticipate another cosmopolitanism - a cosmopolitanism to come”. This implies that democratic iterations allow people to have the opportunity to deliberate on issues affecting them, and the deliberation must accommodate others so that they engage with one another and view their concern as equal citizens. Benhabib's (2006:178) notion of cosmopolitanism reminds people to be *hospitable* and welcome others who are different from them to discussion in a friendly and generous manner. This being the case, one needs to pay more attention to the particular identity of a person and the individual's needs. In other words, democratic iterations require the affected people, irrespective of their national boundaries, to consider first the norms directing their discussion, with equal appreciation of the value of each member. In this sense, each person must recognise that all people potentially are participants in such debates of justification (Benhabib, 2006:18). The democratic discussion centres its concentration on how people understand themselves as citizens and members of the deliberating group in a nation-state, as well as of the global community. For participants to have a sense of belonging there is a need to agree on the kind of issues that have to be covered, the people who will be included or excluded from the public deliberation, and so forth.

This idea is essentially a Kantian theory of universal rights as an entitlement that each person carries by virtue of being human. The cosmopolitan rights are different, based on the view that people claim them among each other,

irrespective of nationality, community or nation-state. To Kant, the condition of being a prospective constituent in public dialogue creates the origin of his concept of *hospitality*. The general perception of hospitality is a condition of being welcoming, friendly and showing generous manners toward visitors. Nonetheless, David Held, cited by Benhabib (2006:31) states that “cosmopolitan authority places its focus on individual human beings as political agents and on the accountability of power in treating others as co-agents”. In this view, hospitality refers to conditions in which human rights claims are not limited by a specific nationality, but are based on global claims in which all concerned will be considered according to their experiences and differences. The global claims are those that permit all people, irrespective of their differences, their rights based on their virtue as human beings. Benhabib (2006:32) further highlights that “modern democracies act in the name of universal principles that are then restricted within a particular civic community”. This means that a democratic society should authorise people to exercise power among themselves in such a way that people would feel a sense of belonging to a specific community or nation-state within which they can exercise their democratic power and mandate leaders under such conditions (see also Divala 2008). At this point, Amy Gutmann’s conception of democratic citizenship needs to be considered.

2.2.3 Amy Gutmann’s conception of democratic citizenship

Amy Gutmann’s conception of democratic citizenship has moved in the direction of developing what she calls a “deliberative democracy” model, which is sketched in collaboration with Dennis Frank Thomson in the 1996 book, *Democracy and disagreement*. In this volume, Gutmann argues for a more reasoned argument in everyday politics. Gutmann and her co-author Thomson raise an important question: Why is moral conflict inevitable in politics and what should be done about it? To answer the question, the authors identify three vibrant principles of deliberative democracy, namely reciprocity, publicity and accountability. They reason that an ideal frame of

deliberative democracy secures a central place for moral discussion in political life. The primary idea is that, when citizens or their representatives disagree morally, they are required to maintain a democratic process of reasoning together that would enable them to reach mutually acceptable decisions (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:1-2). Such deliberation can inform decision making through reasoned argument, and develop society's collective capacity to pursue justice. At the same time, it can establish mutual understanding among participants in an acceptable way in terms of their social co-operation, even when disagreements seem to persist and persevere.

In Gutmann and Thompson's more recent work, *Why Deliberative Democracy?* (2004), the authors have attempted to stretch and elucidate their deliberative model of democracy. They call for a deliberative democratic model that stands on three principles of democratic deliberation, namely *reason giving, accountability and reciprocity* (Gutmann & Thompson 2004:3-7). These principles endeavour to construct a community and an atmosphere whereby decisions are reached through a process of open discussion. In this process, each participant is free to suggest the agenda and initiate the topic for discussion. The participants are also free to propose ways of deliberation and to contribute freely. They need to be open and willing to consider the views of others. Gutmann and Thompson (2004:3) claim that the deliberative democratic ideal is an unavoidable subject or theme, and that the process must be directed and be considerate of the necessity for others to *give reasons* for their views in the quest of common decisions. These reasons need to be accessible to all the people affected by the matter in question. Reasons must be given in the public environment of political (educational) debate, and decision making in which all feel part of the deliberative community must be binding. The participants must give their reasons in public and satisfy the reasonable judgment of others. Deliberative democracy is vital because it aims to reach a decision that can be sustainable for a reasonable time. Gutmann and Thomson further state that people must not be treated as objects or passive subjects, but have to be treated as free and equal agents

who participate in the governance of their society either directly, or through their representatives. In this model, participants need not exercise their power through bargaining or voting, but by actively providing justifiable reasons and demanding that their representatives do the same.

To Gutmann and Thompson, *accountability* embraces the central problem of representative democracy, connecting the potential conflict between a representative's personal views and those of his or her co-participants. A deliberative democracy requires that representatives articulate the interests not simply of the electoral constituents, but of the "moral" constituents – whether citizens, non-citizens or children (who are the future generations) (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996:93). This idea of holding each other accountable for public reasons further shows that deliberation is vigorous, for it constantly requires that decisions be revised continuously on the basis of the issues and circumstances. In addition, Gutmann and Thompson (2004:34) state that more deliberation has the advantage of increasing stakeholder participation and decreasing government regulation, and, by so doing, promoting the aims of deliberative democracy. This understanding applies mainly to public institutions, such as public schools. The deliberative process promises to resolve disagreements in social issues because its decisions are not made prior to the deliberation itself. It also allows a wide range of relevant views and arguments to enter into the debate, provided they reflect the justifiable concerns, interests and desires of the participants. Hence, Gutmann and Thompson (2004:112-115) further recognise that the deliberative process focuses on democracy, its own principles and other moral principles for critical scrutiny over time. This being the case, deliberative decisions stand on an arrangement that recognises and provides for regular consideration of the same decisions based on new insights, new evidence and new interpretation.

The authors also point out that, in any democracy, the school system is one of the central places where the preparation of future free and equal citizens can be done appropriately. However, this model cannot be achieved meaningfully if the school systems are not fulfilling their roles to educate deliberative citizens. Moreover, Gutmann and Thompson (2004:35) maintain that “democracy cannot thrive without a well-educated citizenry”. Therefore, they put forward a sound argument that public schools constitute one of the important sites for the promotion of deliberation. They also argue that, if there is no deliberation in public schools, it is less likely that deliberation will exist in other institutions of society. I agree with the above argument that educational institutions for all types of schooling, whether primary, secondary or tertiary, constitute a potential avenue for the promotion of deliberative democracy. Thus, a model of deliberative democracy provides the mechanism for its own revision. For this reason, the deliberative model is somehow temporary, because it makes room to continuous revision, which seems to be a self-correcting process. The commitment to revision also respects the ideal of reciprocity.

According to Gutmann and Thompson (1996:93), reciprocity entails establishing principles governing how we should speak (but not what we should say), in ways that value and inculcate in the participants the characteristics of open-mindedness and equality in the public context of political debate and decision making. They further explain that reciprocity seeks to create principles that aim at leading a person to speak in ways that value and instil in the participants the characteristics of open-mindedness and mutual understanding (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:100-102). This principle is a foundational value for deliberative democracy. In this sense, the idea of reciprocity is a regulatory principle that plays two different roles in deliberations. Firstly, it guides thinking in the ongoing process that enables people to engage in a continuous deliberative process in which they provide one another reasons for their position, decisions or policy. Secondly,

reciprocity points to the need to fulfil and develop other principles of deliberative democracy, namely publicity, accountability, basic liberty, basic opportunity and fair opportunity, which are mutual justifications of decisions or policy. The idea of reciprocity that recognises equality and symmetry in deliberation has to recognise and provide for regular considerations of decisions, because, in an actual deliberative process, giving reasons to one another promotes reciprocity (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:101).

The process of deliberation also has *epistemic value* in the sense that deliberation on and justification of decisions must combine factual and evaluative matters when the participants give reasons to one another. The deliberative democratic model questions its own principles and other moral principles, or subjects them to critical examination over time (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:102). As such, deliberation serves as an open criticism of its own principles, but maintains the right for critiques and the idea that moral and political decisions must be justified by reasons. Moreover, Gutmann and Thompson (2004:115) accentuate the fact that “deliberative democrats are committed to mutually justifiable ways of judging the distribution of power”. The importance of deliberative democracy is that it creates public spaces for deliberation on and the provision and justification of reasons to one another on issues that are publicly essential. It also considers everybody as an equal agent who enjoys equal rights to initiate debate and lay down the rules that guide the public deliberation. Therefore, Gutmann and Thompson contend that satisfying the above principles of the deliberative democracy model can make debate possible on basic moral values, without requiring individuals to give up their fundamental positions.

In essence, Gutmann and Thompson’s conception of democratic citizenship, which emanated from a form of deliberative democracy, is important as it permits the people concerned to engage in deliberation directly, or to elect representatives. In this process, both the representatives and citizens

question the given proposals with the intention of reaching an agreed upon outcome. The importance of this approach is that the principles of a deliberative democratic process can assist citizens to deliberate on an issue and reach an outcome that can hold representatives accountable for any decisions made for the benefit of all. The authors also emphasise that, in a world engulfed by disagreements and conflict, there is a need to construct and create educational and political structures that can educate and encourage citizens who hold free and potentially conflicting moral values to engage in debate. At the same time, the citizens will learn and develop the skills and knowledge required for democratic deliberation through political debate, even though agreement on matters is not always possible. Gutmann and Thompson argue that fulfilling these principles of reason giving, reciprocity and accountability can facilitate debate on fundamental moral values, without requiring the individuals to forfeit their fundamental positions. The section that follows will focus on Young's conception of democratic citizenship.

2.2.4 Iris Marion Young's conception of democratic citizenship

Young's conception of democratic citizenship is explicated in her 1996 essay, *Communication and the other: beyond deliberative democracy*. She advocates a communicative democracy with various forms of communication, such as greeting, narrative and storytelling, which she believes can augment and be add-ons to a deliberative democratic model. The study *Inclusion and democracy* (2000) is a follow-up to and extension of her 1996 work, in which she initiated her communicative (deliberative) democracy conception of democratic citizenship. This model of deliberative democracy comprises four vigorous normative elements of the democratic process that are required to facilitate public deliberation. These elements are all considered fundamental for a functional and deliberative democratic society, and are "inclusion, political equality, reasonableness and publicity" (Young, 2000:23-25). The elements are all logically related in the deliberative model in such a way that they sustain each other, showing that the deliberative democracy model can

better address common problems as well as promote effective democratic citizenship education. Young's elements are better positioned to promote deliberative and inclusive democratic citizenship.

Inclusion

According to Young (2000:13), if inclusion in decision making is central to democracy, then the exclusion of some citizens in political deliberation by democratic societies is a failure to live up to their promise. Inclusion is a normative model that ensures that all affected people are included in the process of discussion and decision making. The phrase, all the people 'affected', implies all people irrespective of their race, ethnicity, gender, status, level of education and so forth. An inclusion ideal embodies a strong norm of moral respect for each person, whether such a person belongs to an elite or underprivileged group. Every person participating in and contributing to decision making and conditions of political dialogue must do so by his or her choice of action.

This model promotes the idea that people must be treated as equals and that no person must be left out or forced to make a decision. In this case, all people must be treated as essential if they have to adhere to the rule of law or alter their actions based on decisions that include all voices and interests. In other words, if individuals are to abide by enacted policies and rules and adjust their actions accordingly, each person has to be included and treated as important in the dialogues and decision making from which their voices and interests had been excluded. Young (2000:23) further explains that, when inclusion is coupled with norms of equality, it allows for maximum expression of interests, opinions and perspectives relevant to the societal problems or issues to which there is a quest for public solution. This implies that inclusion cannot be attained in the absence of equality.

Equality

In Young's (2000:23) view, equality focuses on political equality, in which all affected by decisions must have equal rights and worthy opportunities to question others, and to respond, criticise, propose and offer their arguments. This means that democracy needs to promote free and equal chances to express one's views. Participants must have equal rights to freedom and be free from domination or oppression. In this process, no participant must be forced, coerced or threatened to accept certain proposals and outcomes. The notion of deliberative democracy invites all people to be equally included in political debates, equally considered and equally treated in public space. When public discussions on problems and issues are inclusive, they permit the articulation of all interests, opinions and criticism; and when they are free from domination, participants in such deliberation can be confident and convinced that the outcome is a product of good reason, rather than forced or coerced agreement. Inclusion in deliberation permits the articulation of all interests, opinions and criticisms, whereby all participants feel confident that the outcome results from good reasons and consensus. Such confidence has to be constructed on and underpinned by reasonableness. Young (2000:24) stresses that this confidence can be maintained and sustained only when participants adopt a reasonable disposition.

Reasonableness

John Rawls, quoted by Young (1996:75), states that *public reason* "is best viewed not as a process of reasoning among citizens, but as a regulative principle imposing limits upon how individuals, institutions, and agencies ought to reason about public matters". The idea is that reasonableness requires individuals to have a set of dispositions to contribute to conversations on politics or education (Young, 2000:24). This implies that reasonableness

refers more to a set of dispositions that participants in deliberations on common problems or issues will possess, than to the substance of people's contributions to deliberations. At the same time, reasonableness emphasises the need for participants to be willing to listen to the views of others, as well as to present justifiable reasons in order to resolve public problems collectively. It is clear that giving reasons to one another is a process of reaching an agreement or making a decision. During discussions, the participants need to be acting in good faith, trusting each other to listen to and convince one another. Young further notes that all participants who take part equally in a political discussion must be open-minded. The understanding is that to be open-minded and unbiased is to be able to listen to others, treat them with respect, and make attempts to understand them by asking questions that may lead to individual articulation and clarification of their point of view, without prior judgment and prejudice. She also posits that:

Reasonableness is to be willing to change our opinions or preferences because others persuade us that our initial opinions and preferences, as they are relevant to the corrective problems under discussion, are incorrect or inappropriate (Young, 2000:25).

To be precise, each participant needs to be included and treated as an equal person who has to provide good reasons to support their own point of view in order for others to make a decision based on their persuasive and probative reasons in the public space. Reasonableness requires participants to be open to see the reasons that other people offer on particular issues, examining these reasons on the basis of their value rather than on the value of the persons presenting them. Being reasonable is to deal with people's capacity to recognise and take into account differences that exist between people. Young further states that a person can only be fully reasonable if the conditions that permit exclusion are eliminated from the deliberation. There is

a need to alleviate those forms of exclusion of people who are situated differently from one's way of being and to understand that reaching an agreement should not just result from reasonableness and rational deliberation.

Thus, Young (1996, 2000) suggests other forms of communication that need to be included in assessing what is reasonable in particular cases. Young's model of deliberative democracy (communicative democracy) insists on forms of communication such as greeting and narrative or storytelling. Young (1996:129-132) claims that these forms have the potential to engender freedom and equality in public discussions, so as to attain a collective outcome through different styles of speaking and ways of articulating a specific situation guided by common principles. (a) *Greeting* plays a role in a dialogue that aspires to reach an understanding between people who consider the other's individuality. Greeting therefore enables people to acknowledge practically the presence of others, encourage a continuous discussion and exchange among participants, and promote respect and tolerance. (b) *Narrative or storytelling* help individuals to develop compassion and understanding in others who are not physically affected by the narrated situation. Through the articulation of their problems and experiences, the listeners will be able to understand the serious and difficult situation others bear, and the non-affected will understand and contribute to the decision-making process. In this way, all listeners will understand the way in which one's positions; actions and values appear to others from their narrative. Such narratives also serve as a source of exhibiting values, culture and meaning, while the experiences and values of the participants also present a complete social knowledge based on individuals' social situations (Young 1996:129-132).

Young affirms that the combination of various narratives of different people's viewpoints ought to produce collective understanding, unlike rhetoric.

Moreover, narrative/storytelling plays a pivotal role in arguments in a free and equal political discussion in which decisions depend on a need or entitlement (Young, 1996:132; 2000:70-71). In other words, every person has a story to tell and does it through different styles and meanings. Each person is allowed to tell a story with equal legitimacy, and each story has equal value in the communicative situation. Thus, offering justifiable reasons for the participants' arguments has to be practised in public space.

*Rhetoric*¹ is another form of communication that Young perceives as contrary to deliberative democracy than greeting and narrative or storytelling (Young, 1996: 130; 2000:63-65).

Publicity

Publicity implies that the interaction among participants is carried out through democratic decisions in public, with the participants making one another answerable for the outcome. It is assumed that the public space comprises "plural public-speaking" by different individuals, and their collective experiences, histories, commitments, ideals, interests and goals intended by all to attain decisions on collective problems through a common practice (Young, 2000:25). In such a plural context, Young says that all participants need to articulate their views and appreciate others' differences. Doing this will enable each person to clarify his or her specific background experiences,

¹ Rhetoric names the forms and styles of speaking that reflexively attend to the audience in speech. It announces the situatedness of communication. With rhetorical figures a speech constructs the occasion of the speech and also constructs speaker, audience, and occasion by invoking or creating specific meanings, connotations, and symbols, and it serves this connecting function whether the speaker and audience share meaning or not. One function of rhetoric is to get and keep listeners attention through the use of wordplay, humour, figures of speech to represent and exemplify and beautify the arguments, making the conversation draws listeners thinking to reach the speakers desired outcome.

interests or proposals in order for others to get a clear and better understanding of their position.

Young (1996:120-121) further asserts that the idea of deliberative democracy needs to move beyond mere discussions and incorporate vital forms of communication. In this sense, people must not only be included in deliberation, but the process must create public spaces for all those affected in decision making as collective members of society. In this respect, the discussion of political or educational problems should not be bound to eloquent or fluent individuals, but must be accessible to all those who are affected by the matter in question. A deliberative democratic model describes democracy as a process that creates a public forum for citizens to get together to discuss shared problems, goals, ideals and actions. The democratic process allows one to participate in the political or educational debate that strives to achieve a common good. All the participants engage in public discussion, and give the others their reasons in an approach aimed at getting a solution to their collective problems. In a free and open discussion, each participant is allowed to question, challenge and review others' points of view with the aim of getting a suitable, justifiable and convincing reason, which Young (1996:122-123) calls the "force of the better argument", preferred and agreed upon by all. In this approach the participants must be free and equal, which means that each person must have an equal opportunity to make proposals, criticise (without feeling threatened or in danger for declining certain proposals), and attain the outcomes for a consensus through collective judgment.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Young's conception of democratic citizenship encompasses deliberation and communication. Such a normative ideal must embody vibrant elements in the deliberation to be practised in a public space in which all those affected are included and treated equally through reasonableness. However, she further argues for an ideal that covers

social or moral differences and suggests a more inclusive model of communication. A deliberative democratic model recognises deliberation as cultural and universal, but it frequently inflicts some form of domination that devalues and silences other participants' speech. All these aspects are applied in communicative democracy to ascertain that the processes of articulation among devalued, non-eloquent and non-persuasive citizens are freely and reasonably aired in whatever form of communication by collective judgments. In what follows, Martha Nussbaum's conception of democratic citizenship is examined.

2.2.5 Martha Nussbaum's conception of democratic citizenship

In her 1996 essay, *Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism*, Martha Nussbaum begins the elaboration of her conception of democratic citizenship in which she argues for a world (cosmopolitan) citizenship education for schools. She draws the idea of world citizen from the ancient Greek philosopher Diogenes the Cynic, and addresses the question of whether American schools should cultivate patriotic or cosmopolitan sentiments among their students. Nussbaum (1996:11-17) inquires into the kind of educational goals in which discussion/debate should be cultivated. Nussbaum (1996:6) raises the concern whether students should "be taught that they are, above all, citizens of the United States of America, or should they instead be taught that they are, above all, citizens of a world of human beings, and that, while they happen to be situated in the United States of America, they have to share this world with other citizens of other countries?". To answer this question, Nussbaum (1996:7) illuminates four arguments in support of cosmopolitan education, drawing on ideas from ancient Greek Stoic traditions of world citizenship, which understand that, firstly, "any human being might have been born in any nation". She argues that, through cosmopolitan citizenship education, "we learn more about ourselves" as students. Secondly, "we make headway solving problems that require international cooperation". Thirdly, we recognise that moral obligations to the rest of world are real; otherwise, they

would go unrecognised; and finally, “we make a consistent and coherent argument based on distinctions we are prepared to defend”. These arguments are appealing, especially the one that requires students to join hands across the boundaries of different nation-states.

In 1997, Nussbaum developed her ideas into a book, *Cultivating humanity: a classical defense of reform in liberal education*. In this study, Nussbaum advocates a liberal cosmopolitan citizenship for American schools. In cosmopolitan citizenship education, Nussbaum invites people not to see themselves in terms of their local identities and affiliations, but to join the ancient Stoics in realising that we share a common core of human identity. Such an understanding of being global residents will rest on our capacity and willingness to live together cooperatively as humankind. To live cooperatively, with a shared, common identity, is constructed on world citizenship and educational cultures that foster and sustain such an identity. Nussbaum (1996:6-9, 1997:50-53) indicates that the concept, *citizen of the world*, has its roots in the utterance of the Greek philosopher, Diogenes the Cynic, who, when asked where he came from, identified himself by declaring, “I am a citizen of the world” (*cosmopolites*) cosmopolitan or cosmopolitanism. By this, Diogenes meant he refused to be defined simply by his local origins and insisted on identifying himself in terms of more global aspirations and concerns”. The Stoics who followed his lead developed his image of the *cosmopolites* or world citizen, especially by arguing that each of us lives in two communities, namely the community of our birth and the community of human argument and aspiration. The community of human argument and aspiration is the source of our moral and social obligations. With the above in mind, Nussbaum (1997:53) posits that “we should regard all human beings as our fellow citizens and local residents”. In her view, this form of cosmopolitanism is not limited to Western traditions; it is also supported by the influential Indian philosopher Rabindranath Tagore, as well as the Ghanaian philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah. Appiah writes that, concerning African identity, “we will only solve our problems if we see them as human problems

arising out of a special situation, and we shall not solve them if we see them as African problems generated by our being somehow unlike others” (Nussbaum, 1997:53).

In addition, Nussbaum indicates that it is helpful to understand the roots of cosmopolitanism in ancient Greek and Roman idea as an essential resource for democratic citizenship. She points out those contemporary debates on the curriculum, for which she argues frequently, imply that the idea of a “multicultural” education is a new approach, with no forebears in long-standing educational traditions. However, Nussbaum avows that this cosmopolitan and multicultural education is not new, but that its roots can be traced to the Ancient Greek and Roman historical tradition sketched above. Through cosmopolitan citizenship education, Nussbaum (1997:54-59) argues that students will develop an understanding of different cultures and will enrich the conversation among different people of different nation-states about the fundamental moral and political values of others, as a community. For her it is pointless to conclude that our norms are human and historical rather than fixed and eternal, instead of being the result of rational justification. For instance, the conventional culture of fifth century B.C. Athens recognised that Athenian customs were universal, and this became the crucial precondition for Socratic searching. The ethical inquiry requires an environment in which young people are cultivated and taught to be critical of their way of doing things and of rules. Such a critical inquiry, in turn, needs the awareness that life contains other possibilities. It can be said that all these values were realised in the best education, which aimed at equipping citizens for genuine life choices, while freedom is regarded as best cultivated by an education that develops critical thinking.

The true foundation for human association is not based on one’s uninformed and usual way of being or doing things, but on the association that we can defend as being good for humanity in a global community without looking at

local boundaries. For example, students need to recognise that any human being might have been born in any nation and that whatever happens is just an accident of where one is born or resides. Thus, Nussbaum states that, as human beings, we should not allow differences of nationality, class, status, ethnic membership or even gender to set barriers between our fellow human beings and us. We should recognise humanity, its fundamental ingredients, reason and capacity, and give that community of humanity our first allegiance (Nussbaum, 1997:59). Nussbaum also believes that the idea of world citizenship is the source of Kant's idea of the "kingdom of ends". In such a kingdom, each person needs to treat every human being with respect and with the dignity of reason and moral choice or preference, irrespective of their place of birth, sexual orientation or status.

Furthermore, Nussbaum emulates the Stoic idea that the good citizen is a "citizen of the world". The Stoics hold that thinking about humanity and the whole world is valuable for one's knowledge and understanding; we see ourselves and our customs more clearly when we see our own ways in relation to those of other reasonable people. Such people recommend world citizenship for the reason that it recognises in people their aspiration to justice and goodness, and their other capacities for reasoning in this connection (Nussbaum, 1997:60). Nussbaum also affirms that, among the Stoics, to be a citizen of the world one did not need to give up local affiliations, but had to think of oneself as surrounded by a sense of eight concentric circles. The first circle is drawn around the self, while the next takes in one's immediate family, followed by the extended family. The fourth circle concerns one's neighbours or local group; the fifth, one's fellow city-dweller; and the sixth one's fellow countrymen. "We easily add to this list groups formed on the basis of ethnic, religious, linguistic, historical, professional and gender identities, and finally, beyond all these circles is the largest one - that of humanity as a whole" (Nussbaum, 1997:60). Her further point is that the cultivation of humanity is not easy in the absence of a common and vigorous thread binding and connecting all human beings together. The understanding is that one needs

not give up one's local identities and affiliations, whether national, ethnic or religious, but that one is required to struggle and make all human beings part of our community, through dialogue and concern, while showing respect to all people as equal human beings. Individual differences should not be used to classify people according to class, ethnicity, status, sexual orientation or gender in order to develop boundaries between themselves and others, even though it is essential to identify ourselves as individuals and as part of the community.

In my view, for citizens to be able to respond to collective problems there is a need for them to respect themselves and the differences of other people. Citizens must be familiar with local differences, and this is linked to our ability to differentiate and respect the dignity of humanity in each person (Nussbaum, 1997:61). Among other things, the Stoics were not expected to behave as if differences between male and female or between African and Roman did not matter, but to recognise that all people need to execute their duties and obligations in life. Nussbaum explains that the special local obligation for education is to spend sufficient time in educating world citizens about the history and problems of their part of the world, and to recognise that two fundamental human values are shared across all divisions and not just in their own locations. These two values are the human capacity to learn a language, on the one hand, and to understand cultural diversity, on the other. According to Nussbaum, when learning other people's languages, students enhance their understanding of the world around them and their experiences. By learning others' cultural values, students will begin to be critical of their own views. Through culture, ethics, historical knowledge, knowledge of politics, literacy, and artistic and musical learning, we are inclined to be parochial or narrow-minded, relying on our own habits in defining humanity. As education progresses, a clearer and deeper understanding of human variety and differences can show students that their own values are not better than that of other people's simply because they are familiar.

In addition, Nussbaum (1997:62-63) notes that the goal of cosmopolitan citizenship education is to strive for and nurture the attainment of membership of the global community. She states that, firstly, students will develop a sense of willingness to question the goodness of their own position and enter into the give-and-take world of critical arguments about ethical and political choices. In other words, students will have the capacity to engage freely in deliberation and to question the point of view of others through reason-giving. Secondly, students will learn the ability to distinguish within their own tradition between what is parochial or narrow-minded and what may be regarded as normal or habitual for others. Finally, students will find out what is subjective and arbitrary and what is justified by reasoned argument. According to Marcus Aurelius, quoted by Nussbaum (1997:65), the task of world citizenship is “to educate a world citizen to become a sensitive and empathic interpreter, cultivate the capacity for interpretation and be able to present a personal account of one’s own efforts to be a good citizen”. When students engage in discussions, they need to listen to and follow carefully the articulated meaning. In this case, one must learn many things before one can judge another’s action with understanding. Nussbaum further remarks that being a world citizen does not require people to criticise other individuals and their cultures, but requires that them to be very critical of unreasonable actions or policies, and of the character of people who promote them. Therefore, one cannot criticise until one respects and understands the other.

Nussbaum, in clarifying the view of the Stoics, proposes an ideal in which the process of coming to recognise the humanity of all people becomes a lifelong process encompassing all levels of education. Such a norm of world citizenship insists that there must be an understanding of the aspirations of various nations and groups by every citizen. At the same time, the goal of education should not be the separation of one group from another, but should be respect, tolerance and friendship. World citizens also insist that this goal should be fostered in a way that respects the dignity of humanity in each person and citizen. Education of world citizens requires transcending or

crossing over the inclination of both students and educators to define themselves primarily in terms of local group loyalties and identities (Nussbaum, 1997:67).

Nussbaum draws on the Greek Stoics' idea of citizenship education or "multicultural education", which she believes can be functional in the contemporary world (1997:68-70). Such education should take into account the major religious and cultural groups in each part of the world. It must not focus on one dominant religion, but must embody diverse aspects of different religions, as well as the ethnic, local, social and sexual minorities within a particular nation. The awareness of cultural variety is pivotal to promoting respect for others, which is essential for deliberation. Exposure to foreign and minority cultures is mainly a basis of confirmation of the foreign or minority student's personal sense of dignity. It is an education for all students, so that as citizens, in whatever role, they will learn to deal with one another with respect and understanding. Respect and understanding entail not only recognising difference, but at the same time also commonality; not only recognising a unique history, but also common rights, aspirations and problems. The world citizen must develop a concerned understanding of others' cultures, as well as the ethnic, racial and religious minorities within his or her own. One must also develop an understanding of the history and variety of human ideas of gender and sexuality. For a citizen to function well today, one needs to be able to assess the arguments put forward by both sides; and to do so, one needs an education that studies these issues (Nussbaum, 1997:70). Therefore, people ought to become responsible and grapple for others in order to heighten their democratic qualities as citizens.

In the study, *Upheavals of thought: the intelligence of emotions*, Nussbaum (2001) supplements her notion of world citizenship with compassionate citizenship education. In her opinion, it is essential to cultivate and promote compassion in citizens through citizenship education. Her study shows that

education institutions, especially schools, should be concerned about citizens' "tragic predicaments and their prevention" (Nussbaum, 2001:403). In other words, when schools and institutions express their worries and concern over the ill-treatment of citizens, they embrace compassion. It is clear that institutions or schools depend on compassionate students and teachers to keep alive the essential concern for the well-being of those who are suffering. However, even if the democratic state provides perfect institutions, there is a need for support from people for justice to be established (Nussbaum, 2001:404).

In addition, Nussbaum indicates that citizens must embrace the capacity for showing compassion to others. Citizens must acquire this capacity through a compassionate citizenship education that can actively promote compassion in schools to foster a sense of kindness towards others, show solidarity with and respect for human suffering, and show compassion in seeing that no harm is done to others. Through deliberation and engagement, students will develop the capacity for rational argumentation and active engagement through which they can build relations of trust and mutual respect. Furthermore, Nussbaum (2001:408) says that, through compassionate education, citizens will learn that the sufferer of such misfortunes "shows us something about our own lives: we see that we are too vulnerable to misfortune, that we are not any different from the people whose fate we are watching, and we therefore have reason to fear a similar reversal". In my view, this is a profound argument, since it demonstrates that compassion can only take place if citizens are educated to understand the needs of others and the meaning of their predicaments. Students must not think they are excluded from the misfortunes of others. Nussbaum's notion of compassion reveals that there is a fundamental relationship between a compassionate person and social institutions. The compassionate individuals are required to create institutions that represent what they imagine and, at the same time, such institutions should influence and advance a sense of compassion, generosity and solidarity in individuals. In this way, institutions teach citizens basic goodness,

responsibility and appropriate concern. Compassionate citizens will be able to judge that bad things could happen to others through no fault of their own (Nussbaum, 2001:405). Compassion is one component of good citizenship; therefore, it is essential to educate citizens to be compassionate.

According to Nussbaum (2001:426-428), there are three ways in which compassionate citizenship education can be advanced. First, public education at every level should cultivate the ability to imagine the experiences of others and to participate in their suffering. Such education requires fostering humanities and the arts, and stories in which students will be able to express their experiences and that of others, beginning from the lower level through the upper. As children increasingly master appropriate judgments, they are able to extend their empathy to different types of people. To Nussbaum, these ways of developing compassion for others can be achieved through listening to their stories, arts, music or drama. The stories expose the vulnerabilities of others and the listeners become acquainted with their predicaments, such as rape, murder, violence and many more. The education should also embrace literature and music in order to learn about the experiences and sufferings, and the resourceful agency in suffering especially women, the disabled and other marginalized groups who are illiterate; this will communicate their specific sense of tragedy. In this case, students who represent the future generations should be cultured with the skills and ability to participate and deliberate on issues of both personal and public concern. Thus, compassionate citizenship education plays a major role, and becomes a vital condition for sufficient deliberation on the misfortune others as it also takes part in the fight for the welfare of others.

Above all, education for compassionate citizenship should be a multicultural education. This idea of compassionated citizenship education and multicultural education of Nussbaum is also supported by Waghid (2004:534-536). Through this type of education, students will learn how to appreciate the

diversity of situations in which human beings struggle to prosper. In other words, students do not only learn about others' race, status, nationalities, or sexual orientation, but they also learn by imagining other people's lives and participating in their struggles. Education must also focus on political, social and economic history, while including literature and other artworks that involve the spectator in the significance of history for individuals. Through compassion, citizens will try to compare their conception of what is good with the compassionate needs of others. In addition, Nussbaum (2001:433) notes that art is one of the components of compassion that has the ability to inspire students with the ideas and sentiments of brotherhood and compassion. Compassionate citizenship education can also nurture imaginative abilities that are essential to political life and can promote an imaginary curriculum that can help to overcome mental as well as rational obstacles to full political reasonableness.

2.3 Democratic citizenship education as deliberation, compassion and cosmopolitanism

Democratic citizenship education rests on the core notion and ideal form of deliberative democracy. The notion of deliberative democracy plays a role of topical augmentation in democratic theory, which, as argued by Enslin and White (2003:115), has a wider implication for the understanding of citizenship. The above views show divergent conceptions among political theorists of what democratic citizenship education ought to be. The four prominent political theorists on democratic citizenship state that deliberation is an ideal condition of a democratic society. That being the case, the use of the concept of democracy should not be regarded as a mere guarantee of the rights of a passive citizen in a particular nation state, but rather it prepares active, deliberative and compassionate students as future citizens who are free to engage in public discussion.

By drawing on the seminal ideas of the aforementioned democratic theorists, it is clear that citizenship education needs to incorporate the deliberative democracy model, which aims at cultivating and promoting active engagement in deliberation. The model encompasses seven robust normative ideals or elements of democratic processes, namely deliberation, inclusion, equality, reasonableness, publicity, hospitality and compassion. Democratic citizenship education must include the deliberative democracy model in order to cultivate active and deliberative students. The deliberative students will possess the ability to be hospitable and compassionate toward other students in public deliberation on matters of common concern for all affected people, which is what Benhabib, Gutmann, Young and Nussbaum advocate. Democratic citizenship education is embedded in the framework that decision making on policies and matters of public concern among citizens must emanate from public deliberations. Democratic citizenship education exercises deliberation that is inclusive, and that treats everyone as equal citizens in dialogue through giving and weighing the justifiable reasons. The aforementioned democratic theorists maintain that, through deliberation and debates, decision making on public policies and problems are carried out and attempts are made to provide solutions for a common good in a collective manner. Such vivid democratic processes embody *inclusion*; they create space for students affected by policies and decisions to be included in such vigorous discussions, irrespective of their status, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity or minority affiliations. Young (1996) notes that each person, whether a citizen or a foreigner, must be treated as equal and that his or her contribution have to be respected. In this respect, the silenced and undervalued students, such as those from minority groups (women or the poor), have to be given a greater space to articulate and communicate their concerns and to make decisions through other unrestrained forms of communication, namely narratives or storytelling.

Furthermore, Benhabib (1996) argues that deliberation needs to be carried out among free and equal citizens, committed to collective decision making in

which fellow citizens share an obligation to propose a topic and question decisions, and in which participants convince each other with rational arguments to accept decisions. In this case, all students will have a sense of attachment and of belonging to each other through public debate, with no one experiencing any form of domination or oppression. The role of the teachers is to facilitate open discussion by allocating the topic or subject and giving equal chances for articulation. Moreover, teachers requires to create a deliberative environment that is conducive, in which participants are allowed room for self-clarification, and opportunities are prepared for students to learn how and when to question topics of dialogue. Thus, a model of discursive democracy embraces a broadened matter for debate, includes a variety of participants in different forms of association, and is underpinned by a vigorous public discussion. Democratic citizenship education will not be complete without *equality*. This implies affording the individual teacher and student equal treatment in discussions concerning issues experienced in schools and in their community. When included, each student, whether affected or not by the decision, has to be treated as an equal human being during the deliberation and any agreement must be to the benefit of all. That being the case, all students who participate directly or through representatives in a students' council must be afforded a fair opportunity and allocated time to engage in deliberation based on respect for one's right to articulation and human dignity.

In addition, Gutmann and Thompson (2004) assert that democratic deliberation must be governed by democratic principles, such as reciprocity. These are principles laid down to control the way participants speak so that it characterises open-mindedness and mutual trust between teachers and students, as well as among students. In other words, the context of deliberation permits each student equal and fair opportunity to deliberate freely. The ideas of equality in deliberation have the potential to create opportunities for all teachers and students. Equality enables them: (a) to have the same chances to initiate speech acts, to question, to interrogate, and to open debate; b) to all have a right to question the assigned topics of

conversation; and c) to initiate reflexive arguments about the very rules of the deliberation procedures and the manner in which they are applied (Benhabib, 1996:70). In democratic citizenship education, students must not only be included and treated equally in the deliberation, but they are required to provide *reasonable* arguments by offering defensible grounds for supporting a particular judgment. Deliberation is based on the notion that students have to accept or reject the decisions made, as well as question whether the reasons given are rational enough to be accepted. The apparent idea is that students' representatives must communicate their proposals to other students and give persuasive reasons why they must accept the views, for decisions must be for the common good.

According to Young (1996), a deliberative democracy, which she refers to as communicative democracy, should focus on the devalued and silenced students who are not confident and fluent enough to convince others in a debate. The point is that students who are not expressive must be given the chance to speak and convey their concerns and reasons in the language they understand, and with other *forms of communication*. For example, they can be encouraged to narrate their stories, experiences or misfortunes to other students. The other students are then expected to listen to the story of these underprivileged before making decisions on issues affecting all. Reaching a consensus will deepen their understanding through democratic dialogue. Democratic citizenship education, which fosters a deliberative democratic process, will not only ensure that all students are included, treated equally and give justifiable reasons, but that they also participate in public deliberation. The democratic theorists categorise a variety of contexts in which deliberation and the process of decision making must be exercised. Such decision making must be to the benefit of all students and must be exercised publicly and collectively.

To Benhabib (1996:73), educational institutions are best located to cultivate and practise democracy in public deliberation. This being the case, educational institutions, especially schools, have a profound obligation and responsibility to practise and cultivate deliberative citizens. In other words, schools have to create space to nurture deliberation in students, who are the future citizens, and to equip them with the skills, knowledge and capacity to engage in debates for the common good. The role of the deliberative teacher is to facilitate open debate by providing the topic and giving equal chances to students for articulation. In addition, teachers generate a deliberative atmosphere that is favourable for and encourages students to be reflexive and open to self-clarification. They create opportunities for students to learn how and when to question the topic of deliberation. The same sentiment is shared by Gutmann and Thompson (1996:132), who posit that “the resources of deliberation establish more justifiable ways of responding to the challenges of representation than do other conceptions of democracy”. In democratic citizenship education, students’ representatives or participants are expected to provide, during discussion, justifiable arguments to all students for their preference for such policies or decisions. The students who serve in the students’ representative council should provide their proposals to their fellow students to question and to give their responses in terms of continuous exchange on a decision. In this process, the students’ representatives can foster and promote democracy by means of providing chances and space for deliberation. In doing so, the students’ representatives will be held accountable for any decision or policy enacted by the students who elected them, as well as by those concerned by the decision. However, not all decisions made by the representatives and students during discussions qualify to be agreed on, but those which are based on reasonable arguments, which focus on problems troubling the public, and in which they might have expertise.

However, an understanding that deliberation concerning crucial problems confronting society in general needs to cover a diverse number of students

and representatives, treating each person equally by giving justifiable reasons for decisions or policies, is not sufficient for democracy to prosper. Hence, the above normative ideal of the democratic process needs to be accompanied by other elements (Benhabib, 2006:177). In Kant's seminal idea of *hospitality*, borrowed from the normative framework of cosmopolitanism, the notion of hospitality aims to guide public deliberation, in terms of which good students need to be hospitable to each other in public debate. In deliberation, students are expected to invite and accommodate other students who are vulnerable to ill-treatment to air their concerns regarding the problem in question. For instance, in cases where a school or classroom constitutes students from diverse groups with different background experiences, status, gender or ethnicity, one needs to be generous. The point is that students need to be cultured with skills to be able to accommodate others and to be hospitable to them. This will prepare students to consider one another's differences and background experience and to accommodate others' needs during deliberation.

Gutmann and Thompson (2004) note that a democratic society is always confronted by disagreement and conflict among its citizens. Nonetheless, it is not only important for teachers and students to feel included, to treat each other equally, to give reasons, and to be hospitable to one another in public deliberation, but they are also required to have a sense of *compassion*. Nussbaum (1997:2001) invites people to cultivate humanity as part of the bigger community, in which compassion will be shown to other citizens affected by different misfortunes and distress. Nussbaum (2001:403) points out that those educational institutions ought to be concerned about "tragic predicaments and their prevention". Schools, teachers and students need to consider such sufferings and realise that the victims were probably not at fault. Democratic citizenship education places vigorous obligations and responsibilities on educational institutions to inculcate in their students the capacity to envisage that other people's predicaments are reversal and can happen to any human being. Furthermore, in democratic citizenship

education, students will learn to put themselves in other people's shoes and struggle for the welfare of others and for social justice. Through deliberation, students might be able to come up with ideas on how to tackle social problems such as women and children abuse, rape, murder, poverty, etc.

Democratic citizenship education will also cultivate deliberative and compassionate students who will be able to judge that there are terrible things happening to others through no fault of their own (Nussbaum, 2001:405). The point is that teachers and students will contemplate and reflect on these horrible things happening to other citizens and realise that they are not because of their own mistake but being inflicted on them innocently. For instance, in a country like Namibia, where students come from diverse groups, society is engulfed by social issues of public concern, such as domestic violence, abuse and an increase in cases of rape of women and children, murder, a high crime rate, unemployment, vandalism of school buildings, suicide, discrimination, conflicts among political parties, poverty, alcohol and drug abuse, etc. There is a need to begin educating democratic students who are cultured in compassion. Nussbaum (2001:408) notes that other students (citizens) who experience ill-treatment or misfortune "[show] us something about our own lives: we see that we too are vulnerable to misfortune, that we are not any different from the people whose fate we are watching, and we therefore have reason to fear a similar reversal". The point is that a democratic citizenship education system has a profound responsibility to educate students who are compassionate, since compassion can only occur if citizens are educated with an understanding of the needs of others and the meaning of their predicaments. Thus, no such student must imagine that he or she is excluded from the troubles that others experience.

2.4 Democratic citizenship education and belligerence

In democratic citizenship education, students' compassionate and imaginative ability and skills may not be sufficient for participating in deliberation. Thus, in his study, *creating citizens: political education and liberal democracy*, Eamon Callan (1997) argues for *belligerence* in deliberation to harmonise the preceding model. According to Callan (1997:211), belligerence in deliberation has to do with participants' ability and attempt to question the accurateness or correctness of one another's moral beliefs and the importance of the differences between their positions in order to stir or induce distress, combined with a rough process of struggle and ethical confrontation. He notes that belligerence in deliberation opens up opportunities and moments for ethical or moral reconciliation, "when truth and error in rival positions have been made clear and a fitting synthesis of factional viewpoints is achieved" (Callan, 1997:212). In my view, Callan's argument is compelling because no student or teacher is allowed or has a right to silence others in deliberation, but all participants can freely articulate their minds without fear of being rebuked, interfered with or being intimidated. The point Callan (1997:215) advocates is that deliberation among participants is not intended "to achieve dialogical victory over our adversaries, but rather [is] the attempt to find and enact terms of political co-existence that we and they can reasonably endorse as morally acceptable". This means that the reason for taking part in a discussion is not to try to beat those opposing one's idea, since discussions must be based on reasonable arguments by all participants. Furthermore, Callan (1997:221) asserts that, because deliberation cannot achieve the agreed upon outcome without controversy and distress, the participants in the process will acquire skills and capacity to confront one another through dialogue. Put differently, educating citizens to be democrats must instil in students the capacity to provoke, stimulate and motivate others to speak in order to understand one another's feeling or mind.

This approach can reveal individuals' inner feelings and truth concerning the position or perspective of others. In this respect, teachers and students learn to speak their minds and are prepared to confront or fight various injustices in their society, such as rape, murder, women and child abuse, domestic violence, armed robbery, theft, alcohol and drug abuse, teenage pregnancies, poverty, unemployment, tribalism, racism, exclusion of minority groups in decision making, etc. Consequently, students and teachers will establish fundamental ideas about the policy, decisions or problems at hand, and will be sensitive and compassionate to the views of others during debate. Democratic citizenship education will cultivate citizens with valuable capacities for a contemporary democratic society. This is also the view of Waghid (2008b:23), who argues that democratic institutions will nurture students and teachers with capabilities to take responsibility for their own ideas, to take intellectual risks, to develop a deep sense of respect for others, and learn how to think critically with others in a democratic society.

In conclusion, each of the five democratic theorists contributes to an account of how to educate students to engage actively in public deliberation. In this approach, both teachers and students will acquire the ability to engage in public debate confidently. At the same time, teachers and students will become hospitable and engage in belligerence with others, while remaining sensitive and compassionate to the suffering of others. Students will be able to put themselves in similar circumstances and fight in solidarity with others for social justice. Against a held presupposition that the promotion of democracy and the diversity of a democratic society require a conception of citizenship education, I argue for a vibrant form of democratic citizenship education that encompasses deliberation, inclusion, equality, reasonableness, publicity, hospitality, compassion and belligerence. In my view, this model is better suited to foster and promote deliberative and active engagement and a sense of mutual trust and generosity, as well as compassion among citizens, in executing social justice. The aforesaid model of democratic citizenship education is insufficient and inappropriate to cultivate deliberation with the

purpose of addressing African problems and societal ills. Therefore, I now proceed to explore the conception of democratic citizenship, based on the traditional African thought of two prominent African theorists, namely Kwame Gyekye and N'Dri Assie-Lumumba.

2.5 'African' conceptions of democratic citizenship education

I do acknowledge that the preceding framework is somewhat biased towards what can be conceived of as 'Western' approaches to democratic citizenship education. Therefore, I shall endeavour to explore the ideas of Kwame Gyekye and N'Dri Assie-Lumumba. In this regard, it should be considered that African cultural practices may not always be commensurable with 'Western' conceptions of democratic citizenship. By drawing on traditional African thought on democracy in his seminal work, *Tradition and modernity: a philosophical reflection of the African experience*, Kwame Gyekye (1997) offers a philosophical interpretation and critical analysis of the African cultural experience in modern times, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. He claims that African people face numerous and unique societal challenges. Some of these challenges are rooted in the values and practices of their traditional cultures, whereas others are indicative of the legacy of European colonialism. In this study, Gyekye (1997) challenges the ideas that modernity for African people must be equated with Western values and institutions. Nevertheless, the Ghanaian philosopher argues that if African modernity and its challenges and problems are to be endured and addressed in a way that will be really meaningful to its people, it must be a self-created modernity, forged and creatively refined within the "furnace" of deliberations between African intellectual creativity and Africa's multifaceted cultural experience and tradition (Gyekye, 1997: xii). This implies that democratic citizenship education must try to understand the African traditional experience and practices in order to adopt the useful approach to those challenges facing society.

Notably, Gyekye (1997:134) has drawn his conception of democracy from the famous and perhaps the most widely accepted meaning, which is “the government of the people, *by* the people, and *for* the people”. However, his expression of and *by* the people in this popular and well-known meaning in an African traditional thought signifies democracy as:

[The] government of the people is whose form of practice derives in its entirety from the historical and cultural experiences of a people and is in conformity with their vision of how they want to be governed or to govern themselves; a system of government born of the hopes and aspirations of a people and in shaping of which the people, in consequence, have intellectual, ideological, and emotional attachments; a system of government that is considered by the people as their own and which they are ever prepared to protect and defend to the hilt. Government by the people is whose constitutional rules, principles, and procedures are set up by the people themselves; a system of government that allows the people to rule, that makes it possible for people to participate in making decisions that affect their personal lives, community, or state (Gyekye 1997:134).

The above statement implies that the African traditional system of democracy has its roots in the people, and represents their goals, values, ideals, experiences and aspirations. Simultaneously, the system is also nurtured, refined or cultured, and modified by a people to reflect their wishes, desires and experiences, but its nuances cannot be imposed on a people based solely on ideas from outside. The reference here is to a government that not only represents local people’s values, experiences and aspirations, but which

also creates spaces for all citizens to participate in dialogue on issues of common concern, regardless of their status or level of education.

In addition, Gyekye's (1997) exposition of traditional African knowledge and democratic rule is derived from the *Akan* people of Ghana and some other African countries. The analysis of the traditional African experience reveals that there are some visible or noticeable democratic elements in the traditional African political system of the chiefs or kings (Gyekye, 1997:116). Although the selection process of chiefs or kings, as well as the right to rule, is a heritable practice and only a person from the royal lineage can compete or stand for such positions, in this process the elders from the royal family have to ascertain that the eligible candidate is creditable and possesses the utmost degree of quality (Gyekye, 1997:118). It is worth noting that the African traditional system represents democracy when the chiefs or kings are chosen by the people, even when this is done through representatives selected by the masses. The point is that the elected chiefs or kings have to rule with the consent of the people. From this view, Gyekye (1997:118) stresses that, in traditional African politics, the people – the common people, not the chiefs or kings – are the basis of all properly constituted authority.

Moreover, Gyekye challenges the view that, in African thought, community confers or bestows personhood on the individual and that the individual's identity is thus simply a derivative of the community identity. He attributes this notion to other African philosophers, such as Ifeanyi Menkiti, and to African socialist political figures such as Kwame Nkrumah, Senegal's Leopold Senghor, and Tanzania's Julius Nyerere (Gyekye, 1997:118). He argues further that African thought ascribes a definite or distinct value to the individual. For instance, Gyekye reinforces his notion of democracy within the African traditional system by citing Sithole's general observation of democracy, namely that:

“Those who have lived in Africa know the African people are democratic to point inaction. Things never settled until everyone has had something to say. [The traditional African] council allows the free expression of all shades of opinions. Any man has full right to express his mind on public questions and to carry out any program, required the sanction of the whole clan or tribe” (Gyekye 1997:118)

In addition, sketching the idea of democracy propounded by former President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Gyekye stresses that “in African society the traditional method of conducting affairs is by free discussion”. In the traditional African democracy, “The elders sit under the big tree and talk until they agree”. The idea of talking until an agreement is reached is fundamental to the traditional African concept of democracy, and it gives each participant a space in the deliberation toward an agreed outcome. More so, Gyekye (1997:136) notes that the traditional African political system and institutions manifest some democratic moments, and that some have the potential that is suitable, conducive and relevant to the evolution of the democratic practice, even in a large, modern political setting. Some of the observable facets, which Gyekye (1997:136) argues include the fact that the traditional African institutions facilitated the democratic process, that is, the town or village or state councils that have served as instruments of political participation and involvement did not regard (status) wealth as basis for membership in the traditional councils. This implies that the traditional system was inclusive, and both the rich and the poor found spaces to participate. The villages and towns had free will to make decisions and settle matters of local concern during council meetings with the community or representatives to debate issues of common interest.

This process is carried out with free expression of consent, opinion, popular will or common interest, consensus and consultation. The participants speak

and deliberate by presenting their reasonable arguments toward a consensus. Such meetings are usually prolonged until a solution or consensus is reached. All decisions are made in an open and accountable manner, in line with the traditional system of rule and, at the same time, the prejudice towards or intolerance of misrule is demonstrated by the people as an indication of dissatisfaction with service. There is an approach to the seat of political power and the simplicity of the form of communication between the rule and the ruled. In the traditional African system, the political organisation's well-being, success and survival are matters of concern for everyone, that is, for the public interest and common good or idea of the state as *res publica* (republic) (Gyekye, 1997:136).

The understanding is that the participatory nature of the democratic practice and the communication structure of the African society serve the purpose of democracy by paying close attention to the formulation of towns, district councils and villages. This approach aims to assure the participation of local people (in towns or villages) in making decisions that directly affect their lives and to stimulate in them feelings that they are part of the general political process on a more or less daily basis, and not only during elections (Gyekye, 1997:138, 139). Stated differently, participation in dialogues of public interest must be in 'less to more' encounters, which enable all people (citizens) space and an opportunity for both active and inactive participants in deliberation. This is a simple method for eliciting the views, opinions, concerns and ideas of all people at all levels represented in the African system.

Gyekye (1997:138) argues that the method is relevant to the modern state setting for active and constant participation to take place that will facilitate possible ways to address the problems facing society today. He also states that town or village assemblies must be open to all citizens, and that all kinds of social, economic and political issues must be deliberated as part of the democratic political process. In this practice, the village or town population

must be encouraged to participate in the political process; this will elevate and sustain the higher level of political consciousness needed by the people in a democratic public space, thus also making democratisation a reality (Gyekye, 1997:138). Gyekye also concludes that towns or villages will not disappear from the nation-state, and that democratic politics cannot be exclusively restricted to towns (urban centres) where only active participation can possibly succeed or take place. From the arguments above, it can be stated that the traditional African political system and experience could prove useful in the discussion of the societal ills visible in the modern African society and in Namibia in particular.

Gyekye (1997:141-143) calls for “a comprehensive conception of democracy” that embodies and considers an adaptation of the traditional African experience in democratic education for African people. He argues that this comprehensive conception of democracy model can provide for political rights, social rights and economic rights encompassing the total welfare or well-being of all members (citizens) of the political community. At the same time, this model will offer a sharper meaning to, as well as a concrete translation of, the idea social and political equality (Gyekye, 1997:141). According to Gyekye (1997), the conception of democracy held in Western political thought and practice places emphasis on political rights and the liberal (individual) notion of democracy. Conversely, this idea of an individual’s rights and the detachment from the community in Western political thought has failed to address or elevate social and economic rights to the status of concern and commitment equal to that of political rights.

For this reason, Gyekye (1997:142) considers a comprehensive conception of democracy to be essential if democracy (as a system of government) is to succeed in playing the role its advocates and adherents expect it to play in a political community of human beings with diverse, but essentially common needs, interests and aspirations. The comprehensive conception of

democracy model is considered as being able and well attuned to promote the politics of the common good, the politics that aims at fostering a set of fundamental goods or interests, held as potentially basic human prosperity. The traditional African conception of democracy encompasses “communitarianism”, which fosters generosity, solidarity and compassion (*ubuntu*) – a political theory that is committed to the politics of the common good. The idea of common good, for Gyekye (1997:50, 142), is linked to human nature and the idea that individuals need certain basic characters of the community if they are to function as human beings. Furthermore, Gyekye (1997) shows that the traditional African experience can be established on the African notion of “communitarianism” or “*ubuntu*” (in the traditional African thought), which translates as humanity towards others. Waghid (2009) cited in (Waghid 2009:71), also points out that *ubuntu* is a concept that is found in almost all African languages, although under various names, and that it denotes human interdependence through deliberative inquiry. Thus, it can be argued that the idea of *ubuntu* must have existed in the history of the African people. Waghid (2009:71) further argues that:

Ubuntu-like deliberative democracy is a form of communal engagement which allows space for criticality, non-discrimination and ensuring that human relations flourish, the practice of deliberative democracy can be considered as specifically of relevance to African societies because of its history of colonisation, racial oppression and segregation, and economic, political and social instabilities, insecurities and complexities- all those societal ills which potentially stand a better chance to be eradicated through democratic deliberation.

In this sense, the idea of *ubuntu* in the traditional African experience shows that an individual cannot exist as a human being in isolation, and supports the

idea of human interdependence. *Ubuntu* takes place only when individuals act as and feel part of the community that is confronted by several tribulations; the whole community becomes concerned and struggles for the well-being of the affected and sufferer of such ills, while jointly seeking an amicable solution (Waghid, 2004; 2009:76). In this process, the idea of *ubuntu* encourages the community to engage in and deliberate on issues affecting society and those of common good. This model of democracy with African traditional elements is considered to have the necessary conditions for fostering and educating African (particularly Namibian) citizens to be democratic and to address the many challenges present in our modern society.

Based on the preceding observations, I have decided to employ Gyekye's (1997:119-120) notion of democracy, which points out that the traditional setting in African society and traditional African politics exhibited features or elements of democracy, in both theory and practice, some of which can or needs to be nurtured and refined for a contemporary application. Gyekye (1997) calls for the inclusion of the traditional African conception of democracy in democratic education in order to educate African citizens on their own values, virtues and moral tradition. With this in mind, I supplement my deliberative democracy model with Gyekye's idea of African traditional knowledge to advocate for the cultivation of a democratic citizenship education that embodies a less-to-more deliberative encounter in democratic education for the Namibian people. Alongside Gyekye's view of the adaptation of the traditional African experience of democracy for education, I deem it necessary to expand N'Dri Assie-Lumumba's notion of democracy.

In her 2006 *Higher education in Africa: crises, reforms and transformation*, the African historian N'Dri Assie-Lumumba advocates for women's access to education and indigenous knowledge systems in higher education in African institutions. Her notion of women's access to formal education, in particular to higher education, is expanded in the 2007 manuscript she edited, *Women and*

higher education in Africa: reconceptualising gender-based human capabilities and upgrading human rights to knowledge. Here she and some other African scholars attempt to address some of the problems inherent in African education, mainly issues such as gender inequality, the lack of female access to schooling and the biased or discriminatory, Eurocentric worldview that predominates in African school systems and higher education (Assie-Lumumba, 2007:16). Furthermore, Assie-Lumumba argues for equity and the education of women and girls in Africa, and for “Indigenous Knowledge Systems” in African higher education, which she says have been “under attack since the trans-Atlantic enslavement and particularly during colonialism” (Assie-Lumumba, 2007:16). Assie-Lumumba (2007) raises the question, “what kind of education is best for African societies at large and which kind of (higher) education for what kind of society?” To answer this question, Assie-Lumumba (2007:8) points out that higher education plays a central role in human resource formation, particularly in a developing continent like Africa. She also stresses that higher education is a central place where philosophers, technicians, scientists and humanists are educated and cultivated. Thus, one of the fundamental issues that need to be included in such education is the fruitful cross-fertilisation of indigenous knowledge within the spaces of the dominant Western knowledge lines, as well as the inclusion of the female population. Assie-Lumumba’s point is that, for education to be meaningful to African people there is a great need for African indigenous knowledge production and access to formal education, which would also help to tackle the many problems facing society today.

In the study, various African scholars attempted to address issues of gender, higher education, and the production of knowledge as a means for agency, reclaiming of human rights, and a source for informed participation in social processes. Crucial to this argument are issues concerning basic fundamental rights for women in higher education. The authors argue for the significance of women’s access to higher education and knowledge if African societies and countries are to break the cycle of poverty and human misery (Assie-

Lumumba, 2007:471). Assie-Lumumba further claims that, through the education process, the participation of women as students and professionals, as well as the factors that determine their various and valuable contributions to the production of knowledge are reproduced.

Since modern African societies are confronted by various predicaments and new challenges, such as HIV/AIDS in the area of health care, or poverty, there is a profound need for equitable education and access to education at all levels by all for human development to occur (Assie-Lumumba, 2007:472). In order to address these numerous predicaments and the scourge of the tribulations and ills in our societies, Assie-Lumumba states that it is necessary to break the imbalance in formal education, which limits women's acquisition of knowledge, their ability for self-realisation and their contribution as agents in the process of socio-economic development in Africa. The understanding is that, without women's proper acquisition of knowledge in education, it will be difficult to tackle the societal problems facing African societies today and for the continent's economic development to flourish.

In addition, Assie-Lumumba (2007:473) stresses that there is unequal access by women to formal education, especially higher education, and that this leads to the limited representation of women in critical positions in the field of education, politics, and the economy and knowledge production. As a result, the poor distribution of education constitutes an objective barrier to development. She further states that poor access to education limits women's participation in decision-making processes and planning concerning issues affecting their day-to-day lives. This restriction does not only miss the benefit of women's insights, but excludes and overlooks their concerns, viewpoints and input, and this constitutes an infringement of their rights to exercise their capabilities (Assie-Lumumba, 2007:473). Apart from the low number of women at all levels of the formal education system, especially at the level of higher education, there is a concern for the nature and type of education

obtained by those who get it. Hence, the unequal gender distribution of education, both in quantity and type, is a major characteristic of many educational institutions.

Assie-Lumumba (2007:473) posits that, although several policies have been adopted that are aimed at increasing enrolment and redressing inequalities, African nation-states have failed to sustain the pace for closing the gap, particularly in higher education, where the imbalance is dominant. Assie-Lumumba (2007:472) argues that the foundation of social progress and development, which includes the political, social and economic levels, needs to be valued, developed and utilised to enhance the quality of life for the general population. It is irrelevant to continue to address the issues of imposed or imported formal education and African indigenous education in dichotomous and mutually exclusive terms. It is essential to integrate formal education into the African social reality (Assie-Lumumba, 2007:474).

Advocating for an indigenous knowledge system, Assie-Lumumba (2007:474) states that, although the illiteracy rate among African women is one of the highest when compared to that among European women, African women were involved in every aspect of society on a basis that allowed different but equally worthy participation by both males and females in education, as well as in the production and utilisation of knowledge. They have also acquired other forms of literacy, that is, the ability to read the world around them, to identify means and strategies of survival, and to promote human dignity (*ubuntu*). Since African women constitute the majority of marginalised people, the focus on their inclusion would be an expressive indicator of a genuine effort to improve people's lives through an integrated development policy that allows human capabilities and their knowledge and skills to be harnessed for the benefit of all people in both local and global communities (Assie-Lumumba, 2007:475). The point is that the African indigenous approach to the

acquisition of knowledge needs to be reinforced formally and further developed in response to new and modern challenges.

Furthermore, Assie-Lumumba (2007:476) points out that, for African people to realise their aspirations and achieve a good quality of life in which their human needs are satisfied with dignity, it is necessary to formulate long-term plans founded on sustainability. There is a great need to break the barriers between the access of women to schooling, especially higher education, and the community. In this case, each learner or human being, whether male or female, must be given the opportunity to reach their full potential (Assie-Lumumba, 2007:473). Since schools and higher education play a major role as central educational institutions, they must also organise activities that can contribute to the promotion of people's well-being in all areas of expertise in which women are shown as powerful, positive and having much to contribute, such as teaching, research and policy formulation. This implies that democratic citizenship education should educate and consider the expertise, knowledge or experiences of dynamic African women in all spheres of learning, and empower them by encouraging participation in all deliberations concerning their welfare and the welfare of the community at large.

In this sense, there is a need to create a favourable atmosphere in which education for development can have a concrete meaning, and where women can equally enhance their skills and benefits in schools and higher education. The understanding is that all human beings, female or male, can make a profound contribution to nation building and to the social, political and economic development of the society and entire country by playing a collective role in solving local problems, without exclusion or discrimination. Every effort should be made to provide learning opportunities to break the gap of gender inequality (Assie-Lumumba, 2007:477). Moreover, Assie-Lumumba (2007:479) claims that, through equitable access of girls and women to education at all levels and of all types, women will regain access to their social

space, which will enable them to play their full roles as important members of communities and nations-states, as indispensable agents and a driving force for change, and as beneficiaries of social progress. Such inclusive involvement of all members of the society in economic and cultural production, as well as in political participation and decision-making processes at various levels of society, is a necessary condition for the well-being of all.

To complement the aforementioned democratic citizenship education model that I am advocating for the Namibian education system, I regard the claims of the two renowned African theorists mentioned above compelling. Particularly, the ideas of Gyekye (1997) and Assie-Lumumba (2007), that democracy should promote the traditional African experience and indigenous knowledge system, appear indispensable in democratic citizenship education. Another fundamental consideration is the full utilisation of human capabilities and the fulfilment of African women's right to learning in all areas and at all levels of education, including higher education. This implies that there is a great need for the consideration of women (the female population), who form part of the marginalised group, in access to quality education at all levels of education, not only at the elementary or literacy (informal education) level, but at the higher education level as well. By so doing, citizens (students and teachers) will not only get a deeper understanding of their own customs and traditions, but all citizens, whether male or female, rich or poor, will be able to acquire education for social progress and reach their individual potential.

Such education will also enable people to appreciate and understand better the significance of their own ways and the difference of others. Through this approach (that is, democratic education), citizens will be allowed to utilise their acquired knowledge, skills and abilities to deal with the societal ills that have engulfed the modern Namibian society. This kind of education will enable future generations to grasp not only an understanding of the Western ways of deliberating, but also the African customs and traditions (i.e. humanness;

ubuntu) that are considered to have the necessary condition to enable individuals and the community at large to assist those who have become victims and sufferers of huffy tribulations and injustice in the contemporary Namibian society.

2.6 Summary

This chapter concedes that, although some distinctions and nuances exist in the theoretical meanings and understandings of democratic citizenship, the ideas of all the four renowned democratic theorists examined above contribute to the call for educating citizens to be democrats. The democratic theorists Benhabib, Gutmann and Thompson, Young and Nussbaum, as well as Callan, Gyekye and Assie-Lumumba, agree that decision making and the problems of the general public must be dealt with through public deliberations. Such deliberations must be carried out in public spaces by all the affected or concerned people in a free and reasoned discussion. In particular, Benhabib, Gutmann and Thompson, and Nussbaum share the same sentiments that the essential place to cultivate and promote deliberation on political or educational issues is the public space.

Furthermore, the chapter shows that deliberative democracy is concerned primarily with the involvement and mutual support of all citizens in public deliberations as equal, free, accountable and reasonable citizens to tackle the problems confronting society. Democratic citizenship education that incorporates a form of deliberative democracy entails inclusive, equal, open and unforced deliberation on the educational issues in question, with the aim of reaching an agreement and outcome based on reasonable and justifiable arguments by all participants. The students also must be hospitable to others and possess a sense of compassion during this deliberation. However, as Callan (1997:221) points out, deliberation cannot be achieved or agreed upon without distress and belligerence. Thus, students need to acquire the skills

and capacity to provoke others to speak their minds freely to attain a justifiable outcome.

Above all, democratic citizenship education encompasses deliberative democracy, which is underpinned by the democratic normative ideals of inclusion, equality, reasonableness, publicity, hospitality, compassion and belligerence, with a touch of the traditional African experience or indigenous knowledge. When students are educated with such skills and abilities, deliberation will be fully inclusive and will treat all as equal agents who offer reasonable arguments toward an agreed upon outcome. In other words, Gyekye (1997), Nussbaum (2001) and Waghid (2004, 2009) offer a vibrant argument for advancing compassion in schools to promote a sense of generosity towards others, solidarity with and respect for human plight, and kindness in considering that no harm is done to others. These aspects also include the ability to observe and lessen the everyday anguish of others, as well as foster a sense of responsibility for any harm imposed on others. In this process, students and teachers become hospitable by actively inviting others to participate in and show compassion, generosity, solidarity and respect for human dignity (*ubuntu*) through the African indigenous system, as well as by being belligerent to the other, thereby developing mutual trust in one another. The participants are also able to imagine and sympathise with the sufferings of others, understanding that they may be suffering due to no fault of their own but simply because they have been afflicted. Such students will be in a position to struggle and fight collectively for the welfare and social justice of others who innocently experience misfortunes, knowing that they also are not exempted from the ill-treatment that could be inflicted upon any human being.

The democratic citizenship education that I discussed above embodies the discursive deliberative democratic model and co-exists with three other cosmopolitan normative ideals, namely hospitality, compassion and belligerence, as well as the traditional African experience, lifestyles and

African knowledge systems, especially inclusive and equitable access for the female population to formal education and higher education in Africa (Assie-Lumumba, 2007; Gyekye, 1997). In my understanding, this form of education is well positioned to advance and cultivate active engagement, and to help shape deliberative and compassionate citizens who actively and vigorously stand against social ills and the problems faced by the community as it strives for the well-being of all its citizens and advances social justice.

In the subsequent chapter I shall employ the deliberative democratic citizenship framework, as argued above, to examine whether the Namibian education system contains defensible democratic citizenship education.

CHAPTER THREE

CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN NAMIBIA: A SEARCH FOR DEMOCRACY AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE LAST TWO DECADES

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I argued that it is through deliberative democratic education that a nation-state cultivates a democratic citizenry. This chapter seeks to explore the concept of democratic citizenship in the Namibian education system and its transformational agenda over the past two decades. The chapter focuses on two key areas: firstly, the interpretation of the Namibian education system in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial education system in order to understand the shape of the current education system, and secondly, an analysis of some of the major education policy documents in relation to democratic citizenship education. These education policy documents will be analysed using some of the constitutive meanings of democratic citizenship education identified in Chapter 2 (deliberation, inclusion, equality, reasonableness, publicity, hospitality, compassion and belligerence, and Africanist humanness, that is, *ubuntu*) to discern whether the Namibian democratic education is defensible. Finally, I shall identify the dilemmas in the policy facing the attainment of democratic citizenship education, and more importantly, the reason they should be regarded dilemmas. I shall now proceed with an historical overview of the education system.

3.2 Historical overview of Namibia's education system

This section offers an historical account of the Namibian education system during three periods: the pre-colonial, the colonial/apartheid, and the post-

colonial periods. Hogan and Smith (2003:166), using Rorty's idea which assert that public education is not an autonomous practice, but is part of the whole system within society, whether authoritarian or democratic. This implies that a nation's education system is embedded in the authority of the government at a specific period. The point, therefore, is that the Namibian education system is based on the ideology of the government at any particular time. Thus, I consider it necessary to interrogate the historical development of education in Namibia and interpret its policy documents to get a clearer understanding of what led this nation-state to fight for transformation from authoritarian education to democratic education. Gadamer (1975:87) argues that historical interpretation can serve as a means to understand the context of a text even when, from another view, it simply sees in the text a source that is a part of the totality of the historical tradition. In other words, a nation's education system or policy could be interpreted on the basis of its historical context. Hence, my argument will be based on the understanding of the Namibian education system during the historical periods mentioned above in order to determine what shapes the contemporary democratic education system. The approach will also enable me to establish what kind of citizens the system intends to cultivate with the shift from apartheid to a democratic dispensation.

3.2.1 Pre-colonial education system

Western formal education in Namibia was first introduced by Wesleyan missionaries from the London Mission Society at Warmbad in southern Namibia in 1805 (Amukugo, 1993:33). However, Rodney (in Amukugo 1993:33 and Lilemba 2008:60-62) asserts that "the colonizers did not initiate education in Africa, but only supplemented or partly replaced those, which were there before". He further maintains that the Western pre-colonial education system (Eurocentric education) was contrary to the aspirations of the African people and therefore irrelevant. Moreover, Amukugo (1993:34) states that the formal aspect of African education meant institutionalised and

well-planned or organised education programmes. Hence, the early formal education in Africa, as in any other part of the world, was embedded in religion. For instance, in Islamic countries, education was designed to study the Quran, while in Christian nation-states such as Namibia, education was aimed at teaching the Bible, following instructions and training the priest (Amukugo 1993:35). Furthermore, Cohen (1994) states that, with the arrival of white missionaries in Namibia, the Rhenish Mission started working among the Namas and Hereros in central, western and southern Namibia, followed by the Finnish Mission, which started working among the Ovawambo in the north of the country in 1870. The Roman Catholic Church started work among the Namas and Hereros in 1888 and 1896 respectively, and extended their activities to Kavango in 1910. It can be argued that literacy teaching was aimed at Bible reading, as well as enabling its beneficiaries to follow the instructions of the white masters and to be submissive and obedient citizens. Similarly, Harber (1997:115) explicates that the primary aims of missionary education were to “tame Africans to become both servile and to despise their own culture and history”. Since Western civilisation based on Christianity was considered superior to African civilisation, missionaries were encouraged to introduce primary schools to impart Western culture. The plan was that educated African Christians would also play a role in the economy of the community attached to the new mission stations; they would require little knowledge besides schooling to enable them to become capable employees. It is clear that illiterate people or those with limited skills and education were incapable of participating actively in educated discussions of public affairs and contributing to national development. Education based on this idea became the primary value of all citizens throughout the period of missionary education. Above, we have seen how the promotion of these values assisted in developing a passive sense of citizenship in Namibia until the colonial period.

3.2.2 Colonial education system

After the formal education system in Namibia was introduced by the missionaries, it was followed by the German (1884-1915) and South African (1915-1990) education systems respectively (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2004; USAID, 2005). When the German colonialists arrived in Namibia, they introduced education for the white settlers in 1909. However, no education was provided for Namibian citizens because it was not deemed necessary for the economic development of the territory at that time (Harber, 1997:115). According to one missionary, “there was always the risk that education would implant undesirable ideas such as democracy and equality” (Harber, 1997:115). The point is that, during the German regime, Namibians were not offered any opportunity for schooling; education was reserved for white people. This kind of philosophy and practice disadvantaged the majority of the citizens, deprived them of equal space, and favoured the privileged groups.

When the former South African colonial government took over from the Germans, it sustained the segregated education system, but introduced “Bantu Education”, which was developed specifically for Namibia’s black population² in terms of vocational utility (Cohen, 1994:96). In other words, black children were expected to learn how to read and write in their mother tongue and to have little knowledge of English. The aim was to prepare citizens for specific jobs (as part of a semi-skilled and unskilled workforce) that the South African colonial government required. A very small number of Namibian citizens were equipped to become messengers, clerks and other functionaries in the administrative system, whereas literacy and numeracy were considered sufficient for others (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture,

² This includes the Ovambo, Kavango, Herero, Nama, Damara, Caprivi, coloured people and San.

1993:2). Besides, Harber (1997:116) points out that the election of the National Party in South Africa in 1948 marked the commencement of a change in education policy in both South Africa and Namibia. With the launch of the Eiselen Commission in 1949, the Bantu Education Act was declared in 1953, setting a foundation for the education system in South Africa, which then extended to Namibia. The idea was to increase the provision of education for Africans as the growing economy needed more black people who were literate; however, such education would be separate and unequal with the intention of ideological control (Harber, 1997:116). It was clearly stipulated that education for black people should be in the mother tongue and should not prepare them for equal participation in society. One can say that education in the hands of the missionaries prepared citizens differently; black people were incapacitated and could not participate as equally and freely as other citizens. Nyaggah (in Harber, 1997:116) underlines this concern by pointing out that, in 1954, H.F. Verwoerd, the Minister of Native Affairs and a prominent figure in South Africa, and one of the architects of apartheid and Bantu Education, avowed that:

The Bantu must be guided to serve his own community in all respects. There is no place for him in the European community above the level of certain forms of labour... For that reason it is of no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption in the European community, where he cannot be absorbed.

From the statement above, one can argue that black people were regarded as inferior and made to obtain limited education in comparison with their white counterparts. Therefore, they were expected to remain passive and to serve submissively. In addition, the Namibian education system was characterised by segregation and separate development. Education was a privilege of the

white minority³ elite group, while the black majority was ill-prepared and had limited resources. The administration of education was fragmented and categorised along racial lines (Cohen, 1994:228). The Ministry of Education reports that the provision of schooling to black Namibian children was for only a few, and most of those who had access to education did not go far (MEC, 1993:2). This implies that Namibian citizens were cultivated to become passive participants and followers of the white minority.

Cohen (1994:229) further notes that the education system in Namibia before 1990 totally disregarded the true aspirations of Namibian citizens. In support of this sentiment, the government (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:7)⁴ admitted that the education and training policies were irrelevant to the needs of all citizens. There were eleven semi-autonomous educational departments, which were based on ethnicity and race (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:7). This implies that the society and the education system were deeply divided along racial and tribal lines. It is also noted that education during the apartheid rule in Namibia placed a lot of emphasis on passing traditional examinations based on memorisation, so that rote learning became a stronghold in many of the classes and subjects (Harber, 1997:127).

Moreover, corporal punishment was the order of the day in many primary schools, while authoritarianism and dependency were the most common features of school organisation and management. Harber further stresses that the content and processes of apartheid education in colonial Namibia were also aimed at perpetuating inequality. Chase (1986, cited in Harber, 1997:118), posits that the teaching methods used in Namibia in the mid-1980s was still essentially authoritarian, because “children are expected to be well behaved sponges, absorbing the text-book knowledge relayed by the teachers and furthermore to reproduce these facts in examinations”. The

³ White people comprised 3%, while 97% of the total population was black people.

⁴ This stands for the Government of the Republic of Namibia's Education for All.

education philosophy did not aim to prepare those pupils either to think for themselves or to question their teachers (Harber, 1997:118). It can be assumed from the foregoing that the entire education system, which reflected both the apartheid and the colonial education systems, was heavily reliant on South African education bodies. For this reason, during the colonial and apartheid regimes, most black Namibians were deprived of the necessary skills and knowledge that would make them employable or fully participate in debates concerning their education and everyday lives.

It can be argued that this form of education failed to promote active citizenry. The reason for this is that, while white education was well resourced and financed, “Bantu Education” was only controlled but was not supported financially. In addition, learners were taught to memorise content without questioning their teachers or even thinking critically on the subjects by themselves. One can conclude that it was impossible to promote active citizens or participants who could defend or oppose certain inequalities or forms of ill-treatment through conversation or public discussions. In other words, during this period, citizens kept their views to themselves, since they were not afforded the space or right to air their views on educational issues in public because of the authoritarian government. Consequently, Namibian citizens who received their education from the German and South African colonial education systems were cultivated to be passive, unquestioning and unchallenging citizens. At the same time, the colonial education system was highly oppressive, authoritarian and autocratic, without any consideration for basic human rights and freedom for all Namibian citizens. In this case, the nation-state was under an authoritarian government and all the educational arrangements were aimed at educating citizens to be obedient and willing to adhere to the authoritarian government’s ideology. Namibia’s colonial patterns of life primarily affected the black majority, who were oppressed by the white minority group (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2004:5). It is also apparent that the colonial government was characterised by a single National Party ideology whose aim it was to separate people along racial lines (Harber,

1997:116). In the process, citizens were expected to respect the rule of law and to adhere to colonial policies, such as separate racial development. Within this discriminatory arrangement, the processes of decision making concerning governance took place without the inclusion of all citizens. Harber (1997:116) adds that blacks, for example, were not involved in debates regarding policy development and governance or the education of their children. In addition, Lilemba (2008:110) expounds that the years of colonialism and degradation robbed many members of the Mafwe⁵ and other groups in Namibia of the opportunity to respect one another as members of the human race, and hence impeded their potential to develop for the benefit of their country. He further stresses that Namibians (including the Mafwe) had to fight for their freedom and liberty in order to restore their humanity and democratic rights (Lilemba, 2008:228). It is clear that education before independence failed to create space for active participation, engagement and democratic deliberation. It can be stated that the education system before independence was authoritarian in nature and unable to nurture active citizens. Undoubtedly, the pre-colonial and apartheid authoritarian governments failed to cultivate a democratic citizenry that could participate in education issues. I now turn to an investigation of the post-colonial education system.

3.2.3 Post-colonial education system and its transformational agenda

The winds of change started to blow in Namibia on 21 March 1990, when the country gained its independence under the new SWAPO⁶ democratic government after 105 years of colonialism and apartheid rule. It was in that spirit of independence that the new government deemed it necessary to replace the apartheid education system with a democratic education system. A process of renewal of the education system was then launched as a

⁵ The Mafwe is an ethnic group that is divided into seven linguistic categories. It is found in the Caprivi region of Namibia (Lilemba, 2008:24).

⁶ The South West Africa People's Organisation.

requirement to redress the many ills brought on the country's education by the legacy of apartheid. As a result, the eleven different education authorities, formerly classified according to race, were amalgamated into a single unified democratic national Ministry of Education. Nevertheless, according to the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (1993:19), the Namibian education system after 1990 remains characterised by acute inequalities and tensions. In other words, the former numerous sources of racial discrimination and inequalities left footprints of their modes of distribution of resources based on different racial groups. At the same time, many citizens were excluded from discussion on education and therefore were passively prepared. Thus, the Namibian democratic government introduced a new education policy and goals aimed at bringing about transformation and providing a remedy for the previous inequalities and social disadvantages. More importantly, education was placed at the top of the national priorities of the new democratic administration's agenda, as it was considered fundamental for creating active participants and for the attainment of a better life (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993:21).

The newly elected democratic government of Namibia aspired to emancipate citizens from all forms of oppression. Consequently, the government drafted the Constitution – a fundamental legal document that would serve as a framework for the transformation of all Namibian people and as a building block for democratic citizenship education. According to its preamble, the Namibia Constitution guarantees all Namibian citizens democratic rights:

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of human family is indispensable for freedom, justice and peace; whereas the said rights include the right of the individual to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, regardless of race, colour, ethnic origin, sex, religion, creed or social

or economic status; whereas the said rights are most effectively maintained and protected in a democratic society, where the government is responsible to freely elected representatives of the people, operating under a sovereign constitution and a free and independent judiciary; whereas these rights have for long been denied to the people of Namibia by colonialism, racism and apartheid; whereas we, the people of Namibia, have finally emerged victorious in our struggle against colonialism, racism and apartheid; are determined to adopt a constitution which expresses for ourselves and our children our resolve to cherish and protect the gains of our long struggle; desire to promote amongst all of us the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the Namibian nation among and in association with the nations of the world; will strive to achieve national reconciliation and to foster peace, unity and a common loyalty to a single state; committed to these principles, have resolved to constitute the Republic of Namibia ad a sovereign, secular, democratic and unitary State securing to all our citizens justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. Now therefore, we the people of Namibia accept and adopt this constitution as the fundamental law of our sovereign and independent Republic (Constitution, 1990: Preamble; italics as in original).

In addition, Article 10 of the Constitution provides for equality and freedom from discrimination, while Article 20 provides that all people shall have the right to education (primary education is compulsory). It can be argued that the primary idea of this legal framework is to pave the way for deepening democracy and shaping a united and non-racial society. As a result, the newly democratic government adopted democratic values and rights such as

equality, justice, freedom, human dignity, peace and reconciliation, accountability, respect and responsibility, which, if nurtured, can lead to transformation and democracy. However, one question remains: how does the democratic government of Namibia plan to nurture its citizens and future generations to possess the above democratic values, to face adult life, and to attain its transformation agenda? After 1990, the Ministry of Education initiated numerous education policy documents grounded in the Constitution and aimed at transforming and redressing the past imbalances and inequality in the education system in Namibia. Before analysing the education system in relation to democratic citizenship education within the last two decades (1990-2010), I shall first examine educational transformation in the Namibian context.

According to Harvey and Knight (1996:10), transformation refers to “a form of change from one change to another”. Harvey and Knight (1996:11) also regard democratic education within educational transformation as the extent to which the education system transforms the conceptual ability and self-awareness of learners and enables them to become active participants in educational and societal matters. For Higgs (2002:12), educational transformation is a way of “bringing about fundamental changes” in education. This means that transformation has to do with changing education from its former appearance and turning it into a new system. Furthermore, Waghid (2002:549) describes the concept of educational transformation as “knowledge production, reflective action, seeing new problems, and imagining new ways of approaching old problems and, deconstruction and reconstruction or constant exploring beneath surfaces”.

The point is that transforming education is expected to produce change in the knowledge and skills production of teachers and learners, as well as enable teachers to educate future generations who will be able to see things in a new way and be critical thinkers. In addition, educational transformation also seeks

to stimulate in learners (citizens) a greater awareness of and appreciation for mutual respect, disagreement, justifiable criticism, critical engagement and rational deliberation (Waghid, 2004:535). This implies that there is a need to create enabling spaces in which all learners and citizens can engage in deliberations in which the participants provide reasons to justify their points, respect other people's points of view and accept criticism. Hence, in the Namibian context, educational transformation means a complete change from an old education system, which was apartheid in nature, to a new, democratic education system (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993:2). Not surprisingly, since independence the Namibian government, through the Ministry of Education, has embarked on the development of education policy documents to achieve its transformation goals. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education clearly indicates that the Namibian education system has changed from "education for the elite" to what is called "education for all" (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993:2). One can say that the slogan, *Toward education for all*, spells out transformation for Namibia, as its intention is to redress the past imbalances and unpleasant goals and policies in order to reform non-functional educational institutions, curricula, administrators and resources. At the same time, it also wants to enable policy makers, teachers, learners, parents and communities to participate and engage in education issues. Importantly, the concept of the transformation of the education system, according to the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (1993:2-10), calls for:

- Increased participation, which entails an increase in access for blacks from disadvantaged communities, and especially women, to be included in the education sector;
- Responsiveness to societal interests and needs that insists on an increasingly technologically-oriented economy by providing reasonable facilities, highly trained teachers and administrators, and the knowledge to equip a disadvantaged society; and
- Cooperation and partnerships in governance.

Soon after independence, the Namibian democratic government, through the Ministry of Education, set extraordinary goals and made endeavours to enhance stakeholders and the community, especially the less privileged group, to participate in education and to fulfil the aspirations of its people. Suffice it to say that one of the primary objectives of the government is democratic participation. Next, I shall proceed to analyse some of the major education policy documents in relation to democratic education.

3.3 Analysis of the major policies in relation to democratic citizenship education

This section focuses on an analysis of some of the major education policies in the Namibian education system, based on an understanding of the three historical periods discussed in the previous section. I consider it important to determine whether education in Namibia endeavours to equip its citizens to be democratic. In order to ascertain if this is indeed the case, I shall now analyse the major education policy documents in more detail, with reference to the constitutive meanings of democratic citizenship education itemised in Chapter 2 (deliberation, inclusion, equality, reasonableness, publicity, hospitality, compassion, belligerence and Africanist humanness - *ubuntu*), which could possibly assist the country in engendering democracy. This framework will enable me to answer the main question of this research, namely whether or not Namibia enacts a defensible democratic citizenship education through its education policy documents.

Before taking on the task of policy analysis, I shall first investigate what the concept, education policy, entails. Waghid (2003:15) suggests that it is possible to understand the concept of education by properly relating the word “education” to the use of concepts such as “teaching” and “learning”. In this

sense, one may gain a better understanding of policy making in education. According to Trowler (1998:48), education policy could be described as “a specification of principles and actions, related to educational issues, which are followed or which should be followed and which are designed to bring about desired goals”. Trowler (1998:49) further elucidates that policy is a piece of paper, a statement of intentions or of practice as policy-makers perceive it or as they would like it to be. He affirms that it is better for policy to be referred to as a process, something dynamic, rather than something static. This dynamism comes from a number of sources:

- There is usually conflict among those who make policy, as well as among those who put it into practice, on what constitute the important issues or problems in policy making and the desired goals;
- Interpreting policy is an active process; policy statements are almost always subject to multiple interpretations, depending on the standpoints of the people doing the interpretative ‘work’;
- The practice of policy on the ground is extremely complex, both that being ‘described’ by policy and that intended to put policy into effect. Simple policy descriptions of practice do not capture its multiplicity and complexity, and the implementation of policy in practice usually means that the outcomes differ from policy-makers’ intentions (which are, anyway, multiple and often contradictory).

Furthermore, Ball (in Trowler, 1998:49) explains that “[p]olicy is both text and action, words and deeds; it is what is enacted as well as what is intended. Policies are always incomplete insofar as they relate to or map on to the ‘wild profusion’ of local practice”. Similarly, McLaughlin (2000:442) describes education policy as “a detailed prescription for action aimed at the preservation or alteration of educational institutions or practices”. In addition, Ham and Hill (in McLaughlin, 2000:448-449) draw a distinction between

“analysis for policy” and “analysis of policy”. “Analysis for policy” contributes to the formulation of policy and takes two forms: “policy advocacy” (which involves the making of specific policy commendations) and “information for policy” (which provides policy makers with “information and data” relevant to policy formulation or revision). Philosophers can contribute to both; although in their case, the “information for policy” will take the form of offering conceptual clarification. “Analysis of policy”, according to Ham and Hill (in McLaughlin, 2000:448-449) draw; can also take two forms, “analysis of policy determination and effects” (which examines the processes and outcomes of policy) and “analysis of policy content” (which examines the values, assumptions and social theories underpinning the policy process). It is with this understanding that I shall focus on the “analysis of policy” rather than on the “analysis for policy”. Before the analysis of education policy documents, I shall provide an overview of the conditions that shape the development of each policy. In pursuit of the government’s major transformational goals and democratic education as enshrined in the Namibian Constitution, the Ministry of Education launched and adopted a number of different policies, which include *Toward Education for All*, the Strategic Plan 2001-2006, Education Act 16 of 2001, and the Education Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP). These education policy documents have striven towards the realisation of the transformation goals of the Namibian government (one of the broad goals is democratic participation) and democratic education in Namibia in the last two decades.

3.3.1 Toward Education for All

The first policy document, *Toward Education for All*, was formulated and adopted in 1993. This policy document evolved three years after independence and espouses a vision for transformation (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993:1). The policy document advocates that the former South African education system, which offered education to the elite, be transformed to an education system that includes all Namibian children

(Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993:3). *Toward Education for All* centred on four key goals, namely access, equity, quality and democracy. These goals were aimed at creating equal access to quality education and resources, and the main idea of the policy is the provision of accessible education, especially for all children who were previously denied an opportunity to acquire education. The *Toward Education for All* policy also serves as a guiding document for all future policies in education. According to Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (1993:19-23), the *Toward Education for All* policy is a product of participation by citizens through workshops and individual consultations. During the workshops, the participants were comprised of personnel from the Ministry of Education at national and regional levels, from other government departments, university faculties and staff, teachers' unions, students' organisations, political parties, private enterprises, non-governmental organisations, foreign agencies, and other stakeholders in education. Those who spearheaded the processes tried to involve other stakeholders to solicit ideas in order to achieve the goal of *Toward Education for All* (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993:23). Similarly, for *Toward Education for All* to achieve these goals, it lays out the strategic objectives fundamental to the realisation of the aforementioned goal of educational transformation:

- To provide universal basic education to all, irrespective of race, gender, age, creed, class or disability, and to increase the number of schools and classrooms; to be sure that there are sufficient places for all Namibian children, and to be sure that those schools are adequately staffed;
- To promote equity and access, and to redress past inequalities through ensuring that some children are not assigned to smaller classes, or receive more and better resources because of their race or the region they come from;
- To improve the quality of the education system; to ensure that teachers are well prepared for the major responsibility they carry, and to help them

develop the expertise and skills that will enable them to stimulate learning and provide learners with an environment that is conducive to learning;

- To develop democratic education, learners should study how democratic societies operate and learn about the obligations and rights of citizens. The policy insists that the community at large should share responsibility for enabling learners to be successful (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993:32-41).

The point is that the *Toward Education for All* policy affirms that primary education, in which children only master basic reading, writing and numbers but do not learn about citizenship in a democratic society or respect for the culture and values of others, is not high-quality education (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993:39). The understanding is that each child, irrespective of his or her ethnicity, class, status, ability or difference in any other way, is eligible to and has a right to quality education in any part of Namibia. Equitable access to quality education is essential, but the Ministry of Education has realised that it cannot exclusively guarantee the cultivation of educated and well-informed citizens. Thus, there is a need for democratic education (participation) by all participants, including teachers, learners, parents and all stakeholders, in order to exercise their democratic rights stipulated in the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia. In addition, the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (1993:41-42) points out that:

Democracy must therefore not be simply a set of lessons in our schools but rather a central purpose of our education at all levels ... To teach about democracy, our teachers – and our education system as a whole – must practice democracy ... teachers must be active creators and managers of the learning environment and not its masters or caretakers.

The idea is that, in a democratic school, learners and teachers, and parents, are expected to practise democracy. Learners must be taught and understand that democracy involves more than voting. An underlying assumption of the policy of *Toward Education for All* is that democratic participation is vital to engender active, educated and well-informed citizens. This policy document also claims that the aims of democratic education are to guarantee that all Namibian children have access to quality education, especially the marginalised and disadvantaged and those with disabilities, but not much is said about the inclusion of the public and particularly of marginalised groups (such as women and children, and people with disabilities) in debates.

Moreover, the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (1993:32) stresses that the democratic government's major objective is the establishment of a single, unitary and coordinated education system, which should fulfil the learning needs of the citizens and the reconstruction and development needs of the Namibian society and the country's economy. One can say that educational transformation policy development in Namibia was initiated by the need for a major change that would remedy the apartheid legacy in education, which was characterised by inequality, racism, segregation and other imbalances. It is in this spirit that the democratic government deemed it essential to create a democratic education system in which all citizens would have access to quality education and equal treatment, regardless of race, creed, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic group and so forth.

Similarly, to encourage and facilitate citizen participation in education policy formulation and programme development, and in monitoring and supervising education, communities must be fully involved in the affairs of their schools through school boards or school committees (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993:180). It can be recognised that *Toward Education for All* encourages democratic participation in education in three forms:

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- Stakeholders' consultation and participation in policy development;
 - Parents' involvement in school governance and management through the school board and;
 - Learners' participation in pedagogical activities through a learner-centred approach to education.

One can say that this policy creates a platform at the school level to involve stakeholders, such as parents, learners (secondary level), teachers and principals, to serve as members of the school board to make decisions on governance and the education of the Namibian child. These stakeholders are entrusted to participate actively and contribute to discussions on education, which were introduced three years after independence for a future democratic nation-state. Similarly, the *Toward Education for All* policy accentuates that basic education in particular strives to educate learners to be active participants and knowledgeable citizens. Since the *Toward Education for All* policy pays more attention to consultation and stakeholders' participation in workshops, one wonders whether this democratic process will promote a defensible democratic education in the Namibian education system. It can be said that the policy documents attribute to participation as an ideal process of democracy.

From the onset it is important to acknowledge the Ministry's efforts to promote democratic education by means of citizens' participation in educational discussions. Even though the *Toward Education for All* policy made attempts to achieve democratic participation in education, it seems that there is a lack of full and robust inclusion of all participants in education debates. The point is that the policy arrangement of participation in education discussions solely by stakeholders' representation without necessarily allowing ordinary people to

take part and engage one another in conversation may hamper effective democratic education. Besides that, the policy also does not make a specific commitment to an understanding of the deliberative democracy framework, which I have described in Chapter 2. This means that the policy does not feature deliberation in which all citizens, as well as their representatives, deliberate equally on and give justifiable reasons for an agreed outcome. I am saying that the policy does not pronounce how all citizens are included in the public education debate and I do not actually foresee how the policy-making process completely involves all people in discussion, especially the marginalised groups at the grassroots level. However, only government representatives were consulted and participated in the formation of education policy. It is therefore my contention that the idea of stakeholders representatives' participation in education discussions without including the masses shows that the policy proposition does not create an environment that is conducive for all citizens (specifically those affected by such policies) to air their views and contribute to policy formation.

Although *Toward Education for All* advocates democratic education through participation, in which citizens (learners), who are the future generations, become active and participative citizens, the question is how accessible the public deliberations are to all learners (citizens)? It should be noted that participation is not comparable to the deliberation that will enable all citizens, whether black or white, rich or poor, marginalised or elite, privileged or underprivileged, to engage one another in resolving a specific issue of interest to the public. To clarify the distinction between participation and deliberation in democratic education discourse, I refer first to the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, which defines participation as “the act of taking part in an activity or event”. Similarly, Dew (in Standish 2005:351, 372) describes participation in democracy as that which requires that we simply do not hand over our problems to experts; for there is at least one respect in which any ordinary individual has unique expertise. It is further stated that without participation of the public in the formation of a policy, it would not reflect the common needs

and interests of the society because those needs and interests are known only to the public.

It is clear that participation with others in community is not something that presents itself as an optional extra, but it is something that may add a new dimension to one's life or bring advantages. I am not against the idea of participation in democratic education, but Cavell (in Standish, 2005:379) argues that not to participate, not to give one's voice to others, is to stifle oneself, because the self can only be realised in conversation with others. One can say that it is commendable that the *Toward Education for All* policy encourages people's participation in educational discourse; however, the sole inclusion of stakeholder representatives without the full inclusion of all citizens in decision making regarding policy formation renders that participation to be ineffective and leads to a thin democratic education. The point I am making is that, despite representative participation in policy-making and debates of common concern, it is inappropriate to exclude the voices of all those affected by such policy. As I have argued earlier, it is clear that participation does not necessarily hearten or compel all citizens and their representatives to engage with one another in public discussions, but rather seeks the perspectives of only some groups and disregards the views of all affected people.

Regarding deliberation in democratic education, all citizens, irrespective of their differences or diversity, will be included and will engage in conversation through reasons given based on justifiable arguments. Gutmann and Thompson (2004:7) rightly note that deliberation calls on free and equal citizens to justify each decision in a process of give and take, whereby one person provides reasons that are mutually acceptable and generally accessible to others in order to reach conclusions that are binding in the present, but open enough for them to be challenged in the future. Drawing on the seminal ideas of Benhabib (1996:68) concerning deliberative democracy, which she refers to as discursive democracy, calls for openness of the agenda

for public debate and rational decisions on what is considered to be in the common interest of all based on collective deliberation as free and equal individuals. If this is the idea, one can concede that deliberative democracy rests on the core notion that all citizens deliberate on public problems and find solutions through reason giving. Based on this understanding, it seems to me, therefore, that the framework of the *Toward Education for All* policy document lacks inclusion, because the voices of all citizens and especially those of the less privileged are excluded in the policy formation and decision-making processes.

Furthermore, the *Toward Education for All* policy does not specify procedures by which the disadvantaged groups will be included fully. In other words, the modus operandi or procedures for policy formation and development seem to include few people (mostly people from the Ministry, role players, and representatives), and gives less space to the masses to contribute to education discussions. Thus, I am saying that, apart from representatives' consultation and participation, the policy provides no extra mechanisms to afford the rest of the people (especially the marginalised groups) the opportunities to elicit and educe different ideas on how such a policy can address the needs of the public. Indeed, participation takes place, but it is limited to the stakeholder representatives and, therefore, it spells a lack of inclusion, and this exclusion of all affected citizens' views may possibly restrain the Ministry's envisaged transformation goals and democratic education. This brings me to a discussion of the Ministry of Education's Strategic Plan.

3.3.2 The MBESC Strategic Plan 2001-2006

The Strategic Plan is one of the major policy innovations introduced into the Namibian education system at the beginning of the 21st century. In 2001, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (MBESC) drew up a Strategic

Plan to address the educational problems and challenges, identified by the Presidential Commission in 1999, which impeded the attainment of the set goals (access, equality, quality and democracy). This Strategic Plan covered the period 2001-2006 and was formulated to ensure that the stated objectives were achieved. Particularly, the Minister of Basic Education, Sport and Culture at that time, the Honourable John Mutorwa, stated that the Strategic Plan would maintain the broad goals of the 1993 education brief, *Toward Education for All*, such as access, equity, equality and democracy, because they were central to transformation and democratic education. Apart from that, the Plan intended to address two major challenges, namely equitable allocation of resources and mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2001: Foreword). The Strategic Plan 2001-2006 was shaped by the outcomes and recommendations of the 1999 Presidential Commission's report on education, culture and training, which pointed out that, amid all the broad goals, only 'access' was largely attained. The major challenge highlighted by the Presidential Commission, which had to be dealt with urgently, was the inequitable allocation of the available resources. Furthermore, the Minister pointed out that, for this plan to thrive, it would depend very much on the dedicated support of the ministerial staff, communities, and the co-operating partners (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2001: Foreword).

In addition, the Strategic Plan 2001-2006 exhibited its advocacy for democratic education, as it indicated that noticeable progress was being made that enabled a large majority of young Namibian citizens to enter the school system and to complete their basic education. The Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture (2001:1), however, stated that, after ten years of independence, the education system continued to suffer from the heritage of apartheid. Among the fundamental issues were the inability to achieve the demand of skilled human capital or resources, and to reduce the high rates of unemployment and underemployment. According to the Ministry's Strategic Plan, there was an urgent need to respond to the high

shortage of skilled, experienced and educated workers at all levels of employment (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:1). It is noted that since the development of learners, who are Namibia's future generations, depends on an effective and adequately staffed education system, the shortage of skilled teachers became an impediment, which hampered the attainment of the government's broad goals and development agenda (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:1).

However, the Plan was silent on how all citizens; particularly the affected groups – those that not yet have access education, not reached by resources and those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS – would be included in policy debates in order to come up with strategies to address such challenges. The Ministry of Education's Strategic Plan indicates that, since education is thought to be a weapon in the fight against poverty, a lack of equity in the distribution of wealth increases the challenges facing the provision of basic education in particular (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:2). In order to address the previously mentioned challenges and achieve the broad goal, as well as government's national goals (i.e. to revive and sustain economic growth, create employment, reduce inequality in income distribution, and reduce poverty), the Ministry of Education's Strategic Plan endeavoured to engage in various activities to attain these goals. The Ministry's broad goals are also emphasised and lengthened in the various education plans, such as NDP⁷1 to NDP2 which derived from Namibia Vision 2030. The vision of each plan targets a specific idea and addresses the goals

⁷ NDP 1 is an abbreviation for National Development Plan One, a plan covering the period between 1995 and 2000. NDP 1 aimed at "providing family and community early childhood initiatives, provide for universal primary education, to be extended where possible to junior secondary education as well as the materials and social environment that is conducive to learning and committed learners, teachers and communities" Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:9)

⁷ NDP 2 refers to National Development Plan Two, which focused on the period between 2001 and 2006 and delineated the vision of the government as "sustainable and equitable improvements in the quality of life of all people in Namibia which provides reviving and sustaining economic growth, creating employment, reducing inequalities in income distribution, reducing poverty and promoting human rights" (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:10).

of the Ministry of Education, which are well informed by and cemented in the Strategic Plan, which spans the targeted period in order to achieve the goals. The Strategic Plan emerged through extensive consultations, analyses and, specifically, the recommendations presented by the 1999 Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2001:2). The Plan did not mention how the disadvantaged and less privileged would have access to public discussions and how they would be treated equally in terms of their educational needs. This oversight of the inclusion of the marginalised voices in dialogue encumbers the effective achievement of democratic education. The point is that the initial major goals (especially democratic participation) served as a fundamental goal for the transformation and nurturing of democratic citizenship education in Namibia.

Even though the Strategic Plan resulted from widespread consultation and participation by the public with the aim of addressing the challenges that hindered the country's quest for democratic participation and the attainment of its major goals in the last ten years. It can be said that the Plan's focal point is consultation with and the participation of stakeholders in policy formation. However, nothing is mentioned about the involvement of the less privileged masses as well as the people at grassroots level, especially those who have not been treated equally or benefited from transformation.

Despite the fact that the Minister of Basic Education clearly enunciated that, for the Plan to succeed, it required immense support from its staff members, communities and cooperating partners (Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2001: foreword), the policy is silent on the full inclusion of ordinary citizens, besides those mentioned above. This shows a lack of inclusion in policy formation, which should cover the interests of all the people, be agreed upon, result from engagement, and offer reasons for the arguments. The Plan also does not mention how the marginalised (women, children and disabled groups) will be involved in policy formation. Suffice it to say that this will

restrain proper, equal and fair participation in a democratic society. Thus, this educational policy framework of democratic citizenship education is not also akin to constitutive meanings of democratic education discussed in Chapter 2. In my view, the Strategic Plan shows a thin conception of democratic education and lacks full inclusion, since ordinary people do not participate in debates on education in order to share their dissatisfaction and ideas on better ways to eliminate the said challenges. The point I am making is that it may be impossible to make legitimate decisions and policies that would have a positive effect on all Namibian citizens' interests or needs without full inclusion, which would enable each person's voice to be heard and guarantee the right to question, comment and agree with one another toward an agreed outcome. One can conclude that this Plan lacks the inclusion of all citizens in debates concerning its formation and development. I now turn to an analysis of the policy Education Act 16 of 2001.

3.3.3 Education Act 16 of 2001

Another major policy initiative that was launched at the beginning of the 21st century was the Education Act No. 16, promulgated in December 2001. This fundamental national education policy document encapsulates Namibia's democratic education policy and makes participation a lawful democratic practice by the citizens. The Act's primary aim is:

[T]o provide for the provision of accessible, equitable, qualitative and democratic national education service; to provide for the establishment of the National Advisory Council on Education; National Examination Assessment and Certification Board, Regional Education Forums, School Boards, Education Development Fund; to provide for the establishment of schools and hostels; to provide for the establishment of the Teaching Service and the

Teaching Service Committee; and to provide for incidental matters (Act 16, 2001:2).

The above aim shows that the Ministry of Education promulgated the Education Act (Act 16 of 2001) to take democratic participation and school governance a step further by including national advisory councils and formalising the role of school boards and regional education forums. By implication, Education Act 16 reinforces and underlies participation as an indispensable democratic process that would advance democratic citizenship education in Namibia. More importantly, the idea of democratic participation is encouraged through the establishment of educational forums and school boards, in which various stakeholders and representatives are required to participate in dialogue concerning education (Act no. 16, 2001:9). It is apparent that the Act advocates the process of consultation and participation in the belief that education is a participatory and partnership venture. In this process, if any change in policy is proposed, the stakeholders are engaged in the policy debates. Those referred to as stakeholders in education are representative bodies, which consist of parents, teachers' unions, students' unions, the private sector, and political and non-governmental organisations (Act 16, 2001:8). It is worth noting that the Act made immense attempts to involve the society in policy making, although the aforementioned list indicates that there was no provision for including the ordinary people in debates on policies. One can raise the concern, at this point, that the Act confines participation to the stakeholders, without full inclusion of the masses in a way that would enable them to contribute to policy discussion. The Act approaches the process of participation in two ways: The first approach involves the stakeholders' involvement in decision making and participation in policy development through educational forums. In this process, the Honourable Minister established the Regional Education Forum in a region from the local authority areas in the region. The functions of the forum are:

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- to advise the Minister, the regional council and the local authority councils in that region on matters concerning education;
 - to advise school boards regarding educational matters and the functions of the school boards under this Act; and
 - to initiate and facilitate educational development in the region.

The Regional Educational Forum consists of the regional director, who is assigned to the region as a member and has no right to vote, and twenty members appointed by the Minister on the grounds of their special knowledge, skills and expertise in education matters (Act 16, 2001:9). This means that the forum will also have three representatives from each of the groups in the region, namely the regional councils and local authority councils, school boards, recognised associations or unions of teachers, employees and employers, and bodies of learners. It will also have two representatives from the private schools, churches, council of traditional leaders and the National Organisation for Persons with Disabilities respectively (Act 16, 2001:9-10). At the same time, the Act states that the members of the forum are required to elect two of the members as chairperson and vice-chairperson respectively, and that they may not be staff members of the Ministry. The members will hold office for three years and are eligible for re-appointment. Hence, the Act permits the forum to determine its own rules and procedures to govern meetings, as long as the forum will submit annual reports to the Advisory Council (Act 16, 2001:10). The above reveals that democratic participation is designed just for some people, especially people who are seen to have special knowledge, skills and expertise in education. The masses or ordinary people are not given an opportunity to contribute and give their views on how these problems can best be addressed by the policy. In my view, such policies lack inclusion, since if they are aimed at addressing problems and challenges impeding the Ministry of Education and the country's vision for transformation and democratisation, then all citizens affected by the policy need to be fully included in policy discussions and development.

The second approach is at the school level, where parents, learners and other stakeholders are involved in school governance and management by means of the establishment of school boards for state schools. The Act further indicates that, for every state school there must be a school board to administer the affairs and promote the development of the school and its learners. The Minister, authorised by the Parliament, established this programme with the aim of promoting accountability, active participation, effective exercise of powers, and performance of functions on the part of the school board's members. It is clear that the school board plays a very important role in ensuring that schools are well governed and managed. The Act states that the school board should comprise of only 13 voting members, that is; school parents who are not employed at the school, and are not teachers at the school or the principal of the school. In the case of a secondary school, two learners from the school, nominated by the Learners' Representative Council (LRC), must be included. However, the school parents must constitute the majority of members of a school board (Act. 16, 2001:15-16). The Education Act further specifies that members of the school board must be elected by secret ballot and be approved by the Ministry, by a show of hands. The school board has to select the office bearers from amongst its members, i.e. the chairperson, secretary and treasurer; the chairperson must be a parent. A member of the school board holds office for a term of three years and is eligible for re-election (Act 16, 2001:17).

Moreover, the school board of a school that is not a special school, but that offers special education, must co-opt at least one person with expertise in special education. The school should also establish a committee to advise the school board on the provision of special education. At the same time, the Act stipulates that the school board must co-opt one or more representatives of a sponsoring body for the school, representatives of organisations of parents of learners with special education needs, representatives of persons with disabilities, and a person with disability (Act 16, 2001:17). In particular, any

meeting of the school board would only take place when the majority of the voting members form a quorum. Further, decisions based on the majority of the members present at the meeting of the school board constitute a decision of the school board, and in the event of any equality of votes, the presiding member is entitled to a casting vote in addition to a deliberative vote (Act 16, 2001:18). One can infer that the decision making in school board meetings is done based on majority rule rather than all members engaging each other in debate and defending their ideas with reasonable arguments toward an agreed outcome. It can be seen clearly that people with disabilities are mainly included in the school boards of special schools and those that offer special education. This implies that people with disabilities are unlikely to be included in school boards of those schools without special needs. As a result, this expresses a lack of inclusion of the marginalised groups and other citizens, regardless of their presumed abilities in education dialogue.

Furthermore, Act 16 of 2001 stresses that the promotion of democratic participation is vital through various forums where citizens can air their views freely, unlike in the colonial period when their voices were silenced. Nevertheless, this policy document is quiet about people deliberating and engaging with one another on issues of common concern to attain decision making. In my view, due to the lack of inclusion, this process is not sufficient to promote sound democratic education. Furthermore, the policy captures inclusion as advanced through the involvement/participation of parents in governing bodies (school boards), while the composition of these committees comprises learners, parents, teachers, principals and the like. It is remarkable that the chairperson of the committee has to be a parent, and one has to ascertain that all members contribute to discussions on the day-to-day running of the school. This arrangement may also not be sufficient to enact sound democratic participation by all citizens in public debate and decision making. The Education Act spells out that decision making in these forums is for the benefit of the public. However, nothing is said about how the public will be afforded free and equal space to challenge the outcome of the forums. This

necessitates the full inclusion and high involvement of the public, even if they already have representatives in the committees.

The Act states clearly that decision making by school boards and in other forums is based on the majority rule or decision, rather than reasonable argument. As argued earlier, the Act's proposition of majority rule deviates from the idea of democratic education as delineated in the previous chapter. In addition, the above indication shows that, without the full inclusion of all the people in discussions that would enable them make meaningful contributions to legitimate decision making supported by justifiable reasons, this policy will not address the needs of all the people. The point is that since only a number of citizens are authorised to serve in decision-making bodies and speak on behalf of the masses, a lack of inclusion in debates is apparent.

Although this pivotal initiative to legalise democratic participation by stakeholders, parents and learners is laudable, valuable information is likely to be excluded in decision making with the exclusion of the views of ordinary people and marginalised groups from the debate, which affects them. The Act has also pointed out that only learners at the secondary level will be included in school governance. However, the exclusion of some learners from school boards, especially primary school boards, potentially mutes some voices in school governance. The presence of only few (representative) parents, teachers and learners in decision making can inhibit vigorous democratic participation, thus signifying a lack of inclusion of all voices and the perspectives of all citizens in educational matters. When underprivileged people are not given the chance and the right to be heard in debates on policy development, then the policy process does not adhere to the democratic rights enshrined in the Constitution, that is, each person has a right to be heard.

For example, many of the members of the Himba and San communities⁸ in Namibia do not yet have access to education (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:18). In spite of the fact that they have representatives, the ordinary citizens and the disadvantaged, who are denied their democratic right to education, need to be given special space to participate in policy development and debate on education in order to express their dismay and agitate for their needs to be considered in the policy. When such a discussion concerning an education policy does not offer the less privileged group ample space to air their views, then the Act certainly lacks inclusion and this may limit the Ministry's quest for democratisation. What follows is the exposition of the ETSIP policy.

3.3.4 Education Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP)

In February 2005, the Namibian Government, through the Ministry of Education, got under way with a vibrant and strategic plan for the education and training sector, the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (Plan) (ETSIP), which was adopted in 2007. The program is a 15-year plan aimed at:

- the equitable expansion of access to post-basic education and training with a view to increasing the supply of skills;
- the improvement of equity in the distribution of education resources, inputs and learning outcomes; and
- more efficient mobilisation and use of the resources required to finance the sector and strengthened capacity to implement proposed reforms and respond to the adverse effect of HIV/AIDS.

• ⁸ The Himba and the San people are some of the minority ethnic groups in Namibia.

The ETSIP goals were derived and evolved from the findings of the 2005 World Bank study, 'Namibia Human Capital and Knowledge Development for Economic Growth and Equity'. The study concludes that, "...Namibia's education and training system still fails to supply the middle-to high-level skilled labour required to meet current labour market demands and to facilitate the national growth strategy" Ministry of Basic Education and Culture,(2007). The country's growth strategy for Vision 2030, which is a government road map for development, is grounded in the country's capacity to apply knowledge and technology in order to create a value chain for the country's natural resources. The ETSIP is geared towards the achievement of the goal of Vision 2030, which set its target for Namibia as a nation to join the high income countries and afford all its citizens a quality of life that is comparable to that of the developed world (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 2007:1). This means that ETSIP signifies the education and training sector's response to the call of Vision 2030. Furthermore, the ETSIP intends to contribute to the attainment of equitable social development (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 2007:2). For the ETSIP to become a reality, various stakeholders were involved in a wide range of discussions, which took place five years before its enactment. The discussion on the policy document began in February 2005 and lasted until 2007, when President Hifikepunye Pohamba adopted the programme. The ETSIP campaigns against the realisation of a weak education and training system that cannot facilitate the attainment of complex and ambitious development goals. This fifteen-year strategic plan is categorised into three five-year cycles, with the first cycle continuing from 2006/7 to 2010/11, which will then coincide with the Third National Development Plan (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 2007:2).

In addition, the policy claims to cover all spheres of education, from early childhood and pre-primary education through general education, vocational education and training, tertiary education and training, knowledge production, innovation and information, as well as adult and lifelong learning. The ETSIP affirms democracy participation by means of stakeholders' engagement in

discussions of policy development, whereby participants from different faculties were requested to contribute to the democratic process. The democratic process is aimed at ensuring that the policy document affords comparable status to all types of knowledge systems and that it corresponds to the national strategy of moving towards a knowledge-based economy. Through participation and national consultative workshops, the ETSIP endeavours to broaden the range of stakeholders' inputs prior to the finalisation of the draft and its submission to the Minister of Education and to the Cabinet (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 2007:53).

Despite the fact that the ETSIP has created a space for participation through workshops and consultation, it has not created sufficient space for all citizens to engage with one another and share their ideas on the policy. This policy does not mention anywhere how all citizens, especially the less privileged and ordinary people, were involved in the policy development and debate, but rather reveals that only a few people were involved on the basis of their expertise and through their representatives, including the larger public to solicit information relevant to the development of the policy. Since the ETSIP claims to cover all spheres of educational concern and aims to improve the lives of the people, it is supposed to be deliberated on well by all citizens. Unfortunately, nothing is said about the inclusion of marginalised groups or communities (such as people living in extreme poverty, people living with incurable diseases like HIV and AIDS, or abused and disabled people) in public debates. It can be said that the ETSIP policy may not necessarily attain its set goals and that of transformation without fully including all people (especially the less privileged and those were previously excluded from educational discussions during the apartheid period) to share their views and offer various strategies on the identified challenges.

Consequently, the consultation and participation claimed by the ETSIP would seem to slow down a genuine democratic education, since it excludes the

voices of the masses (especially the marginalised) in public discourse and shuns the Namibian target to join the high-income countries and afford all its citizens a quality of life that is comparable to that of the developed world. The fact that some people were involved in policy formation through workshops does not bring the process any closer to the deliberative democratic education sketched in the foregoing chapter. I contend that, despite the encouragement of stakeholders' consultation and participation in policy formation and decision making, this policy falls short and cannot pass the test of a defensible democratic education due to its lack of inclusion. The policy documents highlighted above are not without dilemmas, and I now turn to a synopsis of the dilemmas identified in all the major policy documents.

3.4 A synopsis of the dilemmas and trends in the education policy framework

An analysis of some of the major education policy documents discussed above indicates that, within two decades (1990-2010), the Namibian democratic government, through its Ministry of Education, made efforts to promote democratic education. It is noteworthy that all these policy documents that evolved soon after independence and during the two decades were a product of stakeholders' participation and consultation through their representatives. Notably, all the propositions on democratic education contained in the policy documents accentuate the citizens' democratic participation through three approaches: stakeholders' participation in policy development, parents' involvement in school governance and learners' participation in pedagogical activities (teaching and learning). However, due to lack of inclusion of all citizens in educational discourses⁹ on policy formation, school governance, and teaching and learning, in which most of the valuable

⁹ A continuous stretch of language containing more than one sentence: conversations, narratives, arguments or speeches (Blackburn, 2008:102).

ideas or voices were excluded in conversation especially of marginalised¹⁰ groups (such as women, children, disabled, elders and poor) and those people at the grassroots level. This impedes an authentic democratic education, which was anticipated by the Namibian democratic government. I shall now proceed to enumerate the problem of inclusion in the policy documents analysed above.

(i) Stakeholders' participation in policy development

A study of all the above major policy documents indicates that they were all the result of far-reaching consultations and stakeholder participation in workshops concerning policy development. Nonetheless, one can say that only a few Namibians who served as representatives participated or consulted in the workshops; this shows a lack of inclusion of all citizens' voices in discussion and decision making. The point is that the voices of most of the citizens, particularly those at the grassroots level, such as the marginalised and less privileged, were not heard effectively in order for their needs to be addressed through dialogue. The lack of inclusion of stakeholders and people at grassroots level is also confirmed and evident in the study conducted in Namibia by Lukubwe (2006:102), who argues that:

Teachers and principals are not accorded the opportunity to contribute to policies that affect them although teachers are represented in policy formulation by teachers' trade unions. It may be true of such representation. On the contrary, my observations and deductions from my 2006 Master of Education research findings are that teachers' trade unions lack the capacity and the expertise to meaningfully influence the MoE

¹⁰ To make somebody feel as if they are not important and cannot influence decisions or events; to put somebody in a position in which they have no power (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 901).

policy process. In addition to the lack of capacity and expertise, there is a lack of consultation between the union base and leadership on policy matters. Furthermore, the fact that all teachers' trade unions are political party wings, raises reservations and questions as to whether these unions were formed to serve educators or were formed to be ladders to political office elevations. Thus, policy development; the culture of open debate over education policies is noticeably absent, the principle and value of democratic participation is being trodden (see also Lukubwe, 2009:1).

The above quotation spells out the lack of inclusion and poor participation of all citizens in educational debates, especially in policy formation. It is evident that not all teachers or educators were fully included in policy formation debates, but rather were included through their representatives, for instance teachers' trade unions. These policy debates have excluded the voices of the masses and cannot effectively address public needs. In my view, it is difficult to conclude that sound democratic education has been attained when only a few citizens' voices were heard and could advise the country on how to address impediments that hinder the realisation of the goals. It can be said that public discussions and debates need to fully take account of all people's ideas, treat each participant as equal in the debate, and make decisions based on reasonable arguments. This means that there is a need for extra mechanisms to afford all citizens, even those who are not representatives, an opportunity to contribute to policy development and air their views – particularly the marginalised groups, as well as those who are entrusted with the implementation of such important policies.

(ii) Participation in school governance and management

Concerning school governance and management, the Ministry of Education also claims to include the participation of all parents, teachers, and learners in school governance to enable them make a meaningful contribution to decision making and the management of schools. However, the lack of robust and full inclusion of all the affected people in dialogues about education and the proper ways to govern and manage their schools effectively will slow down the democratic education for which the Namibian government is trying to strive. A process whereby the parents' representatives participate in school boards is likely to result in the suppression of the voices of the marginalised (especially women and children) by the affluent and persuasive. An example is that some African cultural practices, especially in the rural areas of Namibia (e.g. Ovambo, where I grew up), only afford men the power and authority to talk and make decisions; women and children are expected to remain silent in discussions. Therefore, people coming from such backgrounds may find it difficult to articulate as freely and equally as the men. One can argue that the lack of widespread inclusion in school governance and educational debates will curtail democratic education and the idea of democracy. Although parents and learners serve as members in school boards, their voices are not considered decisive in the discussions and decision making. I maintain that all the above policy documents are silent on how to encourage citizens (parents) to participate in school board meetings confidently, especially those who are relegated to inferior positions (mostly women) and are not afforded the opportunity to express their views freely so that they are fully included in debates.

Besides that, the policy documents make no reference to how the African cultural influences on females that are still deprived of the opportunity to speak freely and equally with their male counterparts will be accommodated

so that they can contribute meaningfully to public debates on education. It has been noted that some African cultural conceptions consider women and children inferior in terms of personhood, dignity and status. Based on this assumption, Assie-Lumumba asserts that women's poor access to education limits their participation in decision-making processes and planning concerning issues affecting their day-to-day lives. This restriction does not only miss the benefit of women's insights, but excludes and overlooks their concerns, viewpoints and input, which constitutes an infringement of their rights to exercise their capabilities (Assie-Lumumba, 2007:473). Lilemba (2008:52-54) asserts that people in Namibia, for instance the Mafwe (in particular the women), require a mediator in order to speak to the chief. With this in mind, one should ask the following question: how can women speak freely in school board meetings and classrooms if they are prohibited from speaking without intermediaries in meetings with traditional leaders or chiefs in the rural areas? Thus, this historical cultural background necessarily demands a substantive approach to the rights of women and children. The rights of these groups should be accorded equal space and formal recognition, just as those of any other group. Without consideration of these historical and cultural factors, their upbringing and the way this background affects the execution of such rights, democratic education may not be realised.

Niitembu (2006), in her research in Namibia rural schools reveals that lack of inclusion and poor participation by parents in schools board can be marked. Niitembu (2006:98) argues that there is a lack of joint understanding and shared vision between educators and parents in the school board. She also asserts that this problem underlines other indicative problems, such as a lack of accountability in the matter of school finances, differences in understanding the roles of school board members, and a lack of motivation of parents by the school management. The study further highlights some of the challenges that hinder the effective involvement of parents in rural school governance, such as poor educational background of the parents, poor knowledge of the English

language and poor understanding of educational issues (Niitembu, 2006:98). Since school boards consist of teachers and principals who are educated, and many of the parents are illiterate, there is a high chance for the knowledgeable and experienced to influence, if not manipulate, the outcome of the discussions due to their knowledge. This idea is also put forward by Van Wyk (2004:51), who argues that “[p]arent governors bring to their governance tasks power and status from other contexts, while educators and principals rely heavily on the power and status offered by their position in schools”.

By the same token, Adams and Waghid (2005:30) concur that the situation is even worse in rural schools, where “parents are illiterate and lack participation” and leave the door open for principals to abuse their power and authority and financially manipulate SGBs¹¹. One can concede that poor participation or lack of inclusion is a critical dilemma in school governance and democratic education. Niitembu (2006) further indicates that, despite the fact that parents are provided with some training, it is clear that poor participation due to the lack of inclusion of ordinary parents in education debate and decision making hinder an effective democratic education. This means that the problem of fully including all people in debates equally and freely slows down democratic education and stirs various forms of exclusion of all citizens’ voices from debates. Therefore, it is my contention that Namibia’s present form of democratic education through participation appears to be limited in its scope and cannot pass the test of a genuine democratic citizenship education. In other words, the outcome of the above policy analysis shows that the country is still faced with the challenge of how to enable all citizens to participate fully and actively in policy development and decision-making processes, either at the national or local level.

¹¹ This stands for school governance bodies according to the South Africa Schools Act 1996 (known as school boards in the Namibia Education Act 16 of 2001).

(iii) Learners' participation in pedagogical activities

The aim of learners' participation through the learner-centred approach (MEC, 1993) is to eradicate apartheid mentalities and replace the pre-independence Bantu Education approach, which was characterised by rote learning, with democratic education's pedagogical approach. This pedagogical approach seeks, among other things, to create a classroom environment in which the educator builds on the knowledge and experiences of the learners, encourages them to participate actively, ask questions and think critically. In this process, learners ought to be active participants, while teachers serve as facilitators, unlike in the colonial era when teachers were regarded as knowledgeable and learners as empty vessels that needed to be imparted with knowledge. Nevertheless, not all learners participate actively in education debates and discussion due to the differences in their upbringing. As I have stated in the discussion on school governance, traditional African women and girls are especially vulnerable, as they are granted inferior status and are not expected to speak as freely as their male counterparts. Although the policy documents encourage all learners to participate actively in classroom activities, children from some African traditional backgrounds may find it difficult to take part actively. The policy documents do not mention or specify the manner in which girls, who are still dominated and regarded inferior to boys, will be motivated to speak at the same level during teaching and learning. In such a socio-cultural setting, women or children will not be listened to and their voices will not be heard in any policy development and decision making due to their silence. Concern for the effects of poor participation and lack of inclusion in pedagogical activities in the learner-centred approach is shared by the NIED (National Institute for Educational Development, 2003:19):

In most of African countries, including Namibia, cultural diversity is a main feature of the social context. This is

why unity in diversity has been a key policy in Namibian educational and cultural development. Once unity becomes a focus, each can see the value of one's own culture and context in contributing to that. A balance has to be achieved in reinstating African culture and heritage to redress the former domination by Eurocentric culture, without losing the positive contribution that European culture can make.

It can be observed that cultural diversity plays a major role in the Namibian context (National Institute for Educational Development, 2003:19). This means that cultural diversity exists in different areas or regions, all of which are relatively homogenous in their own way. One area of diversity can be noticed in urban areas, where many different cultures are represented in the same classroom. The other area of diversity is mostly in rural areas. The National Institute for Educational Development (2003:19) further stresses that the role of African culture in deliberation and a clearer understanding of people's upbringing have to be considered when establishing ways in which African upbringing and deliberative democracy overlap. It is further argued that one of the reasons the learner-centred approach, as a form of democratic education, has been perceived as a foreign element in the Namibian education system is possibly because it was not couched in the appropriate African likeness of the upbringing of children. Therefore, it is necessary to incorporate the active participation championed by Western democracy with African practices (National Institute for Educational Development, 2003:19-22). When learners; differences, as highlighted above, are recognised and considered in educational discourses, individuals will be allowed to air their views and make a contribution to policy formation and decision making, despite their pace and fashion of articulation. This means that all learners could possibly have a chance to participate, irrespective of their background or upbringing or capacity to engage in discussions. One can say that the African value of ubuntu, which requires less deliberation, could potentially enable the excluded

people to partake equally in conversations with the active participants, but also for the less expressive to contribute toward a meaningful engagement and outcome. This understanding shows that democratic education was/is not embedded in the African value of ubuntu because it did not take cognisance of people's diverse cultural practices, backgrounds and upbringing, which makes some speak less actively than others because it is against their lifestyle; this may then hinder the democratisation venture. Thus, the dilemma of inclusion in educational discourses requires concerted efforts from all citizens in terms of spirited inclusion if a defensible democratic education is to be realised; that is, a minimal deliberative democratic education, which encompasses less belligerent deliberative engagement along with ubuntu towards achieving full inclusion and solving the alarming ills in society.

The point is that learners' (people's) differences in upbringing needs to be considered when participating in teaching and learning activities that require them to engage in classroom discussions, school governance and decision making on policy. For this reason, I argue that the policy documents and democratic education propositions should also consider these cultural varieties, especially in rural areas, where women and girls are expected to play silent roles and are assigned to inferior roles in debates or discussions. I believe it is impossible for women and children, who are excluded from discussions during meetings with kings and chiefs, to participate actively in the school board discussions. Learners from such backgrounds, especially girls, will struggle to participate, unlike the boys. This implies that poor participation or lack of inclusion may arise from some African cultural practices that tend to hinder citizens in both rural and urban areas from participating actively in debates, decision making and public affairs. Such a backdrop will enable some learners to participate actively and at the same pace with others in classroom discussions or activities, thus there is a need for the African idea of ubuntu to be incorporated in education. It can be said that, despite the policy documents' pronouncements on democratic education (through learners' participation), it seems to ignore the major activity of

institutional schools to engage learners in classroom activities in which all will be included fully and participate as equal agents.

On the same point, Kandumbu (2005:2) notes that, in spite of the introduction of the new democratic curriculum, most of the teachers remain incompetent, lack the skills to facilitate a democratic classroom, and continue to use the old teacher-centred method rather than the learner-centred approach. She further states that, in spite of the involvement of parents and learners in school board committees and other forums that assist in the formation of policies and decision making, these policy documents have not been well or fully presented to the schools and the wider community for review and critical engagement. My argument is that the aforementioned policy developments (at both national and local levels) did not create the spaces or conducive environments that would allow all citizens, i.e. parents, learners and the community at large, to participate fully in educational debates and offer their views on education policy development and decision making. The policy documents are also silent on how parents' participation in school board or parents' meetings and decision making will be encouraged for all citizens, especially those (mostly women) who are considered inferior and are not afforded the opportunity to express their views freely. Nevertheless, one can also say that the Namibian democratic government's quest for democratisation is facing various challenges, for example the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report (United Nations Development Programme, 2009) shows that, even after twenty years of democracy, Namibia still holds the infamous record of being the country with the highest levels of inequality in the world.

The Presidential Commission Reports of 1999 (in Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:9), and Kandumbu (2005) also confirm that, in relation to government's major transformational goals, not much has been achieved, except in the area of access to education, where some progress has been

noted. Other instances, which possibly reflect the lack of inclusion in educational discourses, are evident in the report by the National Planning Commission on the Namibian Census of 2001. This report confirms that 15% of the 1.5 million Namibian children aged six years and above had never attended school, and that the percentage in the rural areas is higher than in the urban areas (Government of the Republic of Namibia, National Planning Commission, 2003:34). The report of the Namibian Census of 2001 further shows that the illiteracy and unemployment rates are high in Namibia, as reflected in Chapter 1 of this study. It is also shown that the unemployment rate among females and other marginalised groups is higher in proportion to their male counterparts, and that these inequalities inhibit effective participation and inclusion in education debates (Government of the Republic of Namibia, National Planning Commission, 2003:37).

Other factors that may aggravate the lack of inclusion in educational discourses can be traced to the prevailing societal ills such as the HIV/AIDS pandemic, vandalism, murder, teenage pregnancies, high rate of rape cases, alcohol and drug abuse, teenage pregnancies, poverty, domestic violence, etc. (see also Kandumbu 2005:99; Lilemba 2008:233-240). One can argue that a democratic society with a high prevalence of societal tribulations reveals government's poor engagement with all the public, meaning that citizens do not have sufficient access to the right platform to table their concerns and to strive towards resolving them in collective deliberation. It is interesting to note that the Ministry of Education states clearly that "Malnutrition, economic inequality, and illiteracy can be obstacles to democracy that are more powerful than barriers to participating in elections" (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993:41). Regardless of this claim by the Ministry, looking at the analysis of the policy documents shows that Namibia's democratic education agenda remains a dream. I am saying this because most of its citizens are still excluded from educational debates and their voices are muted in decision making. At the same time, the country is still plagued by disparity and societal ills, which, the Ministry admits, are obstacles

to democracy. The point is that the affected citizens, especially those deprived of their basic human rights such as people living in extreme poverty, need to be included in public debates to air their views and share their life stories and predicaments. Therefore, one can also argue that those educational discourses are not embedded in the African value of *ubuntu*, in which both the expressive and non-eloquent, active and non-active participants are encouraged to articulate their points of view as equal human beings and make their voices heard. This process will embody the voices of all citizens; even those of the non-eloquent, previously silenced or oppressed and marginalised groups.

In the next chapter, I shall explore McLaughlin's (1992) interpretation of democratic citizenship considering the African view of *ubuntu* and show its possibility for Namibian education to create an environment conducive to less-to-more deliberative encounters and engagement that are appropriate to allow all citizens to find the necessary spaces for deliberation, whether they are eloquent or inarticulate.

CHAPTER FOUR

A MINIMALIST-MAXIMALIST CONTINUUM FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I shall discuss the minimalist-maximalist continuum form of democratic citizenship education, with reference to the work of Terence McLaughlin (1992). To begin with, I shall explore the interpretations of a minimal-maximal conceptual framework of democratic citizenship. Secondly, I shall show the qualities of the minimal and maximal forms of democratic citizenship and highlight some problems with maximal citizenship and reconsider minimal citizenship. I shall proceed to take a stand in favour of a minimalist democratic citizenship education, framed in a less deliberative and non-belligerent manner, coupled with the principle of African¹² *ubuntu*, which is underscored by compassion, respect and careful listening, as a favourable approach at this stage in the Namibian education system. I will lastly delineate the conceptual framework that appears more appropriate to address the lack of inclusion in the current Namibian education system.

4.2 Minimalist and maximalist forms of democratic citizenship

In this section, I draw on Terence McLaughlin's (1992) minimalist and maximalist conceptual framework regarding citizens in a democratic society. McLaughlin highlights a concern of different concepts of democratic

¹² The concept "African" is derived from "Africa", which refers to a continent. African can thus refer to a person, and as a signifier not just of geographical origins, but also of race/ethnicity. Moreover, African can also allude to ways of doing, to cultures and traditions, to things peculiar to Africa (Outlaw, 1996:71).

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citizenship and appreciates the usefulness of discrete conceptions as a way to understand the arguments on the term. He believes that the best way to explain much of the ambiguity and tension in this area is to view the concept of citizenship on a set of continuums, ranging from minimal to maximal interpretations. The minimal and maximal interpretations are of “underlying political beliefs and to divergent interpretations of democracy itself” (McLaughlin, 1992:236). The four features of the concept of citizenship and resulting contrasts involve (i) *identity* (form/substance), (ii) *virtues* (private/public), (iii) *political involvement* (passive/active), and (iv) *social prerequisites* (closed/open). Within a democratic society, he asserts, the concept of citizenship and individual are determined by the location of one’s ideas on the four continuums. For example, citizenship as a personal identity can range from a person’s name and legal status only and supplementary to other matters introduced, to a citizen’s status as an integral part of an individual’s *identity*. He utilises the concepts of *form* and *substance* to explain this. Examples of the extremes on this continuum are the individual within a free society, who does not bother to vote or participate in civic affairs at all – the political, non-involved individual on the one end of the continuum (form) – and the social or political activist who finds his or her reason for being in such activities on the other end.

Furthermore, McLaughlin (1992:236) says that a minimal and maximal conceptual framework of citizenship is possible on the other three continuums, and the perspectives held by individuals on the other four continuums go a long way towards defining their perspectives of the concept of citizenship within a democratic society. For instance, one person may take a maximal perspective on identity, virtues, and political involvement and a minimal perspective on social prerequisites, whereas another person may adopt a maximal perspective on all four features. Thus, the social and economic agendas of the two individuals may be very dissimilar and even at odds. In this case, because of so many possible contributions and extents of minimal and maximal perspectives on the citizenship features of identity, virtues,

political involvement and social prerequisites, it becomes quite apparent why it is so difficult to come to an agreed-upon definition for citizenship. This, in a way, means that people promote very different concepts under the name of citizenship.

In terms of education, McLaughlin (1992:236) states that “it is clear that the conflicts of interpretations between minimal and maximal concepts of citizenship are related directly to parallel conflicts between minimal and maximal interpretations of education for citizenship”. This implies that there is a very divergent set of goals for educating for citizenship: from a minimal interpretation, “education for citizenship” has as its major priority the provision of information and the development of virtues of local and immediate focus (such as those relating to voluntarily activity and basic social morality). There is nothing in interpretations of this kind that requires the development in students of their broad critical reflection and understanding, informed by a political and general education of substance or virtues and dispositions of the democratic citizen conceptualised in fuller terms. Nor is there a concern to ameliorate the social disadvantages that may inhibit the students from developing into citizens in a significant sense (McLaughlin, 1992:237). Conceivably one of the most salient points of contrast for educational purposes concerns the degree of critical understanding and questioning that is seen as necessary to citizenship. The different maximal concepts require a considerable degree of explicit understanding of democratic principles, values and procedures on the part of the citizen, together with the dispositions and capacities required for participation in democratic citizenship generously conceived (McLaughlin, 1992:237-238). This, to my view, emphasises how citizens/learners in deliberative democratic citizenship education ought to engage in deliberation fused within a belligerent manner towards reaching some reasonable results.

Furthermore, McLaughlin notices that a minimal perspective merely requires the “unreflective socialization into the political and social *status quo*”, whereas a maximal perspective “requires a much fuller educational programme, in which the development of a broad critical understanding and a much more extensive range of dispositions and virtues in the light of a general liberal and political education are seen as central. It also requires the consideration of a more explicit egalitarian thrust in educational arrangements” (McLaughlin, 1992:238). It should be mentioned that McLaughlin does see the potential dangers in both perspectives. The minimal perspective can lead to charges of indoctrination and uncritical acceptance of societal structures, while the maximal perspective can lead to a failure to promote a variety of public virtues or to the disintegration of society. From my perspective, a minimal democratic citizenship education will not necessarily jeopardise democracy, but rather enable all people, especially the excluded ones, to engage in discussion aiming at reaching some possible solution. I believe that minimal democracy can still lead to deliberation intending to solve some of the burning problems in society.

It is in the light of the above exposition that I deem it important to make a call for a minimal democratic citizenship in a less deliberative, non-belligerent fashion without necessarily provoking others coupled to a localised African *ubuntu* as a basis of citizenship education to eliminate a lack of inclusion in educational discourses as offered in the foregoing chapter. This is the form of democratic citizenship education I consider helpful for the Namibian situation, which tends towards maximizing inclusion, especially the excluded and marginalised people who are likely to find it difficult to engage and deliberate at the same level as others. These groups are excluded due to different circumstances for instance, due to their diverse backgrounds, African cultural and lived experiences, upbringing, as well as their respective political and historical milieus. , thus, contend that within this educational framework, the excluded or marginalised groups may find a space to air their voices and

contribute to decision making of their concern. Before that, let me briefly discuss the possible dangers of maximal citizenship.

4.2.1 Problems with maximal citizenship

As highlighted above, it can be argued that some modern democratic theorists referred to in Chapter 2 of this study, such as Benhabib (1996), Gutmann and Thompson (2004) and Young (1996), have articulated an ever more detailed description of what becoming a democratic citizen entails. Some have expected more from citizens than a basic commitment to conform to democratic procedures and have begun to flesh out not just the skills and knowledge necessary to operate within a democracy, but also the virtues and indeed behavioural characteristics of truly democratic citizens in public (educational) conversations and debates. Norman (1992:37) notes that rights and obligations do not in themselves explain why citizens should adhere to them. In his view, social contract theory is insufficient because it cannot account for citizens who default on obligations. He further argues that “the only solution is to recognize that if there is such a thing as allegiance to the political (educational) community, it must rely on something more fundamental than a package of reciprocal rights and obligations and it must be a matter of deeper ties and loyalties” (Norman, 1992:37). Other defenders of a maximal view of citizenship education, such as Mathebula (2009:14) argues that it is an education towards a maximal interpretation of citizenship that values individual autonomy, while at the same time it builds modern democratic societies (see also Divala, 2005:103). It can be said that a maximal venture is commendable in its attempt to deepen democracy and to achieve greater equality.

However, Norman (1992:37) added that there are some dangers inherent to the maximalist educational venture, as this perspective is likely to lead to the failure to promote a range of public virtues or to the disintegration of society.

Likewise, McLaughlin (1992:245) also acknowledges that the maximalist view may pose the danger of presupposing a substantive set of public virtues that may exceed the principled consensus that exists or can be achieved. Epitomising this thinking, Karlstrom (in Lappin, 2010:13) asserts that “it has been claimed that the permanence of substantive views of maximalist views of democracy in Africa¹³ has precipitated high expectations that have proved difficult to fulfil leading some to lose faith in democracy”. Given the above perspectives, one can conclude that there are some contesting views on what is regarded as an ideal view of citizenship education, not only in Britain but also in Africa, and in this context in Namibia. The maximalist view of citizenship implies that there is genuine robust debate and engagement with government and educational policies that should “articulate the practice of a substantial form of education for citizenship” (McLaughlin, 1992:245). In other words, in a deliberative democratic citizenship education, all people are expected to deliberate vigorously in the discourses of educational policy development, school governance and teaching and learning. I argue that a maximalist view of citizenship may pose problems and jeopardise the Namibian democratic citizenship education, since it requires active and provocative deliberation in which participants are expected to belligerently provoke each other in a manner that makes it difficult to speak their mind about an issue and to offer cogent arguments towards reaching a legitimate outcome (Benhabib, 1996). However, in my view this form of engagement seems to create more exclusion in Namibia, where many citizens, especially the marginalised groups, are already excluded from such important conversations on their concerns. The belligerent deliberative democracy may not be appropriate for the African context, because this form of education does not take into account people’s upbringing, cultural practices and ways of thinking.

¹³ In contrast, Mattes and Bratton state that “at least some Africans have to develop more modest understanding of democracy”, and that minimalist perspectives should be relatively easier to satisfy” (cited in Lappin, 2010:13).

As a result, I argue that maximal citizenship calls for more deliberation, belligerent engagement and confrontation than the majority of Namibia's people will be able to engage in, especially those who were excluded from democratic debates. The point I am making is that this form of engagement is not part of their upbringing; therefore Namibia's democratic education requires a minimal form of citizenship because people cannot change suddenly, although they could begin from a minimal form of engagement and move towards a maximal form in the long run. For instance, in Chapter 3 of this thesis I contend that, because policy formation and educational dialogues excluded the voices of the masses, vigorous deliberation in a confrontational manner will not empower such citizens, for instance elders and young people, in dialogue, since the elders will regard the younger generation as disrespectful and raised in terms of a Western way of life, which does not correspond to the African cultural practices and forms of engagement. I am not calling for young people to accept the elders' standpoints, but rather to engage with each other in a manner that intends to find an argument that will take the participants beyond the impasse. Suffice it to say that I am not discarding maximal citizenship, but rather am trying to provide an alternative view of democratic education that will make it possible for all participants to engage each other in dialogue and contribute to decision making. I am convinced that maximal citizenship cannot be regarded as a workable approach to address the current Namibian dilemma of exclusion, but rather will be a solution for the future. Therefore, I proceed to consider the minimal form of democratic citizenship.

4.2.2 Reconsidering minimal citizenship

A minimalist view of democratic citizenship is described by McLaughlin (1992:236) in rather unappealing terms, namely "formal, legal and juridical". He also indicates that education for a minimal citizenship does not "require the development in students of their broad critical reflection and understanding, informed by a political and general education of substance, or virtues and

dispositions of the democratic citizen conceptualized in fuller terms (McLaughlin, 1992:238). In affirmation, Callan (1997:170) argues that minimalist citizenship education is regarded as equally uninspiring. Callan further states that minimal citizenship includes only that which various groups within society can agree on and therefore “can include no more than the lowest common denominator in a society’s understanding of what its children should learn” (Callan, 1997:170). On McLaughlin’s one end of the continuum, minimal citizenship describes the basic institutional conditions of a liberal democracy and the corresponding skills and knowledge that citizens need, whereas maximalist views, unlike minimalist ones, hold fast to the public-private divide (McLaughlin, 1992:238). Nevertheless, I am not convinced that a minimal notion of citizenship requires a minimalist education. I believe this framework will instead help both learners and elders to engage in educational activities regarding policy, school governance as well as teaching and learning. Unlike maximalist citizenship, minimalist citizenship views all participants, active and non active might find deliberative space without excluding anyone to dialogue. I am arguing that only those who are capable of articulating their viewpoints will take part. Even the example taken from McLaughlin, that minimal citizens need to know how to vote “wisely”, assumes that the simple act of marking a ballot paper involves careful consideration of the candidates and their policies — a task which surely requires “broad critical reflection and understanding” (McLaughlin, 1992:238).

I agree with Dieltiens (2005:199) when she argues that an education for minimal citizenship requires much the same as an education for maximal citizenship. On both ends of the minimal-maximal continuum, learners need to be able to engage in public debates, to make reasonable arguments, to recognise their interdependence and to value diversity (Dieltiens, 2005:199). Given the above interpretations, I contend that it is vital to adopt a minimalist democratic education for Namibia in order to create enabling conditions for more inclusion. I argue for a minimal democratic citizenship form of education that encompasses less deliberation and non-belligerence, as argued by

Waghid (2010:231), tied with African *ubuntu*: compassion, careful listening, respect and dignity, which may be sufficient for maximising inclusion in educational discourses, that is policy formation, school governance and teaching and learning, and promoting the defensible democratic education necessary for Namibia. I believe that, when participants engage in a less deliberative non-belligerent dialogue, they are involved in activity and may well achieve an agreed upon and viable solution to the problem. In this sense, participants will not only rigorously engage each other, but rather articulate in a lesser form with the intention to resolve a deadlock while carefully listening. I now turn to a discussion of the shift toward a minimalist form of democratic citizenship.

4.3 A shift toward minimalist democratic citizenship in conjunction with African ubuntu

In this section, I want to show how *ubuntu* connects with a minimalist form of democratic citizenship education, which appears more favourable at this stage of the Namibian education system. The interpretations by McLaughlin of democratic citizenship enthused my move towards a minimal form of democracy that encompasses less deliberative democracy in conjunction with African *ubuntu*. Taking into consideration the aforementioned stance, I wish to illuminate the distinction between deliberative democracy and African *ubuntu*, as well as the potentiality and prospect of this framework for Namibia's democratic education dilemma of less inclusion. Firstly I shall explore the distinction between deliberative democracy expounded in Chapter 2 of this study and the notion of African *ubuntu*. Secondly, I shall examine different features of *ubuntu*.

4.3.1 Distinction between deliberative democracy and ubuntu

In this subsection I wish to reiterate from the onset the uniqueness of deliberative democracy by making reference to the discussion in Chapter 2 of this study, and then to describe what African *ubuntu* entails. According to some conceptions of democratic citizenship, as alluded to in Chapter 2 (cf. Benhabib, Young, Gutmann and Thomson, Callan and Nussbaum), deliberation is considered the core of democratic citizenship education. This deliberation requires active engagement, inclusion, equality, publicity, reasonableness and belligerence, as well as cosmopolitanism, in particular hospitality and compassion toward the other. Besides, in the words of Waghid (2009:76), deliberative democracy:

is a form of communal engagement which allows space for critically, non-domination and ensuring that human relationships flourish, the practice of deliberative democracy can be considered as specifically of relevance African societies because of its history of colonisation, racial oppression and segregation, and economic, political and social instabilities, insecurities and complexities.

From the above quotation, one can say that the notion of deliberative democracy is more about collective engagement by participants actively taking part in debates. The deliberative democratic educational debates are more about communities actively participating in deliberations with provocative engagement, which may exclude the less expressive and non-eloquent from the debates. In my view, this process may induce more exclusion and therefore I disagree with Waghid's argument for deliberative democracy in relation to African communities. My contention is that deliberative democratic citizenship education (DDCE), in its totality and as

framed by different democratic theorists in Chapter 2, is not viable for the Namibian situation. This makes deliberative democracy impractical or inappropriate for the Namibian context, due to the historical background, people lived experiences, cultural practices and upbringing, which may restrain their capacity to engage actively in distressful discussions to reach reasonable and lasting outcomes. The point I am trying to make is that the conception of DDCE articulated above, as an ideal approach to the promotion of DDCE, is insufficient to eradicate the lack of inclusion and to engender a viable form of democratic education.

When one considers the context and historical background of the Namibian people, who endured more than a century of colonial rule and apartheid regimes, African cultural practices and their upbringing, as articulated in the foregoing section, make it clear that such a framework may not be appropriate for the current Namibian dilemma of exclusion. As argued earlier, deliberation that expects participants – young people or elders – to engage in a provocative and confrontational manner to reach agreed-upon outcomes will not be a viable option for Namibia, because that is not the way of the African cultural pattern of thought. If young people engage elders and sages belligerently, they may be reprimanded for being disrespectful toward elderly people and may complicate the discussions even further. Such form of argumentation will not assist Namibia to achieve an inclusive policy and educational framework. Because people had been exposed – for more than a century of apartheid and colonial education – to some form of torture, war, division and submission, vigorous deliberative and belligerent democratic education could not be a solution for Namibia at this stage. I argue that people from such a background have to be prepared in a non-belligerent and less deliberative manner within an African *ubuntu* form of education, since it takes into account people's upbringing and cultural practices and their lived experience. In a less deliberative engagement, some may air their views with compassion and listen carefully to each others' story or predicament before

reaching a possible solution. This brings me to the discussion of African *ubuntu* as a localised concept within a contextual dimension.

The question can be asked, what is African *ubuntu*? To answer this, Le Roux (cited by Le Grange, 2004:139) states that “*ubuntu* is an African word comprising one of the core elements of a human being. The African word for human being is *umuntu*, which is constituted by the following: *unzimba* (body, form, flesh); *umoya* (breath, air, life); *umphefuila* (shadow, spirit, soul); *amandla* (vitality, strength, energy); *inhliziyoyi* (heart, centre of emotions); *umqondo* (head, brain, intellect); *ulwimi* (language, speaking) and *ubuntu* (humanness)”. *Ubuntu*, like all other African cultural values, has circulated primarily through an oral tradition, that is, interwoven in the cultural practices and lived experiences of African peoples (Le Grange, 2004:131). According to Asmal and Roberts (1996:21), *ubuntu* implies both “compassion” and “recognition of the humanity of the other”. Waghid (2009:76) describes *ubuntu* as “human interdependence through deliberative inquiry ... [that] exists in most of the African languages, although not necessarily under the same name”. Thus, it can be argued that *ubuntu* must have been in existence among the peoples of Africa in the past. Kamwangamalu, cited in Waghid (2010:240), points out that, in the Kenyan languages Kikuyu and Kimeru, *ubuntu* is referred to as *umundu* and *umuntu*; in Kisukuma and Kiltaya of Tanzania it is referred to as *bumuntu*; in shiTsonga and shiTswa of Mozambique, *ubuntu* is rendered by *vumuntu*; in Bohangi, spoken in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and in Kikongo in Angola, *ubuntu* is referred to as *bomoto* and *qimuntu* respectively. Furthermore, Makgoba remarks as follows regarding the notion of *ubuntu*:

Ubuntu is unique in the following respects; it emphasises respect for the non-material order that exists in us and among us; it fosters man’s respect for himself, for others, and for the environment; it has spirituality, it has

remained non-racial; it accommodates other cultures and it is the invisible force uniting Africans worldwide. Therefore, unlike Confucian or European philosophies, it transcends both race and culture (Makgoba, cited in Enslin & Horsthemke, 2004:24).

I am more influenced by Makgoba's fascinating view of *ubuntu* that emphasises and fosters respect for the individual and for others, as well as accommodates other cultures. In my view, this will help Namibian citizens to consider cultural differences between people by inviting and accommodating them in unity in educational debates of public concern. In the light of the above, one can surmise that *ubuntu* is not a new concept, but rather has been in existence for ages and has been utilised by African sages or elders to solve numerous problems among different groups of people. One can conclude that deliberative democracy and African *ubuntu* share similar features to a certain extent, because both argue for compassion, although based on the context. These two dimensions (Western and African) share some elements that might assist in maximising inclusion and may allow the excluded to locate spaces in educational debates despite their deliberative capacity. It simply means that not only may the active participants engage, but also that those who are less eloquent and less expressive may freely put their point across. I am suggesting that the current Namibian democratic education requires a less deliberative democratic education if full inclusion and a sound democratic education are to be achieved. I argue that an active deliberative engagement appears impossible to address the ills of Namibia at this time, although the goal of education is for learners to ultimately become maximal citizens in the long run. But non-belligerence and less deliberation in educational debates is a plausible approach, as it creates spaces for all people – elders, sages, women and disabled groups – to participate in these debates and to contribute toward finding solutions to such problems.

It is clear that participants who show a sense of *ubuntu*, that is being compassionate, hospitable, generous and kind, are required when engaging in educational debates on policy development, school governance and pedagogical activities as issues of concern to be addressed by all (Waghid, 2009:76). One can say that, by means of less deliberation, which is ingrained in *ubuntu*, all participants would be driven by the belief that such people will possess and exhibit these characteristics, namely hospitability, solidarity, kindness and generosity. Therefore, I contend that democratic debates taking place within a framework of non-belligerence, less deliberation, careful and tentative listening, more compassion and hospitality, will make educational discussions more inclusive, since they will consider people's cultural and traditional practices, upbringing, affliction and their marginalisation in debates. When the Namibian democratic citizenship education takes into consideration people's differences it may not only maximise a space for less deliberation and inclusion, but may also solve the dilemma of the lack of inclusion in Namibia highlighted above. In this process, all citizens, especially the previously excluded and marginalised, may possibly find equal spaces to take part in public discussions. It can be said that, because of less deliberation with *ubuntu*, no participants will be discriminated against, and young people will freely articulate their viewpoints among elders while showing respect to them, while reaching long-term solutions to burning issues, unlike when deliberation is characterised by active engagement, confrontational and distressful moments that may lead to the exclusion of active and eloquent people from participating in debates which, in turn, may jeopardise meaningful discussions.

Enslin and Horsthemke (2004:57) raise their distrust of African *ubuntu* and are of the opinion that "it remains unclear how characteristically African ways of philosophizing are meant to help resolve problems and clarify issues in education. How does an African philosophy of education contribute to curriculum selection, problems in HIV/AIDS education, the debates about authority and the classroom or schooling and identities, democracy and

citizenship”? Despite such distrust in the African principle of *ubuntu*, I am still swayed by this notion because of its unique characteristics and distinctiveness. *Ubuntu* is conceptually and practically associated with a long and profound tradition of humanist concern, caring, generosity and solidarity. Le Grange (2004:135) maintains that there have been increasing calls from postcolonialists, anti-colonialists, philosophers of science, feminists and poststructuralists in recent years for the democratisation of philosophy so that Western philosophy can be decentred and non-western philosophies demarginalised. Noteworthy is that Ramphela (1995:15) expresses a similar viewpoint when she argues that:

Ubuntu as a philosophical approach to social relationships must stand alongside other approaches and be judged on the value it can add to better human relations in our complex society. ... The refusal to acknowledge the similarity between ubuntu and other humanistic philosophical approaches is in part a reflection of the parochialism of South Africans and a refusal to learn from others. ... We do not have to have the humility to acknowledge that we are not inventing unique problems in this country, nor are we likely to invent entirely new solutions.

This citation underlines my call for a less deliberative democracy as a Western view to be rooted in an African notion of *ubuntu*, for example a less formal deliberation, as Gyekye (1997:135) maintains, in order to address local problems. I am not actually defending a wholesale mixing of African culture that undermines women and children, but rather am arguing for *ubuntu* as an expression of humanism, in terms of which people can consider each other in debates and listen to the voices of the underprivileged who might not always have the opportunity to air their views. However, I am not advocating a total

rejection of Western philosophy in democratic education in Namibia, but rather concur with Harding (1993), cited in Le Grange (2004:135), that “Our solution cannot be escaped to ‘elsewhere’. Instead, we must learn to take responsibility for the limitations as we also value their indubitable strengths and achievements. But to do so require a more realistic and assertive grasp for their origins and effects ‘elsewhere’ as well as in the West”. In this sense, *ubuntu* rooted in less deliberative democratic education may well be a possible solution to the problem of exclusion and may maximise possibilities of engagement by all citizens. Thus, I concur with Gyekye (1997:xi), who argues “against both the wholesale, uncritical, nostalgic acceptance of the past – of tradition– and the wholesale, offhanded rejection of it on the grounds that a cultural tradition, however ‘primitive’, would have positive as well as negative features”. This means that the grounds of rejection or acceptance will have to be normative or practical. In this case, some features of the African cultural practices among Namibians that I consider to be negative include the traditional attitude toward silencing and excluding women and children in public discussions and so forth. I contend that this framework is of value and needs to be nurtured in citizens (learners) to address their lack of inclusion in educational conversations.

The point I am making is that less deliberative democratic education, tied with African *ubuntu*, will hopefully equip participants (learners) with the skills and knowledge that are common to and recognised by many, if not by all, Namibians. Since most citizens adhere to African cultural practices, I believe that, when people are nurtured with the sense of *ubuntu*, they will engage in collective deliberation and their voices will be heard. In so doing, citizens will listen to the stories of those being ill-treated, and all people, as a community of deliberation, can act in the interests of all to eradicate exclusion and work together toward solving the prevailing ills in society. I argue that when democratic educational discussions are rooted in *ubuntu* as a contextual dimension whereby the lived experiences, background and upbringing of people will be taken into consideration, all people will locate an environment

conducive to full inclusion and respect for elders. However, minimal democratic citizenship with less deliberation does not necessarily evoke passivity, but rather allows all people to engage in activity towards reaching meaningful decisions and solving prevalent problems in the country. Ramose (2002:324) points out that *ubuntu* underlines and is consistent with the philosophical understandings of being human. Ramose further argues that *ubuntu* as a concept and experience is linked epistemologically to *umuntu*¹⁴ through the faculty of consciousness or self-awareness, releases the speech of being and pursues its rationality by means of a dialogue of being with being. In this sense, the interaction of *umuntu* – as an indivisible of being – oneness and wholeness of being – in “dialogue for being with being” (Ramose, 2002:325). The idea is that the logic of *ubuntu* is towards humanness, meaning *ubuntu* is always a human-ness and not human-ism (Ramose, 2002:326). Elaborating the notion of *ubuntu*, Broodryk (2006:22, 28) refers to *ubuntu* as a comprehensive ancient African worldview based on the core values of humanness (caring, sharing, respect, and compassion) and associated with a qualitative communal way of life, in the spirit of family. He goes on to say that the *ubuntu* value of “being humanness is to respect all religions and world views and is different from humanity or humanism”¹⁵ (Broodryk, 2006:31). What follows is a discussion of various features of African *ubuntu*.

4.3.2 Features of African ubuntu

Broodryk (2006:31) delineates the features of African humanness or *ubuntu* as follows:

¹⁴ There are five basic normative categories of African philosophy, viz. *muntu*, *kintu*, *hantu* and *kuntu* and *ubuntu* (Ramose, 2002:324-326).

¹⁵ “Humanism in its modern context is a reference to the thinking that all religious beliefs should be rejected and that the only issue which should be at stake is the promotion of human welfare” (Broodryk, 2006:31).

Humanness is a permanent ingredient of certain lifestyle, whilst any deed of kindness to other person is a once-off or temporary manifestation of humanity. Humanness is intense and practised sincerely with emphasis on “-ness” as a spiritual manifestation of a human-centered person(s), appears to be the best word in the English language with which to describe *Ubuntu* to others. Humanness is observed when an empathic person identifies him or herself with the problems and suffering of others in an understanding way. He or she treats all human beings equally.

It can be seen that humanness is the main component of *ubuntu*. Other features categorised by Broodryk are compassion and hospitality, respect and dignity. The value of compassion entails sharing emotive feelings with others, including rejoicing heartily with fellow men, or showing pity or mercy. Broodryk (2006:77-78) argues that, to be a true human being (the *ubuntu* way) is to care and share, and to respect others. An important value for *ubuntu* as part of the lives of African people is about reaching out to others, for instance compassion is the showing of empathy for the suffering of others, prompting one to selflessly help them, or to try to understand their sorrow or problems. Suffice it to say that this is especially visible in traditional African community life. With regard to the African notion of *ubuntu*, Broodryk (2006:50) states that it embraces friendliness and hospitality. Visitors or strangers are welcomed in African houses and greeted in a friendly manner that shows respect for other people. Broodryk (2006:50) remarks that “[i]t shows that visitors are recognised as human beings”. Most importantly, he states that traditional African societies placed a high value on human worth because of its expression in a communal context rather than in the individualism that is prominent in Western societies. One can say that the difference between African and Western life approaches is based on the “We” (African inclusiveness) versus the “I” (Western exclusiveness) styles.

Broodryk further accentuates the value of respect as another feature of *ubuntu* that foregrounds obedience (legal aspects, rules, conventions), honour (values and traditions), and consideration, that is, taking into account the fate of others and refraining from discrimination and selfishness (Broodryk, 2006:63). Respect embraces a number of customary rules that govern relationships at different levels of society. For example, respect involves the authority elders have over young people, parents over children, and leaders over followers. It does not only emphasise respect for the people we know, but also for those we do not know and, in return, getting respect from all irrespective of their academic and material status, literacy or illiteracy, or whether they are elders or children or rich or poor. In addition, Broodryk (2006:64-66) categorises four conventions regarding the value of respect, namely: (a) youths respect elders and do as they are told without questioning; (b) the man was the head of the family and the woman played a subordinate role; (c) respect had (at all times) to be shown to authority, irrespective of whether or not one agreed with the view of the authority figure, in order for things to run smoothly in all kinds of work situations; and (d) respect for the law had to be strictly adhered to. Respect manifests in behaviour, for example in the way you obey leaders and authority figures, welcome strangers, and how you deal with others, especially the manner in which elders are treated because they are regarded as wise people due to the life skills and knowledge they have acquired over the years.

Like Broodryk, Letseka (cited in Waghid, 2010:240) illustrates *bonto* or *ubuntu* “as normative in that it encapsulates moral norms and virtues such as kindness, generosity, compassion, benevolence, courtesy, and respect and concern for others”. Letseka further proposes “that educating for *botho* or *ubuntu*, for interpersonal and cooperative skills, and for human wellbeing or human flourishing, ought to be major concerns of an African philosophy of education”. Broodryk (2006:67) argues that an African perspective and committed people are easily recognisable in a group or meetings because of

their ability to listen attentively, enquire in a sensible way and act in an energised manner and persist with a task until it is fully completed. This means that the person orientated in *ubuntu* will always strive to behave with dignity, that is, his or her behaviour towards others will speak of tolerance and harmony and will be reflected in his or her choice of words and body language. One can conclude that the above features of *ubuntu* may be relevant and appropriate to be integrated in the Namibian democratic education to eliminate the lack of inclusion.

Furthermore, Gyekye (1997:24) argues for the presence of rationality in African philosophy and states that, on the one hand, philosophy practised by Africans is essentially a critical and systematic inquiry that involves the clarification of concepts into the fundamental values underlying human thought, conduct, and experience. On the other hand, African philosophy of education should interact with the African experience, particularly how understanding, interpretation and reflection have to be applied not only to respond to the basic issues and problems generated by that experience, but also by suggesting new or alternative ways of thought and action. The notion that African philosophical inquiry relates to the active analysis of the African experiences seems to be connected to rationally and humanely examining the values, beliefs, practices and institutions of African communities. Moreover, Gyekye (1997:29) posits that African philosophical discourse embeds two interrelated processes, namely rational discourse and the application of a minimalist logic in ordinary conversations, without being conversant with its formal roles. Despite the fact that Gyekye does also recognise the importance of rationality and logic in deliberative democratic inquiry, he argues that rationality is a culture-dependent concept and that less formal rules are required if people want to engage deliberatively in conversation (Gyekye, 1997:29). In terms of rationality as a culture-dependent phenomenon, he refers to it as the way Western culture understands it and maintains that it could not work properly in African cultures. Gyekye (1997:236) argues that it would be possible to find within African history itself a rational ethos, for

instance African traditional folktales, which exemplify critical thought that might be understood differently from the notion of rationality in Western culture. To Gyekye, culture-dependent rationality can be linked to a critical re-evaluation of received ideas and an intellectual pursuit related to the practical problems and concerns of African society. A critical re-evaluation implies the offering of insights, arguments and conclusions relevant to the African experience by suggesting new ways or alternative ways of thought and action (Gyekye, 1997:19, 24).

One can conclude that Gyekye's view of insights, arguments and conclusions to being critical of political authority, to self-reflection, and to the cultivation of an innovative spirit. However, engaging in deliberation suggests that one has to take into account people's history and culture – one has to be less formal in reasonable conversations (Gyekye, 1997:27). It can be inferred that deliberations should not only be restricted or limited to presenting one's standpoint in a logically reasonable manner through rigorous argumentation and debate whereby views are challenged and undermined, if persuasion and the search for the better argument become necessary conditions for reasonableness. On this basis I agree with Gyekye's stance, since ordinary citizens would be excluded from conversations because of their illiteracy and incapacity to articulate. It is necessary to say that, in the context of Africa (Namibia in particular), minimal deliberative democratic citizenship may be a viable framework to enable people to engage with each other. Gyekye (1997:27) affirms that "considering Africa's history and cultures, people should have less formal deliberative conversations". It implies that conversations should be confined to articulating viewpoints in a non-belligerent way and calls for compassionate argumentation and debate in which perspectives are carefully listened to and respected, but not undermined in the quest for the better argument become necessary conditions for deliberative engagement to unfold. I defend less deliberation, knowing that illiteracy and the lack of eloquence of ordinary citizens would exclude them from deliberative conversation.

Gyekye (1997) further contends that Africa's colonial and postcolonial experience has had enduring effects on the mentality of many Africans, a colonial mentality that leads to "apism", the idea that people should look for answers to Africa's problems outside of Africa, specifically in Europe. It is this same "apist" attitude by most of Africa's people that leads them to suppress their own opinions in favour of the wisdom of sages. However, Gyekye (1997:27) suggests that ways should be found to make the less eloquent, illiterate, and seemingly inarticulate person express his or her thoughts. This is the reason why he calls for less formal rules for deliberative conversation.

With this in mind, I am not completely disapproving of the Western notion of deliberative democracy, but rather am making a call for a less deliberative democratic education for Namibia. Gyekye also affirms my idea when he calls for ways to be created to enable the less-expressive, marginalised, illiterate and all other inarticulate individuals to participate and express their views in conversations. He draws attention to the importance of a minimalist logic in deliberative discourses in order to allow Africa's people to articulate their oral narratives concerning their beliefs, values, folktales, drama and cultural traditions without having entirely convinced others of their orientations (Gyekye, 1997:27). I am of the opinion that Gyekye underlines the relevance of a minimalist logic to deliberative conversation, allowing Africa's people to recite their oral narratives without offering convincing arguments of their position. The reason is that many African people do not necessarily know the logical reasons for their own beliefs and values, which were handed down to them by their ancestors (see Waghid, 2010:243). As a result, my call for an alternative framework, which I call minimalist democratic citizenship for Namibia with less deliberation and non-belligerent engagement with *ubuntu*, is justified, as it would establish conditions to include, rather than exclude, people in the deliberative conversations. Including people in the conversation might give them an opportunity to listen to others, and question and challenge their own positions.

Thus, the idea of a minimalist democratic engagement may possibly establish sufficient conditions that would include rather than exclude people from the deliberative conversation. Waghid (2004:84) supports a minimalist logic, arguing that including all people in debates may open up possibilities for people to begin to challenge and question their own positions self-reflexively. Conversely, the notion of humanness, that is *ubuntu*, is among the main features of the African culture I consider positive. I do not want to adopt a wholesale promotion of the Western idea of deliberative democracy (DDCE) for Namibia, but rather want to reconsider the democratic education that recognises African historical, cultural and traditional practices and experiences as a localised dimension to fit the context (Namibia in particular). Based on the above discussion, I contend that a minimal deliberative democratic education constitutes the follows features: less deliberation, non-belligerence, in conjunction with African *ubuntu*: compassion, hospitality, respect, attentive listening and dignity infused with less logic (cf. Gyekye, 1997). These may assist in eradicating a lack of inclusion. I deem it appropriate to redevelop the Western deliberative democracy in conjunction with African *ubuntu* in a way that may be practicable or pertinent to the Namibian dilemma of exclusion. In my view, this framework is appropriate for contributing to democracy and to the transformation of the educational discourse in Namibia. One can argue that the two schools of thought, that is Western deliberative democracy (DD) and African *ubuntu*, share some common features: compassion, hospitality and dignity. The parallel facets between DD and African *ubuntu* inspired my call for such an integration and redevelopment. The point is that aspects that are already apparent and profound in African philosophy, such as *ubuntu*, need to be incorporated into less deliberative democratic education. Commenting on the value of African philosophy, Higgs (2003:16, 17) has the following to say:

African philosophy ... provides a philosophical framework that can, and should contribute to the

transformation of educational discourse in philosophy of education in South Africa. This is primarily because African philosophy respects diversity, acknowledges lived experience and challenges the hegemony of Western Eurocentric forms of universal knowledge.

I contend that this idea of African philosophy is of value to democratic education in Namibia, as it will prepare learners – the future generation of the country – with knowledge and skills based on their experiences as well as that of others aiming to address various plights facing the society. In my view, *ubuntu* will be helpful to learners in their daily lives and to the society, in which they can address problems facing their society as well as sustain the virtue of respect for elders during deliberation. Through *ubuntu* embedded in less deliberation, even women, girls, disabled people and other marginalised groups will hopefully benefit and be invited and motivated to present their views, and make a contribution to policy formation, school governance and daily classroom activities. In the light of the above, I wish to argue for *ubuntu* as an established framework, with non-belligerence, less deliberation and contextual dimensions that may bring about democratic education leading toward a comprehensive and dynamic inclusion in Namibian educational discourses. My argument for African *ubuntu* is also affirmed by Le Grange (2004:137), who argues that the African philosophical value of *ubuntu* must be brought into our conventions and discourses if we are to decentre and deconstruct Western philosophy. Le Grange asserts that it is the deconstructive/constructive potential of the African philosophical value of *ubuntu* that needs to be explored and become part of our conversations and discourses within the Namibia philosophy of education, as in South Africa. He concludes that in South Africa, where indigenous knowledge systems reside among the majority of its people and Western philosophies remain dominant through new forms of colonisation latent in processes such as globalisation, an African philosophy of education is vital (Le Grange, 2004:138). It is this

form of democratic education that I regard as useful for the Namibian people if full inclusion in debates is to be advanced.

Coupled with the above, the current democratic education policy frameworks will require a concerted effort by all citizens to engage in dialogue, which may possibly promote a sound democratic education that can address the numerous ills in society. I affirm that a continuum between less deliberative belligerent democratic education (proceeding from a minimal towards a maximal form) has sufficient conditions to cultivate Namibian learners (citizens) who can address the social ills that challenge their daily lives and galvanise all citizens to address the societal ills preventing the country from attaining its set goals. In my view, there is also a need for legitimate deliberation that includes and considers people's differentiated (African) cultural and traditional practices and upbringing, irrespective of who they are, their status and abilities, their ethnicities or background (see Gyekye, 1997:135; Young 2000:53). I contend that non-belligerence and less deliberation have the potential to promote a legitimacy of collective decisions, to encourage spirited views on public matters and, at the same time, to promote a mutually respectful purpose of decision making and to correct mistakes that may arise in the process of decision making (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004:10-12). It is clear that less deliberation can facilitate an effective democratic process, which could possibly eradicate the lack of inclusion in the education system by giving a minimal reason in less deliberative engagement, which may lead towards an agreed outcome for all. It can also be argued that the aforementioned education system and its policy documents are governed by a Eurocentric notion of democracy and that they lack the Afrocentric¹⁶ tradition of democracy, which can hopefully ensure a genuine democratic education.

¹⁶ "Afrocentricity is ... the term used [to describe] global Africa as the sum total of continental Africa (as well as) the diaspora of enslavement created by the dispersal of enslavement and, finally the (later) diaspora of colonialism or the dispersal caused by the destabilization and long-term consequences and disruptions of the colonial era ... (as well as) a dialectical method, seeking to negate the ... negative portrayal of the most distorted history in the world,

As highlighted above, it is pivotal to include the African notion of *ubuntu* as a contextual dimension in which democratic citizenship education is situated, and citizens are expected to participate in such discourses. In my view, an education system framed in African *ubuntu* and with less deliberation may enable the masses – especially those who have been excluded – to fully engage with each other and air their views. I contend that the Western idea of active and robust deliberative democracy, which requires a belligerent and provocative as well as distressful engagement, may not be appropriate for democratic educational debates in Namibia. This idea is augmented by Gyekye (1997: xi), when he states that some of the features of Western modernity may not be appropriate for African and perhaps other non-western societies and cultures. Deliberative democratic citizenship education (DDCE) is implausible for the African context and not suitable for eradicating a lack of inclusion in Namibia, because of people’s diversity: cultural differences, upbringing, and so forth. Equally, with the country’s historical background, especially people having been subjected to a century of colonial rule and decades of apartheid, not all people may participate actively and engage belligerently. On this basis, I am arguing that DDCE, in totality, is not viable to eradicate the lack of inclusion in Namibia due to the distinctiveness of African cultural practices and contexts. As a result, for the lack of inclusion to be solved there is a need for a minimal democratic citizenship education (MDCE) alongside an established African notion of *ubuntu*. It is a democratic education that is non-belligerent, less deliberative, more careful, and listening, more compassionate and more hospitable, that will make educational discussions more inclusive, since it considers people’s cultural and traditional practices, their upbringing and experiences of oppression and marginalisation. I am arguing that, when democratic citizenship education takes into account people’s differences, it will capitalise on the chances for deliberation by all citizens appropriate to the elimination of the lack of inclusion in Namibia. Therefore, I wish to show how a minimal form of deliberative democracy

that of the African people (so that where) the thesis is Euro-centrism, the antithesis is Afro-centricity” (Rafapa, 2006:11).

coupled with African *ubuntu* may possibly eradicate the lack of inclusion and enable all citizens – the marginalised in particular – to make their voices heard and contribute to policy development, school governance and teaching and learning in Namibian public schools. This brings me to a discussion of the elements of the conceptual framework of a minimal democratic citizenship.

4.4 Delineating the minimal democratic citizenship conceptual framework

This section attempts to outline a minimal democratic citizenship framework that constitutes less deliberation and non-belligerence, coupled with the African *ubuntu* values of (a) compassion; (b) respect; (c) attentive listening to the concerns of others regarding their welfare and needs; and (d) dignity. I am convinced that less deliberation (as a redeveloped Western philosophy of democracy) will allow citizens – especially the marginalised – to also find democratic spaces to engage each other. In this democratic process, all people, irrespective of their economic status and level of eloquence, will be afforded opportunities to make a meaningful contribution to educational debates and other public issues of concern to them. As some democratic theorists argue, it is through deliberation that participants may air their views and tend towards agreed upon outcomes in a democratic society (see Benhabib, 1996; Gutmann and Thomson, 2004; Young, 1996). Nevertheless, as far as the Namibian context is concerned, a less deliberative process will help to eradicate the current lack of inclusion apparent in educational debates. Unlike Callan (1997), a proponent of belligerence in deliberation, I hold that a non-belligerent form of African democratic citizenship education could lead to the exclusion of some groups from educational discussions. In a non-belligerent process, people are required to be sensitive to and engage with one another in a non-provocative manner that will not cause distress, but rather will pay more attention to people's narratives and lived experiences in order to address burning issues. The idea of non-belligerence in deliberation is supported by Stuart Mill (cited in Callan, 1997:209), who argues that,

instead of enlightening people, a dialogue marked by belligerence can lead to emotional distress amongst the participants, which may compromise the dialogue itself. Stuart Mill emphasises the need for conditions to be put in place for ethical confrontation to be fruitful. On this basis, I view belligerence in deliberation as having negative implications for democratic education in Namibia. Therefore, I argue for non-belligerence with less deliberation, coupled with *ubuntu* to foster more inclusion and to cultivate citizens who can engage in educational debates.

Echoing the importance of African *ubuntu* in democratic citizenship education, Waghid posits that “*ubuntu* is relevant to African societies because of their history of colonization; racial oppression and segregation; and economic, political, and social instability; insecurities; and complexities” (2010:240). I am of the opinion that the above relevance of African *ubuntu* needs to be cultivated in Namibian democratic education as well. Waghid (2010:240) adds that *ubuntu* provides both a general philosophical position as to how people should coexist organically, and a way in which Africa can contribute to the global culture, that is, a matter of reconciling the local (*ubuntu*) with the global (deliberative democracy). Although some writers, for example Enslin and Horsthemke (2004), argue that virtues like compassion, hospitality, respect and so forth are apparent in Western philosophy, Broodryk (2006:77) assert that they are also prevalent in the African philosophy of *ubuntu*. This is the reason I argue for *ubuntu* to be located in democratic citizenship education. Careful listening is a vital feature to be nurtured among Namibian people to eliminate their lack of inclusion in educational discourses aiming to address the ills facing the society, such as the HIV and AIDS pandemic, domestic violence, inequality and so forth. Waghid (2005a:80-81), in response to Hountondji’s critique of African philosophy, argues that:

If one considers that philosophy takes into account the narratives and life experiences of Africans, and whose

‘structures of dialogue and argumentation’ invariably involve listening to the voices of others (no matter ill-informed), then it follows that ‘structures of dialogue and argumentation’ cannot simply dismiss oral tradition and cultural narratives.... Listening to what other has to say, albeit unimportant or inarticulate justifications, brings to the fore the voices of the people which would otherwise have been muted or marginalised. For instance, the view of an African sage (*ondudu*) or his followers, offered in conversation, should not necessarily be dismissed as irrelevant to the dialogue just because it may possibly not be eloquently expressed. What makes a dialogue a conversation is that people are willing to listen to one another’s ideas without putting them down or dismissing their subjective views as being unworthy of consideration. A dialogue becomes a legitimate conversation when points of view are expressed in a way that allows the other to offer his or her rejoinder, no matter how ill-informed.

I am of the same opinion, namely that dialogue should consider all people’s standpoints, since it might not always be possible for solutions to be attained through reasonable argumentation, but good and careful listening may help in reaching agreed upon and reasonable outcomes. In this process, when people listen carefully to each other in deliberation, they also respect the dignity of others. In essence, the above features of African *ubuntu* seem valuable, because when people engage in a non-belligerent lesser form of deliberation with *ubuntu*, they tend to be more compassionate, listen carefully to one another’s stories and respect the standpoints and ideas of others, without exclusion and discrimination (Broodryk 2006; Gyekye 1997). Because, when people listen to each other, they show respect and promote each other’s human dignity, regardless of whether they are rich or poor, literate or illiterate,

able or disabled, articulate or inarticulate. What matters in deliberations are the ideas that are communicated to all and that contribute to the decision making of common concern. This framework comprises important virtues that need to be cultivated and nurtured among the African people to help address the burning issues besetting the continent, and the country of Namibia in particular.

Expounding the relevance of the African philosophy of *ubuntu* to the Namibian education dilemma, I concur with Gyekye (1997:136), who argues that “the traditional ideology, however, positively maintains that any injury done to the community or state as a whole directly injures the individual”. The point is that African *ubuntu*, that is compassion, careful listening, respect and dignity within a less deliberative and non-belligerent engagement, will enable and facilitate an environment in which all people – privileged or underprivileged, rich or poor, young or old, man or woman, traditional or modern, able or disabled – are fully included in debates and can make their voices heard. One can argue that, as far as the idea of creating a modern democratic (education) system of government like the one in Namibia is concerned, most people will agree that these features of African traditional practices are positive and relevant. Although the aim of democratic citizenship education is ultimately to educate active and deliberative citizens, I argue that, for the current education system, a minimal democratic citizenship education appears appropriate to address the dilemma of exclusion and to assist the country to achieve a defensible democratic education. Moreover, I am convinced that the minimal-maximal citizenship continuum, which emanates from a minimal extreme and moves towards a maximal end in the deliberation of a democratic society, has a necessary condition to extend the educational deliberation space to most, if not all Namibians. At the same time, it affords all people an equal chance to participate in policy formation, school governance and pedagogical activities, rather than only having formal representation through stakeholders. Since the Namibian democratic government has shown a commitment towards democratic education through policy advocacy, for instance the Education Act

No. 16 of 2001 and others, it is my contention that less deliberation in democratic education is capable of achieving democratisation. Eventually, this framework may enable the country to achieve the envisioned transformational goals, as well as address the societal ills plaguing the contemporary Namibian society.

4.5 Summary

This chapter explored the interpretations of the concept minimal-maximal continuum in democratic citizenship with reference to McLaughlin (1992). I have also highlighted the dangers of maximal citizenship and reconsidered the possibility of a minimal citizenship, which may help to minimise the current lack of inclusion in Namibia. With that interpretation, I assert that a minimal form of democratic citizenship education, which comprises less deliberation and non-belligerence with African *ubuntu* (compassion, careful listening, respect and dignity), can facilitate the Namibian education system to lessen the existing lack of inclusion and can serve as a temporary solution for the enhancement of a defensible deliberative democratic citizenship education in Namibia.

In the next chapter, I shall show how a minimal democratic citizenship framework may help to eliminate the lack of inclusion in the Namibian educational discourses of policy formation and school governance, and its implications for teaching and learning in Namibia public schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

IMPLICATIONS OF A MINIMAL DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP FOR EDUCATION: A POSSIBLE SOLUTION FOR NAMIBIA'S DILEMMA

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I shall discuss the implications of my alternative framework – referred to as a minimal democratic citizenship with African *ubuntu* (i.e. *less deliberation, non-belligerence, compassion, careful listening, respect and dignity*) – for education in Namibia. Moreover, I shall illustrate how it may assist in creating enabling conditions for more inclusion and deliberation by all citizens. Firstly, before illuminating the implications of the framework, I wish to explore briefly the notion of inclusion. Then, I shall proceed to show the implications of more inclusion in policy formation and school governance. Secondly, I shall expound the implications for teaching and learning in Namibian public schools. Since my account in this chapter aims to defend a form of minimal democratic education and *ubuntu* at school level, less deliberation must be emphasised at the regional and national level as well. As different authors (for instance Gutmann (1995), Benhabib (1996) and Kymlicka (2002)) have argued, although democratic citizenship education can take place in different arenas, such as homes, schools, and out-of-school sites, I agree with their idea that schools are the “best avenues” (Hahn, 2008:263) to advance deliberative democratic education. With this in mind, I contend that the afore-mentioned framework may assist in eliminating a lack of inclusion in democratic educational discourses, policy formation, school governance, and teaching and learning. Moreover, it seems to be a necessary condition for Namibia's education system in terms of which a defensible democratic education can be advanced. This framework may create deliberate spaces for all citizens to air their views and may hopefully ensure that learners will be nurtured with the virtues, skills and knowledge that will

enable them to engage in public debates on addressing the many ills plaguing the Namibian society.

5.2 Minimal democratic citizenship for more inclusion

I want to restate that minimal democratic citizenship, which constitutes a lesser form of deliberation and non-belligerence, coupled with compassion, careful listening and respect and dignity, seems to be an appropriate framework from within which to assist the Namibian education system to eliminate the current lack of inclusion in educational discourses, with reference to policy formation, school governance and teaching and learning. Through less deliberative citizenship education, the voices of people who were excluded because they could not engage in active deliberation on the same level with others due to their marginalisation, diverse backgrounds, lived experiences and upbringing, will be heard. Furthermore, these people will be able to contribute to decision making regarding issues of concern to them. In this section, before discussing the implications of my alternative view of democratic education for Namibia, I wish to explore the notion of inclusion. In so doing, I will acquire a greater understanding of what gave rise to inclusion in general, and who deserves to be included in educational discussions. This idea may eventually strengthen my call for a minimal democratic citizenship framework aimed at vigorous inclusion in Namibia.

Young (1989:251) maintains that the emancipatory movement of modern political life in the eighteenth century enforced the need for inclusion. Some political theorists started claiming equal political rights for all citizens, especially the underprivileged and marginalised, that is; women, workers, Jews, blacks and others. These political theorists insisted on the equal moral worth of all persons, and on the social movement of the oppressed in political (educational) debates (Young, 1989:250). In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the struggle for inclusion increased among the excluded

and disadvantaged, and it was established that obtaining full citizenship status would bring them freedom and equality. Unfortunately, not much of what has been anticipated seems to have been achieved. Although by the late twentieth century, liberal capitalist societies had formally extended citizenship to all groups, some are still being treated as second-class citizens. As a result, the defenders of social movements of the oppressed and excluded groups have recently questioned why being refused/denied equal citizenship rights has not led to social justice and equality despite the efforts toward inclusion. In answering that question, Young draws attention to the problematic link between citizenship for everyone and the equal treatment of all citizens. Young (1989:251) asserts that the challenge still rests on the call for differentiated citizenship as the best way to realise the inclusion and participation of everyone in full citizenship. This implies that the inclusion and participation of everyone in public discussions and decision-making processes requires mechanisms for group representation. Thus, according to Young (1989:251), this form of inclusion and participation of everyone in social and political (educational) institutions sometimes requires the articulation of special rights that guide group differences in order to bring an end to the oppression and disadvantaging of others. Since all people in a democratic society have inalienable and requisite rights, only the inclusion and participation of all citizens in political (educational) life will allow for prudent and fair decisions, and a public that enhances rather than inhibits the capacities of its citizens and their relations with one another meant for the common good.

Regarding the idea to strive for the common good, Schumpeter (1942), like Young (1997), questioned the notion of inclusion and pointed out how problematic it might be, especially in any context in which democracy is pursued. For Schumpeter (1942), the concept of a common good means different things to different people; even if we could reach some agreement on what it is, this would still leave the problem of what mechanisms should be put in place to achieve the common good. A further problem is who decides what

the common good is when translated into programmes of action. In addition, Young (1997:66) questions the goal of a common good as both a starting point and as a possible goal of democratic deliberation, for:

... It may harbor another mechanism of exclusion. Assuming a discussion situation in which participants are differentiated by group-based culture and social position, and where some groups have greater symbolic or material privilege than others, appeals to a common good are likely to perpetuate such privilege ... When discussion participants aim at unity, the appeal to a common good in which they are all supposed to leave behind their particular experience and interests, the perspectives of the privileged are likely to dominate the definition of that common good.

Schumpeter and Young exposed some of the serious difficulties in the role that the notion of a common good can play in the collective pursuit of the good, and their concerns are applicable to political as well as educational goods. Young (1989:263) argues that a feasible way to achieve the common good is to create conditions in which all individuals and groups, especially those on the periphery of the community, may participate in debates regarding what it is and how it is best pursued. This demands a form of democratic education that encourages all people to articulate their needs and to listen to those expressed by others. I am arguing that this approach, in particular, is central to the context of Namibia's diverse society. Young (1989:263) further claims that individuals' lives, needs and interests and their perceptions of their needs and interests need to be considered in policy making and decision making at schools, and that they should be given a specific voice in deliberation and decision making.

As regards the groups that should be to be included in the debates, Young (1989:265) argues that candidates for group representation in policy making in the USA (as in Namibia) are women, old people, the poor, disabled people, young people, non-professional workers and other underprivileged groups. The oppressed and disadvantaged members of society deserve specific representation in diverse public debates, since the social consensus today is that all people have equal moral worth and deserve equal citizenship. Therefore, many feminists and others in the struggle for the full inclusion and participation of all groups in the structures of society, institutions and positions of power, call for rights and rules to ignore differences of race, culture, gender, age or disability, as they perpetuate rather than eliminate oppression.

Moreover, one can ask the following question: does having citizens who possess rights and opportunities to participate in political (educational) activities necessarily secure public deliberation. The answer is, not necessarily. Ramphele argues that the Constitution effectively disenfranchises illiterate citizens, especially rural women and the young unemployed, since it is “inaccessible to them as a tool for understanding and asserting their (political) rights” (Ramphele, 2001:4). In other words, the illiterate masses are not in a position to make informed choices and decisions in exercising their citizenship and are left to the mercy of the local and national demagogues who decide and interpret what citizenship entails (Ramphele, 2001:5). I agree with Ramphele that the right and opportunity to participate in political (educational) discussion does not, by itself, guarantee greater participation¹⁷ or full inclusion, but rather that this is guaranteed by means of effective public deliberation on the part of all legitimate interest groups in society.

Based on the above exposition, I infer that the formation of a democratic government and a dismantling of the apartheid regime in 1990 promoted the

¹⁷) Gutmann, (1996:346) posits that “Participatory democracy not only takes too many meetings but also disrespects the people who would, quite reasonably, rather be represented than respect themselves”.

rise of inclusion in Namibia's democratic education. The call for inclusion became imminent after Namibia gained its independence. The democratic state realised that it was impossible or rather difficult to achieve the transformation goals without the involvement or participation of the community, as proclaimed by Act 16 (2001). For this reason, the state encouraged the participation of stakeholders and community members in education discourses at different levels. Nevertheless, despite the fact that representatives from both groups were involved in democratic education discourses (all levels), the analysis of the major policy documents referred to in Chapter 3 of this thesis showed how marginalised groups or ordinary citizens are excluded¹⁸ from educational discussions. The Government of the Republic of Namibia, (1993) claimed that the democratic government considered it urgent to revise all segregation and discriminatory policies and to instigate democratic education in which citizens, through their stakeholders representatives, can be included and be encouraged to participate in educational discourses, unlike in the past, when people, in particular black and marginalised groups, were not afforded such an opportunity. The policy proposition, which lacks inclusion, is incommensurable with the democratic citizenship framework alluded to in Chapter 2 of this study. The exclusion of the masses, especially marginalised groups, from decision-making and educational dialogue at national, regional and local (school) level undermines democracy. I shall now proceed to discuss the implications of the minimal democratic citizenship education framework for more inclusion to the Namibia

¹⁸ Young (2000:52-53) states that, although people seem to be included (presence) in debates, there are two types of exclusion, namely internal exclusion and external exclusion. Internal exclusion refers to when individuals or groups are included from the discussion and decision-making process by means of a specific style of expression, the use of language that is difficult to understand and the dismissal of the participation of some people as being out of order. External exclusion is the obvious one in which some members are kept out of debates or decision-making processes, while others are allowed to dominate and make decisions. Nevertheless, internal exclusion is visible in school board meetings and classroom practices in our schools, whereby some members, for example women or girls, are excluded from debates or decision-making processes, and influential members are permitted to dictate the decision or result of the debate. External exclusion, on the other hand, exists when some members use other forms of expression in a public discourse by either speaking English, or using other ways of articulation not known to fellow members due to their status in the society.

educational discourses, that is; policy formation, school governance and teaching and learning.

5.3 Implications of the framework for educational discourses

In this section I shall discuss the implications of a minimalist democratic citizenship with *ubuntu* and its distinctive elements of less deliberation, non-belligerence, compassion, careful listening, respect and dignity in its entirety for educational discourses such as policy formation, school governance and teaching and learning in Namibia public schools. As argued in the previous chapter, the above-mentioned elements of this framework are interrelated and require functioning as logical processes in order to eliminate the dilemma of exclusion and to engender a democratic education. Let me proceed to show the implications of the abovementioned framework for policy formation.

5.3.1 Implications for policy formation

In terms of less deliberation in policy formation, I argue that all stakeholders' representatives may possibly find spaces to air their views and contribute to educational policy formation. This implies that each group's representatives, for instance teachers' unions, will find deliberative spaces not only for the eloquent, but that the less eloquent will also make their voices heard in policy formation. In other words, citizens must have a space to engage in and make meaningful contributions to deliberations and decision making about the formation of policies regarding their daily lives. Kymlicka (2002:284) emphasises that a number of recent political events and trends throughout the world – such as an increasing apathy and long-term welfare dependency in the United States; the resurgence of rationalist movements in Eastern Europe; the stresses created by increasingly multicultural and multiracial populations in Western Europe; the failure of environmental policies that rely on the

voluntary cooperation of citizens; and a disaffection with globalisation and the perceived loss of national sovereignty – have triggered the interest in citizenship education. Concurring with Kymlicka, Waghid (2008:32) asserts that the above events show that the stability of modern democracies depends not only on the justice of their institutions – for example South Africa (in this context Namibia) on its Constitution and multi-party democratic system (democratic education) – but also on the quality and attitude of their citizens. Kymlicka (2002:285) further mentions the following qualities that democratic citizens (representatives and all citizens) require: (a) their sense of identity and how they view potentially compelling forms of national, regional, ethnic or religious identities; (b) their ability to tolerate and work with others who are different from themselves; (c) their desire to participate in the political process in order to promote the public good and hold authorities accountable; and (d) their willingness to show self-restraint and exercise personal responsibility in their economic demands and personal choices that affect their health and their environment. He goes on to say that, in the absence of citizens who possess these qualities, democracies become difficult to govern, and even unstable (Kymlicka, 2002:285).

Given the above insights, I contend that, since Namibia's current form of democratic education lacks inclusion, it will not function effectively without responsible and accountable citizens. This implies that the desires and worries of Namibian citizens will be discussed and considered in decision making and policy formation through less deliberation. It implies that many people – e.g. those affected by HIV; the disabled; the poor; the unemployed; those facing discrimination; those experiencing rape and domestic violence; immigrants; foreigners – will be included in public (educational) dialogue and that their voices will be heard. This means that all Namibians, irrespective of race, socioeconomic status, and ethnic or tribal background, will be allowed to deliberate freely in policy development processes and debates. The implication is that, unless all Namibians from different cultural and ethnic groups (e.g. Herero, Ovambo, San and Himba), and disabled and

marginalised citizens, are included in policy formation, Namibia's education system will not achieve an inclusive policy framework. The development of policies should not just take place within government structures, but should also involve ordinary citizens in order for democracy to flourish and to ensure that issues of concern to the public are considered in policy formation. In my view, less deliberation is such an education practice that facilitates engagement and prepares the citizens of a democratic state to be engaged in public debates as they try to solve burning problems of mutual concern. The idea is not to discriminate against the active, articulate and affluent members of society, but to create conducive environments that will allow full inclusion of the poor and marginalised groups, for instance Himba and San children who do not yet have access to quality education. It implies that mechanisms will be put in place for the vigorous inclusion of ordinary people who are excluded from public discussions on policies (e.g. the Toward Education for All policy and other vital policies) that aim to address their problems and to guarantee development and economic prosperity. Others will find better ways to address daunting problems, such as the lack of inclusion, and will allow people who currently do not have access to water or quality education to contribute to the deliberations. It also implies that other people, for example the unemployed, those suffering from HIV/AIDS and various illnesses who do not necessarily enjoy the fruits of independence may possibly find deliberative spaces to make their voices heard and contribute to debates of their interest. It can be said that the inclusion of all citizens, irrespective of their status, class, intellect and background, is required so that they can participate and engage in decision making.

My argument for less deliberation does not merely oppose the exclusion of those serving as representatives, such as trade unions, but in this process the marginalised groups and those at grassroots level will find deliberative spaces. The point I am making is that conversations about policy must be an all-encompassing deliberation by all members, that is; people from different groups making their voices heard and contributing meaningfully to policy

formation. This implies that representatives and ordinary citizens will engage each other firstly and reach some agreed upon outcomes, before the representatives present or defend the outcome at the national forum (see Gutmann & Thompson, 2004). Thus, within less deliberative engagement, enabling environments and mechanisms will be created for the public to contribute to policy development, which aims to solve the problems – e.g. high levels of unemployment, poverty, etc. – besetting the Namibian society and to attain justice for all. In view of the fact that such policy documents are initiated to address public issues, the community must be included in such discussions in order to make suggestions or air their views on how such needs or problems can possibly solved. By way of all citizens deliberating in and contributing to policy formation concerning education in Namibia, I agree with White (1996:53-65) when she argues that:

Free speech, for instance, will not flourish in a society whose citizens do not want to give a hearing to unpopular views. Not only legal bans but also self-censorship and public indifference can inhibit free speech. Thus, even in a society with well-developed political machinery citizens will need basic political virtues like trust and distrust and a sense of fairness.

From this perspective, it is imperative to cultivate virtuous citizens who will be able to participate actively in and make meaningful contributions to educational discussions aimed at policy development. I turn to Winch and Gingell (1999:10), who argue that the government of a nation-state inscribes its aims, in the education system, which tells us what that education system is for. Since an education system embodies the fundamental purposes of education, it determines the character of everything else: institutions, curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. The aims can be implicit as well as explicit, and can be subordinated to the everyday practices of teachers and students, as well as in government documents such as policies. It is with this

in mind that I argue for robust inclusion of all the excluded: women, the poor, illiterate people, people with disabilities and learners, to be able to contribute to policy formation.

Regarding the inclusion of marginalised groups in deliberations, Noddings (cited in Winch & Gingell, 1999:96-8) demands that the inequalities of attention, opportunity and treatment that marginalised groups – women in particular – suffer in our society be addressed properly in the educational context. This implies that the voices of women and other marginalised groups must be considered in educational dialogues. Noddings (in Winch & Gingell, 1999:96-8) further emphasises spontaneous responses to the plight of another, which she calls “natural caring”. She also provides a comprehensive account of care and the phenomenology of caring relationships, and details the implications of these for moral education. It is suggested that what we need is care to be applied to everyone, i.e. that we treat everyone as a friend or member of the family. Given the above view, I am more persuaded by Noddings’s idea of taking into account/focusing on everyone’s fate or predicaments and voice in deliberation and decision making leading to policy development, so that each person’s needs and concerns will be cared for in the policy.

This implies that, with less deliberation, the voices of all people, irrespective of their differences, background and vulnerabilities, will fill the deliberative spaces to contribute to developing policies. In this way, the many ills experienced might be addressed through a less deliberative engagement. I am saying this because all people, especially the affected, will articulate possible ways in which their problems can be solved, since they are more familiar with them than the experts are.

This means that less deliberation, characterised by non-belligerent engagement regarding policy formation, and may possibly assist in addressing some of the problems prevalent in Namibian society. As I have

indicated earlier, belligerence as advocated by Callan (1997) is not a desirable feature for democratic education in African (Namibia in particular). It implies that decision making regarding policy formation does not require participants to provoke each other. Seeing that Namibia is a diverse society in which democratic educational deliberation involves people from different groups based on race, ethnicity, status or class, religious and historical, cultural and traditional background and lived experience, it will be unnecessary for such people to engage with each other in a distressful and confrontational atmosphere. The point is that it will not create a convenient atmosphere for all stakeholders' representatives and all citizens to engage with each other in attempts to formulate a policy, which aims to address inequality in the distribution of resources, access to quality education, and combating HIV/AIDS and other ills plaguing the Namibian society. Such participants do not need a provocative situation, as Callan (1997:217) argues, in order to express their opinions concerning burning public issues. In school governance, unemployed people whose children cannot afford to pay school fees or wear a school uniform will express their affliction, while others listen to their narratives.

My argument for less deliberative democratic education will not function effectively with the idea of belligerence as advocated by Callan (1997). I am sceptical that less deliberation fused with belligerence can promote a viable democratic education for Namibia. In my view, belligerence may provoke a fight and may stimulate disagreement, especially in dialogue with elders, who do not expect young ones to speak in a disrespectful manner. Thus, to provoke other people or those experiencing inequality – who also have a long history of warfare – will not achieve fruitful outcomes, but rather will worsen matters in debates. Hence, such people need to feel free to air their views, initiate speech and defend their preferences in the public sphere without fear of being provoked, rebuked or reprimanded. In other words, all citizens need to have access to deliberative spaces that aim to influence decisions and policies. In my view, if citizens were to confront each other it may result in

unfavourable moments among people, especially because of their differences in thinking, cultural or traditional practices and lived experience of war and colonialism. When young people engage the elders or sages during educational conversations in a belligerent manner it goes against the African tradition and cultural practices known and embraced by many Namibians. It is clear that deliberation requires *ubuntu*, which drawn into the account African cultural practices and people's lived experiences as ways to achieve full inclusion

This implies that, when *ubuntu* is applied to policy formation, people will engage in less deliberative conversations without provoking each other, while showing compassion for the stories of those who experience hardships (e.g. famine, poverty) and whose views are not considered in decision making (e.g. the San, Himba and others in Namibia) to engage in public dialogue about policy formation. In the pursuit of less deliberation and non-belligerent engagement fused with compassion, the participants may possibly consider the vulnerability of others by way of "compassionate imagining". The point is that potential situations exist in which the voices of certain groups or individuals are not heard because they are disadvantaged and marginalised in one way or another. Within a less deliberative and non-belligerent approach, the excluded groups may be able to identify with such groups on the basis of their own vulnerability. As Nussbaum (2001:317) observes, "[t]he recognition of one's own related vulnerability is then an important and frequently an indispensable epistemological requirement for compassion in human beings".

Concurring with Nussbaum, I regard the ability to show compassion to others, especially the ability to imagine oneself in the situation of the other, as a very important exercise in deliberation toward policy formation. When people show compassion with those who are being ill-treated and whose needs are not considered in policy, the possibility for all participants to put themselves in the shoes of victims and struggle for their welfare and justice will be created. This entails that the Namibian democratic education coupled with *ubuntu* requires

people to recognise the vulnerability of others brought about by some conflict among ethnic groups and tribalism and division – for instance, within different tribes, e.g. Ovambo, Herero’s and so forth as a result of the political struggle in Namibia – and act in a way that will help them to address their problems in policy formation. In this sense, Waghid (2010:241-242) argues that *ubuntu* is also linked to cultivating human cooperation and interdependence in Africa, and in this case Namibia, which is also a postcolonial African state, in order to mitigate the effects of tribalism, racism, exploitation, and domination. I consider it indispensable to educate Namibian citizens to have a compassionate disposition. When people engage in non-compassionate deliberation, one could refer to Slamati’s (2009:160) idea that an insensitive character may undermine not only democratic education, but also society itself. This entails that people will not only be compassionate, but that they will listen carefully to the stories of those who experience various misfortunes. When all people listen to others they show respect, since *ubuntu* entails the coexistence of people by having respect for one another and recognising each other’s helplessness, and who thereby may assist towards transforming their situation. When people have respect, they allow one another to live their lives according to what might be best for them, that is, they do not impose their understanding of the world on others. If this virtue of respect is embraced by people engaging in policy formation, no one will be left out or victimised, but rather all will contribute meaningfully to decision making and policy formation. It can be concluded that, in the absence of the vigorous inclusion of all citizens in educational policy discussions, all efforts to implement education policies would be in vain in the absence of the cooperation and self-restraint of citizens, without the exercise of civic virtue, such as the willingness of citizens to participate, and without an ability to trust and to express their sense of justice (Kymlicka, 2002:286).

5.3.2 The implications for school governance

In terms of school governance, stakeholders' representatives, e.g. unions, the business community, government representatives and traditional leaders, and ordinary citizens may acquire spaces to articulate their views and to engage through less deliberation. In this process, the participants will proffer their ideas concerning the vulnerabilities of people who receive unequal treatment, especially regarding the distribution of resources. I want to restate that, although the Education Act, No 16 of 2001, claims to create space for the practice of democratic education through the process of consultation and participation, these spaces need to be filled by a less deliberative engagement with the distinct aim of including all participants in the dialogue. At the same time, all people will contribute to decision making related to school governance. Hendricks (2000:25) posits that "participation in school-based governance has the potential of contributing in (sic) the democratic transformation of whole school communities". Yet, Waghid (2001:1) maintains that "effective policy initiatives driven by functional or instrumental preoccupations are not only conceptually flawed but also deprive education of its wider human purposes". This implies that participating in the system of school boards would not necessarily promote democratic transformation, as Hendricks posits. There are many variables that influence the way school boards govern schools, which need to be considered to determine whether their practices advance democracy. It can be said that there are dilemmas of excluding and denying especially the less privileged and vulnerable groups from democratic practices in Namibian education. It is apparent that, with less deliberation, all stakeholder representatives, that is; educators, parents and learners, should get an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to decision making related to school governance.

In this process, even the voices of illiterate, poor and disabled people, including women, will be heard and issues related to people who might not be able to afford to pay school fees or buy school uniforms for their children will be dealt with and each person's ordeal of being unemployed will be shared among the participants. As stated above, representatives may deliberate with the represented groups or community members before presenting their ideas to school boards, as they will be held accountable. This means that not only representatives but also ordinary people who are not representatives require to engage with the representatives prior to the enactment of any school governance policy, since they are also democratic citizens and have the right to participate in deliberations. The point is that there should be strategies to create enabling conditions for the inclusion of non-representatives, i.e. ordinary people, in school governance and management.

Niitembu (2006) states that, while members of school boards in Namibia are trained, some of them still lack skills and knowledge due to other socioeconomic inequalities, such as a lack of English literature, a lack of educational knowledge and so on. It is my contention that only through cultivating a nonbelligerent and less deliberative engagement in democratic education in which all members of school boards and other citizens, will be empowered and transform their practices and be fully included in dialogue irrespective of their ability, levels of literacy or other differences that may exist. Although Act No 16 of 2001, as discussed in Chapter 3, intended to create spaces for citizens – e.g. stakeholders, parents and communities, especially those who were previously denied access to educational debates – to participate in educational discussions, their voices are still excluded due the absence of a healthy and complete inclusion. Therefore, it is only when people are fully included in decision making concerning school governance and the education of their children that outcomes resulting from such deliberations can be considered legitimate (Benhabib, 1996). While one acknowledges the efforts of the Namibian democratic government to empower parents and citizens who were previously deprived of such opportunities,

without full inclusion of their voices in school governance the marginalisation of the poor and underprivileged in Namibia will continue, and their needs and expectations will remain unrealistic under the present provisions. In my view, unless school governance is located within a context of less deliberative democracy, it will not achieve a sound democratic education. Put this way, cultivating a particular type of citizen has the potential to identify a person's repressed capacity that might enable him or her to participate in democratic structures as an equal and democratic citizen.

This further implies that the full inclusion of all serving on school boards applies to stakeholder representatives, such as; parents, teachers, learners, other co-opted community-based individuals and even school principals serving on the different school board committees. I am saying that, despite this representation, not all participants (especially parents) get equal or ample opportunities to express their viewpoints, for various reasons, such as a lack of educational knowledge, illiteracy, a lack of English knowledge and so forth. Their non-participation indicates a lack of inclusion and may thwart the country's quest for democratic education and transformation. Thus, through less deliberative engagements, all people – women and children, the poor and disabled people – should be included in such debates if legitimate decisions and outcomes are to be achieved (Benhabib, 1996). All participants have to engage each other in debates as a collective and make decisions to solve burning issues. By so doing, the well-being of all people, which is fundamental during this deliberation, will be acknowledged. However, less deliberation is not only premised on the notion that only representatives should deliberate, but also requires ordinary citizens to take part and engage with representatives in decision making.

The point is that all people affected by educational or school governance find an opportunity to deliberate and influence decisions that have to be taken in the deliberation, for the reason that representatives will be held accountable

and serve the interests of their groups (Benhabib, 1996; Gutmann & Thompson, 2004). In less deliberation, stakeholders and all citizens must be regarded as moral and political equals, and each individual must participate freely without discrimination or exclusion of any kind. It is clear that parent representatives and teacher representatives have the same opportunity to influence decisions, while teacher representatives have the same opportunity as learner representatives or even school principals as well as the entire community, because they are considered humans with the same moral and political capacity. No one should be excluded because of his or her ability or any other differences. I am not advocating for the inclusion of stakeholders representatives only as it is now the case in Namibian school governance, but rather am calling for less deliberation that includes all people (poor or rich, women or men, able or disabled, and all other marginalised groups) affected by or concerned with education. Their voices must be heard and they must be allowed to contribute to school governance. Epitomising this thinking, Lakoff (1996:30) asserts: "We are social beings. We are because of our intentions with others. We achieve what we do because we benefit from their work. Hence, if we share many common interests, and hence the needs of others, when we look to our own". In other words, we ought to consider others in less deliberation and support those situations and movements that symbolise democratic values and bring people together. It implies that, in less deliberation, school board members and community members must work together as a collective and consider each other's needs, i.e. the public needs.

More so, less deliberation among all affected people can take a form of, for example, school board members and communities from different backgrounds, levels of education, race, class, status or religion engaging each other and sharing ideas that can address burning issues at hand, e.g. disciplinary problems, vandalism and so on. Elucidating on this, Waghid (2003:83) affirms that democracy as reflexive discourse is useful, as it liberates thoughts and practices in a way that provides more choice, freedom

and possibilities for transformation and emancipation. This means that the process of less deliberation by all opens possibilities for people to speak against issues that bound them, brings about change, enables each group to learn more of the other's interests or needs and to discover different experiences that in turn will lead towards enhancing an understanding of the concerns of others. In this process, all point of view will be afforded space, as deliberative democracy suggests that legitimate decisions and outcomes must result from all people engaging each other, and that decisions are not just influenced by those who are affluent or eloquent or who have certain expertise (see Benhabib, 1996; Gutmann, 1995; Gutmann & Thompson, 2004). In this sense, creating less deliberative spaces for all people in school governance will address burning issues because different perspectives will be heard on how to solve such problems, and eventually exclusion will be lessened if not eradicated. A less deliberative engagement related to school governance should not be coupled with belligerence (cf. Callan, 1997) but rather should take place in a non-belligerent environment to enable all participants to articulate their views in a caring manner.

As regards belligerence in school governance, as shown above, all stakeholders' representatives, both young and elders will create a confrontational and distressful atmosphere that may rather stir conflict and people may not listen to each any longer instead of solving burning problems. The same situation applies to teachers and parents when they participate and contribute to decision making regarding school fees or admission, if some of the parents cannot afford to pay such fees. In addition, confronting people who are unable to articulate their perspectives actively and freely in dialogue, when provoked, may exclude them more because the belligerent atmosphere is not consistent with or in favour of their cultural practices. Callan (1997) argues that belligerence is a process of struggle and ethical confrontation in which participants disturb each other's doubts about the correctness of their moral beliefs or about the significance of the difference between what they

and others believe as a matter of arousing distress. Therefore, it does not need to be emphasised in the contemporary democratic education in Namibia.

Moreover, Waghid (2009) maintains that, through a process that allows people to find the truth of how others feel about education and suffering, the participants will come to a deeper understanding and realisation of the situations and predicaments of others in decision-making processes. Nevertheless, this is contrary to the Namibian context because of people's African cultural practices, background and upbringing, in terms of which there should be no confrontational engagement between elders and young people. I am of the opinion that people will engage each other with more civility, without belligerence and distress, in an atmosphere that is free from confrontation, as this may complicate the discussion more. In this way, no one will feel threatened, silenced or rebuked, as some people will be afraid to participate due to provocative moments and engagement.

Through less deliberation with non-belligerence, all citizens, specially the marginalised people may not be necessarily be excluded by means of provocative and distressful engagement, because those people living in impoverished and abject circumstances will be allowed to articulate their views and to influence educational policies. In this process, all people will not only be included because of a non-belligerent condition, but they will also make a meaningful contribution to decision-making processes, especially in a country with a history of more than 105 years of apartheid and colonial rule. The point is that interactions between people from that historical background may often be heated for various reasons, and may fail to solve those crucial problems due to a lack of inclusion and insight into the feelings of others, who are not afforded an opportunity to engage in democratic deliberation. In this sense, I contend that a sound, defensible democratic education will not be achieved without a localised concept of African *ubuntu* in less deliberation. In other words, when less deliberation and non-belligerence considers the

principle of *ubuntu*, there might be a possibility to diminish exclusion in school governance.

I want to reiterate that less deliberation and non-belligerence will not reach the desired full inclusion, but people have to demonstrate *ubuntu* to each other irrespective of their difference and experiences. When people engage in less deliberation and non-belligerence, characterised by interdependence and disagreement (*ubuntu*), they engage in a collective identity; they find their commonalities (see Waghid, 2010). I argue that allowing people to engage in deliberation with compassion will cultivate them to become democratic citizens, since they will find spaces in which they can learn to identify the similarities and differences between them. In this way, people will be required to listen carefully and with compassion to others' stories of misfortune, and to fight for the well-being of others. For example, poor people, those living with HIV, etc. might share their views on policy development. Spaces may be created to enable all people to treat others humanly, as well as to restore their human dignity when their predicaments and views are listened to carefully, and by so doing solutions that are appealing to the marginalised and excluded will be attained. This implies that a less deliberative engagement that considers compassion and careful listening in school governance as an appropriate feature will enable participants to restore their human dignity when their stories are heard, and to make a contribution to decision making equals. Since such characters are required to be nurtured among Namibian citizens, including young people as future generations, let me proceed to show the implications for teaching and learning in Namibian public schools.

5.3.3 Implications for teaching and learning in Namibia public schools

While the previous sub-section indicated how the minimal democratic citizenship education framework can assist in minimising exclusion in policy

formation and school governance, this section focuses on how it may help in cultivating democratic citizenry through teaching and learning activities. My intention in this section is to show how vital it is for teachers to educate learners to engage in classroom deliberation as a way of minimising the exclusion of those who might find it difficult to participate enthusiastically. It is incumbent on teachers to create classroom environments conducive for all learners to contribute to dialogue. Teachers have a duty to introduce learners to the deliberative structures and processes of the nation so that they can participate in these structures and processes.

This implies that teachers and learners have to be committed to deliberation stemming from a lesser form and moving toward the greater form of deliberation. It requires not only the active, but also the inactive, to find deliberative spaces in which all learners will air their views without fear of exclusion. It also implies that teachers need to be agents of deliberation and educate learners to deliberate in classroom activities, irrespective of their upbringing or patterns of thought. It also implies that teachers should be aware of power relations in deliberation and be committed to create opportunities for the disadvantaged and marginalised in deliberations (cf. Young, 1997). I also concur with Enslin and White (2003:124) when they point out that, since the public schools are the only institution that all young people are likely to attend in the liberal democratic society, it must be the major site for citizenship education. Thus, such schools should be organised and run on democratic principles. Through less deliberation, all learners and teachers, regardless of their ability and background, will find spaces to engage each other. The inclusion of all learners in deliberation – irrespective of gender, race and socio-economic background – is another way of addressing exclusion and making schools accessible to all children. Furthermore, the notion that only stakeholder representatives, by virtue of their position and office, know what is best for their constituents limits inclusion (cf. Chapter 3 of this study). Thus, it implies that teaching and learning need to create more enabling conditions for learners in deliberative engagement, if they are to have a say in all matters that concern them. One way of doing this is to allow classroom representatives to handle issues only after they have been

thoroughly deliberated and exhausted properly by everyone at classroom level. An example might be those learners who can deliberate on issues such as disciplinary procedures put a system in place to show how justice could prevail in their school and how disputes among them could be sorted out. It further implies that both teachers and learners must find formal opportunities in the classroom for the development of deliberative skills; for instance, teachers can use the context of extramural activities, such as debate clubs and debating societies, to practise deliberation.

Enslin and White (2001:124) interpret Benhabib's view of "plurality of modes of association" in a deliberative school context to include the informal curriculum that is offered by clubs and societies. Thus, there should not be one set of rules for deliberation inside the classroom and another for deliberation outside the classroom. The fact is that the out-of-classroom experiences may provide authentic and substantial contexts for deliberation. The inarticulate learners who were deprived of their democratic rights to dialogue might find such spaces to deliberate and share their views. As Gundara (2000:17) states, the exclusion of girls and women from deliberation is to deny them education or employment, which is similar to denying them equal access to education debates. It is apparent that refusing people access to democratic education (deliberation) because of a particular cultural practice is not right. Gundara (2000:17) gives the example of a Sikh wearing a turban or a Muslim girl wearing a headdress being excluded; saying that is illegitimate because wearing a turban or a headdress does not impair their acquisition of education or pose an impediment to gaining employment. As highlighted above, one can argue that it is pivotal to include both teachers and learners in teaching and learning to engage each other freely as equal beings as a way of emancipating themselves from all forms of exclusion and allowing them to exercise their democratic rights.

Enslin and White (2003:114) affirm that "[d]eliberation in democratic education has a potential for inclusiveness by creating spaces for democratic citizenships and citizen identities". The point is that the culture in all public

schools requires a democratic arrangement and a characteristic way of doing things so that the attitude of staff and learners will indirectly encourage all learners to embrace the qualities required for living in a democratic society. It is clear that promoting vigorous inclusion by means of less deliberation and active participation in school life will prepare learners to make informed choices and become deliberative and respectable members of society in their adult lives. This is the reason why I am arguing for less deliberation in teaching and learning to prepare learners for adult life and to enable them to address various problems through deliberation. Waghid (2006:315-316) asserts that it is through deliberation that students and teachers learn how to experience “intelligent action”, which would enable them to reflect on educational problems by means of making intelligent choices about ways of action to solve these problems. In other words, minimal deliberation democracy, which includes all learners, is a meaningful practice that could enable learners and teachers to evolve and enhance their problem-solving capabilities in and beyond the classroom.

I want to relate deliberation in teaching and learning to the work of Boal (1979:166), a follower of Freire, who proposed a dialogical exchange framework for theatre plays, aimed at transforming the oppressed and bringing about their emancipation. For him the theatre serves as an emancipatory site. It implies that there must be no difference between the actors and spectators and that all people must participate equally in the play as a form of dialogical exchange. In my view, learners and teachers will engage in dialogue not as spectators but as actors, and will take decisions based on public interest rather than on individual interest (cf. Boal, 1979:166). Thus, by means of less deliberation and learners presenting their standpoint in a shared manner, all may listen carefully to each other’s views, and engage in and question the perspective of others while respecting each other’s differences. One could argue that, since all citizens are moral beings (cf. Gutmann & Thompson, 1996), no person must be excluded from deliberations concerning his or her life or interests. Hence, not only must learners who are

presently in the classroom be included in deliberations, but also those who do not have access to education, if full inclusion is to be achieved. Some of these children – especially those from the Himba and San communities – are ignored in educational deliberations concerning their lack of access to quality education (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001), and the democratic rights of all other Namibian children as enshrined in the Constitution are denied them. One can say that full inclusion must also see to it that all children have access to quality education. A child who lacks access to education is excluded from deliberation in a democratic country. Seeing how less deliberative democracy may potentially minimise the lack of inclusion in school governance, it will be plausible for stakeholders and community members to engage in less deliberation with non-belligerence.

Since non-belligerent engagement is an important aspect of less deliberative democracy, it requires that learners will discover how to contribute to debates without provoking each other, but rather by listening carefully to the standpoints of others. I am convinced that, in this process, all participants (parents, learners and teachers) will also listen to and hear the truth of each other's predicaments. In such a case, learners who usually do not speak freely and actively will be stimulated to utter their points of view, and other learners will in turn show concern for the individual and the inability of some people to speak in conversations, with the intention of including them in deliberations and hearing their voices. All participants will engage each other to deal with their likely resentment of policymakers and educators. In less deliberation and non-belligerent in teaching and learning in Namibian schools need to also embrace an African idea of *ubuntu* classroom activities.

This implies that when learners are educated to be democratic through less deliberation in a non-belligerent way, they also need to apply and exercise *ubuntu* as part of an African lifestyle. As Waghid (2005a:82) argues, the cultivation of an African philosophy of education has to be based on three

ideals, namely; (a) “education that aimed at achieving virtues as a matter of cultivating good action; (b) involve human beings engaging in social practices whereby they live the good life through acting rationally in society with others as a matter of cultivating practical reasoning; (c) demonstrates the potential to promote justice, courage and truthfulness in individuals, that is, goods or excellences internal to their practices”. In other words, I am swayed by Waghid ‘s idea of engaging in social practices and promoting justice in individuals (in this case, learners and teachers) in teaching and learning as virtues that might help Namibian citizens to include others in deliberations and to struggle as a community to address the injustices happening to others.

The point is that less deliberative democratic education will equip participants (learners) with the skills and knowledge already known in Namibia. When learners (most of them African) are nurtured with the sense of *ubuntu*, they will engage in collective deliberation and their voices will be heard. In this sense, learners may listen to other people’s stories of misfortune and ill-treatment and, as a community of deliberation, may act in the interests of all to curtail exclusion and may work together to solve the problems of others. This idea of *ubuntu* is of value to democratic education in Namibia, because it will prepare learners, as the future generations of the country, to emancipate themselves from exclusion, as alluded to in Chapter 3 of this study, and enable them to deliberate on public issues aimed at addressing the problems faced by their society. Through *ubuntu*, embedded in deliberation, even girls, the disabled and all marginalised groups will benefit and be invited and motivated to present their views, and to make a contribution to school policy formation, school governance and daily classroom activities without being excluded or discriminated against.

When learners are cultivated in a compassionate manner, as discussed above, they will consider the differences between them. In this way, learners will be encouraged to engage each other in and outside their classrooms about pertinent issues in the school and society related to education, politics,

ethnicity or tribalism. By so doing they will learn how people ought to live in a diverse society. Apart from that, learners also need to be equipped with skills to deliberate respectfully in dialogue with those who hold views and beliefs opposite to their own. The implication is that learners will learn from and emulate the compassionate practices of their teachers through their actions toward those who are excluded from teaching and learning activities because they find it difficult to deliberate at the same level as others due to their vulnerabilities. An example would be that learners from impoverished communities without a good command of English may find space to also contribute to discussions without fear and prejudice when narrating their life stories. Girls who might experience some discrimination and who are assigned to inferior positions due to their cultural or religious beliefs also find deliberative spaces in the classroom. For teaching and learning to benefit all learners, compassion must play a role in deliberation and both boys and girls must engage each other equally in the classroom and in all the activities of the school. This means that there should be equal representation of boys and girls in leadership positions, and the roles of boys and girls should be given equal status. In addition, the roles of girls need to be emphasised in order to end the cultural oppressions of women. This process will encourage the silenced girls in the classroom and all learners will become compassionate as well as respect each other. I reiterate that African people will not automatically embrace active deliberation quickly, but rather gradually. This will require both teachers and learners to listen carefully to the stories and opinions of others and show respect regardless of their differences. It implies that, when learners listen to the narratives of other people, and to folktales and dramas, they will show respect and human dignity (cf. Gyekye, 1997). When careful listening is nurtured among learners, possible solutions might be achieved in the process whereby all people make a contribution through deliberation.

Likewise, when teachers organise learners to engage in less deliberation and non-belligerence encompassed with compassion and careful listening, it may lead to mutual respect among learners, which will enable them to reach collective and binding outcomes (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004). Although this sense of collective decision making may tend to mutual respect, it should not

be seen as a recipe for peace (see Macintyre, 1999). Yet, within a plurality (as is the case with less deliberative educational classroom practices) disagreements are bound to emerge. This implies that, through deliberation, issues regarding learners who cannot afford to pay school fees and are not favoured by admission policies may suggest how such values might be shared and understood. The point is that to deny those with whom we disagree the chance to air their views in debates and to adopt their own perspectives would be regarded as a lack of equality and not rooted in mutual respect. It can be said that all learners and teachers must engage with each other and offer their opinions without exclusion, and deliberation must be practised in the public sphere. Both learners and teachers must not only air their views in public in common interest, but also show respect and dignity while deliberating with compassion.

I contend that, when learners are cultivated with less deliberative and non-belligerent skills, as a Western idea of democracy integrated with an African *ubuntu*, that is compassion, careful listening and respect and dignity, it may assist them effectively in decision making and policy formation. In this process, learners will with engage each other as people from different backgrounds and lived experiences. For learners to show compassion, they must be taught to be concerned about the misfortune of others. In other words, the views of others who cannot afford to pay school fees and who are unable to wear school uniforms will be heard. I therefore maintain that, when teaching and learning is framed in less deliberation, it is likely to create spaces for all learners, especially the groups that are current excluded from Namibian democratic education, to participate in the classroom despite differences in their cultural practices, upbringing and lived experiences.

This approach will also help learners who do not speak confidently and eloquently in the classroom due to circumstances beyond their control. In teaching and learning, both the learners and teachers will engage with each other, with the learners being allowed to express their views regarding a particular subject without fear of discrimination. All will respect each others' viewpoints. In this case, teachers must create a classroom environment that

prepares learners for deliberation and participation in a global economy and in a democratic society.

Cultivating *ubuntu* requires that we create a culture of careful listening to many voices that we might not like or even disapprove of, that is, carefully listening through engagement with the aim of preventing any form of injustice (Waghid, 2010:247). With *ubuntu*, listening to the views and lived experiences of others shows respect, and this may help participants to come to a plausible conclusion and achieve an agreed upon outcome. Gutmann clearly states that “respect for persons does not require that we treat other people as if their lives were not worth living, a perspective that is antithetical to any plausible conception of democratic justice” (in Waghid, 2010:247). MacIntyre (1999:139) argues that respect does not mean agreeing with all what others utter, but rather questioning and challenging their views. I am saying that respect and dignity need to govern teaching and learning in Namibian schools, in which process learners will be given the opportunity to air their views and listen carefully to the standpoints of fellow learners. In this way, learners will be able to evaluate them to discern the authenticity of such arguments toward attaining a common good and outcome. The point is that if learners are led to embrace these skills, it is very likely that they will also be allowed to deliberate freely, initiate speech acts and debate issues of concern in a meaningful manner.

This democratic process entails that learners should also be motivated to raise burning issues that affect their lives and school, or education as a whole, even if teacher and parent associations have not raised them. There are many more things that learners, teachers and schools could do in order to acquire the skills to become deliberative democratic citizens. All the skills mentioned above require the capacity to listen carefully to others, even if their viewpoints may not be accepted or even if one disagrees with their ideas. This implies that even learners who are inarticulate due to their educational background will be allowed to deliberate. In this way, all learners will be able to respect the human dignity and standpoints of fellow learners, and also to take ownership of their respective school buildings and facilities. These learners, nurtured with

ubuntu, should be encouraged to debate issues that concern them and to insist on discussing measures to address the societal ills plaguing the community, such as the vandalism of school buildings. I am saying learners should be allowed to engage in and discuss their viewpoints freely and fully in a less deliberative manner. This entails that every teacher needs to exercise or practise *ubuntu* if learners are to discuss burning issues and take a stand to negotiate effectively and successfully across diverse groups and work together and strive with others. In this way, less deliberation and *ubuntu* can be advanced better if learners are included in democratic education in all school spaces, but especially in classroom activities, sports, extramural activities and so forth. So, this needs to become the responsibility of all people involved in the life of schools, such as learners, teachers, parents and the government, if democracy is to be advanced.

With regard to the idea of educating and cultivating democratic citizens through less deliberation in teaching and learning, Peters (1966, cited in Winch & Gingell, 1999:71) claims that “We see education as instrumentally connected to the practices of education. This means, education is not valuable as a means to a valuable end such as a good job, but rather because it involves those being educated being initiated into activities which are worthwhile in themselves, that is, are instrumentally valuable”. Peters argues that “education involves the acquisition of a body of knowledge and understanding which surpasses mere skill, know-how or the collection of information. Such knowledge and understanding must involve the principles which underlie skills, procedural knowledge and information, and must transform the life of the person being educated both in terms of his general outlook and in terms of his becoming committed to the standards inherent in the areas of education” (Peter, cited in Winch & Gingell, 1999:71). On this basis I call for a minimal democratic citizenship framework that includes *ubuntu* to be cultivated in learners so that they can become deliberative and compassion citizens, not only acquiring technical skills, but also having the knowledge that will allow them to engage in dialogue. It is clear that fostering a less deliberative democratic character with *ubuntu* is indispensable for Namibia.

In this sense, less deliberative democracy with Africa *ubuntu* can be enacted in Namibia's democratic education, where learners may find a space to discuss their linguistic, cultural, ethnic and religious differences and may learn to live with others whose lifestyles may be deeply threatening to their own (cf. Benhabib, 1996). In so doing, learners will not only discover what they have in common, while acknowledging their competing narratives and significances, but they will also create opportunities to coexist. Eventually, they might create a community of conversation and interdependence and also one of disagreement without disrespecting others. This implies that, when schools educate learners to become democratic citizens, they need to create enabling conditions in which learners can realise their similarities and respect their differences.

The point is that *ubuntu* requires less deliberation and non-belligerent engagement as it considers people's cultural practices, lifestyles and patterns of thought, especially the African cultural practices that will facilitate deliberation by both eloquent and poor people to air their views freely. With *ubuntu*, people engaging in conversations are required to listen carefully to and show compassion for fellow discussants' stories of misfortune, and to allow those who are inarticulate to get their point across. People will not only struggle for the well-being of learners whose unemployed parents cannot afford school fees or uniforms, but will also see to it that they have access to education. In other instances, people who find it difficult to express themselves well must be given ample time to narrate their points, while others listen with respect. It is the duty of teachers to create favourable classroom environments and to help learners to clarify their own stories in a way that all learners will understand them sensibly. Finally, less deliberation with *ubuntu* provides the possibility of experiencing others through deliberative engagement and allows the excluded to contribute to discussions in one way or another. This is the framework that I contend will help Namibian citizens to achieve more inclusion and to educate citizens with the skills and knowledge to promote democracy.

It is worth mentioning that citizens (learners) do not only require individual citizenship, because “individuals cannot pursue their own self-interest without regard for the common good” (Waghid, 2004:528), but rather are required to consider the interests of others. Reinforcing this perspective, citizens require some level of civic virtues and “public spiritedness” for the common good, as pointed out by Galston (1991) and Macedo (1990). This implies that all children are required to have access to quality education, as Galston (1991:217) postulates, because for citizens to possess some level of virtue and “public spiritedness” and to act responsibly with respect to their education and that of their children, the state has to provide a basic education for all children. He further argues that four types of virtues constitute a responsible citizen:

- (i) general virtues: courage, law-abidingness and loyalty;
- (ii) social virtues: independence and open-mindedness;
- (iii) economic virtues: work ethic, capacity to delay self-gratification, adaptability to economic and technological change; and
- (iv) political virtues: capacity to discern and respect the rights of others, willingness to demand only what can be paid for, ability to evaluate the performance of those in office, willingness to engage in public discourse (Galston, 1991:217).

Concerning the aforementioned perspective, I am more convinced by Galston’s notion of citizens’ ability and willingness to question political authorities and to engage in public discourse, because I am of the opinion that Namibian citizens need to engage in and question matters of public policy, school governance and teaching and learning, as they are the goods that are

essential to enact political deliberation. In other words, effective educational policy implementation rests on responsible citizenship (cf. Waghid, 2008a:32). As regards the Namibian context, one can argue that a democratic nation-state would not succeed in attaining its transformational goals and providing a basic level of democratic education if citizens – learners, teachers and parents (unemployed, business fraternity and others stakeholders) – are not fully included in democratic conversation. This involves engaging each other in educational or public discourses to address problems that prevent the country from achieving the intended goals. I contend that the abovementioned virtues could not be attained in the absence of a minimal deliberative democratic citizenship education with *ubuntu*.

Moreover, I argue that ills such as the vandalism of school buildings and teenage pregnancies will only be addressed when all people are included in educational debates and allowed involvement and deliberation in policy discourses and school debates. Kymlicka (2002:286) asserts that all efforts to implement education policies would be in vain in the absence of cooperation by and self-restraint of citizens, without the exercise of civic virtue such as a willingness of citizens to participate, and an ability to trust and to express their sense of justice. My interest is in citizens' willingness to participate and engage each other in educational deliberation, and their ability to trust and to express their sense of justice and that of others. Unless all Namibians are fully educated to air their views and to contribute meaningfully to decision making regarding policy formation, school governance and teaching and learning, the transformational goals will not be attained that could eventually engender a defensible democratic citizenship education.

5.4 Summary

In this chapter I have tried to show that my framework (minimal democratic citizenship), i.e. less deliberation, non-belligerence, compassion, careful listening and respect and dignity, signifies an alternative way for education in Namibia. I discussed the implication of the minimal democratic citizenship framework for eliminating the dilemma of a lack of inclusion in educational discourses, policy formation and school governance. I have also explored the implications of this framework for teaching and learning in Namibian public schools and how it can help to cultivate deliberative democratic citizenry coupled with African *ubuntu*. I argued that only when all people are engaged in policy formation and school governance, and learners are educated through teaching and learning, may a lasting solution to the current societal ills engulfing Namibia be achieved.

This framework is appropriate, as it opens up the possibility for people to find deliberative spaces for decision making regarding policy formation and school governance, and at the same time this framework may guide learners to become deliberative citizens through teaching and learning. It also provides space for citizens/learners to exercise *ubuntu* as a localised practice that creates the possibility for compassion when people listen carefully to fellow human beings' stories of misfortune and struggle for their well-being. Such burning issues will be deliberated on with the intention of reaching an amicable solution to problems. The framework also nurtures all participants to show respect while debating issues of common concern, policy formation and school governance. The proposed framework also maximizes the possibilities of inclusion of the masses – especially different marginalised groups (poor people, women, disabled citizens, etc.) – in discussions and allows them to air their views while others listen carefully and show respect. It may ultimately assist the Namibian education system to cultivate deliberative democratic citizens who can engage not only locally, but also globally, in educational, political and public discourses concerning their daily lives and that of others.

As I argued, unless the education discourses, that are policy formation, school governance and teaching and learning in Namibia, devise a minimal democratic citizenship with an *ubuntu* framework, including less deliberation, non-belligerence, compassion, careful listening, respect and dignity, the country will not achieve full inclusion and eventually will fail to address the societal ills facing it.

The following chapter attempts to broaden the horizon of my argument by showing the link between the Namibian education system and NEPAD and the MDGs. Most importantly, it will underline how the above framework may assist the country to achieve some of the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs.

CHAPTER SIX

NAMIBIAN DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION – POSSIBLE LINKS WITH NEPAD AND MDGs

6.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter I focused on the implication of my alternative framework, namely a minimalist democratic citizenship education intertwined with a localised concept of African *ubuntu*. The framework entails non-belligerence and less deliberation along with *ubuntu*: compassion, careful listening and respect, and dignity, for extensive inclusion and the cultivation of a democratic citizenry in Namibia. In this chapter I shall explore the possible links between Namibia's democratic education and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Firstly, I shall offer a brief overview of the development of the MDGs and NEPAD, as well as of their respective importance to education. I shall further explore possible links between Namibia's democratic education, NEPAD and the MDGs. I shall discuss challenges that Namibia faces in achieving the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs. The chapter also demonstrates how the minimalist democratic citizenship education framework argued for in the previous chapters can assist the Namibian education system to advance some of the goals of NEPAD, in particular the MDGs. It should be noted that the educational discourse today has not only become a part of the debates locally (in Namibia), but also regionally (Africa's NEPAD), and globally (MDGs) (Divala, 2008:203). This means that the educational discourse has become a part of the global agenda as well. Thus, the above alternative form of education can help Namibian citizens to not only engage in dialogue and make their views heard, but also to contribute to decision making on their concerns at all levels – locally, regionally and globally.

I propose that a minimalist democratic citizenship education framework should connect with the cosmopolitanism ideas of hospitality and forgiveness in order

to broaden the horizon of the Namibian education system towards fulfilling its democratic role by taking up a central role in the cultivation of a democratic citizenry who can engage locally as well as globally. I also consider that the notion of a cosmopolitan citizen is well suited to the promotion of justice and education for all. Once social justice and the good of society are promoted as aims of the education system, democracy will hopefully be advanced. I have argued that the role of public schools is to educate future generations to engage in conversation and learn to strive towards justice for all as a deliberative community. My argument for a minimalist democratic citizenship education with *ubuntu* must also consolidate the idea of cosmopolitanism. The use of cosmopolitanism, as seen in Chapter 2 of this study, rests on the core notion that people are fundamentally connected to each other because they share the same “nature” – humanity (Nussbaum, 2001). This form of cosmopolitanism also believes that our belonging is secondary to our common nature as people. Further, as moral agents, people ought to be aware of the consequences of their actions towards each other, and this requires that our conversations take into account the importance of cosmopolitanism, democratic iterations, hospitality and forgiveness (Benhabib, 2006:19; Derrida, 2001:22; Nussbaum, 2001; Waghid, 2005:331). What follows is an overview of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

6.2 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – Overview

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), an initiative of 189 countries, were promulgated in 2000 and it is estimated that the MDGs and their targets will be attained by 2015. According to Republic of Namibia (2004), the MDGs were set by the international community with the intention of achieving the following eight fundamental goals:

1. Eradicate poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women

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4. Reduce child mortality
 5. Improve maternal health
 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
 7. Ensure environmental sustainability
 8. Develop a global partnership for development.

Considering that Namibia is an African nation-state that is a member of the countries involved with the MDGs, and that it is part of the global village, it compiled its own millennium development goals in 2004, which were derived from the determinant MDGs drawn up during the World Summit in 2000 (Namibia MDGs, 2004:1). Namibia's democratic government has mounted numerous strategies and policies aimed to achieve the MDGs by the set date (Namibia MDGs, 2004:1). The requirement is that the above-mentioned MDGs are achieved by all the participating countries. For this reason, some African heads of states agreed to adopt an initiative called the New Partnership for Africa's Development as a strategy to assist African countries, such as Namibia, to realise their MDGs by the projected time. Below I shall examine the goals of the NEPAD initiative.

6.3 New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) - Overview

NEPAD is an initiative introduced by African heads of states that was adopted in October 2001. According to Taylor (2005:15):

NEPAD has not, obviously, sprung from a vacuum, but there are indeed a multitude of predecessors to the partnership that allows observers to place this latest African renewal program within its broader historical and intellectual context. It is deemed vital for any coherent understanding of NEPAD's prescriptions that is strategic

framework document is placed within its proper historical circumstances, both in relation to previous African recovery projects and the broader global political economy.

It is further stated that the debate concerning Africa's development emanated before, during, and immediately after the decolonisation process, at one of the launch at the Bandung Conference of 1995. In the 1970s, the questions pertaining to how and where Africa would "fit" into the wider international political economy became prominent. Some of the profound resolutions adopted by African leaders through the OAU¹⁹ in the early years of independence were based on the notion of the economic integration of Africa as a precondition for actual independence and development. This central theme of the declaration was articulated at Algiers (1968), Addis Ababa (1970 and 1973), Kinshasa (1976), and Libreville (1977). However, from the late 1970s, variants of Africa's progress plans, frameworks, agendas and declarations were aimed at promoting development and, subsequently, democracy (Taylor, 2005:17-18). In other words, Africa has never been short of plans and programmes.

In October 2001, African heads of states introduced the NEPAD initiative. It is noted that NEPAD is the brainchild of three African leaders, namely Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, and Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria, who sold the idea to other heads of state. It is a product of the official merger of South Africa's Millennium African Recovery Programme (MARP) and the Senegalese Omega Plan. After the heads of state had endorsed the NEPAD initiative, significant interactions were undertaken with relevant foreign governments and organisations comprising the G8, the European Union, various UN agencies such as UNAID, UNICEF, UNESCO, etc., and other development partners (Osie-Hwedie, 2005:26). This implies that NEPAD is hailed as the answer to Africa's development problems;

• ¹⁹ OAU stands for the Organization of African Unity (Taylor, 2005).

it was designed by Africans for Africans. The NEPAD initiative envisions a state where “Africans must not be benevolent guardians; rather they must be architects of their own sustained upliftment” (Osie-Hwedie, 2005:27). According to paragraph 42 of NEPAD, the strategic framework document indicates that:

The New Economic Partnership for Africa’s Development recognizes that there have been attempts in the past to set out continent-wide development programs. For a variety of reasons, both internal and external, including questionable leadership and ownership by Africa’s themselves; these have been less than successful. However, there is today a new set of circumstances, which lead themselves to integrated practical implementation.

On the basis of this citation, it is clear that the NEPAD project acknowledges that previous plans were unsuccessful and NEPAD has contributed profoundly to putting African development back on the global political agenda. The NEPAD initiative is Africa’s response to achieving the MDGs, through the proper coordination of all African leaders and their countries (Diescho, 2002). Furthermore, NEPAD has delineated numerous pillars on which the success of its initiative rests. These pillars include creating conditions of sustainable development, which implies achieving peace, security, democracy and political governance initiatives; working on sectoral priorities; bridging the gap of infrastructure and human resources development; and mobilising Africa’s resources, which entails capital flow and market access initiatives (Diescho, 2002:14-15). One can conclude that NEPAD is an initiative that is championed to eradicate poverty and reduce the marginalisation of Africa in the “global village”. The questions that beg answers in this chapter include; what is the link between Namibia’s education system and NEPAD and the MDGs? How could my framework of

minimal democratic citizenship assist the Namibian education system to advance some of the goals of NEPAD and MDGs? These questions will be discussed in the following section. According to its Secretariat Report (New Partnership for Africa's Development, 2002), NEPAD "is a framework that entrenches the right of the people of Africa to determine their own development path and own strategies for integration into the world economy". In other words:

NEPAD reflects the belief of all African leaders that they have the responsibility, together with the African peoples, to address the lack of development and growth on our continent, the pressing problems of poverty and social exclusion facing the majority of our population, and Africa's increasing marginalisation from global markets for goods, services and capital.

The fundamental objective of NEPAD is to promote sustainable development on the African continent in a manner that embodies social, economic and environmental dimensions. In particular, the main aim is to eradicate poverty by meeting the MDGs highlighted in the preceding section. NEPAD's Secretariat Report (New Partnership for Africa's Development, 2002) sketches the objectives of the initiative as follows:

- Eradication of poverty
- Attainment of sustainable growth and development
- The integration of Africa into the global economy
- The acceleration of the empowerment of women

NEPAD's principles constitute:

- Africa's ownership of and responsibility for the continent's development;
- The promotion and advancement of democracy, good governance, human rights and accountable leadership;
- Self-reliant development to reduce dependence on foreign aid;
- People centeredness;
- Advancing women;
- Partnership between and among African people;
- Accelerating and deepening regional and continental economic integration;
- Building the competitiveness of African countries and the continent;
- New partnership with the industrialised world;
- Linkages of NEPAD to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other agreed goals and targets.

The principles imply that NEPAD programmes and projects rely heavily on its sectors of focus, particularly education, amongst other principles stated above, to ensure the promotion and advancement of democracy, good governance, human rights and accountable leadership and partnership (New Partnership for Africa's Development, 2002). It can be assumed that education has a major role and function to play toward the advancement of the NEPAD goals. Based on this assumption, I wish to make a call for the consolidation of the idea of cosmopolitanism. Incidentally, NEPAD has also identified the following specific programmes for special focus, namely Education for All (EFA); the development and implementation of the School Feeding Programme in collaboration with the World Food Programme

(Namibia is forceful on this programme); and increasing participation in secondary education. As highlighted above, it can be seen that EFA is one of NEPAD's programmes with a special focus on education. This, therefore, clarifies the link between NEPAD and Namibia's democratic education through EFA. The Namibian EFA shall be discussed in the following section, but it can be concluded that the NEPAD initiative rests greatly on African people and nation-states if the stated outcomes are to be achieved. Sharing the same sentiment, Osie-Hwedie (2005:25) states that:

For NEPAD to succeed, increased and more sustained investment in human development is crucial. Here is a need for progress and expansion in education, and effective health systems. Thus, education is, and must be treated as, a basic human right, and a critical human resource for a better economy. For this reason, such investments and developments in education must go beyond primary education.

In the light of the above understanding, I shall proceed to the discussion of the importance of NEPAD goals and their link to the MDGs.

6.4 The Importance of the NEPAD goals and the MDGs

The importance of the MDGs and the NEPAD initiative is that they share certain goals and targets, which are supposed to be met by each nation-state by 2015. These goals rest on the achievement of plans, such as the attainment of the Gross Domestic Growth (GDP) growth rate of above 7% per annum within 15 years, which would then need to be sustained (New Partnership for Africa's Development, 2002). The point is that a GDP rate of 7% can only be attained depending on the successful attainment of MDGs. Hence, it is worth noting that the NEPAD initiative envisages that, for the

MDGs to be achieved, the Pan-African annual economic growth rate will also have to be raised to 7% per annum. It is also interesting to note that the primary goals of the MDGs are the same as those of NEPAD, namely the eradication of extreme poverty. The aim of this goal is to halve the proportion of people whose income is less than a dollar per day, between 1990 and 2015. In this regard, this goal is envisioned as a determinant to assist those living below the poverty line, i.e. one dollar per day, to be able to fulfil at least their basic needs. Nevertheless, with such vital goals to be achieved by 2015 in the African context, this might not be realistic, since the continent is beset by an enormous number of people living in extreme poverty. For instance, in Namibia, 50% of the population lives below the poverty line, while 35% of the population are unemployed.

From the above discussion, one can say that the MDGs are goals that are structured to guide the universe in achieving some universal principles as a whole, while the NEPAD initiative is an African response to the MDGs, to be achieved by each nation-state by 2015. This implies that NEPAD is an African contextual strategy to deal with African challenges to achieve the global goals of the MDGs. Hence, Osie-Hwedie (2005:25) states that there is a need for Africa to double the current US\$50 billion in development assistance if the Millennium Development Goals are to be met. In addition, UNAIDS report 2000 (in Osie-Hwedie 2005:25) declares that:

If NEPAD is to succeed it must transform the relationship between Africa and the rest of the World. This means bringing an innovative and fresh political energy and a greatly sharpened focus to our joint efforts to push forward the development of Africa. Particularly, the African people should be empowered to demand more from their governments and of the international community.

Consequently, I wish to argue that the Namibian education system needs to consolidate the minimal democratic citizenship education in order to cultivate a less deliberative democratic citizenry, as well as connect with the idea of the cosmopolitan citizen (cosmopolitanism). This brings the discussion to the link between Namibia's democratic education and the goals of NEPAD.

6.5 The link between Namibia's Democratic Education and NEPAD

The Namibian democratic education, which is based on the philosophy of the Education for All (EFA) initiative, was introduced in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, when representatives of 155 nation-states (currently 188), 33 intergovernmental bodies and 125 non-governmental organisations pledged to work towards the goal of Education for All (World Education Forum, 2000:1). The notion of providing education to the whole universe was a great challenge for all the participating members of the international community. Expanding on the idea of EFA in April 2000, some of international organisations and UN agencies, such as UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNCEF, IMF and the World Bank, prepared an educational forum presented in Dakar, Senegal. Many heads of state, national leaders, UN agency heads, education policy makers and practitioners assembled to discuss the progress the different nation-states had made in the realisation of EFA goals (World Education Forum, 2000:1). Among others, the talks touched on the strategies and mechanisms that could enable or accelerate the provision of basic education on the one hand, and pay more attention to how the nation-states planned to attain EFA's goals on the other hand.

In the Namibian context, "The provision of education for all has been inherent in the educational policies in Namibia since independence", as alluded to in Chapter 3 of this study (see Government of the Republic of Namibia, , 2001:26). It is argued that the provision of education for all is not a drive that flows exclusively from the World Education Forum, and that was conceived as

an impetus by the Dakar World Education Declaration (Government of the Republic of Namibia, , 2001:26). However, in 1993, three years after Namibia gained independence, the democratic government promoted a vision of transformation expressed in *Toward Education for All: A Development Brief for Education, Culture, and Training*, which states that:

Education for all does not simply mean more schools or more children in school. Nor does it mean that we simply start literacy classes or increase the number of places in programmes for out of school youth. Education for all requires that we develop a new way to think about our system of education and training and how we organise it (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993:1-3).

From the above view, one can infer that education for all has been Namibia's philosophy of education. The central idea of the *Toward Education for All* policy, as alluded to in Chapter 3 of this study, was meant to pave the way for the deepening of a democratic society and changing the elitist education to one that would provide education for all Namibian children. Namibia has drawn its goals for its idea of education for all from the March 1990 meeting of a group of renowned educators and political leaders in Jomtien, Thailand, where it was advocated that education be made accessible to everyone on the globe (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993:3). The major theme of the conference and the resolutions adopted by acclamation declare that it is imperative for everyone to have access to basic education because (basic) education should now be considered a right of citizenship, and because development, however we understand it, requires a literate populace (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993:4). Most importantly, Namibia's *Toward Education for All* policy integrates the basic principles and goals of EFA, which were based on that World Declaration on *Education for All*, to which Namibia is a signatory (Government of the Republic of Namibia, , 2001:8).

The goals of EFA are as follows:

- EFA Goal 1 - Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children;
- EFA Goal 2 - Ensuring that, by 2015, all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances, and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to a completely free and compulsory primary education of good quality;
- EFA Goal 3 - Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes;
- EFA Goal 4 - Achieving a 50% improvement at all levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;
- EFA Goal 5 - Limiting gender disparities in primary and secondary education, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to, and achievement in, basic education of good quality; and
- EFA Goal 6 - Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence for all, so that everyone will achieve recognised and measurable learning outcomes, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life-skills.

From the above goals one can conclude that education for all will only be achieved if primary education is made more accessible to all the world's children. It is clear that the flourishing of a nation-state rests on the provision of universal primary education, which will ultimately benefit the country concerned. The Namibian government has worked towards EFA because it is regarded as vital to facilitating development and social equity. The government has also initiated development goals, which were conceived in an

effort to revive and sustain (a) economic growth; (b) employment creation; (c) reduction of inequity in income distribution; and (d) reduction of poverty, derivative from the EFA National Plan of Action 2001-2015 (Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, 1993; Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:8-9). The Plan of Action outlined other programmes that were engineered toward the achievement of the EFA goals, such as NDP1²⁰ and NDP2²¹. These two plans aim to ensure the attainment of the Education for All goals (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:1-11). The National Plan of Action rests on the understanding that all citizens of Namibia will require jobs that will enable them to live a better life with the minimum cases of poverty. Each person is entitled to human rights and freedom, whereby each individual feels free to exercise and practice their own rights without fear of discrimination or intimidation, and all people will have equal access to resources.

The EFA project was strengthened when the Namibian government committed itself to achieving the six Dakar goals, which provide universal, equitable access to quality education, democracy, lifelong learning, early childhood development, and education for girls, women, the marginalised and people with disabilities (Government of the Republic of Namibia, , 2001:3). As a result, the Namibian government spends a huge percentage of its annual budget on education in order for the EFA goals to be achieved. It can be noted that the country has made profound strides in achieving the provision of access to education. Despite such achievement, the country is faced with the

²⁰ NDP 1 is an abbreviation for National Development Plan One, a plan covering the period between 1995 and 2000. NDP 1 aimed at “providing family and community early childhood initiatives, provide for universal primary education, to be extended where possible to junior secondary education as well as the materials and social environment that is conducive to learning and committed learners, teachers and communities” Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:9)

²¹ NDP 2 refers to National Development Plan Two, which focused on the period between 2001 and 2006 and delineated the vision of the government as “sustainable and equitable improvements in the quality of life of all people in Namibia which provides reviving and sustaining economic growth, creating employment, reducing inequalities in income distribution, reducing poverty and promoting human rights” (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:10).

possibility of not attaining all its targeted goals, as highlighted in Chapters 1 and 3 of this study. The dilemmas will be discussed in the following section. As discussed in the previous section, NEPAD is an initiative that was endorsed by African heads of state a decade after EFA in 2001. Its goals and targets were projected to commence in 2001 and to be attained by 2015. EFA is listed as one of the special initiatives with the aim of facilitating a specific focus and ideas. Thus, EFA is a strategic arm of the NEPAD initiative, which serves as a response to poverty alleviation in Africa and as a vehicle to transport and enable the continent (including Namibia) to achieve the MDGs. One can conclude that there is a clear link between Namibia's democratic education and NEPAD, because EFA is one of NEPAD's programmes; therefore, it is evidently linked to the MDGs as well. What follows is an exposition of the challenges facing Namibian education in attaining the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs.

6.6 Challenges facing Namibia in achieving the goals of NEPAD and MDGs

I would like to reiterate my arguments that numerous challenges are confronting not only the world at large, but also Africa as a continent and, in this case, Namibia as a nation-state. Regarding the MDGs, the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, declared 2009 as the year of development. Ban Ki-moon urged that "we need to focus attention and accelerate the process to achieve, to realize, the Goals of the MDGs by the target year, 2015. We have only six years left before 2015". He added that, "In the decade since the Goals were first agreed, we have learned a great deal about what works, and where we need to focus our efforts. Evidence shows that the Goals can be achieved, even in the poorest countries, when good policies and projects are backed by adequate resources". It was also observed that the MDGs have triggered unprecedented efforts worldwide in the fight against poverty, hunger, disease and environmental destruction. Hence, Ban Ki-moon declared that, "we can and must do more, especially given the growing impact of climate change, increasing global hunger, and continuing fallout from the economic and

financial crisis". He urged "the heads of state and governments to engage fully in ensuring a successful, practical, action-oriented outcome that delivers results for the billions of people struggling to meet their basic needs and to live in dignity and peace" (United Nations MDGs Summit, 2009). <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/summitstroy.shtml>.

Although the UN is concerned about the challenges facing the world in the attainment of the MDGs, it is noted that Africa is behind the other continents, and various problems hinder the attainment of the goals of the EFA, NEPAD and MDG initiatives. The United Nations MDGs Summit (2009) reports that:

By addressing education challenges with particular attention to issues of access, quality and equity, African countries will be in a better position to benefit from economic growth, industrial development and investment opportunities. In 2006 alone, some 101 million children, more than half of them girls, were not attending primary school, according to UNICEF's latest State of the World's Children report. Almost half of them live in sub-Saharan Africa. At the current rate, millions of children especially girls, children with disabilities, orphaned and other vulnerable children will remain excluded and be denied their fundamental right to education in 2015. Provision will also be made for special care and support to orphans and other vulnerable children and to strengthen the linkages between schools and communities through student governance bodies and parent-teacher associations. Despite efforts to promote access to quality education, many African countries are still grappling with such issues as rural-urban disparities, the combined effects of poverty, climate change, the impact of HIV and AIDS, high dropout rates, deep-

seated socio-cultural inequalities, the impact of civil conflicts, and sheer lack of basic infrastructure, including lack of water and poor sanitation.

From the above observation, it can be said that the African continent, through the NEPAD initiative, is faced with immense challenges in the effort to attain the MDGs. Osie-Hwedie (2005:32) points out that, although the African nation-states have the willingness to attain the projected goals, there is a great need for donor assistance for the realisation of the goals. This implies that the provision of education for all children, young or adult, would depend heavily on sufficient educational resources, that is; human capital, financial resources and all other relevant means. He further notes that another major reason why the education system in developing countries, especially in Africa (in this context Namibia) is lagging behind is due to a lack of human capacity. The point is that African nation-states need to develop mechanisms that will eradicate the gap caused by the continent's brain drain. There is a need to attract intellectuals to assist in boosting our education system. I agree with Osie-Hwedie's idea that the education system in African nation-states (in this case Namibia) needs to consolidate minimal democratic citizenship to cultivate democratic, less deliberative citizenry and to connect to the idea of cosmopolitanism if some of the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs are to be advanced. Osie-Hwedie (2005:33) argues that:

Governments must not merely pay lip service to good governance, human rights and democracy, but must be seen to practise them. There must be tolerance of diversity, open and honest internal dialogue, and the respect of the rule of law and national institutions. All these are necessary ingredients for peace and development.

With this in mind, one can ask whether Africans, that is, the civil society and the public, are well acquainted with and participate in the development of NEPAD. Osie-Hwedie (2005:27) responds that, despite the fact that NEPAD is an initiative for Africans by Africans, it seems as if it was initiated on behalf of the masses and there were no mechanisms for consultation and engagement with the majority of the people on the continent. It can be concluded that, once the African heads of states discussed the initiative, it was taken to the Western capitals, even though there was no meaningful discussion among Africans themselves. In this sense, one can say that NEPAD seems to be a policy imposed on the people for implementation without their voices or contribution to its formation. This then raises the question of the legitimacy of the initiative. Govender (in Osie-Hwedie, 2005:33) asserts that “there has been little or no engagement with civil society, and that, as a poverty alleviation mechanism, NEPAD lacks the participatory element essential to the success of the programme”. I am attracted to Govender’s observation of non-engagement by society, a situation in which there is a lack of a participatory element, which then hampers the success of such an initiative.

Sharing the same sentiment, the recent UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report (2010:271) laments that, “with five years to go the 2015 target date for many of the key goals set on the Dakar Framework of Action, progress towards the EFA goals is at a crossroads”. Although much has been achieved over the last decade, many of the world’s poorest countries (e.g. Namibia) are not on track to meet the goals set in Dakar in 2000. Thus, for such countries, a big question mark now hangs over the prospect of achieving the envisaged goals. The reason for falling off track is due to the threat posed by the fallout from the financial crisis (UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2010:271). Thus, there is a need for an urgent and effective response in order to enable the nation-states that are lagging behind to be on par with the developed countries. Another, greater threat is the “business as usual” mindset of many national governments, international financial institutions and parts of the United Nations system. The UNESCO EFA Report 2010, which calls for

placing marginalisation at the core of the EFA agenda if the goals are to be achieved, appears fascinating.

The UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010 believes that it is important to reach all sections of society and the regions that are being left behind (in this case Namibia) in the attainment of the Dakar EFA goals. It has been stated that the “EFA goals are for everyone and grounded in a commitment towards social justice and human rights” (UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2010:271). As a result, there is a need to strengthen commitments to equity and inclusion in the most efficient way to accelerate progress towards the 2015 deadline. Most importantly, the EFA Report states that failure to address inequality, exclusion, stigmatisation and discrimination, on the basis of wealth, gender, ethnicity, language, location and disability, is holding back the progress of the EFA initiative. In this regard, in Namibia, which has one of the highest rates of inequality in the world, the EFA will not be achieved successfully and fully. Despite the fact that Namibia spent a huge amount of its annual budget on education, the country is still battling with the challenges impeding the realisation of its EFA goals. According to the Government of the Republic of Namibia (2001:26-28), the challenges include (a) the provision of education to marginalised children in rural areas, including orphans and vulnerable children; (b) the inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream education; and (c) the strengthening of the national literacy programmes. Other challenges in public rural schools comprise lack of running water, electricity and sanitary facilities, as well as the supply of teaching and learning materials.

In addition, the lack of equipment in schools, absenteeism, drop-out rates, challenges of education technology, HIV/Aids, the high unemployment rate, especially among the youth, as well as inadequate financial resources to address all the above burning issues hamper the attainment of the EFA goals (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:38-9). Besides the financial constraints, the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs may not be attained

effectively unless Namibia's educational discourses consolidate minimal democratic citizenship and connect with cosmopolitanism idea of forgiveness in order to include fully all citizens, especially the marginalised groups, in deliberation, as argued in Chapters 4 and 5 of this study. The point here is that people must not only be expected to implement the NEPAD initiative or policy, but their voices and views need to be heard as they contribute to the formation of such initiatives. In this way, they claim ownership and are held accountable to any failures. There is a need for robust inclusion through less deliberation in democracy, whereby the civil society and the nation at large engage in educational deliberation in order to achieve the NEPAD goals and, eventually, the MDGs.

It should be restated here that there is a big challenge resulting from the inability of a great number of parents to send their children to school, mainly due to poverty. When compared with other countries in the world, Namibia shows one of the highest disparities between the rich and poor (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2001:27). Thus, it is clear that Namibia's education system may find it difficult, if not impossible, to achieve the projected goals of NEPAD and the MDGs by the 2015 deadline. Furthermore, because NEPAD's policy formation is largely connected to EFA, Hwedie concludes that the nature of the formation of the initiative gives the impression that Africa is resubmitting itself to the same processes and relationships that led to its marginalisation in the past. It seems NEPAD is not well known, and it may not even be a priority in some countries, such as Namibia. Voicing the same concern, the UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring Report (2010) states that numerous challenges confront most developing nations, or the poorest nations in the world, in their effort to achieve their EFA goals, and financial constraint is one of the challenges.

In this sense, it is clear that; overall, Namibia does not fare well in its attainment of the MDGs. I shall proceed to show how the minimal democratic citizenship framework may potentially assist Namibia's democratic education

system to achieve some of the goals of NEPAD and, ultimately, the MDGs. This can be achieved through less deliberative and non-belligerent engagement with *ubuntu* and by being connected to the idea of cosmopolitanism, that is, hospitality and forgiveness.

6.7 Minimal democratic citizenship framework and the attainment of some goals of NEPAD and MDGs

The argument in this thesis is that, unless Namibia's educational discourses on policy formation, school governance, and teaching and learning devise a minimal democratic citizenship framework, which encompasses less deliberation and non-belligerence coupled with African *ubuntu*, the country will not eliminate the dilemma of the exclusion of civil society, especially the marginalised groups. This will thwart the country's process of engendering a defensible democratic education and will eventually impede the arrangement to achieve the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs. Although Namibia acted as a signatory to NEPAD and the MDGs, it seems the education system will not be able to achieve the envisaged goals by the 2015 deadline. The Namibian democratic education goals are related to the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs. However, the investigation of Namibia's democratic education system in Chapter 3 of this study shows that there is much need for concerted efforts in order to realise the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs.

Additionally, the recent MDG conference held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, where all signatories from all corners of the world met to review and rethink the progress of the participants, established that African countries have failed to achieve the conceived goals. Therefore, the participating members of the MDG initiative called for the setting up of the necessary mechanisms to attain them (Osie-Hwedie, 2005). I contend that less deliberative democracy possesses the necessary resources to help Namibia's democratic government, through its education system, to achieve some of the NEPAD goals and the MDGs. This perspective is based on the concern that only five

years remain to meet the MDG deadline, which is 2015. One has to think deeply, reorganise, reflect on new mechanisms and reasonable strategies, and be innovative for African nation-states to fast-track the achievement of their goals. This means that there is a need for concerted efforts from all citizens through less deliberation if Namibia as well as other African countries were to achieve the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs. Duncker and Humblot (1996, cited in Waghid, 2010:246), argue that:

Africa's political autocracies which have persisted despite the formation of the African Union and its New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) project, whose purpose is to foster a culture of democratic governance... NEPAD holds that the socioeconomic recovery and development of the African continent, is impossible without true democracy, respect for human rights, peace, and good governance.

I concur with the above view on the part of African leaders seems inspiring and there is every justification for supporting such a view, since peace, security, good governance, respect for human rights, and sound economic management are preconditions for democracies to thrive. I would like to maintain this view, given that the attainment of international competitiveness, re-integration into the global economy, and building capacity on the African continent cannot be achieved without consolidating democracy. Nevertheless, it is at the level of democratic discourse that NEPAD's biggest challenge lies. The question asked is, "How do NEPAD's partners sustain and cultivate spheres of communication and negotiation, which are not only central to the success of the alliance but also necessary in order to consolidate and enhance democratic discourse?" (Waghid, 2010:246). Waghid further states that it is not simply a matter of strengthening the mechanisms to resolve conflicts, promote human rights, and restore and maintain macroeconomic stability. Rather, it is a matter of NEPAD's partners taking seriously the

principles of a minimal democratic citizenship, that is, less deliberative engagement, to enable their conversation to continue (Waghid, 2010:246). In other words, the political tyranny represented by NEPAD plans not only to undermine the voices of the majority of people, but also to aggravate the already unstable climate of political instability and marginalisation of the vulnerable (see Abdi, Ellis & Shizha, 2005:458). One can conclude that there are numerous challenges in attaining the goals of NEPAD, especially in engaging the masses and contributing to public conversations of their concerns.

Considering the above view, it is certain that there is a clear link between Namibia's democratic education and NEPAD and the MDGs, because they are striving towards the same major goals such as eradicating poverty, improving health, and fighting HIV/AIDS, etc. Other goals include promoting gender equality, the empowerment of women and promoting democracy, human dignity and rights. Thus, citizens should be educated and nurtured through less deliberation so that they may engage freely and be fully included in public or educational debates. In this way, democracy will be fostered and issues of common concern, such as poverty, will be alleviated. At the same time, the HIV and AIDS pandemic could be mitigated through less deliberation, since citizens (people) could contribute in various ways towards the achievement of the envisioned goals.

In this process, people's human rights and dignity will be promoted and advanced. Citizens should be allocated ample space to articulate their views and concerns regarding all societal ills highlighted in the last three chapters of this study. Some of these views might be addressed through conversations that have to do with less deliberation, non-belligerence and infused with more compassion, and to listen carefully with respect and promote human dignity. As argued in the preceding chapter, if citizens are nurtured to engage in a less deliberative manner without provoking and stirring distressful conversations, people may carefully listen to each other's stories and vulnerabilities, while showing respect for one another's utterances and ordeals, a number of issues

will be addressed. Alternatively, when the people's views are all considered in debates, human dignity and rights will be manifested amongst the participants, not only in Namibia's educational debates but also in conversations about NEPAD and the MDGs. In this way, the goal in relation to poverty, the HIV/Aids pandemic, gender equality and women empowerment will be reached. To expand my argument, Namibia's educational discourses at all levels must not only advance minimal democratic citizenship with *ubuntu*, but also consolidate and cultivate cosmopolitan citizens. These will enable Namibia's citizens, as citizens of the world, to assist the country in achieving some of the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs.

At this point, I wish to connect citizenship education with the notion of the cosmopolitan citizen to advance my call for minimal democratic citizenship with *ubuntu* for Namibia. I support Nussbaum's view, which follows the Stoic tradition that states, "Each of us dwells...in two communities - the local community of our birth and in the community of human argument and aspiration... in which we look neither to this corner nor to that, but measure the boundaries of our nation by the sun" (Nussbaum, 1997:59). Taking into account the above perspective that the Namibian people are not only citizens of Namibia but also of Africa, and ultimately citizens of the world, I hold that Namibians must also be educated to be able to engage in dialogues as world citizens rather than simply as Africans or Namibians. In other words, because the citizens of Namibia do not only belong to Africa as a continent, and NEPAD's dialogue transcends the boundaries of nationality, they must be able to engage in the MDGs as a global dialogue. Benhabib (2006) has rightly called for cosmopolitan norms (e.g. hospitality) in democratic iterations as an essential feature of Namibia's democratic education, as noted in Chapter 3. She points out that democratic iterations guided by hospitality require that all nation-states be accommodated and have equal opportunities to engage one another in deliberations, not only within their nation-states but also on cosmopolitan levels, regarding issues affecting the people, and the countries' as well as global concerns.

Strengthening the above sentiment, Derrida (2001), in his study, *On cosmopolitanism and forgiveness*, argues for two things: cosmopolitanism as a concern for immigrants and asylum seekers, being hospitable to them in conversations, and forgiveness of the unforgivable. Since Namibia connects with the goals of NEPAD and aims to achieve good governance and co-operation, partnership and democracy, I support Derrida that citizens engaging in such deliberations need to embrace the idea of pluralism, hospitality and forgiveness in order to achieve justice for all. In this process, all citizens will be invited and will receive hospitality, engaging with one another irrespective of their differences and forgiving one another in order to advance some of the goals of NEPAD. Derrida admits that forgiveness leaves him torn (“partage”): “I remain torn”, i.e. with reference to post-colonial violence in Algeria, “but without power, desire, or need to decide” (Derrida, 2001:51). He stresses the concept of forgiveness and the need to expose the rule of political appropriation that sidesteps, rather than upholds, justice in the name of reconciliation, which is also the case in Namibia.

Nevertheless, in the absence of the law, hospitality “would be in danger of remaining a pious and irresponsible desire, without form and without potency, and of even being perverted at any moment” (Derrida, 2001:23). Moreover, “[i]t is a question of knowing how to transform and improve the law, and of knowing if this improvement is possible within an historical space which takes place between the law of an unconditional hospitality... and the conditional laws of the right to hospitality” (Derrida, 2001:22). From this perspective, I argue for hospitality as a condition for cosmopolitanism to embrace dialogue regarding the NEPAD goals and the MDGs, in which participating countries, whether developed or developing (e.g. Namibia), would contribute to deliberations regarding policy development. Since Namibia, like many other African countries, lags behind in the attainment of such fundamental goals, the people might not find it possible to deliberate at the same pace as others. Consequently, the community of engagement must be hospitable to them and work together to address, or propose mechanisms to address, burning issues impeding the nation from achieving the goals.

Furthermore, I echo Derrida's (2001:32) call for forgiveness as a condition for cosmopolitanism to enclose the Namibian educational debates, "forgiving only the unforgivable". This implies that, although the colonial and apartheid education systems can be unforgivable, Derrida calls for forgiveness because it can help citizens to think anew in order to help Namibia achieve some of the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs. In this sense, forgiveness need to surface in the educational discourses, despite the education system's long history of colonialism and apartheid; the participants (citizens) need to forgive their colonisers in order to consider each other in dialogue. At the same time, both colonised and colonisers are required to view each other as part of humanity, especially in countries that have been convicted of crimes against humanity. Not only the colonies but also those who colonised others must be able to consider others' misery or predicaments (like those experienced in Namibia) as their own, and struggle together to assist in achieving the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs. The point I am stressing is that the minimal democratic citizenship framework, together with the cosmopolitan idea of forgiveness in educational/public discourses, could help people to deliberate and address the many ills plaguing society.

Seeing that there are only five years left for all countries to attain the goals set for 2015, all the participants need to consider the other as human beings. These challenges will be addressed through deliberation and a possible solution will be attained for those problems especially. When Namibia's educational conversations consolidate the idea of cosmopolitan citizenship, citizens will regard others as fellow citizens of the world and consider the otherness of others while forgiving them in order to address the many ills of the society and achieve the envisioned goals. When Namibian citizens are prepared to partake in educational and public conversations and engage in dialogue regarding NEPAD, their voices will ultimately help Namibia to attain the MDGs. My central argument is that only when Namibian citizens are educated to engage in the discourses at all levels, local, regional and global, will they be able to contribute well to efforts to achieve some of the goals of

NEPAD and the MDGs. In this way, when citizens deliberate and practice forgiveness, possible solutions to some of the daunting challenges that presently confront the Namibian society could be attained. Thus, the Namibian public obligation should not only consider citizenship education, but also consider themselves as citizens of the world and consolidate cosmopolitanism as the idea of forgiveness, “forgiving only the unforgivable”, for some goals of NEPAD and the MDGs to be achieved.

6.8 Summary

This chapter has attempted to clarify the possible link between Namibia’s democratic education, NEPAD and the MDGs. It has shown that Africa had various initiatives and development strategies, which led to the introduction of the NEPAD initiative. The NEPAD initiative is an African response to the execution and the attainment of the MDGs, which are closely linked to the NEPAD project called EFA. EFA serves as a strategic programme for NEPAD to achieve the MDGs. Namibia’s education system consolidates the goals of EFA, which are derived from the NEPAD initiative. This chapter also reiterates the numerous challenges faced by Namibia’s democratic education system in the effort to attain the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs. I have shown that the NEPAD initiative relies heavily on African people for the promotion and advancement of democracy, good governance, human rights and accountable leadership. The main argument in this chapter is that, for Namibia’s democratic education system to achieve some of the targeted goals of NEPAD and the MDGs, there is a great need for a minimalist democratic citizenship framework with *ubuntu* to consolidate the ideas of cosmopolitanism, hospitality and forgiveness that will enable citizens to forgive each other, especially the colonial and apartheid education system, in order to engage in educational discourse to determine how best the country (or the continent) can achieve the set goals.

In concluding this study, the next chapter shall provide a summary of the main findings and propose possibilities for future research, as well as offer a response to potential criticisms this thesis may face.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

7.1 Introduction

In this concluding chapter of the study, I would like to provide a summary of the main findings and comment on possible areas for future research. In the brief discussion of the main findings of the study, I demonstrate how these findings potentially advance transformative education in Namibia. It is also vital to show how these findings link up with the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs. This chapter shall also provide recommendations for future research and offer a response to potential criticisms this thesis may face.

7.2 Main findings of the study

This study has explored education for democratic citizenship and cosmopolitanism in the Republic of Namibia. The analysis of some major educational policy documents has shown that democratic participation and consultation could serve as a vehicle to advance democracy in the Namibian educational discourse, that is, in the areas of policy formulation, school governance, and teaching and learning in public schools. However, the main finding of the study is that there is a dilemma of a lack of inclusion of the masses, especially the marginalised groups (such as the poor, disabled, and women and children), in educational and public conversations.

An investigation of Western theories of democratic citizenship revealed that deliberation is a core notion in democracy, and that it is accompanied by inclusion, equality, reasonableness, publicity, hospitality, compassion and belligerence. On the other hand, the African conception of democratic citizenship, which advocates for an African humanness, *ubuntu*, indigenous

knowledge and cultural and traditional practices and experiences, needs to be considered if a defensible democratic education is to be advanced. The above perspectives and features informed my understanding of what democratic citizenship entails. These elements helped me to analyse the Namibian democratic educational policy documents, which show that the proposition in the Namibian educational policy documents is incommensurable with the modern conception of democratic citizenship, which involves deliberation, inclusion, equality, reasonableness, publicity, compassion, hospitality, belligerence and African *ubuntu*.

My quest for an appropriate approach to democratic citizenship education through which to address the dilemma of the lack of inclusion was informed by the work of McLaughlin (1992). His minimal-maximal interpretation of democratic citizenship guided my thinking, and it was discovered that a minimalist democratic citizenship framework, coupled with *ubuntu*, could be a viable option/approach for the context of Namibia. Therefore, the study proposes a minimalist democratic citizenship framework with the African value of *ubuntu*, which entails *non-belligerence and less deliberation* fused with *compassion, careful listening, respect and dignity*. The target is an inclusive policy framework for the marginalised groups that could assist the country to engender a defensible democratic citizenship education. This framework is well thought out, since it takes into account the local people's historical background, as well as their traditional and cultural practices.

The present study has also discovered that, since Namibia's democratic citizenship education is clearly linked with NEPAD, the MDGs and EFA, the minimalist democratic citizenship education framework may not only help in eliminating the lack of inclusion in addressing the societal ills plaguing the country, but it may also assist in achieving some of the goals of NEPAD, the MDGs and some EFA goals.

7.3 Do these findings potentially advance transformative education in Namibia?

The findings show that Namibia's transformational goals, that is, democracy, access, equality and quality, are at stake in the absence of a democratic citizenry, which should be fully included in education/public debates on their concerns. The point here is that marginalised groups and the general public should not be excluded from decision making regarding policy formation, school governance, and teaching and learning, and the many ills confronting the country (e.g. poverty, HIV/AIDS, gender inequality, unemployment, domestic violence, rape cases, drug abuse, teenage pregnancies, etc.). The social problems could be solved when the afflicted or victims of such ills offer suggestions on how to address their misfortunes, while others listen carefully, with the compassion and respect that promote human dignity. In this process, the desired transformation will be advanced, since there will be a redress of the current exclusion of the marginalised voices from the dialogue that pertains to their interests. This would eventually lead to social justice for all.

7.4 How do these findings link up with the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs?

This thesis shows that Namibia's education system links with the NEPAD initiative and the MDGs through the EFA programme. However, without the full inclusion of the general public, particularly the marginalised groups, in public dialogue, the above goals may not be achieved at all. Since some of the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs are also prevalent in Namibia's EFA, the thesis argues that, unless civil society, especially the marginalised groups, accesses the deliberative space to make their voices heard in public and in educational deliberations, it will be difficult for Namibia and other African nation-states to advance good governance and cooperation, and this would hamper the attainment of the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs. Thus, this thesis argues that there is a need to educate Namibia's citizens to engage in educational dialogues in order to assist the country to attain some of the goals

of NEPAD and the MDGs. It can be said that the fact that Namibia serves as a member of NEPAD and supports the MDGs requires of its citizens to be educated to have the capacity to engage in deliberation about things happening within their nation-states, but also in educational deliberations that take place at the regional and international level. In this process, everyone ought to be accommodated and be treated as equal, and their problems should be addressed in a cosmopolitan manner. In other words, there is a need for citizens to be hospitable to the otherness of others, and to forgive the unforgivable, in order to address some of the crises confronting not only Namibia, but also the world, while striving to reach some of the goals of NEPAD and the MDGs by 2015.

7.5 Recommendations for future research

This study has attempted to explore whether the Namibian education system acquired a defensible democratic citizenship education in its educational policy documents after the country gained independence and democratic rule. Since the central focus of this thesis is the notion of democratic citizenship and cosmopolitanism in education in Namibian public schools, there is room for future research on democratic citizenship and cosmopolitanism in relation to higher education. The other possibility is that, since the African philosophy of *ubuntu* appears to be central to the current research in educational policy studies, there is a great need to further explore the concept of *ubuntu* and deliberative democratic citizenship in the Namibian education system.

Since this study is not immune to criticism, it may be necessary to offer a response to potential critics of the argument for a minimalist democratic citizenship from the African perspective of *ubuntu* highlighted in this thesis.

7.6 Possible criticism

Potential critics may argue that a minimalist form of democratic citizenship could pose a danger to the **mission** of democracy that Namibia, Africa and the entire world desires. My response to this criticism would be that this study does not reject a maximalist form of democratic citizenship, but rather opts to create an opportunity for Namibian citizens, especially the excluded and marginalised groups, to find deliberative spaces in which to make their voices heard and to contribute to decision making and policy formation regarding their concerns. At the same time, I would argue that, by educating Namibian citizens to engage in a non-belligerent approach and with less deliberation, which is a minimalist form of engagement, they could be empowered to move progressively towards a belligerent and discursive deliberation, which is a maximalist form of engagement and a desirable agenda for what the world requires in the long run. I am arguing that those who are currently excluded from debates due to their vulnerability and inability to actively articulate should be permitted to deliberate in the same way as those who are already deliberating actively and belligerently in order for Namibia to achieve its intended transformational goals and to advance democracy. If other researchers have different ideas about that would enable Namibia to engender a defensible democratic citizenship education, deliberation may well continue.

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