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The paradox of civic education in Malawi's education system: regaining the missed opportunities

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There is a common assumption that the removal of civics from the curriculum between 1995 and 2002, when Malawi became a democracy might have deformed citizenship and civic education (CE). This narrative assumes that civics, as a discipline, was critical for instilling democratic and civic values among Malawians. This then prompted the Tonse Alliance Government (TAG) to change the Ministry of Civic Education and Culture (MoCC) to the Ministry of Civic Education and National Unity (MoCENU) as the first step. Additionally, the then Minister of MoCENU proposed a policy change to reintroduce civics in schools arguing that, it is only through this subject that democratic citizenship can be realized. Accordingly, this paper sought to argue that mere changing of MoCC to MoCENU, and reintroducing civics in schools may add nothing toward the creation of democratic citizenship when we consider global trends. This paper therefore utilized qualitative research design especially Critical Hermeneutics to analyze available literature on citizenship and CE trends, its conceptions and common issues around the globe. In doing so, the paper sought to explain whether Malawi's CE projects have been on the right trajectory or not, and how power-relations and political interests have shaped its development. Mainly, we ascribed to the epigram that, *straightening a tree is better done in its sapling*. In other words, the best spaces for behavior change and habit formation remain the schools because they are naturally designed to prepare children for such roles and functions. While our arguments might not be final, we still understand that many researches have held a fragmented view of citizenship and CE. We thus sought to analyze these two concepts in the lenses of Critical Pedagogy as suggested by Paulo Freire and Henry Giroux who understood schools as political spaces where the hegemony captures the curriculum to oppress society while protecting their interests. By advocating for a democratic model of education anchored in humanization, problem-posing, and critical conscientization, Critical Pedagogy molds students into future citizens who values critical thinking, transparency and democratic values.

KEYWORDS

civics, citizenship education, global citizen movement, four-corner stones, Critical Pedagogy (CP), oppression and conscientization, emancipation and gender equality, curriculum reforms

Introduction and background to citizenship education and Malawi

While the term CE may be relatively new in Malawi given shortage of literature in this field (Shara, 2002; Namphande et al., 2017; Manthalu, 2018; Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga, 2022; Kendal and Samati, 2022), its values have existed in Malawi since 1965 when the country became independent from Britain. Within the schooling context, CE has been experience through civics as a discipline until 2002 when the curriculum was revised in response to the coming of democracy in Malawi (see Manthalu, 2018; Kendal and Samati, 2022). As Chingombe (2020) and Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga (2022) observed, countries that were under the British Protectorate such as Zimbabwe Zambia and Malawi among others, the type of CE that was offered in schools was mainly aimed at preparing citizens who would be obedient to the authorities, and could help advance colonial agendas such as that of protectionism and exploitation. Thus, Nafukho et al. (2005), Mweso (2014), and Chingombe (2020) called this CE diluted knowledge, which was aimed at creating, gullible and docile individuals who would not challenge the authority against abuses. Furthermore, Nafukho et al. (2005) reiterated that the British were aware of what had happened in Morocco and Cameroun where the citizens had access to critical CE which eventually enlightened them into staging a revolution against the French colonizers, hence the British avoided such risks. Similarly, Kamuzu Banda, being a British trained medical doctor and historian (see Mweso, 2014; Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga, 2022) had read about these revolts hence chose to adopt the British leadership and education model by systematically using CE curriculum to consolidate his powers (Mweso, 2014). As Mapanje (1981), Mweso (2014), and Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga (2022) argued, Dr. Banda also used different state machinery and party militias such as Malawi Young Pioneers (MYP or Kayombes), Youth League and the Special Branch Police to suppress any potential dissents while creating a silence culture through a god-father-like monster, often known as Kamuzuism.

Civic education and citizenship in the postcolonial Malawi context

When Malawi got independence from Britain in 1964, just like many other African countries, Dr. Banda became the first president under the Malawi Congress Party (MCP). As observed by Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga (2022), Banda introduced a type of CE that would help create gullible and docile workers who would replace the colonialists in the industries, similar to those described by Bowles and Gintis (1976) of the Correspondence Theory. It was the same time that the University of Malawi (UNIMA) was founded to train human capital for long-term purposes. Around the same period, civics was introduced in primary schools as a tool for developing nationalistic and patriotic citizens who would not only serve Malawi but would also support the political interests of Dr. Banda and his MCP through the Four Corner Stones (Four Commandments), namely: unity, loyalty, obedience and discipline (Mweso, 2014; Manthalu, 2018; Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga, 2022). Additionally, Manthalu (2018) and Chingombe (2020)

contend that civics was not a bad subject in itself, but rather that African dictators such as Dr. Banda (Malawi), Robert Mugabe (Zimbabwe), and Dr. Kenneth Kaunda (Zambia) used this subject as a tool for stamping their authority over their citizens. For example, civics covered topics such as community engagement, road safety rules, obedience, patriotism, voting systems, and discipline among others (also see Mweso, 2014; Namphande et al., 2017). Equally so, the same civics was used as a tool for repressing dissenting voices through invocation of the Four Commandments such as unity, loyalty, obedience and discipline such that the citizens were forced to memorize and recite these commandments in schools and/or during political rallies (Mweso, 2014; Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga, 2022), and these demonstrate that civics was a double-aged sword. Moreover, if anybody was deemed to have broken any of these Commandments, the MYP or the Youth Leaguers would arrest, banish, assault and/or kill that person for blaspheming the god-father- Dr. Banda (Mweso, 2014; Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga, 2022). Using the same Four Commandments, MCP compelled anybody including mothers and their unborn babies to buy party membership cards or else they would not access any public service (Mapanje, 1981; Rubadiri, 2013; Nkhata, 2017; Manthalu, 2018). Furthermore, no-one would be allowed to move around or do shopping when Dr. Banda was holding a political rally or when he was speaking on the radio; nor would one mention the name of Dr. Banda in vain rest he/she should be sent to prison without trial or be fed to crocodiles (see Mapanje, 1981; Mweso, 2014; BTI, 2020; Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga, 2022). Precisely, if anyone criticized MCP and Dr. Banda- the Lion, as he was usually named, he/she was construed as rebellious and disloyal to the leadership hence in contempt of the Four Commandments outlined in the civics canon. These canonical texts were taught to learners in the primary schools, initiating them into the shrine of silence, docility and praise-singing (see Rubadiri, 2013; Mweso, 2014; Nkhata, 2017; Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga, 2022). It was during this period that many politicians and university academics such as Jack Mapanje, Prof David Rubadiri, and Kanyama Chiume and the Mutharikas went into exile fearing persecution due to their hard-hitting verse as well their political successes respectively (see Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga, 2022). For those who chose to remain in Malawi, they simply had to submit to the silence culture and/or indeed wrote their literary works in heavily woven metaphorical language (see Mapanje, 1981; Rubadiri, 2013). The issue here is that, CE was mainly used as a tool for unleashing terror on those citizens who appeared to be critical of the regime or indeed had the ability to influence the public into challenging the hegemonic tendencies of the authority.

Citizenship and civic education under the new democratic Malawi

In 1994, Malawi became independent under Dr. Bakili Muluzi of the United Democratic Front (UDF) as president. As Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga (2022) observed, changes in curricular content and modes of assessment were made in response to the democratic climate. Furthermore, Chirwa and Naidoo (2014, 2016), Kendal and Samati (2022) and others trace curriculum review processes

in Malawi to the envisaged political wind of change that began around the 1990s, when several portents pointed to the possible downfall of Banda's regime. These included increased western donors pressure on Dr. Banda including travel bans, Operation Bwenzani by the Malawi Defence Force (MDF) to disarm the MYP and the National Referendum which was held in 1993 during which 64% of Malawians voted against one party rule (see [Chirambo, 2004](#); [Mweso, 2014](#)). By 1995, the UDF government introduced the Education Sector Policy Investment Framework (ESPIF) to guide educational reforms in Malawi to align education with democratic values ([Kendal and Samati, 2022](#)). To this end, the curricula for both primary and secondary schools were reviewed so that they should speak to the democratic needs of that time (also see [Chirwa and Naidoo, 2014](#)).

While many aspects of the curriculum were revised including assessment methods, and content ([Chirwa and Naidoo, 2014](#)); [Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga \(2022\)](#) observe that the assessment methods still encouraged memorization, and that the Outcomes Based Education philosophy (OBE) ([Kendal and Samati, 2022](#)), which also underpinned the National Curriculum Statement and the Curriculum 2005 of South Africa ([Cross et al., 2002](#); [Ngobeni et al., 2023](#)), were still predominant. [Chirwa and Naidoo \(2014\)](#) further report that curriculum reviews in Malawi and many parts of Africa were mainly driven by international instruments, and that South Africa as a regional power-house led the way for many African countries. Indeed, curriculum reforms in Africa have been driven by international instruments such as the Education for All Movement, UN Human Rights on Education and western donors (see [Du Plooy and Zilindile, 2014](#); [Chibambo, 2023](#)). Furthermore, [Cross et al. \(2002\)](#) observe that OBE originated from trade unions in the USA before it spread to Australia and many parts of the world including South Africa in the 1990s, despite many contestations regarding its successes. For Malawi, curriculum reforms demanded introduction of new courses, removal of some courses, reduction of content, tinkering with assessments and pedagogies ([Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga, 2022](#); [Kendal and Samati, 2022](#)). Thus, the first victim to be chopped from the curriculum was civics and other humanistic courses as educators argued that most of these subjects enforced the silence culture and repression under Banda's regime ([Chirambo, 2004](#); [Mweso, 2014](#)), and that democracy would become incongruous if the curriculum had maintained such content. Besides, it was the same time that the influence of neoliberal-globalism was increasingly being felt across the world, hence national educational systems needed to reposition themselves according to the democratic realities ([Kennedy, 2012](#); [Kendal and Samati, 2022](#)). This then meant that nations needed to transform their curricula by including disciplines that would help create democratic citizens who would function effectively within the 21st century globalized spaces.

However, difficult questions continue to be asked regarding the type of citizenship needed for this globalized world, and the type of CE that would indeed help prepare such an effective global citizen who would quickly adapt to the ever-changing needs of our times ([Kennedy, 2012](#)). Some of the propositions has included the reintroduction of civics as a discipline, while others have proposed the integration of civic knowledge into other disciplines in the schools ([Kennedy, 2008](#); [Manthalu, 2018](#); [Chingombe, 2020](#)). All these propositions seem to hold water as they have been tested

in many parts of the world. Even then, preliminary evidence suggests that civics has been used mainly as a tool for instilling in the masses nationalistic and patriotic values (not global values), through which tyrants create stultified and subjugated individuals ([Ranciere, 1991](#)), and that such leaders have often aimed to fortify their political interests and powers ([Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga, 2022](#)), and that educators should not leave the responsibility of preparing democratic citizens in the hands of civics. This maybe the reason civics was replaced by social studies in Malawi, Zimbabwe and South Africa (see [Schoeman, 2013](#); [Chingombe, 2020](#); [Kendal and Samati, 2022](#)). Thus social studies do combine elements of civics, development studies, life-skills and history to reflect the hospitable, fluid and social nature of globalization and democracy.

The notion of citizenship in Malawi and its issues

Under the constitution of Malawi, people who were citizens of this country before the 1994 Constitutional amendment automatically maintained their citizenship status. Citizenship in Malawi can also be acquired by birth, descent, marriage, registration and/or naturalization ([Malawi Government, 1994](#): Cap 15:01). Essentially, anyone can acquire citizenship in Malawi upon meeting the requirements of this Act. Importantly, foreign women who marry Malawian men automatically become citizens of Malawi. Conversely, foreign men who marry Malawian women may only become citizens after 5 years of staying with their wives on a valid permit in Malawi. While CE provides the platform for understanding, entrenching and practicing citizenship and its related functions, this citizenship of belonging and identity does not fully represent the citizenship we are arguing for in this paper, although it helps us explain the complexities of CE in general.

Another contentious issue about citizenship in Malawi is the exclusion of certain tribes, cultures, sexes and religions usually reflected in hate speech, access to education, infrastructure developments, and resource distribution ([Mashingina, 2019](#); [Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga, 2022](#); [Chibambo, 2023](#)). A good example is the quota system of selecting students to public schools and universities which often excludes the people from the northern region. As [Mashingina \(2019\)](#) and [BTI \(2020\)](#) report, there are certain religions such as Jehovah's Witness, Rastafarians, Nyau Masquerades, and the Church of Satan who are usually persecuted, demonized and/or excluded from public life just because of their beliefs. Furthermore, children of Muslims or Rastafarians have not been allowed to attend public or Christian schools simply because of their dress code and/or dreadlocks despite being citizens protected by the Malawi constitution. Essentially, Christianity dictates the order of public life despite Malawi being a secular state (see [BTI, 2020](#)). There have also been conflicts between the State and Religious groups over same sex marriages (LGBTs) and abortion for decades, and this climaxed into nationwide demonstrations against LGBTs headed by religious groups ([The Guardian, 2023](#)). While religious bodies such as the Public Affairs (PAC) have often been instrumental in promoting inclusive democracy and policing state impunity, they also have been the source of inequalities. For instance, until today, LGBTs are excluded

from public life in Malawi, and their freedoms are always under public scrutiny and State control.

As argued by Kumashiro (2000), society is full of hypocrisy as it continues to normalize the otherwise abnormal, in this case heterosexual. We re-affirm Kumashiro argument that heterosexuals, homosexuals and/or celibates are either normal and/or abnormal in one way or another, save that cultural and religious beliefs have deliberately chosen to twist the truth based on myths. Simply put, if we can accept that democracy is the absence of despotism, then we should also accept that heterosexuality is the absence of homosexuality, and both of them have often existed side by side as normal- in human history. Our argument is that society should desist playing holier than though tricks and/or double standards on things that concern human rights while assuming the role of God on human conduct. As Kumashiro argued, we need to accept that among us, live people with different sexual orientations and interests, and that in the interest of human rights, we should accept them as such not imposing on them our thought patterns and belief systems.

Interestingly, the arguments against LGBTs are mainly based on religious books such as the Bible and the Quran, etc., which are not only contested texts but are also contradictory. Similarly, condemning LGBTs based on the so-called natural or unnatural order is problematic unless we can provide the original account that made any of these natural or unnatural apart from these Hebrew beliefs and cultures. The third argument which is based on procreation is also sickly as it fails to acknowledge that not all couples get married to make babies. And, since potency and procreation are not guaranteed- as some heterosexual marriages cannot make babies by choice or fate- then this procreation argument is nonsensical. Moreover, in the era of 4IR, procreation may not be limited to heterosexuals as people can now have laboratory children. Besides, the Bible and the Quran should not be considered as universal books for all humanity, but rather for the believers of that faith, and that such canons should be subjected to critical exegeses. Another argument concerns sin or transgression (see *The Guardian*, 2023) which captured leaders of the demonstrators in Malawi: “faith leaders say the proceedings, brought by a transgender woman, are an attempt to legitimize sinful acts.” This argument is strongly anchored in religious beliefs such as sin vs. righteous, but not facts and truth, and one wonders why the whole society should use such contested notions to condemn LGBTs as if all of LGBTs subscribe to such beliefs. On the topic of LGBTs, we urge our readers to read Kumashiro (2000) for robust discussions. That aside, our position is that in any democracy, all human beings have freedoms and rights, and the state should protect such rights not limit them including those of LGBTs (Rawls, 2005).

According to BTI (2020) and Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga (2022), Malawians have since colonialism not really enjoyed freedoms of choice and expression even though this is provided for in the Constitution. For example, there have been laws which criminalize citizens for expressing their views against the state president under the protected emblems although this has just been repealed. While Access to Information Bill (ATI) was passed in 2016, its implementation had stalled until this day because of political interference and procedures (BTI, 2020). Worryingly,

ruling party militias have continued to attack opposition voices reminiscent of the Dr. Banda’s era (see Mweso, 2014; Nkhata, 2017). Governments have also sometimes used economic sanctions against the media by demanding impromptu tax settlement, broadcasting license fees settlements, and other flimsy reasons through use of MACRA, Censorship Board and MRA, and/or denying them state advertisements (BTI, 2020).

The above debates demonstrate that Malawi’s citizenship has been critically challenged by an array of issues that are a reflection of a malfunctioning CE. Thus the proposal by MoCENU to re-introduce civics in the schools maybe mere political hallucinations that lack research-based evidence given the dearth of critical studies on citizenship and CE in Malawi (see Schoeman, 2013; Namphande et al., 2017). This far, civics as school discipline, has proved to be an abused tool that can be manipulated to advance political agendas of the ruling elites (see Mweso, 2014; Chingombe, 2020; Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga, 2022). Its emphasis on national building and patriotism has ended up creating citizens who are xenophobic, racist, docile, uncritical, and obedient political fanatics. For example, in Malawi for example, the state and MCP zealots have gone flat-out persecuting Burundian and Rwandan refugees by forcefully pushing them to concentration camps at Dzaleka while vandalizing and robbing them of their shops and property in the name of national security and protecting indigenous businesses (see *All-Africa News*, 2023; *VOA*, 2023). Equally, in Zimbabwe, ZANU PF has always been using the army and the police to harass and kill opposition party followers in order to silence them and rig the election (Chingombe, 2020). These developments contradicts the commonly held assumption that civics can help create an emancipated global citizenship such as the one Paulo Freire had imagined (see Ranciere, 1991; Freire, 2005; Giroux, 2011).

Like Ngobeni et al. (2023) had argued, continued existence of socio-economic inequalities, political factionalism, corruption, xenophobia, GBVs and other crimes in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malawi (also see Maphosa and Shumba, 2010; BTI, 2020), point to Africa’s broken education systems and poor CE programmes. These authors have argued that, when education systems adopt effective pedagogies such as Critical Pedagogy (Ranciere, 1991; Freire, 2005) and/or Culturally Relevant Pedagogies (Ladson-Billings, 1995), where humanization, critical-conscientization and problem-posing are stressed, students could develop critical thinking skills, cultural diversities, and democratic values. We thus affirm that Malawi missed the opportunity to design an effective CE curriculum following the democratic changes between 1990 and 2002. As Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga (2022) argued, the removal of civics and humanistic subjects, and chopping of content from the curriculum were not enough to achieve quality CE for entrenching democratic citizenship. Moreover, Chirwa and Naidoo (2016) and Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga (2022) observe that these curriculum reformations mainly focused on high-stake tests and content tinkering, but not really pedagogical issues. Further, Kendal and Samati (2022) re-affirm that the adoption of OBE, and the testing system succeeded in instilling rote-learning, memorization and parroting of facts, which eventually led to the Banking Approaches such as those Critical Pedagogy condemns (Freire, 1970; Ranciere, 1991; Chibambo, 2023), as they create docile

and uncritical masses who cannot function effectively within the modern democratic spaces.

Common schools of thought on citizenship and civic education: a global perspective

Around the globe, CE has been conceptualized using different theoretical lenses as this section demonstrates. We also strived to demonstrate how these conceptions have impacted on CE as a discipline by drawing on from some few key scholars such as Kerry Kennedy, John Rawls, Howard and Patten, Ranciere and others. And, for Kennedy (2012), CE refers to a policy made by the state; a program initiated by the school; a course taught by instructors and/or an activity experienced by an individual learner in a school. Kennedy notes that there are some common threads across these assumptions, which inform CE curricula. Essentially, these threads mainly concern education of young people, which prepares them for future citizenship in their society. Torney-Purta et al. (2001) on the other hand, asserted that CE content may be less codified and less formalized unlike other disciplines. They further argue that CE is less codified due to the following: some uncertainties when conceptualizing its knowledge, its social and agglutinative nature, and diverse backgrounds of the teachers drawn from wider disciplines. Thus, these peculiarities have made CE distinct from other disciplines in the curriculum hence it has not demanded mastering specific bodies of knowledge or skills. Kennedy (2012) concedes that CE has essentially concerned the understanding of political processes that regulate individuals' lives in a society, and that it has rapidly evolved over the years.

For Green (1997), another conception of CE is that individual nations (Nationalist citizenship) have become bedrocks for understanding and conceptualizing CE and citizenship. This position argues that people within the nation should share some values that hold them together to create distinct groups of citizens. This perceives citizenship as a sense of belonging or national identity (Chingombe, 2020). The other position is that due to increased globalization in the late 21st century, it has become necessary to increase cross-border alliances (Rizvi, 2007). Thus, citizens began to depend on other countries as well, hence citizenship and CE needed to transcend national borders (Altman, 2009). This has been christened global citizenship as it emerged out of globalization, although a great deal of nationalism remain. The third position has aimed to provide an optional dimension to CE and global citizenship, and this has been termed cosmopolitan citizenship- an offshoot of global-citizen (Chingombe, 2020). Essentially, cosmopolitan citizenship represents a broader understanding of citizenship and CE which emphasize internationalization instead of nationalist nature of citizenship although limited traces of nationalism are seen (Van den Anker, 2010; Chingombe, 2020).

These three conceptions (nationalist, global and cosmopolitan citizenship) have often challenged the commonly held assumption that citizenship is all about legal status conferred by a country on a person within its borders (identity and belonging citizenship) (see Kennedy, 2012). Kennedy further observes that Europe and

North America, had until the early 20th century focused much on the development of nations that provided special human rights to their citizens, and until now citizens access these privileges within their countries. However, following globalization, people have had to look beyond national borders because they are now confronted by local and foreign forces. Kennedy also cites the influence of the European Union (EU) on Europe where European citizenship have been introduced. Previously, EU countries retained their national sovereignty and had to seek visas when visiting other European countries. Today, EU has abolished these borders, and citizens can now cross, stay and work in any European countries since they hold dual citizenship. In Africa, this view was also tabled at the African Union Meeting by Gadhafi of Libya, and it is currently being championed by the Economic Freedom Party of South Africa (EFF). The EU instance affirms that citizenship has now become a complex matter, hence calling for new ways of doing CE and citizenship.

Other approaches to citizenship and civic education

According to Kennedy (2012), many countries have attached their CE programs to different overarching theories, while tuning them to their national needs. For instance, Civic Republicanism Approach to CE (see Kennedy, 2012, p. 125) assumes that, "individuals can come together around common purposes, values and goods, and that their responsibility is to contribute toward the common good, while also recognizing that individuals' interests may sometimes be subjugated to a higher common good." Furthermore, there is the Full-blown Liberalism Approach to CE which refers to citizenship that is anchored more on giving the individual his/her liberties rather than the group to which he/she belongs (subjectivist CE) (Kennedy, 2008). As Howard and Patten (2006) contend, there are Liberalism Approaches, which emphasize openness, absolute freedoms and deregulations (Neoliberalism). For Rizvi (2007), neo-liberalism has influenced CE positions as it steps up deregulations and erasure of structures that block individuals from achieving socioeconomic and political liberties in society. Thus, Kennedy (2012) and Chibambo (2023) post that, neo-liberal citizens within the neoliberal-globalism, are perceived as self-regulated and self-sustaining, who minimally depend on state intervention in what is termed minimalist state or minimalism. Additionally, the Rawlsian Approach to Political Liberalism (see Rawls, 2005), believes in restrictions on the role of the state on what should be taught, and what should be included in the CE curriculum within a democracy. Rawls proposes that there should be no single ideology guiding CE other than shared political values necessary for harnessing democracy. He believed that religious institutions would this way be cushioned as they remain outside political spheres.

The above theories demonstrate that Malawi's citizenship and CE lie between Civic Republicanism and the Rawlsian model of CE given state interferences and influences which have been the recipe for manipulation and oppression. Despite some differences in these theories, there are also some elements that are common; for example, while citizenship has been historically attached to nationalist models, globalization and neoliberalism

are exerting pressure on individual countries, hence the need for cosmopolitan citizenship, an observation also made by Kennedy (2012). For Howard and Patten (2006), neo-liberal-globalism has both influenced the developments around global CE curriculum in Australia and other European countries. Lockyer (2003) equally postulates that elements of Full-blown Liberalism and Civic Republicanism have also accounted for the development of CE curriculum in the United Kingdom and other European countries. Kennedy nonetheless suggests that emphasis on human rights by many countries demonstrates that they have adopted Classical Liberalism and Neoliberalism models of CE curriculum. Primarily, Kennedy seem to suggest that dominant theories of CE have continue to shape nationalism, while new theories are mainly guiding the need for global and cosmopolitan citizenship.

Importantly, Kennedy (2012) argues that there are some theoretical dilemmas which concern content for CE, and whether or not CE should be considered as a process and/or a discipline. For example, a study which was done in 30 countries including Australia and Mongolia (see Kennedy, 2012), it was established that CE has some civic knowledge and skills (content) although emphasis was on processes. It was argued that, these findings could have been like that because the study involved many countries with different national interests and political systems, hence selecting universal content for assessment was impossible. The findings also demonstrate that within neoliberal-global spaces, designing CE programs is challenging. While most of the previous debates illustrated that CE has, for a long time, focused on harnessing nationalist values (Kennedy, 2008, 2012), it has also been revealed that globalization is rapidly destabilizing the CE and citizenship landscape. It has also be argued that neoliberal-globalism has also presented antagonistic forces from within and without the states due to differences in races, education culture and socioeconomic capitals among others (Bourdieu, 1984; Reay, 2004; Rizvi, 2007), and that these forces have exerted pressure on CE curriculum. Accordingly, educators have often opted to emphasize CE processes such as engagement and participation rather than content (Kennedy, 2012). Even then, CE content has mainly focused on knowing indigenous political systems and institutions instead of global processes and systems anchored in Critical Pedagogy, hence increasing the paradox of actualizing cogent Cosmopolitan citizenship and CE for the 21st century era.

The notions of global citizenship and civic education from a global perspective

According to Albuлесcu and Albuлесcu (2015), democracy gets strong when citizens are better informed, and can willingly participate in socio-economic and political life. The authors further argue that for citizens to be well informed of their functions within a democracy, they need an effective CE curricula and pedagogy that replicated democratic civic values. They further argue that, while citizenship and CE curricula may be informed by diverse socio-economic and political conditions, there might be need for global citizens who are aware of the prevalent socio-economic

and political changes; are ready to find alternatives; are sensitive to community and global issues; are accountable to their actions; are empathetic about others; think and act in a democratic spirit, and can locate and challenge any forms of abuse and exploitation (Drisko, 1993; Heater, 2004; Schoeman, 2013; Albuлесcu and Albuлесcu, 2015). This kind of prescriptions together presents us with what Kennedy (2012) and Chingombe (2020) described as Cosmopolitan citizenship and CE.

Albuлесcu and Albuлесcu (2015) further observe that social movements such as the Black Lives Matter and others have unearthed complex socio-economic and political issues that require responsive CE in the modern age. Similarly, Heater (2004) and Schoeman (2013) concede that notions of citizenship and CE are indeed complex such that developing CE curricula within the globalized democratic spaces have been taxing; a view also shared by Van den Anker (2010) and Kennedy (2012). As Vally and Spreen (2012) observe, within the globalized world, schools have been forced to regularly transform their curricula to prepare citizens who can respond to the socio-economic needs of the global village under the banner of the knowledge economy. This argument presupposes that the role of schooling is to produce technically skilled laborers who can address socio-economic needs of the nations. However, critical theorists have quashed this argument as it limits the role of schooling to mere technical instrumentalism (Roberts and Peters, 2008; Vally and Spreen, 2012). And as Chibambo (2023) argues, schools are mostly ill-prepared to provide such technical skills since most of them operate like cottage farms. These debate illustrate that preparing global citizenship still remains challenging given the complex socio-economic needs, competing identities and diverse cultures of the peoples. These then do not necessary call for only prescription of CE content, but also the need for responsive pedagogical processes that recognize human agency, diversities and freedoms, which can eventually model the leaners into democratic citizens befitting the 21st century (Giroux, 2011; Albuлесcu and Albuлесcu, 2015).

For Schoeman (2013), global and cosmopolitan citizenship may be realized if institutions are provided with adequate supportive policies, resources and enabling environment. He however warns that resources alone may not be enough to enhance democratic citizenship, unless right knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and virtues, and capacity building initiatives are given to strategic institutions (also see IDASA, 1999, p. 2). In a nutshell, Schoeman suggests that resources and systems designs alone may be worthless when implementing democratic CE, unless adequate systems support for building institutional capabilities are put in place (see Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2006). Thus cogent democratic citizenship calls for sustained systems support that can meaningfully facilitate acquisition of knowledge, skills and values that underpin diversities of the global village. Schoeman also observes that such systems support should also include nurturing through words, studying, modeling and/or demonstrations by teachers. Schoeman (2013) also asserts that while all social institutions help develop knowledge, skills and values that can shape individuals' dispositions, schools have some added advantages of developing unique civic competencies in the learners owing to their traditional roles, and the fact that such learners spend most of their life in the schools. Perhaps, Giroux (2011) gets is right when he argues that the notions of citizenship needs to be continually questioned

and reconstructed by schools so that we should prepare progressive global citizens.

Although schools have the added responsibility of imparting global citizenship values (Kennedy, 2012; Manthalu, 2018), their main problem concerns how they can best deliver global citizenship and CE. As Chingombe (2020) adds, during apartheid in South Africa, CE values were mainly taught through history, Inkatha Studies and other subjects, while in Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia civics was the main tool. Similarly, in the 30 countries studies by Kennedy (2012), CE values were taught differently, and some values that were nationalistic made global CE complicated. Schoeman (2013) also postulates that, in South Africa learners covered the nature of government, electoral processes, national holidays, historical figures and political systems, affirming what Kennedy (2012) had also established. However, Schoeman asserts that CE in South Africa was mainly aimed at creating obedient, docile and non-critical citizens who would not challenge the abusive white monopoly of apartheid regime. This observation echoes Malawi's case in which Dr. Banda's used CE to invest his Four Commandments in the people (Mweso, 2014; Bentrovato and Dzikananga, 2022), and the Zimbabwe CE case where Mugabe and Mnangagwa used civic to mold docile and dumb citizens while consolidating their political powers (Namphande et al., 2017; BTI, 2020; Chingombe, 2020). For Chingombe (2020), this form of CE was biased against genuine global citizenship although it fused the Civic Republic and the Rawlsian models of CE (Rawls, 2005). Indeed, both Nussbaum (2006) and Schoeman (2013) considered genuine global CE as one that provides global knowledge and skills while embedding humanity, rule of law, moral responsibility, empathy for others, civic mindedness, equality, accountability and participation in public life.

Going by these debates, it can be argued that in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Malawi, CE and citizenship have been ineffective due to the manipulation of the curriculum by the state. This way, many citizens have demonstrated acute ignorance on governance, political processes, electoral matters, human rights, and general participation in public life (BTI, 2020; Chingombe, 2020). This CE deficit has also threatened Africa's young democracies (Schoeman, 2013; BTI, 2020), so much so that, these nations have killed their democracies. It is not surprising then that many African countries continue to be identified with abject socioeconomic inequalities, poor infrastructure, corruption, xenophobia, robbery and all sorts of crimes given the CE inherent in them (see Maphosa and Shumba, 2010; Ngobeni et al., 2023). Although South Africa unlike Malawi and Zimbabwe, has treated CE as an important subject in all its post-apartheid educational policies (Schoeman, 2013), CE implementation has also lacked direction due to politics, power-relations and cultural diversities. Schoeman also blames education policy changes that are not foregrounded in research since such policies disengages critical stakeholders on the type of CE they want, and how it can best be achieved. These arguments further support our earlier position that questioned the MoCENU pronouncements on re-introducing civics in Malawi as a means of preparing global citizenship (Malawi Nyasa Times, 2021c). This comes against the backdrop that the curriculum reforms of 1990 to 2002 had removed this subject alongside other humanistic subjects for their political credulity and associated

undemocratic commandments that were used by Dr. Banda to manipulate and torture citizenry (see Mweso, 2014; Bentrovato and Dzikananga, 2022). We therefore find this policy directive not only retrogressive but also founded on political hangovers. We further contend that education policies cannot be initiated by peril ministers such as MoCENU who knows nothing about the role of education. We equate this to asking Russia to broker a peace deal in another democratic state while knowing that in Russia's language democracy is a taboo.

Attributes of a good global citizenship and CE: unpacking the paradoxes

This far, we have seen that the notions of citizenship and CE are complex and contentious (Schoeman, 2013; Albuлесcu and Albuлесcu, 2015; Chingombe, 2020). The key questions that have confronted philosophers of education concern the attributes of citizenship that CE achievable within globalization. Indeed, within CE discourses (see Kennedy, 2012; Schoeman, 2013), there has been disagreements over the knowledge and skills required for global CE, and how such CE can be implemented. Conversely, Albuлесcu and Albuлесcu (2015) have identified common knowledge and skills that define cogent global citizenship and CE such as commitment to democratic values, equality, participation, truth and patriotism as obligations (Drisko, 1993), and diversity, privacy, due process, property, human rights, and freedoms as rights of good citizenship (Schoeman, 2013). These obligations and rights are essentially similar to Nussbaum's Functionings (doings/duties) and beings (freedoms/rights) (Nussbaum, 2006) in the Capabilities Approach (Sen, 1999). Furthermore, Drisko (1993) identified justice, freedom, equality, diversity, authority, privacy, due process, participation, truth, human rights, rule of law, tolerance, civic responsibility, self-restraint, and self-respect as key attributes of CE. He also argued for a curriculum that is anchored on social justice and liberties, which allows learners to theorize and practice democratic principles through dialogue, discovery and questioning. Schoeman (2013) also recognized classroom dialogue as an essential aspect that benchmarks long-term democratic values. These propositions are kin to our proposed theoretical framework, "Critical Pedagogy" and do re-affirm our quest for the reconceptualization of a Cosmopolitan CE, which is anchored in pedagogy of questioning (see Freire, 2005; Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014). Conversely, Namphande et al. (2017) identified respect for the common good based on the spirit of Ubuntu that is "you are because we are." Like Namphande, Schoeman (2013) argues that students must voluntarily debate the nature of the public good, and establish for themselves how best that good can be actualized through compassion, responsibility and collaboration. Schoeman further concedes that debates, research and dialogue are precursors to critical thinking and cogent global citizenship. He then detests the banking models of education (see Freire, 2005) as dehumanizing, objectifying, oppressive and exclusionary, echoing the sentiments by Giroux (2011) and Bentrovato and Dzikananga (2022).

The above discussions suggest that democratic global citizenship and CE are complex concepts that cannot be reduced to mere school disciplines such as civics, Inkatha Studies and/or Social

Studies given the infinite demands of the global village, and the fluidity of global citizenship. These also imply that CE has more to do with the formal and hidden curricula practices and dispositions (see Giroux, 2011; Schoeman, 2013) rather than specific knowledge domains or disciplines. We thus continue to propose the adoption of CE that is anchored in Critical Pedagogy as this theory shifts from prescriptive knowledge domains to Pedagogical practices that model learners into transformative global citizens and democrats. Additionally, Albuлесcu and Albuлесcu (2015) posted that they had established a strong relationship between democratic classrooms and students' civic dispositions in society. They also observed that students who worked under democratic classrooms demonstrated immense enthusiasm to participate in school and community projects. These findings strongly suggest that learners need to be introduced to principles of democratic citizenship while young, and that this can only be possible through Critical Pedagogies (Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014). We thus reiterate the old Burundian aphorism that says: "straitening a tree must be done in its infancy," otherwise, you break it when it is old enough. And medically, it is easy for doctors to treat rickets of a toddler than those of an adult-analogy befitting our current argument.

Critical pedagogy as a theoretical framework

According to Freire (1970, 2005) Critical Pedagogy advocates for an educational system that seeks to promulgate a just society. Critical pedagogy (Emancipatory Pedagogy) requires dismantling of educational structures and power-relations that perpetuate hegemony and oppression (Giroux, 2011). The pioneers such as Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux and McLaren believed that education is naturally political such that educators and students should become transformative intellectuals (Giroux, 2011) or cultural workers (Freire, 1970), capable of identifying and redressing all injustices, and detecting myths surrounding the oppressive world. Freire (2005) as cited in Nouri and Sajjadi (2014) presented humanization, critical conscientization and problem-posing as the main constructs of this theory. Freire postulated that humanization- which is expressed in love, hope, trust, faith, and critical thinking- helps teachers and students develop critical awareness of their environment. He argues that education should enable students and teachers to become aware of the sources of oppression, and willingly take action against such sources. He argued that humanizing the world is only possible through dialogue as a minimum condition through which critical conscientization can be realized (Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014, p. 4). Conversely, Critical Conscientization (see Freire, 2005) denotes to learn to perceive socio-economic and political contradictions, and take action against oppressive structures. Conscientization occurs when students and teachers know that they know, such that they can take action. Precisely, this occurs through humanizing and problematizing different contexts under mutual dialogues and continuous questioning (Freire, 2005; Giroux, 2011). Freire realized that authorities usually seek to promote a culture of silence by acting as Good Samaritans, while seeking to control and manipulate institutional processes including the curriculum. Once manipulated, the students and teachers are perceived as

gullible, fungible, lifeless objects, and governable. To undo these evils, schools will require critical conscientization to ably locate, question, and uproot the source of that oppression (Ranciere, 1991).

Thirdly, problem-posing approach problematizes the "banking" model of education, in which the teacher "owns" knowledge and "deposits" it into the students' minds as if they were financial deposits to be withdrawn on an ATM (examinations); without any interests accrued (new knowledge). Students are like borrowers while the teachers are lessors. This system ignores learners background knowledge during the learning processes, and the teacher typically talks, knows, thinks, disciplines, and selects anything on behalf of the passengers (learners). In principal, the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his own professional authority, which he sets in opposition to the freedoms of the students (Freire, 2005; Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014). Freire argues that the banking model of education makes students feel dull, isolated and as untrusted knowers. This way, students are initiated into dependence, isolationism and indecisiveness, which will eventually make them passive and apathetic democratic citizens to public life (see Chibambo, 2023; Ngobeni et al., 2023). The problem-posing model thus is based on humanization and critical conscientization which later became "pedagogy of questioning" by Freire and Faunder (as cited in Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014). Freire also argued that Critical Pedagogy destabilizes the myth of pedagogy by recognizing students and teachers as colleagues who continually co-create the curriculum under mutual relationships, which are devoid of arrogance, mistrust and hate (Ranciere, 1991; Giroux, 2011).

Through the three main theoretical thrusts discussed above, Critical Pedagogy helped us analyse Malawi's socio-economic and political structures in relation to good governance, global citizenship and CE. We reassert that different approaches to CE and citizenship have been tried and proved to be complicated as they depend on both classical and modern theories (Kennedy, 2012). Unlike in the UK and Australia- where CE has been somewhat effective- in Africa, high levels of poverty, violence, xenophobia, wars, socioeconomic inequalities, vandalism, and crime continue to characterize society signaling ineffective CE curricula in general (Ngobeni et al., 2023). Arguably, the UK seldom experiences cases of theft, reckless violence and other petty crime as is the case in Africa. As Maphosa and Shumba (2010) observed, symptoms of broken education systems may manifest in lawlessness, violence and crime. It is not surprising then that in South Africa and Malawi, houses have very high fences, usually with galvanized electric fences, as if they are protecting game. This may as well underscore CE curricula that are guided by fraudulent educational policies (Schoeman, 2013).

Reconfiguring citizenship and CE in the lenses of Critical Pedagogy

Educational challenges in Malawi as a precursors to effective civic education

First, we continue to argue that quality CE and citizenship will depend on quality resource supply chain and continued

institutional support to build capabilities both for the staff and students (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2006; Ngobeni et al., 2023), which will eventually translate into quality education and quality graduates and by default democratic global citizenship. Despite this fact, evidence suggests that Malawi's educational systems are characterized by lack of equitable access (Namphande, 2007) and shortage of teaching and learning resources (Chirwa and Naidoo, 2016; Chibambo, 2023), which impact on education quality especially in rural areas (Kendal and Samati, 2022). Furthermore, Kendal and Samati reports that poor schooling conditions account for over 80% of learner attrition from schools. Nonetheless, Chibambo (2023) observes that school attrition has implications on the future of the learners as they may not be able to support their families. Thus such families may not live a decent life as democratic citizens hence reproducing unbreakable poverty circles. For Chirwa and Naidoo (2014) and Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga (2022), lack of school resources also demoralize teachers and students hence demonstrating less commitment to teaching and learning respectively.

According to Munthali (2019) over 95% of the teachers in primary and secondary schools she interviewed during her studies in Malawi, reported that they utilized the banking pedagogies due to oversized classes; limited textbooks, over-loaded syllabus, and the desire to meet the examination syllabus. Similar findings were also made by Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga (2022) and Kendal and Samati (2022). Furthermore, Chirwa and Naidoo (2014, 2016) reported that education systems in Malawi prepare learners for high-stake tests and memorization of facts instead of critical thinking skills and creativity which are necessary weapons for achieving emancipated citizenship within the 21st century. The MoEST (1999) similarly testified that, "Malawi's education system does not enhance critical thinking and entrepreneurship skills, which make it appear valueless among communities hence children can withdraw from schools with the support of their parents." The submission by MoEST symbolizes loss of parental control, and testifies to the fact previous curriculum reforms did not yield the expected results, hence loss of public trust in the education system.

The above debates illustrate that citizenship and CE in challenges in Malawi have not emanated from lack of civics as a discipline but rather pedagogical inadequacies. For example, although the authors do not delve on citizenry emancipation, their arguments touches on memorization of facts and rote learning (see Manthalu, 2018; Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga, 2022). These concerns have their roots in Critical Pedagogy (Ranciere, 1991; Freire, 2005; Giroux, 2011), which deplored the banking model of education for entrenching the silence culture and dependence syndrome in the learners. Consequently, gullible and docile will not be ready to make informed decisions and participate in public life in future as they were enculturated into a dependency culture which often reveres abusive authority. Similar findings were also presented by Maphosa and Shumba (2010) and Schoeman (2013) who established that students who were taught using democratic pedagogies demonstrated great willingness to lead processes and participate in public life more than those who were trained using banking models. Indeed, democratic global citizenship demands schools to embrace CE curriculum that is based on Critical Pedagogies (Ranciere, 1991; Freire, 2005) and/or

Culturally Relevant Pedagogies (Ladson-Billings, 1995). As argued before, *straightening a tree is best done in its infancy*, rest you should break it. This analogy reaffirms that more than Global citizenship, Cosmopolitan citizenship will only be actualized if educators adopt Critical Pedagogies. However, when schools are socially stratified; have poor resources, and teachers employ despotic pedagogies, then learners will have a skewed view of life; one that normalizes differentiation and violence as the only way for solving societal problems and disagreements (Maphosa and Shumba, 2010).

Use of quota system as a precursor to inequalities and poor citizenships in Malawi

In Malawi, use of quota system- as means for selecting students to educational institutions- has been very contentious (Mashininga, 2019; BTI, 2020; Bentrovato and Dzikanyanga, 2022). BTI observes that academics, CSOs and FBOs have often argued against quota system as they feel it excludes the minorities from the Northern region of Malawi, and that it had outlived its relevance given the increased numbers of schools and universities. Quota system is based on students' home district rather than merit, and it sounds similar to affirmative action (AA) of South Africa. Although Quota system started under Dr. Banda, all democratic governments have maintained it academics resistance who perceive it as a stratifying tool that obstructs equality and justice. According to Gumede and Biyase (2016) and Kafunda (2021), educational inequalities in South Africa and Malawi have been increased by classification of schools into rural or urban; national or conventional, and/or community and open schools as the bases for selecting and resourcing schools. Eventually, education has often favored students from urban or conventional schools since they are well-resourced and located in prestigious cities and towns. These have also determined the quality of education different groups of students receive with the poor students receiving the type of education Critical Pedagogy rejected (see Reay, 2004; Chibambo, 2023). These differentiations have serious implications on Cosmopolitan citizenship as learners observe and internalize injustices as being normal and acceptable practices.

Socio-economic problems as precursors to civic education and global citizenship in Malawi

The Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy defines poverty as "a state of continuous deprivation and lack of basic necessities of life" (see Namphande, 2007). MPRS concedes that poverty has multiple dimensions which include lack of income and human capabilities. According to the Borgen Report (2021) and Kendal and Samati (2022), 52% of Malawians are still ultra-poor, while 80% are generally poor living below the poverty line of <1 US dollar/day. These issues are attributed to poor education quality, environmental degradation, unemployment, population growth, gender inequalities and lack of citizenry voice, which underscore deluded CE offerings (also see BTI, 2020). Similarly, the

World Bank (2020) has recognized education as key to socio-economic development and equality. It further affirms that education harnesses democracy while lowering crime and violence rates, and that its intrinsic values help individuals make informed decisions about their democratic and civic roles in society. Arguments like these justify the need for equitable education systems that can guarantee people quality CE. Available literature however suggests that governments have through neoliberal-minimalism reduced their funding toward education following the IMF's structural adjustment programmes, hence making Cosmopolitan CE impossible (Roberts and Peters, 2008; Chibambo, 2023). Neoliberalism has also forced schools to find other means of resourcing themselves through commodification of knowledge and/or selling (Vally and Spreen, 2012). These events have led to knowledge capitalism since technical knowledge has been perceived as profitable hence is being highly commodified (Roberts and Peters, 2008), eventually leading to epistemi-cide or the extinction of humanistic knowledge forms to which CE belongs (Du Plooy and Zilindile, 2014; Chibambo, 2023). Likewise, Reay (2004) has observed that the job market has often favored affluent children because they have social networks and the desired skills obtained from affluent schools. This means that poor children who mostly enroll for humanities programs in rural schools may get low paying jobs due to the reputation of their schools and programs hence perpetuating inequality circles (Chibambo, 2023). They are inequalities like these that Critical Pedagogy has often condemned as they naturalize negative citizenship in society. Moreover, and the two groups of people may often live in suspicion of each other and will hardly co-exist as equal human beings, unless the poor accepts to be exploited through low paying labor (Bourdieu, 1984; Reay, 2004).

Knowledge wars within the schooling spaces and citizenship education

Young (2008) as cited in Chibambo (2023) contends that the role of education cannot be reduced to mere technical instrumentalism since global society is now faced with complex socio-economic needs. Young seems to urge educators to promote knowledge democracy in the schools by accommodating both knowledge of the powerful (productive) and powerful knowledge (emancipatory) knowledge. Young (2008) citing Bernstein (2003) further makes a case for vertical discourses (academic knowledge) and horizontal discourses (indigenous knowledge) suggesting that both formal and informal knowledge belong to the Social Realist realm, hence deserve equality within the academic spaces since learners come to school for different purposes. These arguments reflect the complex nature of global CE as its participants are drawn from diverse races and cultures hence such spaces will usually experience competing power-relations and tastes (Bourdieu, 1984). Arguably, one reason global CE has been difficult to achieve may be because of undermining knowledge democracies, modernity, individualism, hegemonic tendencies and differentiation of systems, which in turn, contradict the spirit of democracy and Ubuntu (Rizvi, 2007; Chingombe, 2020). While globalization has essentially challenged indigenous cultures and

knowledge systems (IKSs) (Bourdieu, 1984), recent studies show that countries are now beginning to recognize the value of IKSs by giving them equal spaces through CE curricula (Kennedy, 2012). Importantly, IKSs have provided to the people civic and democratic values such as justice, co-existence, hosting strangers, peace, love, humility, teamwork, critical thinking, family planning and hard-working among Africans (Ubuntu) (see Nafukho et al., 2005), the very same values global CE proponents advance (see Kennedy, 2012; Schoeman, 2013; Albuлесcu and Albuлесcu, 2015), and these are also the central concerns of Critical Pedagogy and Culturally Relevant Pedagogies (see Kumashiro, 2000).

Political issues as precursors to effective citizenship and civic education in Malawi

Several political events have pointed to poor citizenship and CE in Malawi. For example, political trends since 2004 have demonstrated that, while universities do champion liberation fights across the globe, in Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia, students have eschewed liberation battles. For example, some lecturers and students have chosen to side with incumbent politicians serving as mutineers of dissent views (Nkhata, 2017; Chingombe, 2020). The Robert Chasowa murder case (The Guardian, 2012), a student at MUBAS who was killed by government operatives, and the Academic Freedom Saga at UNIMA where several lectures were arrested (Nkhata, 2017) are good examples of mutineers at work. Other examples include the one where primary school pupils- as young as 6 years (see Daily Maverick, 2020), were manipulated by politicians and teachers to vandalize public infrastructure during mass protests. One wonders how such kids can make informed decisions about their civic rights and freedoms to demonstrate and riot in that way (also see VOA, 2016). This supports the theorem that students in Malawi have often participated in liberation struggles- not as informed citizens- but rather as political mercenaries and lifeless objects; the very same objectification Critical Pedagogy scholars have often condemned.

The post-elections violence and appointments as precursors to deprived citizenship and CE in Malawi

According to BTI (2020) report and Xinhua (2019), the post-election violent demonstrations in 2004, 2011, 2019, and 2020 organized by the Human Rights Defenders Coalition (HRDC), UTM, and MCP has demonstrated that both the police and Malawians can sometimes become violent, vandalistic and xenophobic. During these protests, twenty civilians were killed by the police, while some senior police and army officers were stoned to death in Lilongwe and Karonga respectively (BTI, 2020). It is also reported that HRDC was sponsored by MCP and UTM and some international donors because the donors disliked the then government for its hard stance on LGBTs, while the opposition felt that the election was rigged by the DPP (BTI, 2020). However, soon after the DPP was ousted, the militant leader of the HRDC joined the Tonse Government as minister

of MoCENU, and the other four members were rewarded with diplomatic positions (Malawi Nyasa Times, 2021b; Maravi Post, 2021a,b). Such appointments were not only ill-timed but also lacked merit as they weakened the CSOs. Others have also argued that the combatant leadership of HRDC did not deserve such a ministerial post in MoCENU because his violent character contradicted the spirit of this ministry (Malawi Nyasa Times, 2020). From a Critical Pedagogy perspective, these arguments hold substance as socio-economic emancipation is perceived to be achievable through humanization, critical conscientization and problem-posing climaxed in love, dialogue and role modeling as opposed to hardline Marxist approaches (Freire, 2005; Schoeman, 2013; Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014). Likewise, events such as calls for Federal government (BTI, 2020), various corruption crimes such as the Sattar-gate, Cross-Road-gate, Butchery Fertilizer-gate, the Bridgin Foundation-gate, East Bridge-gate, COVID 19-gate (Malawi Nyasa Times, 2021a, 2023), and many other gates, do reflect on politicians greed, impunity and arrogance (Malawi24, 2023), as they lasciviously ride on the citizens enforced stultification and silence culture, imprinted in the pathetic souls by the then Four Commandments of civics.

This far, we endeavored to demonstrate Malawi's efforts to reintroduce civics as a vehicle for achieving democratic global citizenship. The analyses from global case-studies have demonstrated the delicacies of actualizing global CE and citizenship within the neoliberal-global spaces. The debates also pointed to the complexities within the classical and modern theories for conceptualizing Cosmopolitan citizenship and CE (Kennedy, 2008, 2012) as nations are now finding themselves between hard-rocks and mountains due to the complex socioeconomic and political needs of the global village. Our onset position was that Malawi does not really need civics as a standalone discipline because it has been used in many countries as a tool of manipulation and oppressions (Mweso, 2014; Chingombe, 2020; Bentrovato and Dzikananga, 2022). Global studies have also demonstrated that citizenship and CE cannot just be actualized through specific civic disciplines as it concerns interdisciplinary knowledge, values, interests and beliefs. Accordingly, many countries have not just focused on knowledge content but also on civic processes and practices such as engaged pedagogies (Kennedy, 2012; Schoeman, 2013). These findings support our proposal for a Cosmopolitan CE that is informed by Critical Pedagogy (Freire, 2005; Schoeman, 2013) as it emphasizes humanized and Ubuntu processes. As Schoeman had argued, CE may become problematic if informed by unphilosophical foundations emanating from political hallucinations such those being proposed by MoCENU. Irresponsible CE is thus dangerous to human existence in this global era since it tends to pamper inequalities, xenophobia, violence, lawlessness and corruption as has been the case in Malawi where refugees are now being abducted and persecuted like the Jews during Hitler's days (Malawi Voice, 2023).

Conclusions and recommendations

This study sought to argue that Malawi's CE and citizenship have been ineffective due to political intrusion and shoddy

educational policy decisions that are founded on political hallucinations. We argued against the decision to reintroduce civics as a discipline for achieving Cosmopolitan citizenship given its historical abuses around the globe (Chingombe, 2020; Bentrovato and Dzikananga, 2022). The analyses established that Cosmopolitan democratic CE cannot be actualized through a single discipline such as civics nor can it be done by NGOs but rather that, it should be considered as entailing complex processes guided by philosophical research which can inform CE curriculum (Kennedy, 2012; Schoeman, 2013; Albuлесcu and Albuлесcu, 2015). This means that its pedagogies should be informed by Critical Pedagogy (Freire, 2005; Giroux, 2011) which are anchored in humanization, problem-posing, critical conscientization, dialogue and role modeling. We also examined various theoretical conceptions of CE, and concluded that these theories fall under Classical theories and modern theories mostly amalgamated when conceptualizing Cosmopolitan CE due to neoliberal-globalism requirements. Some of these theories were liberalism, neoliberalism, Civic Republicanism and Rawlsian schools of thought (see Rawls, 2005; Kennedy, 2008, 2012). While CE and citizenship have not been full-proof to paradoxes, scholars agree on certain common denominators that underpin democratic global citizenship (Drisko, 1993; Schoeman, 2013), which eventually set the tone for Cosmopolitan CE curricula in schools. The study also established that CE curricula have usually considered subject knowledge, content and processes and practices as possible parameters for deciding CE activities (Kennedy, 2012), and that processes followed by knowledge and skills determine CE actualization. On processes, Schoeman (2013) proposed a Pedagogy of Care as the vehicle for achieving global democratic citizenship; a notion that supports use of Critical Pedagogy for achieving Cosmopolitan citizenship (see Giroux, 2011; Nouri and Sajjadi, 2014). The reason is that Critical Pedagogy works on role modeling and positive behavior interventions (Maphosa and Shumba, 2010) which allow learners to experience, appreciate, accept and internalize global democratic values through practice. As Drisko (1993) had established, students who were taught under democratic classrooms had demonstrated huge desire for debates and participation in social and political life. These findings further supported our argument that citizenship and CE should be foregrounded in Critical Pedagogy as it immerses learners into Cosmopolitan democratic principles at tender age. We thus recommend policy-makers to base their curriculum reforms on Critical Pedagogy and Culturally Relevant Pedagogies whenever designing programs such as those on Cosmopolitan citizenship and CE, since evidence have proved this pedagogy to be effective enough for actualizing cosmopolitan and global citizenship in different contexts. Given the rapidly changing global affairs, we urge policymakers to consider shifting from Nationalist CE approaches, and mere global CE approaches to Cosmopolitan CE Approaches which considers the influences of neoliberal-globalism. Since this study was mainly conceptual in nature, we urge scholars to conduct descriptive phenomenological studies (Cohen, 1987), which combine document analyses and interviews to help them understand the lived experiences of Malawians, and their perceptions regarding CE and the political economy. We started with an aphorism, "straightening a tree is best done

when that tree is young,” meaning that we can only entrench Cosmopolitan civic values in the youth when they are freshmen through Critical Pedagogy rather than when they are done with their lives.

Author contributions

MC did 90% of the work in identifying and analyzing the literature. This was also part of the PhD thesis for MC which culminated into the award of the Doctoral degree in Philosophy of Education. JD in his capacity as the supervisor of this PhD, played an overall role in advising, guiding, and proofreading as well offering all technical and economic support of the work including publications fees. All authors contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

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