


# Chapter 13


## Barriers to Inclusive Education and Prospects for the Khoesan of Botswana

**Kemmony Collete Monaka**

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-5277-7205>

*University of Botswana, Botswana*

**Anderson Monthusi Chebanne**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5393-1771>

*University of Botswana, Botswana*

### ABSTRACT

*The Botswana education system planners endorsed a technocratic view of planning, emphasizing their curriculum expertise instead of learners' realities. Numerous studies on Khoesan education in Botswana attest to serious hurdles more especially that Setswana and English languages are second, third, and sometimes fourth languages depending on the localities of the Khoesan children. The Khoesan were and are still subjected to discrimination and marginalization in education and other domains of life. The creation of the Remote Area Development Program (RADP) in 1978 by the Government of Botswana was recognition that the Khoesan were the most marginalised. The question is whether the Khoesan benefitted. The answer is that it was other groups who benefitted from RADP and not the Khoesan. The main reason for this was and is that marginalization and poverty cannot be eliminated by homogenous schemes.*

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Botswana education system planners endorsed a technocratic view of planning, emphasizing their curriculum expertise instead of learners' realities (Maruatona, 2005). Numerous studies on Khoesan education in Botswana attest to serious hurdles more especially that Setswana and English languages are second, third, and sometimes fourth languages depending on the localities of the Khoesan children (Motshabi, 2006b). The Khoesan were and are still subjected to discrimination and marginalization in education and other domains of life. The creation of the Remote Area Development Program (RADP)

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3373-1000-8.ch013

in 1978 by the Government of Botswana was a recognition that the Khoesan were the most marginalised. The question is whether the Khoesan benefitted. Wily (2018) pointed out that it was other groups who benefited from these programs and not the Khoesan, the main reason being that marginalization and poverty cannot be eliminated by equal and homogenous schemes. Chebanne (2020) further raises the cultural question, whether this was a consideration in the development of the RADP. The RADP programme has been hailed for positive contribution to the provision of infrastructure and services in remote areas and not much progress has been made regarding the performance of Khoesan children in schools as they are the highest in terms of high failure rates and school dropouts.

The Khoesan languages are not part of the education curriculum in Botswana, and the failure to appreciate Khoesan languages has greatly disadvantages the Khoesan children with only a few making it to tertiary institution (Monaka & Hiri-Khudu, 2016). In spite of Botswana being a multi-ethnic society, the country's education curriculum overlooks the diversity existing in the country. This chapter seeks to argue that high failure rates and high school dropout among the Khoesan children are red flags that point to alienation and assimilation, and that the education curriculum needs to embrace Khoesan languages and lifestyles. An inclusive curriculum will transform the Botswana education system from being inward looking to been open, equitable, having multiple perspectives as well as exercising unity in diversity (Monaka, 2007c). There is need to recognize that multicultural education fosters recognition, embodies respect for individuals as well as equal rights for all citizens (Chebanne & Monaka, 2024b). The recognition and inclusion of Khoesan language into the Botswana education system curriculum will be an enabler towards improved participation and make an impact on their performance in school and reduce dropout rates. It will also communicate trust and solidarity across ethnic groups.

By recognizing diverse ethnic identities within the nation, Botswana's education system could build an inclusive national identity that continues to focus on peace and unity rather than laying seeds for future conflict by continued efforts to erase them. At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century it has become increasingly clear that development must embody a commitment to cultural pluralism and cultural diversity against the pressures of homogenisation (Chebanne & Monaka, 2024a). Homogenisation, or, more accurately, cultural hegemony, has generally taken two forms. The first is embedded in the post-colonial project of nation-building. Many Third World countries have sought to construct a nation-state amongst diverse ethnic groups within inherited colonial boundaries by imposing the culture and language of one of the ethnic groups, thereby making it dominant. The second is inherent in the processes of globalisation which subject the Third World to increased cultural imperialism and dominance by Western culture. The cumulative effect of both trends is contradictory. On the one hand, the ethno-linguistic marginalisation of many minority groups has been intensified. On the other hand, grass-roots forms of cultural assertion have emerged as marginalised ethnic groups resist discrimination and social exclusion.

For the most part communities who speak Khoesan languages are found in Botswana followed by Namibia. Also, most of these communities are small and therefore prone to language shift, decline, dearth, and death (Batibo, 1997). Organizationally, Khoesan ethnic groups have, irrespective of their ethno-linguistic and ethno-cultural distinction, preferred small manageable communities.

[...] it seems clear that San groups were highly organized, small, mobile groups with an intimate knowledge of resources available to them and of how these resources varied through time and space. The settlement patterns employed are becoming increasingly documented, using data from a variety of sources (Mokhtar, 1990, p. 357).

18 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:  
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/barriers-to-inclusive-education-and-prospects-for-the-khoesan-of-botswana/381616](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/barriers-to-inclusive-education-and-prospects-for-the-khoesan-of-botswana/381616)

## Related Content

---

### Workforce Diversity Curriculum Design Considerations for Diversity Certificates and Study Abroad Experiences

Atoya Sims (2017). *Discrimination and Diversity: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 113-135).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/workforce-diversity-curriculum-design-considerations-for-diversity-certificates-and-study-abroad-experiences/182085](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/workforce-diversity-curriculum-design-considerations-for-diversity-certificates-and-study-abroad-experiences/182085)

### French Immersion “So Why Would You do Something Like That to a Child?”: Issues of Advocacy, Accessibility, and Inclusion

Renée Christine Bourgoin (2016). *International Journal of Bias, Identity and Diversities in Education* (pp. 42-58).

[www.irma-international.org/article/french-immersion-so-why-would-you-do-something-like-that-to-a-child/145338](http://www.irma-international.org/article/french-immersion-so-why-would-you-do-something-like-that-to-a-child/145338)

### Application of Collaboration Technology to Manage Diversity in Global Virtual Teams: The ThinkLet-Based CE Approach

Cecilia Santillanand Sujin K. Horwitz (2016). *Handbook of Research on Race, Gender, and the Fight for Equality* (pp. 240-266).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/application-of-collaboration-technology-to-manage-diversity-in-global-virtual-teams/148770](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/application-of-collaboration-technology-to-manage-diversity-in-global-virtual-teams/148770)

### Transformative Learning: Positive Identity Through Prison-Based Higher Education in England and Wales

Anne Pikeand Susan Hopkins (2019). *International Journal of Bias, Identity and Diversities in Education* (pp. 48-65).

[www.irma-international.org/article/transformative-learning/216373](http://www.irma-international.org/article/transformative-learning/216373)

### Gendered and Generational Analyses of Farm Households' Livelihood Diversification in Ghana: Implications for Credit Demands and Allocations

Katherine Kaunza-Nu Dem Millar, Abdul-Razak Alhassanand Mamudu Abunga Akudugu (2023). *Empowering Women Through Microfinance in Developing Countries* (pp. 79-92).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/gendered-and-generational-analyses-of-farm-households-livelihood-diversification-in-ghana/333110](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/gendered-and-generational-analyses-of-farm-households-livelihood-diversification-in-ghana/333110)