

Fieldwork Internship Program 2012
Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, Kyoto University

Reflection sheet

Name: Antonie Lyson Chigeda 2012 Year (you enroll in ASAFAS)

1. Research title :

Democratic citizenship education in Malawi; linkage between deliberative democracy and citizenship teaching and learning in schools.

2. Period of your fieldwork :

04 / 09 / 2012 ~ 29 / 11 / 2012 (84 days)

3. Please write your research purpose and aim.

The purpose of the research was to explore the linkage between the ideals and aspirations for deliberative democracy and the citizenship teaching and learning in secondary schools in Malawi. Following the purpose of the research, the study aimed at responding to the following questions;

- How is citizenship teaching and learning reflected in school culture and governance systems, in Malawian schools?
- What classroom practices characterize citizenship teaching and learning in Malawian schools?
- To what extent are the classroom practices, and school culture and governance systems, related to the aspirations of deliberative democracy?
- Why is deliberative democracy critical in fostering and sustaining active citizenship in emerging democracies like Malawi?

4. Please write up your brief outline on “how did you achieve the original goals which you have described in your submitted proposal?”

To achieve the study aims and purposes, data was collected in schools from one of the six education divisions in Malawi, the South East Education Division. Four schools were selected from the four districts and these represented the high level Conventional secondary schools (CSS) and low level Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSS) for good comparisons on practices. Theoretical sampling was used in selecting schools on the given requirements. School Principals, Teachers, and students in forms one and four formed the study sample. Data collection instruments were developed by the researcher and these were pilot tested in two separate secondary schools before their use in the study schools. Both qualitative and quantitative data was

collected through personal interviews, questionnaires, classroom observations and literature study. Data was analysed using qualitative and quantitative approaches to respond to the research questions stated.

Preliminary analysis of the research data indicates a weak linkage between current school practices and the aspirations of deliberative democracy. Teaching practices do not encourage high level critical discourse, and debating and exploring different points of view. It is dominantly focused on recall. Governance and school culture reflects conservative and rigid rule following by the students with little involvement of the students in the process. This shows that the present teaching practices, school culture and governance practices provides little space for students to cultivate critical perspectives that will foster knowledge, values and skills requisite for active participation in the current democracy in Malawi. It provides weak support for student activism and rationally voicing out their thoughts and views on matters affecting them both in school and beyond the school, as should be the case in a strong democratic society. A situation which according to theorists does not support growth and development of strong democracy in a society.

5. Please describe your plan and perspective on future fieldwork and other overseas academic activity.

In pursuance of the findings of the study stated above, I intend to disseminate the findings of this study through seminars and conferences as opportunities may allow and get feedback from these presentations that would inform a follow up study. The follow up study shall focus on understanding why schools are struggling to teach towards a vibrant deliberative democratic culture in Malawi, and in the process also assess the contribution of current education practices towards the growth and development of deliberative democratic culture particularly in emerging democracies like that of Malawi. This work consequently shall form the core of my doctoral dissertation at the end of my study program.