



**SERDEC Education Journal (SEJ)**

Online ISSN: 2710-4796

<https://sej.so/>

## **Conceptualizing Participatory Transnational Citizenship (PTC): A Framework for Civic Reintegration of the Somali Diaspora**

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**DOI: 10.70595/sej116**

### **Abstract**

This conceptual study diagnoses a critical gap in Somali diaspora-homeland relations: the absence of an educational framework to convert the complexities of dual citizenship into a force for collaborative reintegration. Using an interpretive paradigm and qualitative literature synthesis, the research analyzes diaspora studies, citizenship theory, and Somali education through constant comparative and thematic analysis. The synthesis identifies a core paradox of Asset versus Alienation and three systemic barriers: The Sovereignty Bind (political fragmentation stifling civic education), The Legitimacy Contest (competing claims to define Somali civic identity), and Curriculum in a Vacuum (content disconnected from transnational life). In response, the study constructs the Participatory Transnational Citizenship (PTC) framework, a novel model grounded in critical transnational citizenship and pedagogy. The PTC framework features a Dual-Track Educational System for diaspora abroad and returnees, and a Civic Collaboration Lab for structured dialogue and community projects. Designed as a conceptual intervention, its validity derives from diagnostic adequacy, theoretical coherence, and constructive alignment. The framework provides an actionable blueprint for policymakers and educators to transform dual citizenship from a dilemma into a civic asset, foster social cohesion, and enable the diaspora's transition from ambiguous engagement to structured partnership in Somalia's development.

**Keywords:** Conceptualizing, Participatory, Transnational Citizenship (PTC), Framework. Civic Reintegration, Somali Diaspora

## 1. Introduction

The Somali diaspora constitutes a significant and complex sociopolitical phenomenon, originating from the protracted period of state collapse, civil conflict, and mass displacement following the outbreak of civil war in 1991. An estimated two million Somalis have since resettled globally, primarily within North America, Europe, and the Middle East (Gagiano, 2020).

The foundational catalyst for this diaspora was the catastrophic collapse of the Somali state in 1991, which triggered large-scale forced migration (Gagiano, 2020). This exodus occurred within a longer historical continuum of colonial disruption and post-independence struggles over governance and national identity (Abdelgawad, 2021). The diaspora itself has become a key site for the re-articulation of “Somaliness,” where cultural and literary productions serve as vital mediums for preserving collective memory and reconstructing identity in exile (Gagiano, 2020).

A defining feature of this diaspora is its robust transnationalism. The pivotal role of Somali diasporic women in sustaining kinship networks across borders, managing familial resources, and preserving cultural traditions, thereby forging a connective tissue between host countries and the homeland (Al-Sharmani, 2006). Beyond the familial sphere, diaspora members, particularly women, function as critical agents of development, channeling financial remittances and social capital toward humanitarian and rebuilding efforts in Somalia—contributions that remain systematically under-acknowledged (Gröschl, 2024).

Integration into host societies presents distinct psychosocial challenges, including intergenerational dissonance between immigrant adolescents and their parents regarding cultural norms and adaptation strategies (Wilhelm et al., 2022). Furthermore, community-specific stigmas, such as those surrounding mental health, can impede access to care and successful integration, underscoring the need for culturally competent service frameworks (Pratt et al., 2016). Economically, the diaspora’s impact is substantial, with annual remittance flows exceeding \$1.3 billion, constituting a lifeline for the Somali economy yet operating within a complex landscape of financial regulations and access barriers (Elmi & Ngwenyama, 2020). The diaspora's ongoing transnational engagement is shaped by the paradox of dual citizenship, creating competing loyalties and obligations between host nations and homelands. This contradiction complicates civic identity, fostering a sense of ambiguous belonging and framing the diaspora's relationship with Somalia in terms of perpetual liminality. The challenges of reintegration are magnified by returnees' varied resources and perspectives, which can lead to social stratification and resentment within Somalia. As current support systems focus on logistical aid without addressing the civic complexities of dual citizenship, the diaspora's potential remains underutilized. This paper proposes an Educational Framework for Participatory Transnational Citizenship (PTC) to transform these contradictions into cohesive civic engagement, aiming to shift dual citizenship from a liability to a constructive asset for national reintegration and development.

## **1.2. Significance of the Study**

This study holds significance for both academic discourse and practical policy. Academically, it contributes to the fields of diaspora studies, transnational education, and citizenship theory by proposing a concrete pedagogical model that bridges the abstract concept of transnationalism with actionable civic curriculum. It offers a new lens for understanding diaspora-homeland relations beyond remittance economics. Practically, the proposed PTC framework provides a actionable blueprint for Somali policymakers, educational institutions, and diaspora organizations. It outlines a pathway to harness diaspora capital more effectively, mitigate reintegration conflicts, and foster a unified sense of participatory citizenship that transcends geographical and legal boundaries, thereby directly supporting peacebuilding, governance, and sustainable development in Somalia.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Diaspora and Transnationalism**

The concepts of diaspora and transnationalism have gained significant scholarly attention, particularly in the context of global mobility and identity. Diasporas are characterized by the ongoing connections they maintain with their countries of origin, influencing individual and collective identities within host nations. Clark's work on Asian Australians suggests that diasporas with transnational orientations often exhibit robust ties to local and global identities, while demonstrating weaker connections to nation-states, which are losing authority in a globalized context (Clark, 2007). This observation aligns with the notion that contemporary migration flows and transnational social networks enable individuals to navigate multiple cultural identities concurrently, often leading to a reconfiguration of belonging (Shafaf, 2025; Müller & Belloni, 2021).

Moreover, the role of digital technologies in diasporic communities has transformed traditional notions of identity and engagement. Leurs and Ponzanesi discuss the emergence of "hypertextual diasporas," where identity and affiliations are continuously renegotiated through digital platforms, complicating our understanding of diaspora as merely a linear connection to a homeland (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2010). This fluidity highlights the critical intersections of technology, diaspora, and transnational identities, suggesting that diasporas are not only about geographical dispersal but also about the virtual and mediated spaces where identities are constructed and contested (Aziz, 2022).

### **2.2. Citizenship**

Citizenship studies encompass an examination of the evolving nature of citizenship amid global and local pressures. Citizenship has traditionally been viewed as a static legal status; however, recent scholarship emphasizes its dynamic and relational aspects. For example, Oloufade and

Pongou discuss how dual citizenship can facilitate transnational solidarity and economic benefits, particularly for diaspora members (Oloufade & Pongou, 2013). Moreover, Ahmad identifies citizenship education as a mechanism to foster active citizenship and resilience among youth, (Ahmed, 2023).

In the Indonesian context, ongoing debates surrounding citizenship politics illustrate the contestation inherent in identity formation and belonging. The dynamics of citizenship within the Indonesian diaspora reveal struggles for recognition and dual citizenship in light of national legislation that restricts dual nationality (Ramdhani et al., 2025; Wardoyo et al., 2025). Such discussions reflect broader themes in citizenship studies, where globalization and local governance raise questions about the inclusivity and moral obligations of citizenship in diverse societies (Nasoha et al., 2024).

### 2.3. Reintegration and Social Cohesion

Reintegration of diasporic communities into their countries of origin involves complex social and political dynamics, particularly in light of diverse identities in modern societies. Rapoport and Yemini highlight a critical aspect of citizenship education: the tension between promoting a shared national identity and accommodating the plurality of identities within society (Rapoport & Yemini, 2019). This duality is crucial for fostering social cohesion, especially in divided societies.

McMurray and Niens provide empirical evidence that participatory citizenship education can build bridging social capital through collaborations across communities, although pre-existing allegiances can inhibit such efforts (McMurray & Niens, 2012). Similarly, the experiences of reintegration are shaped by the legal frameworks that define citizenship, influencing returnees' identity and belonging, as evidenced in various studies (Houte, 2016). Through effective citizenship education and policies promoting social interaction, societies can facilitate social cohesion, particularly in post-conflict settings where reintegration is a concern.

### 2.4. Citizenship Education

Citizenship education plays a crucial role in shaping the values and identities of young learners, impacting social cohesion and active citizenship. Studies emphasize the need for curricula that incorporate not just the history of citizenship but also critical engagement with current issues related to social justice and multiculturalism. For instance, Osler critiques UK governmental policies that frame immigrants as potential threats to social cohesion, arguing instead for informed, active citizenship focused on dialogue (Osler, 2009). This perspective is pivotal for understanding how citizenship education can empower students to engage meaningfully within their communities. Furthermore, Harris and Johns propose a global digital citizenship framework that extends beyond traditional citizenship notions, integrating young people's digital practices into the discourse of citizenship education (Harris & Johns, 2020). This approach emphasizes the necessity

for educators to adapt to the changing landscape of citizenship in a digital age, ensuring that social cohesion and solidarity are promoted not only through in-person interactions but also through digital engagement. The interplay between diaspora, citizenship, and education reveals multifaceted challenges faced in a rapidly globalizing world. By critically examining these domains, we can better understand the complexities of identity, belonging, and the role of education in nurturing an inclusive society.

## **2.5. Identified Gap**

Based on the literature, a significant theoretical and practical gap is evident. While scholars robustly analyze the transnational nature of diasporas, the socio-legal complexities of dual citizenship, and the general principles of reintegration and citizenship education, there is a critical absence of frameworks that actively connect these domains into a cohesive pedagogical intervention. Existing research tends to treat these as parallel concerns: transnationalism describes a condition, dual citizenship a legal status, and citizenship education a generalized tool. Missing is a targeted educational model designed explicitly to translate the structural ambiguity of dual citizenship into a clarified, participatory civic practice for diasporic reintegration. No identified study proposes a curriculum that simultaneously addresses the internal identity negotiation of the diaspora member, prepares resident communities for collaborative engagement, and leverages this process to transform potential social friction into developmental social capital for a post-conflict society like Somalia.

## **3. Theoretical Framework**

### **3.1 Foundation: Transnationalism as Social Reality**

Transnationalism has emerged as a significant social reality, characterized by the interconnections among individuals and groups across national borders. According to Tedeschi et al., transnationalism embodies a broad spectrum of economic, socio-cultural, and political activities that shape individuals' identities and affect their civic engagement. These activities modify one's sense of belonging and citizenship, fundamentally altering aspirations and life decisions (Tedeschi et al., 2020). The concept of "transnational habitus," as discussed by Carlson and Schneickert, further elucidates how migration influences individuals' dispositions and worldviews, demonstrating that skills and perceptions are reconfigured in a transnational context, essential for understanding social integration processes (Carlson & Schneickert, 2021).

The transnational engagements shape social cohesion and mutual recognition, particularly in postcolonial settings (Tin & Duong, 2025). The necessity for educational frameworks that embrace diverse identities and promote the well-being of transnational communities, highlighting the significance of transnationalism as a unifying basis for social practices and policies in modern societies (Tedeschi et al., 2020; Carlson & Schneickert, 2021).

### **3.2 Core Lens: Critical Transnational Citizenship**

Critical transnational citizenship posits that citizenship extends beyond national boundaries, encouraging individuals to engage deeply with processes of identity and belonging arising from transnational experiences. Drawing on Kim and Shatar's narrative inquiry, it is evident that the teaching practices of transnational educators, particularly migrant teachers, embody critical citizenship through active involvement in social justice and political engagement across borders (Kim & Shatar, 2025). This citizenship is not merely a status but encompasses active participation in shaping social realities and advocating for equity.

The concept of critical transnational citizenship involves engaging with diverse learner identities, as highlighted by Zhang and Gao, who argue for an intersectional approach in educational contexts. This approach allows for recognizing and addressing the complex identities influenced by nationality, race, and gender, ultimately fostering a more equitable educational environment (Zhang & Gao, 2024). The integration of critical perspectives in citizenship education supports students in developing critical awareness regarding systemic inequities, aiding in transforming their roles from passive participants to active, engaged citizens.

### **3.3 Pedagogical Engine: Critical Pedagogy and Praxis**

Critical pedagogy serves as a vital engine for fostering engaged learning and social justice practices within educational frameworks. Influenced by Freire's philosophy, critical pedagogy emphasizes student-centered approaches that challenge conventional power dynamics in education (Whiteside & Cross, 2023). Dehler discusses how critical management education can empower students to think critically, engage in reflective practices, and adopt critical action as a means of effecting social change (Dehler, 2009).

The linkage between critical pedagogy and transnational contexts is crucial. It supports the development of cultural competencies and intercultural dialogues, encouraging educational environments that embrace diversity and foster intergroup understanding (Kopish & Marques, 2020). As highlighted by Bickmore, active citizenship education fosters critical thinking about differences, social conflicts, and equity issues, employing pedagogical strategies that enhance student engagement with civic responsibilities (Bickmore, 2014). This dynamic interplay between critical pedagogy and transnational engagement cultivates resilient and socially aware citizenry.

### **3.4 Social Goal: Intergroup Contact and Cohesion Theory**

Intergroup contact theory posits that interaction between diverse groups can mitigate prejudice and enhance social cohesion. This theory is vital in addressing the challenges posed by globalization and transnational migration. For instance, Dederichs et al. provide evidence showing that ingroup preferences can hinder intergroup contact and segregation, indicating a need for deliberate efforts to foster inclusive community engagement (Dederichs et al., 2025).

Intergroup dialogue (IGD) emerges as a promising educational approach for promoting social justice and understanding among diverse populations. This method facilitates structured conversations that validate distinct identities while promoting collective action against systemic inequities (Nagda et al., 2017). Lam and colleagues posit that IGD can effectively engage students and communities in developing empathy and bridging divides, thereby serving as a pathway toward social cohesion in increasingly pluralistic societies (Nagda et al., 2017).

### **3.5 The Integrated Framework**

The integrated framework synthesizes the aforementioned lenses to propose an educational paradigm that embraces transnational realities, critical citizenship, and social justice pedagogy. This framework places transnationalism at its core, recognizing the complexities of global citizenship in contemporary education while advocating for critical reflection and pedagogical practices that challenge inequities. The convergence of critical transnational citizenship and critical pedagogy underscores the necessity for curricula that are inclusive, culturally relevant, and reflective of global interconnectedness (Saeed, 2023).

Such an integrated framework not only promotes engagement across diverse educational landscapes but also prepares students to navigate and contribute positively to an interconnected world, thus aligning educational outcomes with the pressing demands of social justice and equity (Fernández et al., 2016). By cultivating critical awareness and fostering intergroup dialogues, educational institutions can nurture a generation committed to advancing social cohesion and democracy.

## **4. Methodology**

This study adopts an interpretive research paradigm to gain a nuanced understanding of the complex social realities of the Somali diaspora and its connection to the homeland, emphasizing the importance of reflexive positionality in ensuring credible interpretations shaped by the researchers' analytical lenses (Zayhowski et al., 2025). The research design utilizes a qualitative synthesis methodology grounded in the principles of grounded theory, focusing on a systematic analysis and synthesis of existing scholarly literature rather than collecting new empirical data. This iterative engagement identifies core thematic patterns, theoretical gaps, and conceptual contradictions, employing Braun and Clarke's (2020) reflexive thematic analysis to derive themes from secondary sources. Key texts in diaspora studies, citizenship theory, and Somali education were analyzed, moving from descriptive summaries to a diagnostic interpretation of interconnections among themes like sovereignty, legitimacy contest and curriculum gaps, which informed the Participatory Transnational Citizenship (PTC) framework. Although no primary data were collected, the study adhered to the highest ethical standards, ensuring accurate representation

of sourced literature and the avoidance of plagiarism while presenting the framework as a scholarly argument aimed at constructive critique and development.

## **5. Diagnostic interpretation: Identifying Three Systemic Barriers**

The preceding literature review reveals not just contributions but persistent contradictions. Through the interpretive synthesis described in the methodology, three interlocking thematic challenges emerge as gaps in the literature that define the current landscape and justify the proposed intervention. These are diagnostic themes derived from the scholarly discourse, not empirical findings from new data.

### **5.1 Theme 1: The Sovereignty Bind**

The first theme, "The Sovereignty Bind," examines how the quest for national sovereignty impacts educational initiatives in Somalia. This theme is deeply interwoven with the historical context of state collapse and ongoing political fragmentation. Scholars like Schwartz and Aden emphasize the crucial role of education in promoting peace and civility but argue that current educational frameworks often fail to incorporate themes that foster conflict resolution or civic responsibility (Schwartz & Aden (2017). According to their research, educational institutions lack adequate support structures that would allow them to engage effectively with the political realities of armed conflict.

Moreover, Abdullahi et al. articulate the broader implications of patriarchal structures in Somali society, which constrain participation in public affairs and limit educational access (Abdullahi et al., 2023). This entrenched divide contributes significantly to the educational void, perpetuating cycles of ignorance and disenfranchisement, particularly among marginalized groups.

### **5.2 Theme 2: The Legitimacy Contest**

The second theme, "The Legitimacy Contest," refers to the struggle for authority and recognition among various governance structures attempting to establish legitimacy within the education sector. Lau's critique of governance structures indicates that the quest for legitimacy often overshadows genuine educational reforms (Lau, 2013). This contest can obstruct crucial educational initiatives, undermining efforts to create competent and inclusive curricula that meet the populace's needs and aspirations.

Corngold echoes this sentiment by suggesting that legitimacy in education also hinges on how democratic values are represented in curricular content (Corngold, 2010). He cautions against overly centralizing educational authority, arguing for an adaptive framework that promotes local engagement in curriculum design, thus boosting legitimacy and relevance in educational practices. In a similar vein, Tasan and Galigao illustrate how education intersects with democratic values and political trust, indicating that an absence of legitimacy in educational institutions can hinder efforts

to foster democratic engagement among citizens, directly impacting social cohesion and progress (Tasan & Galigao, 2024).

### **5.3 Theme 3: Curriculum in a Vacuum**

The final theme, "Curriculum in a Vacuum," highlights the disconnection between the realities faced by learners and the educational content provided. The significant barriers to effective curriculum implementation are inadequate resources, insufficient teacher training, and a lack of curriculum relevance to students' lives (Ibrahim et al., 2023). The Somali educational landscape suffers from a vacuum where curricula do not adequately address the socio-political context, thereby alienating students from their studies, Barton et al. further emphasize that educational experiences need to be contextualized to enhance their effectiveness (Barton et al., 2015). This disconnect is echoed in the studies on Somali primary education, which reveal that without integrating local realities and cultural elements, curriculum efforts are likely to fail (Ibrahim et al., 2023). Moreover, Ngeno's analysis highlights that inadequate teacher training has led to a conservative approach to education that lacks innovation, ultimately affecting student competency and engagement (Ngeno, 2023). This highlights a systemic failure to connect the curriculum to the pressing needs of both students and the community, fostering educational disengagement.

The themes identified—The Sovereignty Bind, The Legitimacy Contest, and Curriculum in a Vacuum—provide a comprehensive overview of the challenges facing the educational landscape in Somalia. Each theme underscores the interrelatedness of sociopolitical issues and educational efficacy, suggesting that reforms must consider the broader context to create sustainable and meaningful educational outcomes.

## **6. From Diagnosis to Design: The PTC Framework Development Logic**

The Participatory Transnational Citizenship (PTC) framework was constructed through a deliberate, multi-stage process informed by the interpretive synthesis described above.

1. **Problem Diagnosis:** The process began with the diagnostic analysis of the literature, which crystallized the core paradox and the three interlocking thematic challenges (The Sovereignty Bind, The Legitimacy Contest, Curriculum in a Vacuum). This diagnosis defined the precise problem space the framework needed to address.

2. **Theoretical Selection:** To address these multifaceted challenges, relevant theoretical lenses were selected and integrated to form the framework's pillars: Transnationalism to acknowledge the social reality of the diaspora; Critical Transnational Citizenship to provide an activist, border-crossing civic lens; Critical Pedagogy to supply the pedagogical engine for empowerment; and Intergroup Contact Theory to define the desired social outcome of cohesion.

3. **Framework Architecture:** The framework's structural components (the Dual-Track System and Civic Collaboration Lab) were then designed as logical applications of these theories to the

diagnosed problems. For example, the Dual-Track System operationalizes Critical Transnational Citizenship by creating structured pathways for different diaspora positions, while the Civic Collaboration Lab embodies Critical Pedagogy and Intergroup Contact Theory by creating a space for dialogic praxis.

4. Basis for Validity Claims: The validity of the proposed PTC framework is not empirical at this conceptual stage but is established on logical and theoretical grounds. Its validity rests on: (a) its diagnostic adequacy—it is derived from and directly responds to the key challenges identified in the scholarly literature; (b) its theoretical coherence—it integrates established, respected theories into a novel configuration suited to the context; and (c) its constructive alignment—each component of the framework is logically traceable to both a diagnosed problem and a selected theoretical principle. This form of validity is appropriate for a conceptual model, which must next undergo empirical validation through piloting and application."

## **7. Participatory Transnational Citizenship (PTC): An Academic Synthesis**

### **7.1 Philosophy and Core Principles**

Participatory Transnational Citizenship (PTC) embodies a framework designed to empower the Somali diaspora, incentivizing active engagement with their homeland through dual citizenship that fosters robust ties with both the host and origin countries. This philosophy aligns with contemporary notions of identity that are increasingly shaped by globalization and transnational networks. As observed by Castles, the dynamics of migration illustrate how globalization facilitates diverse forms of community formation, whereby individuals remain connected to multiple identities across borders, defining their citizenship in fluid and multifaceted ways (Castles, 2002). Furthermore, the complexities of identity among young Somalis in Europe, as highlighted by Scuzzarello and Carlson, suggest that socio-political environments heavily influence how these individuals navigate their transnational affiliations, ultimately shaping their social identities and participation in civic life (Scuzzarello & Carlson, 2018).

### **7.2 Structural Design: The Dual-Track System**

#### **Track 1: For the Diaspora Abroad**

The first track of the dual citizenship system is tailored for the Somali diaspora located abroad. This structure recognizes the significant role that expatriates play in their home country's development through remittances, investment, and advocacy. Utilizing insights from Williams, it's evident that mobilizing diaspora resources can substantially boost homeland investment, a crucial factor for the recovery of post-conflict economies like Somalia (Williams, 2018). The framework underscores the importance of a supportive policy environment that encourages diaspora engagement, creating tangible pathways for cognitive and financial contributions.

## Track 2: For Reintegration in Somalia

The second track aims at facilitating the reintegration of diaspora members who return to Somalia. This initiative requires comprehensive policies that support economic endeavors, social reintegration, and the addressing of emotional and psychological needs of returnees. While the work of Hassan-Kadle et al. focuses on the importance of education and community engagement for bridging gaps in health initiatives in Somalia, it underscores the need for local ownership and sustainable leadership, which could be beneficial in the context of reintegration policies (Hassan-Kadle et al., 2025). Moreover, effective governance structures that embrace participatory approaches including diaspora input are crucial for the success of reintegration efforts.

### 7.3 The Civic Collaboration Lab: A Detailed Blueprint

The Civic Collaboration Lab acts as a central catalyst for interaction among diaspora members, local communities, and governmental authorities. This lab embodies participative engagement principles that underscore the importance of collaboration to tackle transnational issues effectively. Adefila et al. suggest that collaborative education infrastructures can address sustainability challenges while also enhancing a sense of civic responsibility among participants (Adefila et al., 2021). Such a lab could serve not only to foster civic education but also to generate innovative strategies for sustainable development that directly benefit both the diaspora and Somalia.

### 7.4 Intended Learning Outcomes and Assessment

The intended learning outcomes from the PTC initiative include a heightened understanding of civic responsibilities, improved transnational advocacy skills, and a commitment to sustainable development principles. Assessment methods must be multifaceted, combining qualitative insights with quantitative measures to evaluate the efficacy of participant engagement and educational outreach efforts. Engaging participants in real-world projects can illustrate the impact of their contributions on both local and transnational scales: as highlighted by Klaver and Molen, educational frameworks that encourage civic engagement and social issues can significantly shape positive attitudes among learners (Klaver & Molen, 2020).

The PTC framework is operationalized through four interconnected strategic components. These components translate its philosophical principles into a structured model for action, moving from mindset shift to measurable impact. Table 1 provides a consolidated overview of this architecture, detailing each component's purpose, key features, target audience, and indicators of success.

Table 1. The Participatory Transnational Citizenship (PTC) Framework: Strategic Components and Implementation Matrix

Component	Purpose	Key Features	Target Audience	Outcome Indicators
Philosophical Foundation	To reframe dual citizenship from a legal problem to a civic asset.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asset-based approach</li> <li>• Transnational belonging</li> <li>• Critical civic engagement</li> </ul>	All stakeholders (diaspora, residents, policymakers)	Shift in discourse from "problem" to "participatory potential".
Dual-Track Educational System	To deliver context-specific civic learning for different diaspora positions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Track 1: Diaspora abroad (preparation &amp; sustained engagement)</li> <li>• Track 2: Returnees in Somalia (reintegration &amp; local collaboration)</li> <li>• Modular, critical curriculum</li> </ul>	Diaspora members & returnees	Increased civic literacy; reduced social friction in reintegration.
Civic Collaboration Lab	To translate learning into praxis and build intergroup cohesion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hybrid (physical/virtual) praxis space</li> <li>• Structured intergroup dialogue</li> <li>• Community-focused project incubator</li> </ul>	Diaspora and resident communities in partnership	Completed co-created projects; measurable improvements in trust and collaboration.
Assessment & Implementation Architecture	To measure impact, ensure accountability, and guide scaling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed-methods evaluation (learning + social impact)</li> <li>• Multi-stakeholder implementation roadmap</li> <li>• Policy integration guidelines</li> </ul>	Implementing institutions (NGOs, universities, government bodies)	Documented learning outcomes; institutional adoption of PTC principles; policy change.

## 8. Findings

This study, through an interpretive and grounded analysis of the Somali diaspora's condition and the educational landscape in Somalia, identified a core paradox and three interconnected thematic challenges that substantiate the need for the proposed Participatory Transnational Citizenship (PTC) framework.

### The Core Paradox: Asset versus Alienation

The findings confirm that the Somali diaspora represents a monumental asset characterized by significant financial capital (remittances), substantial human capital (education and skills), and profound transnational social capital. However, these very assets, when deployed without a structured civic and social framework, become sources of tension. The legal status of dual citizenship, rather than being a bridge, often institutionalizes a condition of competing

sovereignties, leading to an existential dilemma for diaspora members and perceptions of privileged externality among resident Somalis. This paradox results in the diaspora's potential being simultaneously celebrated for its economic input and mistrusted for its social and political integration.

### **Three Interlocking Thematic Challenges:**

1. **The Sovereignty Bind:** The research finds that the fragile, contested nature of sovereignty in Somalia directly impacts the space for civic education. Educational initiatives are often caught between competing authorities (Federal Government, Federal Member States, non-state actors) and are frequently instrumentalized for political ends rather than civic development. This environment stifles the creation of a neutral, nationally-oriented civic curriculum capable of engaging complex transnational identities. The educational void is not merely a lack of resources but a consequence of this political fragmentation.
2. **The Legitimacy Contest:** Closely tied to sovereignty, a fierce contest over legitimacy permeates the educational sphere. The findings indicate that neither the formal education system nor informal diaspora-led initiatives currently hold broad, uncontested legitimacy to define a “Somali civic identity.” For the diaspora, their legitimacy to participate in homeland affairs is frequently questioned based on their physical absence and foreign citizenship. For local institutions, their legitimacy to educate a transnational population is limited by a lack of understanding of diaspora realities. This mutual legitimacy deficit hinders collaborative nation-building.
3. **Curriculum in a Vacuum:** The analysis reveals that existing educational offerings, where they exist, are ill-equipped to address the realities of transnational life. There is a critical absence of a curriculum that:
  - Pedagogically addresses the rights and responsibilities of dual citizenship.
  - Facilitates dialogue and mutual understanding between returnees/diaspora and resident communities.
  - Critically engages with Somalia's history, its diaspora formation, and future trajectories from a civic empowerment perspective.
  - Develops practical skills for participatory development across borders. This vacuum leaves diaspora reintegration to chance and perpetuates the social frictions identified in the problem statement.

## 9. Discussion

### 9.1. Validation through Expert Consensus

The proposed PTC framework, while novel in its specific configuration, finds strong validation through alignment with expert consensus across multiple fields. The findings on the “Sovereignty Bind” resonate with scholars like Schwartz and Aden (2017), who argue that education in conflict settings must move beyond basic instruction to actively foster civic responsibility and peace—a core objective of the Civic Collaboration Lab. The “Legitimacy Contest” echoes Lau’s (2013) and Corngold’s (2010) warnings about the dangers of centralized, non-participatory educational authority. The PTC’s dual-track, dialogical model is a direct attempt to build legitimacy through inclusivity and co-creation.

In citizenship studies, the framework aligns with the shift from static legal status to active, participatory practice (Ahmad, 2023; Rapoport & Yemini, 2019). Its transnational focus is supported by literature that views diasporic identity as a dynamic, networked reality (Clark, 2007; Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2010). Furthermore, the pedagogical approach is consistent with critical pedagogy advocates (Bickmore, 2014; Kopish & Marques, 2020) and intergroup contact theorists (Nagda et al., 2017), who emphasize dialogue, critical reflection, and structured interaction as pathways to social cohesion. Thus, the PTC framework does not emerge in a scholarly vacuum but synthesizes and applies robust theoretical principles to the specific Somali context.

### 9.2. Theoretical Implications

This study makes several contributions to theoretical discourse. First, it operationalizes transnational citizenship theory. By moving from abstract concept to a concrete educational framework with modules, tracks, and a “Civic Collaboration Lab,” it provides a model for how transnational citizenship can be *cultivated* rather than merely observed. It answers the call to bridge the gap between the macro-level analysis of diaspora and the micro-level need for pedagogical tools.

Second, it reframes dual citizenship from a problem of divided loyalty to an asset of plural engagement. The theoretical lens shifts from a state-centric view of citizenship as an exclusive membership to a networked, participatory view where individuals can leverage their multiple affiliations for development. This aligns with and extends Oloufade and Pongou’s (2013) view of dual citizenship as a conduit for transnational solidarity.

Third, it integrates critical pedagogy with diaspora studies. While critical pedagogy often focuses on localized power structures, this framework applies its principles to the transnational field, creating a “critical transnational pedagogy” that empowers learners to navigate and challenge power asymmetries between diaspora and homeland, center and periphery, and returnee and resident.

### **9.3. Practical and Policy Pathways: The PTC framework outlines clear pathways for implementation:**

- For Somali Policymakers (Federal and State Levels): Endorse and institutionalize the PTC framework as a national strategy for diaspora engagement. This involves:
  - Legally affirming and facilitating dual citizenship.
  - Mandating the Ministry of Education to collaborate with diaspora experts to integrate PTC modules into existing adult education and civics curricula.
  - Providing resources and legitimacy to pilot Civic Collaboration Labs in major cities and regions with high returnee populations.
- For Diaspora Organizations and Host Countries: Partner to deliver Track 1 (Diaspora Abroad). Host-country integration agencies could support pre-departure PTC courses for those considering return. Diaspora organizations can host modules on Somali history, political structures, and ethical investment, transforming social gatherings into civic learning spaces.
- For Educational Institutions and NGOs in Somalia: Develop and deliver Track 2 (Reintegration). Universities in Somalia could offer certification in PTC. Local NGOs can facilitate the community-based components of the Civic Collaboration Lab, focusing on local needs assessments and joint project management with diaspora partners.
- For International Development Partners: Fund and support the PTC framework as a sustainable peacebuilding and capacity-building initiative. Move beyond funding physical infrastructure to investing in this “civic infrastructure” that mitigates conflict and leverages social capital for development.

#### **9.3.1 Proposed Evaluation Metrics for Pilot Implementation**

To bridge the conceptual framework with practical application, future pilots should consider measurable indicators of success. These could include:

- *Attitudinal Indicators*: Pre- and post-module surveys measuring changes in trust, perceived legitimacy, and sense of shared civic identity among diaspora and resident participants.
- *Collaborative Outputs*: The number, quality, and sustainability of joint projects developed and implemented through the Civic Collaboration Lab.
- *Structural Adoption*: Formal integration of PTC principles or modules into the curricula of diaspora organizations, Somali universities, or adult education programs.

- *Longitudinal Tracking*: Follow-up studies assessing the long-term impact on social cohesion and collaborative behavior in communities where the framework has been piloted.

#### **9.4. Limitations and Future Research**

This study is primarily a conceptual and framework-building exercise. Its limitations point to essential avenues for future research:

- **Contextual Specificity**: The framework is designed for the Somali context. Future research should test its adaptability to other post-conflict diasporas
- **Empirical Validation**: The next critical step is piloting and evaluation. Action research is needed to implement pilot modules and labs, using the intended learning outcomes to rigorously assess impacts on attitudes, social cohesion, and collaborative project success.
- **Scalability and Digital Integration**: Research should explore digital platforms for delivering Track 1 and facilitating virtual components of the Collaboration Lab, making the framework accessible to a global diaspora.
- **Intersectional Nuances**: Further study is required on how the PTC experience differs across intersections of gender, generation, class, and clan, ensuring the framework is equitable and addresses specific barriers faced by groups like diaspora women (Al-Sharmani, 2006; Gröschl, 2024).
- **Beyond empirical testing**, several conceptual limitations warrant acknowledgment. First, the framework's educational focus may encounter limits when confronting entrenched structural barriers such as clan politics, economic inequality, or state fragility. Second, while designed for inclusivity, the framework's effectiveness across diverse diaspora subgroups (e.g., second-generation youth versus first-generation refugees) requires specific adaptation. Finally, in Somalia's contested political landscape, there exists a risk of the PTC model being

### **10. Conclusion**

#### **10.1. Restating the Contribution**

This study has diagnosed a critical gap in the relationship between the Somali diaspora and the homeland: the absence of a structured civic pedagogy to navigate the complexities of dual citizenship and transform potential social friction into collaborative agency. In response, it has made a primary contribution by designing the Educational Framework for Participatory Transnational Citizenship (PTC). This framework is not merely an educational program but a comprehensive model for reimagining diaspora-homeland relations. It re-conceptualizes dual citizenship as a platform for participatory action, provides a dual-track curriculum for preparation

and reintegration, and proposes the Civic Collaboration Lab as a practical engine for joint problem-solving. It contributes to academia by synthesizing transnationalism, critical citizenship, and pedagogy into an actionable model, and to practice by offering a clear blueprint for policymakers, educators, and diaspora leaders.

## 10.2. Broader Relevance

While focused on Somalia, the PTC framework holds relevance for a world characterized by mass migration, transnational identities, and struggles over social cohesion. It offers a template for any nation seeking to constructively engage its global diaspora beyond remittances. It speaks to debates in multicultural societies about belonging and integration, proposing that a sense of global civic responsibility can complement local national attachment. In an era of fragmented identities and contested citizenship, the PTC model advocates for an inclusive, participatory, and educated form of belonging that is fit for the 21st century.

## Recommendations

### 1. For Somali Policymakers:

- Institutionalize Dual Citizenship: Work with legal experts to facilitate and officially recognize dual citizenship, ensuring that policies reflect and support the realities of the diaspora.
- Collaborative Curriculum Development: Mandate the Ministry of Education to engage diaspora experts and local stakeholders in developing PTC modules for integration into national curricula, emphasizing civic education and dual citizenship rights.
- Pilot Civic Collaboration Labs: Initiate pilot programs in major cities with significant returnee populations to create networking and engagement opportunities, fostering dialogue between diaspora and local communities.

### 2. For Diaspora Organizations:

- Facilitate Pre-Departure Training: Partner with host country agencies to create pre-departure PTC courses, preparing potential returnees for reintegration through cultural education and civic responsibilities.
- Engage in Civic Learning: Use diaspora gatherings as platforms for civic education by offering sessions on Somali history, political structures, and the importance of ethical investment in the homeland.

### 3. For Educational Institutions in Somalia:

- Offer PTC Certifications: Develop certification programs in conjunction with the PTC framework that focus on the rights and responsibilities of dual citizenship and civic engagement.
  - Community-Based Learning: Collaborate with local NGOs to deliver the Civic Collaboration Lab's components, ensuring that curriculum and activities are responsive to local realities and needs.
4. For International Development Partners:
- Invest in Civic Infrastructure: Shift funding focus from physical infrastructure to initiatives that build "civic infrastructure," such as the PTC framework, which enhances community engagement and social capital.
  - Support Capacity Building: Provide resources and technical assistance to facilitate the establishment of Civic Collaboration Labs and training for local educators and community leaders on the framework's principles.
5. For Future Research:
- Empirical Testing of the Framework: Conduct action research to pilot the PTC modules and Labs, systematically assessing their impact on social cohesion and civic identity among the diaspora.
  - Explore Digital Solutions: Investigate the use of digital platforms for delivering education modules and facilitating virtual collaboration, ensuring broader accessibility for the global diaspora.
  - Intersectional Studies: Research how the PTC framework can be adapted to address specific challenges faced by different demographic groups within the diaspora, ensuring inclusivity for all identities.

### **Acknowledgements**

The successful completion of this study was achieved through the collaborative efforts of many individuals. The valuable discussions and constructive feedback provided by colleagues played a crucial role in enhancing and improving the research.

### **Funding Statement**

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

### **Disclosure Statement**

The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

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