

**Learning gender: the link with violence in and around schools
in Mozambique.**

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Abstract

This thesis explores the links between gender relations and violence against girls in and around schools in Mozambique. A participatory approach to research was used to explore young girls' and boys' experiences of gender violence in homes, schools and streets. This involved interviews, focus group discussions and observation with a range of institutional actors: parents, family members, teachers, 'sugar daddies' and young people. The study is framed as an ethnographic case study and investigates how gender and power relations are constructed through experience, interaction with others and through what girls and boys observe and acquire in different sites of learning including school, church, family and community, and the media.

Drawing on the theoretical concepts of agency, power relations and subjectivities within gender and social analysis (Butler, 1990; Foucault, 1978; 1982; McNay, 2000; 2003), I explore how gender as a cultural construct is acquired by participants in structured and unstructured learning contexts. The concept of 'situated learning' (Lave and Wenger, 1991) is drawn upon to examine the validity of formal, non-formal and informal processes of learning through which young people learn about gender relations and sexuality in this community in Mozambique. Conceptualisation of learning as a continuum from informal to formal suggests that learning is a lifelong activity shaped by people, context and culture, and that knowledge which involves local knowledge and contextual practice experience, is acquired through 'communities of practice' (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

In terms of the role of the school, the thesis shows how school shapes gender relations through unequal teacher-student power relations, everyday practices and structures that can result in violent acts. The thesis also explores how initiation rites involving young people in groups and individually not only contribute to conveying gender stereotypes but also provide insights into the ways in which such traditions are being mediated and transformed. Drawing young people's voices into the debate, the thesis describes how girls and boys rely on unstructured, informal means of learning through the media and everyday life experience. It suggests that young people absorb knowledge and construct gender identities through different learning processes that might implicitly and/or explicitly lead to gender violence.

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List of acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome
DPEC	<i>Direcção Provincial da Educação e Cultura</i> (Provincial Department of the Ministry of Education)
EFA	Education for All
EP1	<i>Ensino Primário do 1º Grau</i> (Primary Education 1 st level: 1 st -5 th grade)
EP2	<i>Ensino Primário do 2º Grau</i> (Primary Education 2 nd level: 6 th -7 th grade)
EPF	<i>Escola de Professores do Futuro</i> (Future Teachers' College)
ESG1	<i>Ensino Secundário do 1º Ciclo</i> (Secondary Education 1 st level: 8 th -10 th grade)
ESG2	<i>Ensino Secundário do 2º Ciclo</i> (Secondary Education 2 nd level: 11 th -12 th grade)
ESSP	Educational Strategic Sector Plan
FDG	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IFP	<i>Instituto de Formação de Professores</i> (Teacher Training College)
MEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MZN	Mozambican Metical
ONP	<i>Organização Nacional Professores</i> (National Teachers Organisation)
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RRA	Rapid Rural Appraisal
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection

UEA	University of East Anglia
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USD	United States Dollar
WHO	World Health Organization

Glossary

Expression	Etymology	Meaning
<i>amante</i>	Portuguese	boyfriend, lover
<i>bairro (pl. bairros)</i>	Portuguese	living quarter, the smallest administrative unit
<i>capulana</i>	Undetermined	sarong. A cloth wrap worn by local women. Can be found in all sorts of colours and patterns, often bearing national emblems or images of politicians
<i>chapa</i>	Undetermined	form of local transport, usually a private minibus
<i>chefe</i>	Portuguese	leader, boss
<i>conservador (pl. conservadores)</i>	Portuguese	conservator; in this context, conservator of tradition
<i>curandeiro</i>	Portuguese	traditional healer
<i>curanderismo</i>	Portuguese	mind-body-spirit healing approach steeped in tradition and ceremony. It means to enhance wellness at many levels; health, money, love and soul issues
<i>lobolo or lovolo</i>	Bantu	brideprice
<i>machamba</i>	Swahili	cultivation plot, field or family farm
<i>madrinha</i>	Portuguese	godmother; in this context

<i>matangi</i>	Bantu	facilitator/mentor/initiation rites elongated labia
<i>namorado</i>	Portuguese	boyfriend, lover
<i>padrinho</i>	Portuguese	godfather; here facilitator/mentor/teacher of initiation rites
<i>puixa-puixa</i>	Bantu	local practice of elongating vaginal labia
<i>puta</i>	Portuguese	prostitute
<i>Ricinus Communis</i>	Latin	castor oil plant
<i>titio</i>	Portuguese	uncle

Transcription notation

Extracts from my fieldnotes are printed in italics

(...) part of sentence omitted

.... a sentence or more omitted

[] my comments as observer of the scene

madrinha (words in italic): words quoted verbatim in Portuguese or Bantu languages in the thesis

Names of participants have been changed, unless they requested otherwise

Key persons

Brother Abilio: the youngest, lowest-ranking facilitator during the initiation rites

Baba Joaquin: a wise man who performed many important functions in the community. He knew the local culture and customs, plants and natural medicine. *Baba* is a title of rank in the local community: it means wise man and spiritual leader in the local language

Madrinha Maria: one of the facilitators of the local initiation rites

Madrinha Sara: a wise elderly woman who prepared local girls for marriage through initiation procedures

Mr Cujena: worked for a local association, *Associação Projeto de Vida para Crianças e Jovens* (APROVIDA), which works with other organisations such as Action Aid to campaign against violence against girls in schools and assists other projects to improve young people's lives in the local area

Mrs Almeida: a coordinator responsible for gender and special programmes in the *Direcção Provincial da Educação e Cultura de Sofala* (Provincial Department of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Sofala)

Mrs Ibrahim: responsible for gender issues in the *Organização Nacional Professores* (National Teachers Organisation)

Mrs Mendoza: the head of the *Direcção de Programas Especiais* (Special Programmes Department) of the Ministry of Education and Culture

Mr Fidelio: the head of the Beira branch of the *Organização Nacional Professores* (National Teachers Organisation)

Mr Semo: worked in the Health and Education section of the Provincial Department of the Ministry of Education. He was responsible for implementation of the *Geração Biz* programme, which addresses young people's issues around sex, sexuality and HIV/AIDS (<http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2003/english/ch6/page4.htm>)

Pastor Leo: the head of the Pentecostal Church in the province. I stayed with him and his family in the beginning of my fieldwork

Padre Paolo: one of the missionaries from South America who ran the missionary centre outside Beira (the place where the initiation rites were conducted)

Chapter 1

Introduction: concepts and aims

1. Introduction

Violence and the threat of it limits the choices open to girls and women and restricts their options in virtually all spheres of their lives, public and private – at home, in school, and in most community spaces (for example, Krug *et al.*, 2002; Leach and Mitchel, 2006; Pinheiro, 2006). Gender-based violence is of a mainly sexual nature and hinges on unequal power relations between women and men. My experience of living in Mozambique and working in the local education sector led me to question whether unequal gender relations (as power relations) are preconditions for the gender violence that occurs across social institutions such as the family, community and school. In particular, I wanted to know how young people learn about gender, how their gender and sexual identities are shaped by various processes in structured and unstructured learning contexts in local institutions, and how this connects to gender violence in and around schools.¹

1.1 The research journey

The direction of this research developed over time. It began with my experience at a teacher training college in Mozambique, where I worked from 1996 to 1997. As a teacher trainee I went to Nampula Province in the north of the country for a teaching placement at the *Escola de Professores do Futuro* (EPF) (Future Teachers' College). I lived at the college with over 100 students and some of my colleagues. As it was one of the first colleges of this kind (in Mozambique), the students as well as the tutors came from different parts of Mozambique. Although not specifically set out as such, the EPF programme mainstreamed gender by promoting equality at all levels and included a gender sensitising course covering the unequal division of labour, sexuality and HIV/AIDS awareness. The students took part in running the school, and the allocation of their obligatory tasks challenged the traditional roles of women and men. Males, for example, cooked and cleaned, and females did maintenance and construction work. The school promoted female football, volleyball and basketball teams. Besides my role as a tutor, I helped students with practical chores at the school: gardening, construction work, evening activities, clubs, shopping, cooking and many others. During this period, together with my students I also had the opportunity to engage with education

¹ In my thesis I am using the present tense for immediacy not to suggest a generalised truth.

processes in local schools and at the community level in various community projects and campaigns such as sensitising parents to the importance of sending their girls to school and promoting HIV/AIDS awareness. Based on the idea that teachers can and should be active promoters of development in rural areas, the college specifically trained teachers to work in rural areas.²

The programme laid great emphasis on gender equality and promoted equal roles for women and men. The education not only challenged students' ideas about gender identities; it also put its views into practice and proved it was possible. At the time I did not question this situation myself, and I am not sure what the students thought about it. As far as I remember, they appeared to accept the rules, which I assume probably differed somewhat from those they were used to in their home communities.

Another important experience in this journey was learning about initiation rites, both collective and individual, for young people. In Chapter 6 I describe the rites I had the chance to observe during my fieldwork in 2008-2009. As I was exploring the importance of puberty rites, I found it problematic that international discourse views the rituals as 'root causes for discrimination and violence against girls' (Ras-Work, 2006: 2). While researchers have described initiation rites as a means of controlling women's sexuality and hazardous to their lives (some involving extreme tattooing and/or genital mutilation) (WHO, 2008), in the local context, rites can be considered a positive and meaningful aspect of learning. Traditionally, initiation rites for both girls and boys were the main means of education, passing on not only indigenous wisdom but also practical knowledge about such subjects as sexual relations and reproductive health. Rites of passage, as I witnessed, consisted of one or more ceremonial events and were not mandatory for the girls and boys in the local community where I was living. As it appeared, in particular for female initiates, the rites contained instruction and/or tests of the young girl's competence in womanhood, perhaps assuring the girl and those around her that she is ready to and capable of completing her future duties as a wife and mother, as well as her social roles within community. Male initiation rites, in turn, prepared boys for the role of leader and *cabeça de família* (head of the family).

As I discuss in Chapter 6, many parents and elders I met considered it important that young people were introduced to adulthood through the ceremony. In the literature, the educational aspect of rites of passage is stressed as being as valuable as formal schooling is in the West

² See Appendix I for the aims and objectives of the education at the EPF.

(Mutisya, 1996). Rites of passage are viewed as more than a means of learning, however. They also offer continuity, linking young people with adults and the larger community (Arnfred, 2011). In this way they do not merely help to establish gender roles and communal identities (Mutisya, 1996). At the ceremonies I attended I became aware of their central role in socialising young people by establishing their role as female or male within their community (Lewis, 1988; Perkins, 1985; Warfield-Coppock, 1990).

Looking back at my journey, I see the importance of the two learning contexts – the school and community – in the process of establishing young girls’ and boys’ gender and sexual identities. Within the idea of continuity of learning, this research explores processes and practices through which gender identities are constructed and gender relations conveyed. Given the fact that violence affects the lives of young people (for example, Krug *et al.*, 2002; Leach and Mitchel, 2006; Pinheiro, 2006), drawing the voices of girls and boys into the debate is central to my research. Because researching and documenting the incidence of gender violence is a difficult and sensitive task, I had to develop innovative methodologies to address the difficulties and ethical dilemmas involved. I adopted a participatory approach to explore my research questions together with the participants:

- *How is knowledge of gender and gender relations acquired?*
- *How can gender relations (as power relations) affect gender violence?*

By exploring the link between these two overarching questions, this study seeks to provide new insights into how gender and identity construction, and gender relations contribute to gender violence in the family, community and school, thereby enhancing knowledge of the phenomenon and suggesting future directions in advocacy against violence and better awareness of the issue, as well as possible research approaches. This section has presented my personal journey towards the framing of this doctoral research and the two research questions that guided me.

Before I outline the emerging issues from the literature on gender-based violence in and around schools internationally, from Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), and particularly from Mozambique, the next section looks at different learning contexts and considers what people learn about gender and sexuality in structured and unstructured settings such as the family, community, school and church, how these learning processes forge the construction of gender and sexual identities, and what effect this may have on gender violence.

1.2 Gender construction across social institutions

The body of research demonstrates that learning in every community plays a key role in the formation of gender perceptions and roles within its cultural context (see for example, Dasgupta, 1998; Ampoto, 2001; Raffaelli and Ontai, 2004). This process, also considered as ‘socialisation’, enables individuals to adopt gender-specific behaviour, attitudes, and dispositional traits through life-long processes of learning and allocation that maintains gender role differentiation. As I go on to explore, family interactions, schools, churches, and mass media are the key means to construction of gender (and sexual) identities and roles, and shaping gender relations. In terms of my research, the rationale behind the idea of learning across social institutions and the media enables me to see learning as a continuum – a concept which I discuss in Chapter 4. As I am particularly interested in examining how young people construct gender and sexual identities in the context of the local community, it is necessary to examine different social domains. In this section I look at the processes within the family, community, church and school and through the media.

Family and community

For most people, the first primary relationships they establish and form are within the family – the institution which from the start is responsible for the initial construction of gender identities and roles. Traditionally in societies such as Mozambique, families have relied upon community-led learning (Beckwith and Fisher, 2002). In this context, young people can be exposed to a wide range of attitudes and beliefs that are desirable in females and males. The methods used in this type of non-formal learning are very different in nature from the traditional pedagogies used in formal education. Rather than learning ‘hard knowledge’ from textbooks, young people ‘learn by doing’, through learning experiences with their peers, voluntary work, dances, rituals, as well as through contributing to community life. Due to the participatory nature of the activities in community-led learning, young people take responsibility for their own learning and engage actively in the process.

The family continues to play a major role as a key institution in reproducing gender in the context of Mozambique. Arnfred (2011) describes how from the earliest age females and males are encouraged to engage in gender-specific activities and behaviours. While girls are expected to help their mothers with food preparation, cooking, fetching water and looking after smaller siblings as soon as they are able, boys have relatively few domestic tasks to perform (ibid). Arnfred (2011) argues that girls continually learn gender-suitable behaviour

from their female relatives, whereas boys are introduced to gender-appropriate comportment by their male relatives. As I explore in Chapter 4, gender is constructed through gender-specific activities and practices; through performance of every day routines (Bourdieu, 1977; Butler, 1990), in this way forming individual's *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977). Individuals 'perform' gender by drawing on social rules for appearance, dress, mannerism, speech etc. In this way, ritualised practices that carry gendered meaning are embedded in various social situations. This draws our attention to the importance of context and makes it clear that gendered behaviours are variable according to the space and time.

School

My own experience of working in the education sector in Mozambique showed me that violence in schools cannot be divorced from the situation in the community and in the home. As a social institution, school, alongside the family and community, is an important site for the construction of gender and gender relations and reinforces socially prescribed inequalities.

Gender relations in school form part of the 'hidden curriculum'³ and students' informal learning through which their feminine, masculine and sexual identities are constructed and reinforced (Mac an Ghail, 1996; Swain, 2004). Teachers usually maintain socially established norms and gender roles persisting at the community level (Leach and Mitchell, 2006). For example, in many African schools girls are responsible for domestic activities such as cleaning the classrooms and fetching water, while boys perform heavier duties such as chopping wood and digging the school fields (Dunne and Leach, 2005). These activities ritualise and embody the symbolic representation of gendered identities and segregation of gender roles in schools. As mentioned above, the programme at the teacher training college where I was based in the 1990s challenged the construction of gender relations within and beyond the institutional boundaries through daily procedures and structures, at the same time contesting the notion of the teacher's superiority and dominance.

As I go on to explore in the following section, recent studies show that far from being a safe learning environment, schools can be sites of intolerance, discrimination and violence (Krug

³ The term 'hidden curriculum' was first used by sociologist Philip Jackson in 1968. Jackson argues that what is taught in schools is more than the sum total of the curriculum (Jackson, 1968).

et al., 2002; Pinheiro, 2006).⁴ Kabeer (1996) draws attention to social institutions that reproduce gender inequalities, which I discuss in depth in Chapter 4. She notes that as an institution and as part of society, school persists as a main element in the construction of gender identity and gender relations built on socially-approved inequalities. In this way, school as a social arena is characterised by asymmetrical power relations manifesting through knowledge, discourse, age and authority, as well as through institutional practices and structures. Implicit and explicit rules and codes, regulations and symbols embedded in the school routine contribute to the construction of ‘gender regimes’ (Kessler *et al.*, 1985). As I explore in Chapter 4, Foucault (1977) argues that ‘disciplinary power’ reach into subjects through a complex structure of disciplinary regimes that regulate the body and mind. This, however, leads to contradictions and variations in practice, as I explore in the empirical chapters.

The authoritarian form of teaching prevalent in many educational systems in developing countries grants teachers great power and respect (Dunne *et al.*, 2003), sanctioning them to normalise gendered behaviour by policing what is acceptable and what is not and denying pupils room for disobedience (Gordon, 1995). Authority in school can be identified in two ways. First, in relation to the way organisational authority is compounded by the hierarchy of age at play, particularly in social relations where children are governed culturally by a notion of respect for their elders (Jewkes *et al.*, 2005). The gendered nature of respect stands only to further girls’ powerlessness, as it refers to the “patriarchal code of respect” (ibid: 1813). In a study in South Africa conducted by Jewkes and colleagues, a girl explains, “in my culture children have no status, and if you are a girl child you have even less status” (Jewkes *et al.*, 2005: 1813).

In a number of studies (for example, Connell, 1996; Leach *et al.*, 2003; Groes-Green, 2011) school is similarly considered an arena for male students seeking to strengthen their status among their peers to demonstrate their dominance over female pupils. Girls are often subjected to violent sexual advances from boys within the school compound, particularly in student toilets and the school grounds, which are identified by Leach and Mitchell (2006) as unsafe areas. A study of a primary school in South Africa revealed the effect of violent masculinity on girls which, it reports, reflects a ‘fight for gender boundaries’ in the school

⁴ These two reports are the first comprehensive global studies of all forms of violence against children. They build on various empirical studies from around the world, for example Leach *et al.*, (2000); Leach *et al.*, (2003); Matavele, (2005).

grounds. In an atmosphere of fear, many of the girls chose to remain silent and their power to resist was slight (Richter *et al.*, 2004). Girls' power and agency declined when violence and the threat of violence constructed and limited everything they could do. Thus gender violence in schools occurs in a context of informal practices and institutional rules and structures. Moreover, it plays an important role in shaping students' ideas, behaviours and attitudes. In this way school becomes a site for the construction and reinforcement of 'the public performance of traditional heterosexual gender roles' (Meyer, 2006: 47) supporting the notion of male superiority and authority (Leach and Mitchell, 2006).

Youth and media

Research from different parts of SSA show that the media has gained much significance in the region during the last decades (see for example, Crossfire, 2012; Mutula, 2012; Onyango, 2012). As technology standards improve (also in SSA) and the quest for information and knowledge grows, so does the significance of the media.

Research from the West suggests that these patterns are tied to broader trends in the changing structures of sociability, where we are seeing a move toward more individualized and flexible forms of engagement with media environments. Researchers have described this as a turn toward "networked society" (Castells, 2000), "networked individualism" (Wellman and Hogan, 2004), "selective sociality" (Matsuda, 2005), the "long tail" of niche media (Anderson, 2006), or a more tailored set of media choices (Livingstone, 2002). Youth practices have been an important part of the drive toward these more networked, individualized, and diversified forms of media engagement.

Although today's questions about "kids these days" have a familiar ring to them, the contemporary version is somewhat unusual in how strongly it equates generational identity with technology identity. There is a growing public discourse (both hopeful and fearful) declaring that young people's use of digital media and communication technologies defines a generational identity distinct from that of their elders. In addition to this generational divide, these new technology practices are tied to what Buckingham (2007: 96) has described as a "'digital divide' between in-school and out-of-school use." He sees this as "symptomatic of a much broader phenomenon - a widening gap between children's everyday 'life worlds' outside of school and the emphases of many educational systems." Both the generational divide and the divide between in-school and out- of-school learning are part of enduring set

of questions about adult authority in the education and socialization of youth. The discourse of digital generations and digital youth posits that new media empower youth to challenge the social norms and educational agendas of their elders in unique ways. In my research context this takes the form of young people's learning from television soap operas contrasting with what they learn from their elders, leading to a discussion of what constitutes the 'right knowledge'.

As I go on to discuss in Chapter 5, mass media appears to play a significant role in influencing young people's perceptions of the world around them, moulding their opinions, as well as helping them in constructing and defining their gender identity, sexuality and place in the community (Durham, 1999). However, as a powerful means of informal learning, the media is also responsible for controversies surrounding the way it portrays gender roles, gender identities, and sexual relations. This is especially true with regards to the way gender stereotypes are viewed and reinforced. There is growing concern about young people's exposure to sexual content through television and other electronic media, and about the implications for their sexual attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours. Researchers have documented the growing prevalence of gender stereotyping, sexual portrayals and sexual behaviour in television media, as well as association between adolescents viewing patterns and their sexual attitudes (Bryant and Oliver, 2009; Gruber and Grube, 2000) Young people, in particular, are vulnerable as they tend to "compare themselves and significant others to people and images whom they perceive to represent realistic goals to attain" (Botta, 1999: 26). Because young people are inclined to see almost everything as realistic and attainable, they are more likely to emulate the images portrayed in the media. Botta (1999) would argue that girls and boys attempt to model themselves, both physically and through their actions, after the images from television and magazines. So, what influence does the media have on formation of gender roles among young people? Do young people accept and subscribe to everything they watch?

The research from Mozambique also suggests that radio has a great potential for reaching young people. For example, radio programmes have been shown to be successful in introducing communication strategies for shifting sexual behaviour and HIV/AIDS control (Murthy, 2010). "Local programming featuring informative and educational programs that use drama and music performed in local language" has shown to be particularly effective reaching youth in rural areas (ibid). Furthermore, radio is a powerful means in the dissemination of information to large populations, in particular, in constructing ideas in

young people's lives and "a sense of being connected to a larger peer network" (Arnett, 1995: 524).

As I have suggested above, each form of media plays a crucial role in influencing adolescents in different ways. Television, however, because of its prevalence in everyday life, is a central means of learning and information. In the context of Mozambique, while the access to written media (books, newspapers and magazines) was low, television, particularly in urban areas, seemed to have a huge significance in expanding knowledge about the world and social interaction. It was interesting to witness, for example, how young people in Beira used Brazilian *telenovelas* (soap operas) in their search for self-identity and sexual relations. Also how they translated the images and scenarios portrayed in the soap operas into their lives, self-image and gender relations.

By employing an ethnographic approach in my study I aimed to understand how media and technology can be meaningful to young people in the context of their everyday lives. Thus media and technology are viewed in the research as forms of informal learning, embodied in social and cultural relationships, providing possibilities for learning and social action (see for example, Edwards, 1995; Hine, 2000; Ito *et al.*, 2010).

Gender and Pentecostalism

Besides the formative influence of family and school, discussed above, religious institutions such as churches also affect attitude acquisition (see for example, Drogus, 1997; Soothill; 2007). My research shed new light on the prevalence of religious movements, including Pentecostal⁵ churches, in the process of socialisation and construction of gender, and sexual identities in the field site.

Recent scholarship has given increasing recognition to the role of Pentecostalism in shaping people's private spheres (such as family and marital relations) and challenging gender relations. Pentecostalism, to some extent, has tried to both reinterpret and rethink traditional Christian beliefs and symbols concerning gender relations and power acquisition within the church leadership (Robbins, 2004). This can be observed in their theological constructions on women's involvement in community and church leadership. Discussions have been

⁵ The movement of Pentecostal (or 'charismatic') Christianity, although widely recognised to have only been emerging since the early 20th Century, has developed "to become the predominant global form of Christianity of the 21st century" (Casanova, 2001: 435). The key dimensions of Pentecostalism are characterised by a bodily spiritism, in which all believers have the ability to be blessed with gifts of the Holy Spirit and have experience of speaking in tongues (glossolalia), healing and receiving prophecy. In my thesis I use a broader term of Pentecostal with intent, for denominational loyalty and church membership was very fluid among the congregates I met. See Appendix VIII for Christian denominations and churches.

prominent in their inclusion of the gendered nature of the faith (both theologically but also as practised), mainly focusing on the extent to which it can be said to be ‘empowering’ for women (for example, Drogus, 1997; Brusco, 2010). Zents (2005), for example, argues that the power of the Pentecostal movement can influence the lives of women and provide an increased sense of self-esteem. Similarly, Drogus (1997) suggests that Pentecostalism offers women practical skills (for example literacy and numeracy) which in turn generate the possibility for participation in the public arena. According to Chesnut (1997), women seem to benefit from the engagement in non-traditional roles through the church, specifically through roles as evangelists and faith healers that offer new means with which women can publicly express themselves. In the context of my research I experienced this in the role of Margarita, Pastor Leo’s wife, who cared for widows and held ‘prayer group meetings’ in the local area (see Chapter 7). On the whole, the position of pastor’s wife seems to be an under-researched area in the charismatic movement. Soothill portrays the pastor’s wife as “the ever-present, well-dressed, self-confident, and loyal spouse” (2010: 88), and a “nodal power point for mobilizing and deploying female evangelical power” (Kalu, 2008: 153).

According to Soothill (2007) the Pentecostal church has undergone changes in restructuring traditional power and allowing female leadership and exercise of official authority by women in the churches. But how do women feel who succeed in gaining agency? According to Sjorup (2002) who has interviewed Chilean women living in poverty, they felt empowered to achieve positive change in their selves and their communities. As she argues “Pentecostalism led to a new theology where the believer became the subject of her own life. Social ascent was made through ecstatic experience of the Spirit in a caring community which directed the individual towards a ‘female ethos’” (ibid: 24).

Although Pentecostalism has been presented as engendering beneficial, sometimes ‘empowering’ and life changing effects for women, Drogus (1997) points to its ambiguity – later described as ‘the Pentecostal Gender Paradox’ (see for example, Lorentzen and Mira, 2005; Martin, 2002). Brusco (2010) also observes that whilst women represent the great majority in Pentecostalism, the church still fails to address the subordinate position of women.

Central to Pentecostal Christianity is the transmission of behavioural expectations and construction of gender identity as I examine in Chapter 7. Pentecostalism follows biblical literalism that stresses the subordination of wives to their husbands. Clearly, the ideas

represented in churches reflect the views from the Bible, for example, Ephesians 5:23: ‘Now as the Church is subject to Christ, so must wives be to their husband in everything’ (Burdick, 1993:109). Women, however, must only submit to a husband if he too obeys God and thus Pentecostal Christianity has been termed “patriarchy in the last instance” (Smilde, 1997: 347). In this kind of patriarchy, women see themselves as answering to God not to the men in their lives (ibid). In my research, clerics took different approaches to communicating beliefs about gender and gender relations, sexuality and sexual relations. Nevertheless their role was crucial in shaping believers’ perceptions as well as in reinforcing already existing (gender) beliefs rooted in the community as I discuss in Chapter 7.

Despite the patriarchal social order, Pentecostal churches demand certain male behaviour and expect men to support their families (Pfeiffer *et al.*, 2007). Regarding gender roles, the Pentecostal church reflects what is understood by ‘traditional family values’ (ibid). As such, women’s roles are associated to the home and church. Although non-traditional roles for women are not discouraged, they are regarded as secondary to a woman’s primary role as helpmates to men (Pfeiffer *et al.*, 2007; Brusco, 2010). Clearly, as discussed earlier, this view has been changing as women have been taking up responsibilities and leadership roles in Pentecostal churches. When it comes to male gender roles, on the other hand, they are seen strictly as providers, leaders and heads of the family (ibid).

In terms of Pentecostal influence on marital relations and economic behaviour, it has been argued that after men convert to Pentecostalism, the material well-being of the whole household, and particularly of wives improves (for example, Brusco, 2010; Pfeiffer *et al.*, 2007). For example, a study from Mozambique suggests that neo-liberal economic policies have caused the poor to experience not only general financial insecurities but also increasing “intrahousehold gender conflict” (Pfeiffer *et al.*, 2007: 689) with men having more control over household resources. Thus the Pentecostal Church has drawn women, who feel they gain ‘more agency’ (in terms of choice and control) through ‘participatory’ worship practices that promise financial and corporeal ‘miracles’ (Pfeiffer *et al.*, 2007).

In this section I have discussed how young people learn in different contexts of formal, non-formal and informal contexts of learning. As I have suggested above, this investigation into the link between gender construction and violence against girls and young women needs to be broadened to take into account the structural construction of gender and gender relations inherent in social institutions and how these are conveyed/communicated. This section has

also looked into the informal means of learning such as the media, discussing how young people are using the media and the implications for learning. Drawing on the literature on gender-based violence, in the following section, I explore the complexities of the issue and its characteristics in different socio-cultural contexts.

1.3 Situating the study of gender violence in and around schools

The main aim of this section is to situate my study within the wider field of research on violence against girls and young women. I start this exercise by exploring the concept of ‘gender violence’ which informs this study. Then I move on to map out the wider field, and engage critically with existing research on gender violence in the global context, in the SSA region and more specifically in Mozambique. By examining the debates on concepts, forms, nature and influencing environment behind gender violence I consider how my study contributes to existing studies.

1.3.1 Defining gender violence: theoretical debates

Violence is a complex and contested concept. In this section I offer a discussion of how different conceptualisations and approaches to understanding violence have resulted in different kinds of research and action.

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1993, was the first international document which defined violence against women within a broader gender-based framework and identified the family, the community and the state as major sites of gender-based violence. It is within this conceptualisation that I situate my study:

Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or physiological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life
(48/104, UN, 1993)

In my research I explore ‘gender violence’ through drawing on the gender-sensitive framework of Dunne and colleagues (2003). Using this approach, violence can be identified as: any **explicit** form of sexual act, intimidation, abuse, assault or rape – with explicit gendering, and **implicit** practices reinforcing gender inequality including verbal and psychological abuse, corporal punishment, bullying and other forms of hostile acts (ibid). Implicit forms of violence are usually difficult to identify and address as they are assumed to

be a ‘natural’ part of social relations in the institution (Dunne *et al.*, 2003). Mirsky (2003) points out that abuse can be coercive without being physical – an important note to make, given that some of the abuse I will refer to in the context of my research, was in fact not physically violent. Bourdieu offers an extension of the term ‘implicit violence’ to include various modes of “the verbal and non-verbal cues which designate the symbolically dominant position” (2001: 34). For Bourdieu “understanding ‘symbolic’ as the opposite of real, actual, people suppose that symbolic violence (...) has no real effects” (2001: 34). Thus much of this violence manifests itself through means of social or cultural domination, for example, gender relations across social institutions.

While the division into ‘implicit’ and ‘explicit’ violence is used to refer to the gender/sexual context of violence (and not merely to the forms of abuse), it also emphasises the gendered violence of institutional practices. Although the literature offers different definitions around what constitutes violence in the school context (Dunne *et al.*, 2003)⁶, certain common characteristics are to be found. Common forms of violence perpetrated by both teachers/school staff in schools, and parents/caregivers and/or ‘sugar daddies’ in communities include corporal punishment and other humiliating forms of punishment, and sexual and gender-based violence (for example, Leach and Mitchell, 2006; Pinheiro, 2006; WHO, 2002). Among children, violence includes bullying, sexual abuse, schoolyard fighting, gang violence, assault with weapons, and more recently, ‘cyber-bullying’ as one form of ‘cyber-violence’ (Shariff and Gouin, 2006: 33). Both adults and children may use verbal abuse, for example by making derogatory personal comments, through insults, intimidation, public humiliation, and ridicule (Dunne *et al.*, 2006).

While there has been a growing body of scholarship on the range and scale of different forms of violence in schools and communities worldwide, little attention has been paid to the social environments that can have an effect on violence (USAID, 2006). Parkes (2007; 2009) notes that the social context of violence, though important, can be easily overlooked - drawing our attention to the physicality of violent acts instead. Hence, locating the analysis of gender violence specifically within the context of the school’s culture, structures and processes helps to get a deeper understanding of the issue (Dunne *et al.*, 2006).

⁶ For example, in a study in French schools violence was framed as ‘incivilities’ or ‘micro-violence’ (Debarbieux *et al.*, 2003).

In tracing the ways in which gender violence has been researched, I have realised that to date none of the studies in Mozambique have explored the means of the construction of gender, and the ways in which these processes contribute to gender violence. Beside extending previous studies by examining the social context of violence, my research seeks to identify the links between the processes of gender construction, and implicit and explicit acts of violence. Drawing on theoretical conceptualisations of gender, subjectification, agency and power, the study considers the implications of gender specific practices and gender violence in the home, community and school. As becomes apparent in the following sections, violence against girls can be understood in different ways and occurs in different forms.

1.3.2 Understandings of gender violence in the global context

The main purpose of this section is to review the analytical frameworks, conceptualisations and tools for ‘understanding’ gender violence that informed my research design and analysis. I thus consider the approaches that previous studies adopted to investigate the issue, rather than aiming to present specific research evidence from these studies.

Increasing reports of gender violence from around the world illustrate that gender abuse is most likely to take place in both public and private spaces, such as home or school, and be perpetrated by someone known to the victim (Mirsky, 2003; Dunne *et al.*, 2006; UN, 2006). The studies investigate schools where coercion and sexual harassment are experienced most commonly (Burtun, 2005; Leach and Mitchell, 2006). Further to this, in most cases, sexual abuse occurs by male teachers towards female students or by older male students towards younger female students (Mirsky, 2003; Leach and Mitchell, 2006). However, it is important to point out that sexual abuse is not limited to male students and teachers abusing female students. Some researchers look into abusive relationships between male teachers and female teachers, female teachers and male students, male teachers or students who abuse male students, as well as boy-on-boy, girl-on-girl, and girl-on-boy violence (Dunne *et al.*, 2006; Leach and Mitchell, 2006).

Much research focusing on sexual abuse in the school context has been small scale and regional, with the majority of studies being conducted in SSA but it would be wrong to assume that gender violence is therefore a problem specific to that region. Studies conducted in schools in SSA have investigated why female students face rape on the way to and from school as well as sexual harassment, assault from their male classmates and teachers (Mitchell and Mothobi-Tapela, 2004; Parkes and Heslop, 2011). Worrying statistics show a

clear link between sexual abuse in schools and high female drop-out rates (Human Rights Watch, 2001; MRC, 2003). Teachers usually ignore or dismiss the suggestion about having sex with their students, although the evidence tells about teachers offering high grades, exam passes or gifts in exchange for sex (Leach and Mitchell, 2006). At the same time, researchers ask why there is reluctance among girls and their parents to report incidents (Jejeeboy *et al.*, 2005).

Evidence from the West shows somewhat different trends and research focuses on issues of peer pressure expressed in the form of intimidation, ostracism or verbal abuse, and in some cases, physical abuse (Kehily, 2003; Renold, 2002). For example, research from North America and Australia explores the issue of gendered harassment including homophobia, heterosexual harassment and harassment for gender non-conformity, as illustrations of an aggressive and hostile climate (see for example, Kosciw and Cullen, 2002; Martino and Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2003; Meyer, 2006). Research on the issues of “intra and inter-gender bullying” (Duncan, 2006: 51) in British schools focuses on girls’ agency in violence and aggression against other girls. Duncan’s work illustrates destructive behaviour in the form of emotional violence, “exclusion and ‘othering’ by the vociferous and powerful majority” (Duncan, 1999: 55). The studies also explore how and why girls engage in sexual competition and other hostile forms of femininity, for example stealing other girls’ boyfriends (*ibid.*).

Beyond sexual abuse and other types of explicit violence, a wide range of implicit forms of violence are to be found in schools and communities. Research from around the world explore why corporal punishment is often accepted as normal within private domains (in the home and family) and as part of institutional life (Dunne *et al.*, 2003; Pinheiro, 2006). Obedience is closely associated with learning, and disobedient children are assumed not to be learning (Soneson, 2005). Studies from Botswana have investigated disciplinary sanctions which are usually considered necessary when students resist authority (Dunne *et al.*, 2005). Corporal punishment is assumed as implicitly gendered because of the way it is administered. For example, boys often receive disciplinary sanctions more frequently and harshly than girls, but disciplinary sanctions may also be used as the threat to girls who do not give in to sexual requests (Dunne *et al.*, 2003; UN, 2006). Despite corporal punishment being outlawed in many countries, numerous reports document examples of its use and abuse in Pakistan (UNICEF, 2001), Nepal (Save the Children, 2003), India (UNICEF, 2001) and Kenya (Save the Children, 2005; Parkes and Heslop, 2011).

While sexual abuse is similar around the world and always occurs in the environment of acceptance of gender inequalities and violence, it can manifest itself differently in different parts of the world. In South Asian countries, researchers have been examining honour killings and acid attacks which are usually the result of family or land disputes, dowry demands or rejection of marriage proposal (Coomoraswamy, 2005; Pinheiro, 2006). During acid attacks that often happen on the way to/from school or to collect water, the girl's head and/or face are disfigured to destroy marriage prospects and dishonour their families (ibid). Child marriage, recognised as one of various harmful traditional practices, occurs in the Middle East, South Asia, and some countries in East and Southern Africa – for example in Kenya, Ghana and Mozambique (Parkes and Heslop, 2011) or Yemen (UNICEF, 2005). Korbin notes that “child sexual abuse is best conceptualised as the disruption of expected roles, relationships and behaviours” (1990: 4). However, as she points out, there are contexts within which sexual contact with children is accepted in traditional practices such as in initiation rites or marrying child brides (Korbin, 1990). A recent study with schoolgirls in Kenya also investigated whether female genital mutilation is still practised among pastoral communities (Parkes and Heslop, 2011).

In SSA, the HIV/AIDS epidemic has also resulted in research on transactional sex, or sex between usually a younger girl and an older man – ‘sugar daddy’ – in exchange for money or goods (Leach *et al.*, 2003; Moore *et al.*, 2007). As much of this work highlights, this type of abuse blurs the line between coercive and consensual sex. Studies from Latin America meanwhile, suggest that sexual abuse occurring there is more complex and violent than in Africa, often within a gang and drug culture (Barker, 2005).

In the context of emerging new technologies and social media, researchers have also investigated their influence on gender relations and gender violence. According to Shariff and Gouin (2006) cyber-bullying is a new, implicit form of violence, particularly among young people in North America. Barak (2005) notes that online sexual harassment usually includes insulting sexual messages, offensive (sex related) nicknames, pornography, unwanted sexual desires or intentions. Cyber-violence is virtual, yet it can have a significant impact on students' psychological wellbeing, hence distracting them from learning (Shariff and Gouin, 2006).

Globalisation and development have been a focus of researchers' attention in terms of investigating how they can bring about new forms of abuse. Access to modern technology

and mass media has been used in victimisation, name-calling and social exclusion by/of youth. While cyber-bullying has been becoming a serious societal and educational concern in the West, other context-specific forms of violence seem to emerge in developing countries. Transactional relations between young girls and sugar daddies, for example, reflect the complexities of 'exchange'. While it is difficult to determine to what extent men take advantage of girls' lack of economic resources, some girls appear to be able to negotiate safe sex, material gains or other benefits. The emergence of agency among girls, as a reaction to the changing nature of economic and social structures, points to restructuring of gender relations (McNay, 2000) which I will return to in Chapter 4.

From the above review of a growing body of scholarship on violence against girls, it is clear that the focus has been on the nature of acts of violence and individuals, on gender-based violence across institutions and social relations, and on interactions. The evidence from around the world has been capturing the multiple forms that violence takes. Changing modes of abuse can be seen to reflect unequal gender relations intertwined with other inequalities such as age, socio-economic and ethnic background, and sexual orientation. The growing issues of peer pressure through intimidation, homophobia, and other forms of gendered harassment have been observed in schools in the West.

The changing 'environment' of abuse has made me reconsider the division into the explicit and implicit forms of violence that I started out with. From the above examples it is apparent that forms of abuse have been converging and becoming more complex due to new means of communications, thus more difficult to classify as implicit or explicit. The boundaries become obscure as much of this violence takes place within the context of family, community and school and it manifests through means of social or cultural domination.

As discussed above, while the learning environment has been changing, the forms of gender abuse have been shifting too. This led to my interest in investigating the recent work on pedagogies and learning processes within formal, non-formal and informal learning and seeking the link with gender violence. I was particularly concerned about tensions, conflicts and subjectivity and connections between different sites of learning.

Following the examples of different studies from around the world, this section provides new insights into theoretical concepts of power relations, gender subjectivities and agency which are important for 'understanding' gender violence. For example, agency examined in the studies on transactional sex show that some girls are able to negotiate relations with sugar

daddies or other men. This suggests new conceptualisations about the emergence of new multidimensional forms of agency which I will draw on in the analysis of my empirical data. While violence in schools in SSA occurs due to gender inequalities and female students are often victims, in the West the most common form of abuse is peer pressure, homophobia, intimidation and exclusion. As the studies above imply, different forms of violence emerge in different parts of the world, such as honour killing, child marriage, genital mutilation, corporal punishment and disciplinary sanctions and cyber-bulling. Thus contextual differences also bring new conceptualisations about power relations. In my study these provide important insights into the theoretical concepts which I draw on in the analysis of my empirical data.

1.3.3 Changing complexities of abuse in schools in Sub-Saharan Africa

As indicated in the previous section, most of the research on gender violence in educational settings comes from SSA. While drawing general conclusions from these small-scale contextual studies is problematic, there are a number of key ‘drivers’ contributing to the complexity of violence emerging in the region.

Poverty has been mentioned in the literature as one of the key contributors to gender-based violence in schools and this is evident in a number of ways (Fleischman, 2003; Luke and Kurz, 2002; USAID, 2008). A study from West Africa, for example, found that the labour of, or sexual favours, from students was seen as a compensation for teachers’ low salaries (Massart, 2007). Poverty has been shown to contribute to girls’ vulnerability, forcing them to engage in exploitative sexual relations. Whilst girls were more likely to stay out of school because of unaffordable school fees, lack of clothes and supplies, older boyfriends or teachers may offer financial support in exchange for sex (Leach *et al.*, 2003; Teni-Atinga, 2006). In some contexts, parents appeared to encourage relations with teachers in exchange for essential goods, school fees or marriage (Leach *et al.*, 2003). Research in Ghana, Malawi and Zimbabwe revealed that girls felt ‘trapped’ in these relationships; while they expected money and gifts from a sexual partner, love and marriage seemed to be less appealing (*ibid*). Girls’ vulnerability was determined by their limited experience with sexual relations and their insecurity and lack of status in relation to older boys or men. A number of studies pointed out that adolescent girls were particularly at risk for both sexual relations and HIV infection linked to it (for example, Helitzer-Allen, 1994; Vetten and Bhana, 2001). In Uganda, Hulton *et al.* (2004) argued that the cultural environment favoured early sexuality, male’s sexual

desires were considered 'natural' and condoms were rarely used, yet girls were unable to negotiate their sexuality. Girls were also found to be at risk of becoming the victims of the 'virgin cure myth' – the belief that sexual intercourse with a young virgin can cure the man of HIV (Jewkes *et al.*, 2002). It was believed that the younger the virgin, the better the cure (ibid).

Much research on gender-based violence previously assumed that girls were passive victims of exploitation and violence. However, evidence has indicated that young women can also be active social agents challenging socially established gender and sexual identities (Wood *et al.*, 1998; Komba-Malekela and Liljestrom, 1994). Findings draw attention to female agency in what has been termed as 'transactional' sexual relations among students and between teachers and students, and between young girls and 'sugar-daddies' (Nyanzi *et al.*, 2000; Luke and Kurz, 2002). Researchers argue that it is often difficult to establish the extent to which girls enter into transactional relations through coercion or consent. Moreover, they point out that relations between older men and young girls are not a new phenomenon and have been common since at least the 1950's (Niehaus, 2000).

In terms of identifying implicit gender violence in schools, a number of studies have sought to examine the link between school quality and girls' participation (Lloyd *et al.*, 1998; Baden *et al.*, 1998), but also and more importantly, the informal school environment or institutional regimes and the part these play in perpetuating gender differentiation in education (for example, Maimbolwa-Sinyangwe and Chilangwa, 1995; Kutnick *et al.*, 1997; Sey, 1997; Swainson *et al.*, 1998). These studies provide evidence of gendered attitudes of teachers and students in African schools. The findings show that different tasks were allocated to female and male students in the school. Whilst girls were required to help with domestic jobs, such as cleaning classrooms, sweeping schoolyards; boys' responsibilities were linked to their physical strength like digging holes or fetching water (Dunne and Leach, 2005; Rose, 2003).

As mentioned before, sexual abuse in the context of African schools can be perpetrated by both male students and male teachers, but may also include female to female relations. The greatest threat to girls appears to come from older male students who propose love and their sexual advances which then often turn into aggressive acts (Leach *et al.*, 2003; Leach and Mitchell, 2006). If girls rejected sexual propositions, they were under threat of assault or rape (ibid). Teachers usually demanded sexual intercourse in exchange for better grades or passing exams (Leach *et al.*, 2003). This was found to occur at all levels from primary through

secondary to higher education. An example from a university in Kenya showed that girls not only accepted sexual advances for academic assistance but also for financial support (Chege, 2006). Research in Ghana, Malawi and Zimbabwe examined the abuse of junior secondary school girls by older boys, and teachers (Leach *et al.*, 2000; Leach *et al.*, 2003). All three educational systems were characterised by a reluctance to take action against either teachers or male pupils.

Recent research on gender abuse in Kenya, Ghana and Mozambique has also highlighted the inconsistencies in the legal systems and policies as well as unclear reporting procedures, making it difficult to report incidents of abuse, with little or no consequences for the perpetrators (Parkes and Heslop, 2011).

The above review of relevant research in the SSA region shows that the focus of much research has been on the factors contributing to gender-based abuse and shifts and changes in terms of their relative importance. With most studies focusing on violence in institutions, education institutions in particular, research has broadened to explore the dynamics and complexities of local contexts.

The notion of gendered structures of power and agency has been an important development in conceptualising violence embedded in social structures of inequality. While much research has focused on economic and gender inequalities in identifying the main ‘drivers’, a change has taken place in how girls are portrayed in sexual relations with older men – sugar daddies. These findings are particularly important for the emergence of new conceptualisations of power and agency which I will examine when looking into similar case studies.

Violence against girls is understood in different ways, leading to different forms of research and actions. In studying the complex characteristics of abuse, feminist theory and practice have been interested in the question of how inquiry is shaped by moral, social and political interests (Harding, 1987). Thus feminist researchers are concerned to view the perspective of the vulnerable people such as children, women, elderly etc. The feminist approach and the general emphasis on child consultation in programmes and interventions, have facilitated a growing recognition of the importance of giving voice to young people in research. For example, Leach and colleagues (2000; 2003), in attempting to bridge the gap between research and action, show how to use participatory research methods in addressing the issues of abuse of girls in African schools. As has been observed, these activities can help to inform adults of what is happening, and at the same time they are a means by which young people

can express their experience in ways that often cannot be easily put into words. These kinds of methodologies help young people with what Leach describes as the ‘conspiracy of silence’ (ID21, 2001: 2) around events and experiences for which there is often ‘no visual evidence’.

My methodological stance in this study draws on participatory approaches to working with girls and boys. In Chapter 3 I explore the search for the right methodology and how I brought some of the ideas used by Leach and colleagues into my research (see for example, Leach *et al.*, 2000; Leach *et al.*, 2003).

1.3.4 Gender-based violence in Mozambique

Whilst numerous studies illustrate the gendered and unequal nature of schools in developing countries, few studies reporting on sexual abuse in schools come from Mozambique. The studies available mention the problem within the context of girls dropping-out of school (Helgesson, 1999; Palme, 1998; VSO, 2008; VSO, 2011), HIV/AIDS (Thorpe, 2002, 2003; UNAIDS, 2006), and child abuse (Bagnol, 1997; Bagnol and Chamo, 2003). In a study on drop-out in Mozambican primary schools brief references are made to other types of abuse such as sexual relations between older men and teenage girls (Bagnol and Chamo, 2003) and abuse on the way to school (Palme, 1998).

A recent report from the Stop Violence Against Girls in Schools project led by ActionAid offers a more organised overview about gender, violence and education in Manhiça (Southern Mozambique), the project area (Parkes and Heslop, 2011).⁷ Falling within the category of advocacy- or policy-focused research, the findings share some similarities with other studies of violence in SSA, although some trends are specific for the region. For example, Mozambican girls were found to begin sexual life and childbearing earlier and suffered a higher risk of HIV than girls in Kenya and Ghana (Parkes and Heslop, 2011). In this regard, societal changes which will be discussed in Chapter 2 may have implications for sexual practices among young people and gender relations in general. Similar to findings elsewhere, girls in Mozambique also became involved in cross-generational, transactional relations (Parkes and Heslop, 2011). Community members and parents disapproved of this kind of behaviour and these girls were viewed as “greedy, unruly and lacking in respect for their elders” (ibid: 43). As Machel (2006) also points out, in some cases, community members held girls as having responsibility for provoking violence through how they dress and how

⁷ This is a cross-country baseline study carried out in Kenya, Ghana and Mozambique for a five year project (2008 – 2013) Stop Violence Against Girls in School led by ActionAid. In this part of the literature review I only focus on the findings from Mozambique.

they chose to behave.

Earlier research from Mozambique suggests that in some cases parents support early marriage, especially if the girl is pregnant, perhaps hoping for higher *lobolo* (brideprice). This practice continues, although it is difficult to establish its extent (Parkes and Heslop, 2011). As earlier argued by Agadjanian (2001) it is prevalent in rural areas and teachers are considered a ‘good catch’ as they are often the only men who can pay it. Hence parents are often reluctant to take action to discipline teachers’ aggressive behaviour or sexual misconduct and this, together with an environment in which most cases go unreported and prosecutions are rare, encourages unprofessional conduct.

Overall, Parkes and Heslop (2011) found that the way to school was as unsafe as in other sub-Saharan African countries (Parkes and Heslop, 2011). While in individual interviews sexual violence was not reported as often as insult, in focus group discussions the girls mentioned physical punishment and sexual abuse more often (*ibid*). For example, a group of out-of-school girls (14-17-year-old) shared that teachers wanted to sleep with them as a form of punishment. Girls also suggested that male teachers were responsible for frequent peeping, touching and corporal punishment (*ibid*). Corporal punishment was shown to be linked to learning and control not only among teachers, but also parents (VSO, 2008; Justiniano *et al.*, 2005). According to male students, corporal punishment created general fear as a qualitative study revealed: “they make them kneel down on stones ... they order pupils to raise their arms until the end of class or they burn tests if the pupils forget to put their name on it” (*ibid*: 24). Household tasks such as cleaning toilets, cutting trees and cleaning were mentioned in an ActionAid study. However only occasionally did participants suggest that these were gendered practices (Parkes and Heslop, 2011).

Other agency-led research points to ‘sexual corruption’ in the context of Mozambican schools (Government of Mozambique, 2001; Helgesson, 1999; Thorpe, 2003; USAID, 2005). Sexual abuse in schools, in particular, occurs within the framework of power and authority when “those in power abuse their authority to exploit persons (often, but not always, women and young girls) for sexual and/or financial and/or personal advantage” (Jennett, 2006, online source). In analysing power dynamics, the ActionAid study draws on the unequal power relations based on gender, age and socio-economic settings (Parkes and Heslop, 2011). The study considers gendered power relations across social institutions, “where aspects of the local, national and global political economy produce violence and limit their [girls’] space for

action within families, schools and communities, as well as being arenas with opportunities for change’ (ibid: 17). Thus, evidence from this research highlights the inequalities embedded in power dynamics at all levels; in the home, community, school, marital and sexual relations (Parkes and Heslop, 2011).

Further to this, as ActionAid’s report shows, there is reluctance among girls and their parents to report incidents (Parkes and Heslop, 2011). By downplaying or misconceiving violence, teachers and parents (and wider society) simultaneously disregard and encourage the violent behaviour, whilst silencing the victim. Here it is important to note that there are services throughout the country for victims of domestic violence, and special units in schools (Parkes and Heslop, 2011). It is not clear, however, whether girls made use of these services and whether they received the support they need.

To sum up I would like to draw attention to the following issues discussed in the above sections: the concepts relevant to my study, shifting forms of abuse and changing complexities of gender abuse, and how I situate my study in the field.

As suggested above, my research looks into the gendered violence of institutional practices, considering also the forms of abuse and the gender/sexual context of violence. The evidence from around the world, however, illustrates the ways that the forms and environment of violence have been converging. While in SSA gender based violence appears to be linked to poverty, lack of opportunities, and gender inequalities, the research from the West shows a different tendency where peer pressure expressed in the form of intimidation, homophobia, ostracism and in some cases, physical abuse have been noted. In the West, the changing complexities of gender abuse have also been emerging in the context of new technologies and mass media. This has been observed particularly in form of cyber-bullying, pornography and sexual messages. Thus, it is important to acknowledge that the environment and forms of abuse have been converging and becoming more complex (often specific to different regions), therefore it has become more difficult to classify violence as implicit or explicit.

The discussion above has also attempted to provide a broad understanding of a shifting learning environment and how it might influence abusive relationships. My point of departure thus, is to examine different learning processes in order to find the link with gender violence.

1.4 The aims of my research

In this thesis I seek to understand how structured and unstructured contexts of learning (the family, community, school and church, media and informal peer groups) influence the construction of gender and sexual identities of young people. Rather than documenting the extent of violence that girls and young women face in various social institutions, I look at the link between processes of constructing gender identities and gender violence across social institutions.

As I have mentioned above, feminist researchers stress a unique approach to the research process that represents a genuine commitment to changing the status of women and moral and political values (Harding, 1987) which I assume in my research. By using a combination of ethnographic and participatory research I have sought to develop innovative methodological procedures for addressing particularly difficult questions, especially when working with young people. My concern is to critically examine some of the tools used in the study and some of the ethical dilemmas I faced when researching sensitive topics. My interaction with young people was the most challenging and rewarding part of this research and I hope that this thesis conveys the struggles and experiences that I both observed and participated in.

1.5 Overall structure of the thesis

In this chapter I have introduced the thesis, locating the research in the context of learning gender and gender violence and its manifestation in Mozambique, particularly in the context of social institutions. I have presented the two overarching questions – *how is knowledge of gender and gender relations acquired?* and *how do gender relations (as power relations) affect gender violence?* – that guide the study. The structure of the thesis is given below with a brief outline of the content of each chapter.

Chapter 1 has set the stage for this thesis by discussing gender-based violence through a gender approach. I have also introduced the reader to the nature and different contexts of learning across social institutions. I have examined gender-based violence as a field of study in the emerging literature and explained the aims of the research.

Chapter 2 offers an introduction to Mozambique. I look at how historical factors have been influential in terms of changes emerging within the society, social organisation and gender relations. I examine the characteristics of the national education system and judicial

framework. Finally I look in detail at the familial and kin relations in the field context, Beira, Sofala Province.

Chapter 3 presents the research design and details the process of collecting data for the study. I discuss my search for the most appropriate methodology to further explain how I sought to draw the voices of young people into the research and the attempt to address power relations in the field. I also provide personal reflections on the research experience with a particular emphasis on the ethical dilemmas I encountered.

Chapter 4 looks in detail at the theoretical foundation of the research. I review the key concepts that provide the framework for understanding the processes of construction of gender and sexual identities within the notion of learning continuum. Subjectification, agency and power are key concepts in the analysis of the empirical data that I undertake in the subsequent chapters.

Chapters 5,6 and 7 present the data collected through my ethnographic observation in the field and the voices of the participants in focus group discussions, debates and individual interviews.

Chapter 5 explores informal processes of learning in the family and new ways of learning. Following the idea of ‘learning the right knowledge’, I discuss what and how young people learn through informal means in the family and community domain. I look at the media, and in particular at soap operas, which seem to have a strong influence on young people’s construction of identity.

Chapter 6 presents an ethnographic account of initiation rites in the community. This traditional ritual is introduced in the context of group and individual informal learning and reveals important values embedded in the initiation rites that are conveyed to the young people. I analyse the role of community-based education in constructing sexual identities by learning the traditional ways.

Chapter 7 examines education in the contexts of school and church in depth. I draw on classroom observation to analyse the teaching-learning processes in the school and what young people actually learn about gender, sex and sexuality. I look into the content of the curriculum as well as the ‘hidden curriculum’ – the interpersonal dynamics governing in school. In particular, I explore issues around gender identities, sexuality and reproductive health education. I also analyse the complexity of abusive relations in the school and the reasons why they might occur. I analyse the stance of the local churches and their

contribution to the construction of gender identities through the lens of Pentecostal Christianity.

Chapter 8 examines how this research contributes to the enhancement of knowledge about gender-based violence in and around schools. In the light of the above research findings and in relation to established key concepts, I draw some final conclusions about the subject matter.

Chapter 2

Research context

2. Introduction

In this chapter I offer an analysis of the colonial and post-colonial period in Mozambique. In order to provide a context for the complexities surrounding social structures, I pay special attention to what Johnson-Hanks (2002) calls ‘vital conjunctures’⁸ or changes in the social environment. Tvedten and colleagues (2009) observe two vital conjunctures that have been particularly important for gender relations in Mozambique: one is the strong exposure of the southern and central parts of the country to structural forces of ‘modernity’ and labour migration, along with the continued influence of ‘tradition’ in the northern parts of the country. The other is the impact of urbanisation, which seems to have opened up new structural spaces which are available to men and women alike. This has begun to influence gender relations in cities and towns in ways that are profoundly different from those in rural areas (ibid).

In this chapter I also introduce Mozambique’s national education system and I examine the challenges faced by the education system. Exploring a number of factors such as teacher competencies, language and gender issues, I consider the multifaceted situation of schooling. This has important implications for the quality of education, what and how students learn in schools. All this gives the background to understand the complexities of gender and gender relations in the research context.

Moving to the research context – Beira in Sofala Province – I look in detail at familial and kinship relations as well as the distinctive features of marital and sexual arrangements in the field. I use my fieldnotes to introduce some of these issues.

Such arrangements and relationships are vital to understanding social organisation, and cultural and linguistic diversity, which emerge as central themes throughout my analysis.

2.1 Colonial and post-colonial period in Mozambique

Historical and political changes in Mozambique have been dramatic and turbulent; from Portuguese colonialism to the struggle for independence, from the socialist-oriented development policies of the post-independence Frelimo government to the suffering of a

⁸ Johnson-Hanks (2002) integrates the notion of ‘vital’ demographic events with Bourdieu’s theorisation of the conjuncture of structure and action.

sixteen years-long civil war, and, most recently, to the emergence of peace, democratic governance, and a donor-driven neo-liberal economy. This means that the Mozambican people have been exposed to social and political upheavals for many decades. In this section I explore what social implications these events might have had.

Although the Portuguese have been present in Mozambique since the 15th century, effective colonial rule started around the 1930s (Abrahamsson and Nilsson, 1995; Newitt, 1995). The arrival of the Portuguese coincided with severe political conflicts among the local tribes and the movement of the indigenous practices (Newitt, 1995). During the 200 years of colonisation⁹, the Portuguese established sugar and cotton plantations, developed a domestic textile industry, and set up trading enclaves (ibid). The main beneficiaries of these activities were white settlers and the Portuguese homeland. Little attention was paid to Mozambique's national integration, its infrastructure or educating the population (ibid). These commercial activities were not very successful, however, and Mozambique's formal economy became dependent on remittances from migrant workers and on the transfer of merchandise between its land-locked neighbours and the Indian Ocean (Abrahamsson and Nilsson, 1995; Newitt, 1995).

With the establishment of the Colonial Act in 1930, Mozambique's limited autonomy was replaced by a more centralised Portuguese administration. In 1951, Portugal declared Mozambique an overseas province (Abrahamsson and Nilsson, 1995). Throughout the 1950s, the Portuguese government attempted to increase the white population. Following other colonies of the time in Southern Africa, Mozambique was also segregated along racial lines. Strict criteria to acquire non-indigenous status ensured that less than one per cent of black Mozambicans became full citizens (Newitt, 1995). This combined with the search for labour led to a steady migration of Mozambicans to the neighbouring countries of South Africa and Zimbabwe.

In the 1960s, Mozambique became involved in the pan-African movement toward independence (Waterhouse, 1996). In 1975, after lengthy battles, the national movement – Frelimo¹⁰ – took over power from Portugal (ibid). Frelimo encountered a country greatly divided by “indigenous tradition, colonial policies, and regional differences in its

⁹ Portuguese trading settlements and, later, colonies were formed along the coast from 1498, when Vasco da Gama first reached the Mozambican coast (Abrahamsson and Nilsson, 1995; Newitt, 1995).

¹⁰ Frente da Libertação de Moçambique - the Liberation Movement seizing power in 1975 and from then on the ruling party (Baden, 1997; Waterhouse, 1996).

development” (Waterhouse, 1996: 25). In spite of significant religious, cultural and ethno-linguistic differences, Frelimo embarked upon an ambitious project of creating a single nation by putting an end to what they described as ‘tribal thinking’ and ethnicity, and introducing *o homem novo* (a new man) (Waterhouse, 1996). “‘Building the nation’¹¹ – the ‘Mozambican nation” (ibid: 25) was an unfamiliar concept for most people. While discussions about ethnicity and ethnic antagonism was a political matter, thus virtually non-existent throughout the period of independence, signs of internal conflicts were present within the party (Abrahamsson and Nilsson, 1995). For example, a distinctive number of Frelimo’s leaders belonged to southern ethnic groups whereas the Makonde (from the north) were only ordinary rank troops (ibid). The fact that most of the Renamo commanders came from Ndaou tribe, and a couple of important rebels in Frelimo came from the same tribe (for example, Uria Simango) brought mutual suspicion and mistrust (Abrahamsson and Nilsson, 1995). Indeed, some scholars consider the matter of ‘political ethnicity’ predominantly responsible for the origins of the civil war (Abrahamsson and Nilsson, 1995; Bertelsen, 2003). These events imply tensions around ethnic and regional diversity which I return to when discussing ethno-linguistic groups and issues linked to this diversity later in this chapter.

After converting to a Marxist-Leninist party in the 1970s, Frelimo pursued Soviet-style collectivisation designed to bring about rapid development “to lead, organize, orientate and educate the masses, thus transforming the popular mass movement into a powerful instrument for the destruction of capitalism and the construction of socialism” (Abrahamsson and Nilsson, 1995: 28).¹² Extensive social development programmes were simultaneously launched throughout the country to lead a radical transformation of the socio-economic sectors of Mozambican life (Maier, 1992). Privately-owned institutions such as schools, hospitals and missions were rapidly nationalised bringing great popularity for the new government (ibid). For example, the number of primary school students doubled in just seven years, while the number of health clinics quadrupled within the decade (Maier, 1992). Even before independence, the leadership of Frelimo saw basic state education as a right, from which the oppressed society was being excluded by the Colonial State. Schooling was seen as a way to free the people from the bondage of both ‘traditional’ and ‘colonial thinking’, which was necessary in order to open the eyes of the people to the necessity of revolting against the oppression of the Portuguese (Machel, 1979). Thus in the first National System of Education

¹¹ Articles 4, 26 and 36 of the 1975 Constitution of Mozambique.

¹² 3rd Party Congress in February 1977 (see Abrahamsson and Nilsson, 1995: 28).

decree,¹³ education at all levels was depicted as an “exhaustive critique of the structure of the past (...) [and] a dialectical process constructed in the struggle against the old and in contradiction with it, its objectives, characteristics and principles” (Governo de Moçambique, 1983). Education would provide the people with knowledge based on Science and eradicate *obscurantismo* (backwardness), which was regarded as an impediment for development. Frelimo also wanted to do away with the colonial language but confronted difficulties finding a replacement due to the linguistically and ethnically diverse population (Johnston, 1987).

In the end, Frelimo’s cooperation with the Soviet bloc resulted in a raging civil war with its opposition party, Renamo¹⁴, which brought the country to the brink of complete devastation (Hanlon, 1998). The attacks carried out by Renamo intensified in the beginning of the 1980s and halted almost all economic and social State activities in rural Mozambique (ibid). The internal conflicts also stopped the progress of state education: despite continuous demographic growth the number of pupils in primary schools began to decline (Johnston, 1987).¹⁵

From the early 1980s, Frelimo started a campaign against the Catholic church by closing churches, preventing religious activities and restricting the movements of religious staff. This was met with widespread international disapproval, provoking Frelimo to change its stance (Morier-Genoud, 1996). Catholic and other religious institutions, however, resisted the criticism. Nowadays many religions and denominations are represented throughout the country: in the north people are predominantly Muslim, particularly along the coast, but some areas of the northern interior have a stronger concentration of Protestant or Catholic communities (Morier-Genoud, 1996). Protestants and Catholics are generally more numerous in the southern and central regions, however some Muslim communities are also present in these areas (ibid). Mozambique is one of the countries where Pentecostalism and independent churches have played an important role in changing social attitudes and recent social change (Pfeiffer *et al.*, 2007) as I discuss in section 1.2 (Chapter 1).

By the end of the war and following long-term economic mismanagement, Mozambique was considered one of the poorest countries in the world. The country’s entire infrastructure was

¹³ The *National System of Education* decree (1981) was made into a law in 1983 (Governo de Moçambique, 1983).

¹⁴ Resistência Nacional Moçambicana - the former guerrilla movement and presently the biggest parliamentary opposition party formed in 1977 by the Rhodesian Central Intelligence organisation (CIO) (Baden, 1997; Waterhouse, 1996).

¹⁵ It should be noted that the decline in the number and physical state of primary schools as well as the stagnation of number of pupils also were due to the implementation of macro-economic reforms from 1983, through the PRE (Programa de Reabilitação Económica), designed by the International Monetary Fund (Johnston, 1987).

seriously damaged in all sectors and the economy collapsed, with GDP per capita falling by 45 per cent between 1980 and 1986 (United Nations Agencies in Mozambique, 1997). To help the situation, in 1987 the government negotiated a structural adjustment programme with the International Monetary Fund (ibid). As a result, since 1988, external assistance has accounted for more than 70 per cent of GDP and Mozambique has become one of the most indebted and aid-dependent countries in the world (World Bank, 1996).

The signing of a peace agreement in 1992 enabled political stabilisation and the possibility to resume the expansion of social state activities. Post war Mozambique looked entirely different, however. The State was entirely dependent on foreign funding poured into the country in the form of credit from the World Bank and external aid, as Frelimo in return renounced the socialistic path of development. This has initiated growing opportunities for economic and social development and an array of policies and programmes are being implemented to meet the challenges across different sectors (for example, UNDP, 2008). Opportunities for development, however, have had implications for growing inequalities between different groups.

Despite claims that Mozambique has been making remarkable progress in socio-economic growth in SSA,¹⁶ it remains one of the poorest countries in the world. In 2007/2008, 54.7 per cent of the population lived below the national poverty line (Government of Mozambique, 2010). Mozambique's GDP per capita is about USD 453 and the country still faces many challenges, among which education seems to persist (UNDP, 2008).

A society in transition

Mozambique is located on the east coast of southern Africa and is part of SSA. It is divided into 10 provinces (see Figure 2.1) with the capital in Maputo. The population of 22.1 million (Government of Mozambique, 2010) is composed of a complex and diverse range of Bantu tribes¹⁷ (Gordon, 2005) which fall between two main ethno-linguistic groups. The Zambezi valley forms a natural boundary between these two ethnic divisions. The patrilineal peoples are located south of the Zambezi River with Thonga and Shona the two largest groups, and the matrilineal peoples – Makua-Lomwe and Makonde – living north of the river (Newitt, 1995).

¹⁶ Since the mid-1990s the economy has achieved two digit growth (one of the highest economic growth indexes in SSA); external debt has been reduced to below 35 per cent of GDP; the poverty level has dropped by more than 15 per cent and inflation has been kept at one digit (UNDP, 2010).

¹⁷ According to Gordon (2005) 41 Bantu languages are spoken among all the tribes in Mozambique. See Appendix III.

Figure 2.1 Map of Mozambique



Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit Limited (2004).

The most visible changes in Mozambique have been due to colonialism, civil war, labour migration, and urbanisation which have all had an effect on kinship and gender relations (Arnfred, 2011). The devastating war has torn apart social networks and familial

relationships, also the political system's legitimacy has been seriously questioned. Over a million people lost their lives during the war, almost three million people were displaced internally; others sought shelter and safety in neighbouring countries (Hanlon, 1996). Moreover, by introducing the policy of forced labour (*chibalo*), the Portuguese had more direct influence on the position of men and women, and gender relations (Tvedten *et al.*, 2009). *Chibalo* meant that women became responsible for subsistence farming and producing cash crops to meet increasing colonial demands for taxes, and run the household, while men worked on Portuguese farms, fishing and other industries in urban areas against payment in cash or kind (ibid). All these events had serious implications on patterns of living arrangements, divorce and remarriage; changes in sexual behaviour and fertility patterns have also been significant. While men managed to maintain their socio-cultural position through economic gain (Tvedten *et al.*, 2009), women were restrained from the same type of social and economic self-reliance and independence (Newitt 1995). In urban areas, those changes, through the impact they have had on the exercise and practice of rights and obligations, have had implications for the operation of the extended family and kinship system (Bledsoe and Cohen, 1993).

Two important factors have had a particular effect on social change in Mozambique. One is the long term exposure of the southern and central parts of the country to “structural forces of ‘modernity’” (Tvedten *et al.*, 2009: 4), and second is labour migration.

Unlike some SSA countries which returned to their indigenous practices after independence from colonial rule, Mozambique culture suffered significantly after 1975. The Marxist government viewed indigenous practices as ‘backward’ and ‘superstitious’ (Waterhouse, 1996: 56). As part of forming *o homem novo* (a new man) Frelimo forbade many of the practices, such as initiation rites, polygamy, and *curanderismo* (traditional healing) (ibid). Despite the ban, some communities never stopped practicing their age-old traditions, which are now legal since 1990 (Waterhouse, 1996). Particularly in the northern parts of the country, people have continued practising customs such as initiation rites (ibid).

As examined above, the notion of ‘tradition’ is quite problematic; I have therefore chosen to refer to ‘indigenous practices’ instead. In my own understanding, ‘indigenous practices’ are not static but rather, undergo constant changes in response to new influences. In my study I use Anderson's (1983/1991) approach of creative imagery that implies: ‘invented traditions,’ representation, imagination, symbols, and traditions in nationalism, as a constructed narrative

about the nation-state. As a phenomenon that is fundamentally historical in its constitution, the ‘truth’ of national identity cannot be found in fixed racial categories, myths about origins, or certain primordial ‘facts’ (ibid). Thus ‘indigenous practices’ are flexible and responsive to external changes. An example is the changing rules of initiation. Once performed and led by the community or individual *madrinhas* and *padrinhos*, nowadays there appears to be a link with other institutions (such as church).

Gender relations

Although there has been an observable change in gender relations between men and women, gender inequalities remain across social institutions in Mozambique (explored further in the following section). Despite the fact that “gender equality and women empowerment” (GdM, 2005) is an explicit goal of the Mozambican Government, women continue to be disadvantaged when it comes to participation in political and economic and socio-cultural terms, as well as in private spheres (Tvedten *et al.*, 2009).

As previously discussed, the war had challenged relations between women and men, allowing new gender relations and new gender identities to emerge. It is important to understand the differences between the authority during the war and the patriarchal family authority whereby women were (and still are) subordinated to a father, a brother or a husband (Jacobson, 2006). Before the war, women and men lived in different spheres leading separate lives with a clear division of labour. These transformations were only possible because women were ‘brought into’ the ‘male’ sphere during the war. Thus, with Frelimo’s ideological support behind them, women were not afraid to confront their husbands (Arnfred, 2011).

Women’s active participation in the war was of a great importance and corresponded to the new ideas of gender equality affirmed by Frelimo. Samora Machel (leader of Frelimo) saw women’s emancipation as a central aspect of the revolution (Arnfred, 2011). Thus women fought in the war not only for the liberation of their country, on an equal footing with men in the struggle against the Portuguese, but also, and most importantly, for their own freedom (Arnfred, 2011). It seems clear that the civil war required great resilience from women to comply with the demands placed on them (O’Kane, 1996). Estimates suggest between one and two million mines were laid in Mozambique (Human Rights Watch, 1996). Over 75 per cent of these were laid in the southern and central provinces of Gaza, Manica, Maputo and Sofala (ibid).

After the war, when Frelimo started rebuilding the nation, ideas about women’s emancipation

seemed to disappear from the agenda. Pre-war dynamics between women and men seemed to return, and men reclaimed the patriarchal power they had lost during the war. In this process, Frelimo failed to support women, seeing women's struggle for gender equality as "radicalism of the petty bourgeoisie" (Machel, 1974). There was a shift in Frelimo's discourse: it began to promote the nuclear family as the means of change and the future (Arnfred, 2011). This kind of situation has been observed elsewhere in the world too. For example, the role of Vietnamese women in the national liberation struggle had a significant importance for the position of women and gender relations in socialist Vietnam (Pelzer-White, 1989). Women became powerful symbols of strength and independence woman. However, after the war the problem of economic power imbalances between women and men increased in Vietnam (Pelzer-White, 1989). Lack of jobs forced many women into prostitution, while men in position of political and economical power took advantage of their dominance (ibid).

Gendered inequalities among Mozambican women and men are particularly persistent in the areas of agricultural production, employment and income, education and health, and women are highly vulnerable to domestic violence and sexual abuse (Tvedten *et al.*, 2009; UNDP, 2002). Better access to education and health systems has assisted women in increasing their participation in the labour market (Arthur, 1999; da Silva and Andrade, 2000) although in most of the country, women continue to work domestically and fulfil their reproductive role. In spite of women's access to and representation in the Parliament being relatively high, their representation in key institutions such as education, health, and legal sectors remains weak (UNDP, 2002; Tvedten *et al.*, 2009).

From the economic point of view, women's situation in Mozambique is still vulnerable (Rosário *et al.*, 2008). There are observable contrasts between women living in (peri)urban and rural areas. Only a very small percentage of women are urban based, educated, literate and speaking Portuguese, factors which increase the likelihood of getting access to public spheres (UNDP, 2002). Despite better access women, especially in rural areas, have not had a chance to participate in the Mozambican labour force in recent decades (ibid). Lack of opportunities for employment in the formal sector and poverty has forced women to look for various ways of earning an income. For example, some women manage to arrange a *negocio* (small business) by buying products on the main market and resell in the *bairros* (living quarters) or by picking small shellfish on the beach and selling them on the local market. For many women it has meant an additional burden to already existing multiple reproductive,

domestic and collective responsibilities. The fact that women now work outside of the home has important implications for the family structure, as well as for gender relations (Tvedten *et al.*, 2009). Unemployment among men is closely connected to the ability to maintain their manhood and position of household head (Tvedten *et al.*, 2009). This has profound consequences on gendered power relations as insufficient financial resources and economic hardship within families, unemployment, alcoholism, and infidelity have been observed as major causes of domestic violence. Despite the Constitution promoting equality, women, as one of the most vulnerable social groups, continue to be victims of violence linked to the serious issues of poverty and inequality they experience everyday (da Silva and Andrade, 2000).

Drawing on the historical events and contemporary political situation in Mozambique I have looked at their implications upon social organisation and gender relations. As I have suggested above, throughout the colonial and post-colonial period Mozambican women appeared to have been active agents. They took on multiple roles and responsibilities from taking over men's chores on the farms to engaging in the liberation of the nation. This clearly reflects that taking on these multiple roles has enabled Mozambican women to develop new capabilities. The activities women got involved in certainly had important implications for the emergence of new forms of family and kin, as well as gender relations. Taking this as my point of departure I seek to examine the complexity and fluidity of gender and gender relations in contemporary Mozambique.

2.2 Legal pluralism and the mismatch between the law and custom

Having emerged from the civil war, Mozambique declared its will to build a new democratic nation with “no tradition of civic organisations independent of the ruling hierarchies” (Waterhouse, 1996: 61). The Portuguese had limited the development of self-governing local organisations, suppressed trade unions, and had seen participation in independent African groups and churches as ‘political’ and rebellious (*ibid*). As a result at village level, the situation had undergone very little change in the past 500 years and rural chiefs still administered local justice (Waterhouse, 1996).

Later on¹⁸ in the process of democratic transition, a liberal constitution was adopted, followed

¹⁸ In 2004 the revised version of the Constitution officially recognised legal pluralism, as well as the unity between the formal-state courts and non-state actors of justice (Republic of Mozambique, 2004: art. 4). This system is represented by the District, Provincial, City and Supreme Courts which use formal (written) law and the Community Courts, sanctioned by Law 4/92, which rely on informal (unwritten) customary norms (Kyed and Buur, 2006; Kyed, 2007; Kyed, 2009).

by the recognition of traditional authority adopting legal pluralism (Kyed and Buur, 2006; Kyed, 2009). However, the main legislation concerning the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms still stem from the colonial period. Hence some parts of the legislative framework are not always appropriate to address present realities and constitute the cause of injustices and limitations. For example, the current Criminal Code of Mozambique was established and came into force in the 19th century and since that time has had only a few minor amendments.

The current judicial system is characterised by heterogeneity made up of various components: normative formal legal justice (the formally circulating norms); norms arising from the selection and enforcement of laws (the structural element or judicial justice), and customary law, which applies informally understood rules (Kyed and Buur, 2006; Kyed, 2007; Kyed, 2009). The “patchwork of non-state institutions” (Kyed, 2009: 94), and the lack of communication between the non-state actors and the formal justice system are problematic. The lack of investment in informal mechanisms of justice practices alongside the plural character of the structure cause discrepancies and difficulties in provision (ibid). While the legislative bodies apply the national law, the Community Courts are influenced by unwritten customary rules (Bagnol, 1997).

This ‘customary law’ is made up of widely recognised practices and customs which set the standards: what such practices and customs define as just and unjust, acceptable and unacceptable, constitutes the norm in customary law, even if these practices are not allowed by state law (Bagnol, 1997). Consequently certain formal law concepts do not correspond with customary law. For example in the case of *lobolo* (brideprice) the two law systems do not correlate in the name of child protection. *Lobolo* is a traditional ceremony in the patrilineal/patrilocal system whereby the man pays *lobolo* to the bride’s family in order to formalise the marriage (Bagnol, 2006). Brideprice can be delivered in the form of money, domestic animals or symbolic goods (for example, alcohol and *capulanas*). Once this is paid, the man owns the woman’s labour and that of any children she produces (ibid). In a society where farming is almost entirely done with hand tools and where there are no landless labourers to hire, a wife represents a major capital investment (Bagnol, 2006). Greater production is gained by investing more capital to buy more wives. Sometimes, both the number of children and the number of wives for whom the man has paid *lobolo* is a standard for measuring a man’s power and prosperity (ibid). A man with many wives is seen as a rich

person, since only somebody rich could acquire them.

According to these different contexts certain practices are regarded as lawful or unlawful, hence the problems arising out of them are seen as subject to being either resolved or punished. The state law and customary norms rest on different rules with regard to whether local practices are acceptable or unacceptable. For example, the initiation rites discussed in Chapter 6 constitute an indigenous custom which has been related to the control of the female body, sexual conduct and the woman's fertility. As discussed, puberty rites represent a symbolic point at which young people learn indigenous knowledge and in particular, traditional aspects of the construction of gender identity are emphasised. The rituals are therefore recognised by the community as an important practice marking children's readiness for adulthood. Although some components of these ceremonies may violate children's rights, the legal framework is ambiguous about these rituals.¹⁹

Also the concepts of 'child' adopted by the two legal systems are to some extent contradictory. In customary law a child may reach adulthood any time between the ages of 8 and 15 years of age and this is usually marked by sexual maturity.²⁰ In Mozambican law the age at which childhood ends is not defined. While in Family Law²¹ the minimum age for marriage is 18 for both women and men, it is acceptable for members of the girl's family to decide that she can wed at a younger age.

In my fieldwork, I experienced the ambiguity of the legal framework through the stories of my neighbours. My impression was that people seemed to apply the national law and customary law interchangeably, depending on the situation. *Lobolo* and initiation rites, for example, as focal events for maintenance of indigenous customs as well as processes of inclusion, seemed to take an ambiguous position in regards to children's age, preparedness and maturity. The gains in female participation achieved through socialism have left no mark.

As previously examined, religious pluralism across the country may be an additional source of cultural challenges. It can be assumed that for the followers of different religions, tensions emerge in terms of what principles to adhere to with regard to premarital sex, extramarital relations, polygamy and customs such as initiation rites. However, what I witnessed during

¹⁹ Initiation rites and/or other traditional rituals are not mentioned in any of the legal documents I found and analysed.

²⁰ In the research context a child reaches sexual maturity when they can reproduce.

²¹ On December 16, 2003, after more than a decade in the works, the Mozambican Parliament passed a new Family Law. This legislation is a major victory for women's rights in Mozambique and a powerful testimony to the strength of the Women's Coalition. (http://www.oxfam.org/en/programs/development/safrica/moz_law.htm)

fieldwork was people combining the elements of religion and customary beliefs in a quite free and flexible way.

Gender violence in schools and the legal framework

Brasileiro (1997) states that incidence of gender abuse can be correlated with historical and political background: gender abuse is likely to be high in countries experiencing civil and/or political conflict where civic institutions offer limited services and legislation is difficult to enforce. Although Mozambique has been at peace for 15 years, for nearly two decades before that it experienced a sustained period of political turbulence which impinged on the development of a legal framework (for example, Kyed, 2007; Kyed, 2009). Nonetheless, since independence, the government has been attempting to make up for lost time by focusing on children's welfare has been a priority for the government since Mozambique's independence, as over half of the population is under 18 years of age (da Silva and Andrade, 2000). Since independence the government has ratified laws and legal regulations protecting children, including outlawing sexual abuse, early marriages and harmful traditional practices.²² Recently the act on Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences and regulations against sexual abuse and corruption in schools: the Teacher's Code of Conduct²³ and the Dispatch number 39/GM/2003 were introduced.²⁴

In 2008, the Ministry of Education and Culture presented the Teacher's Code of Conduct to lay down a disciplinary procedure for cases of teachers sexually abusing students (Centro de Integridade Pública, 2008). The Code also establishes the fundamental values of the teaching profession and the principles that should guide teachers' behaviour, individually and collectively, in their professional practice: it defines teachers' fundamental duties and defends and protects the liberty of students to learn, and equality in schooling opportunities. It advises teachers to "abstain from using their profession to obtain immoral advantages", "abstain from the sexual abuse of female students along side with refraining from taking bribes in the form of money or sexual favours from students, parents and caregivers" (Centro de Integridade Pública, 2008).

The Dispatch number 39/GM/2003, in turn, acknowledges that teachers sexually abuse female students. In so doing the document raises a very serious issue: apart from being a

²²The National Plan for Children and the Family Law

²³ The Code of Conduct is divided into five parts: Part 1 relates to teachers' engagement with students; Part 2 to their engagement with parents and caregivers; Part 3 to their engagement with society; Part 4 addresses their engagement with their profession and Part 5 talks about teachers' integrity. For other parts of the Code of Conduct see Appendix IX.

²⁴ For Dispatch number 39/GM/2003 see Appendix X.

serious ethical violation, this is a crime in law and should be punished (Ministry of Education, 2003). Although the document puts forward punishment for teachers and educational personnel, it shows no concern about the girls' education, health and necessary support (ibid). The Dispatch justifies the proposed measures by emphasising the value of "scientific, technical, cultural and physical preparation and a high moral, civil and patriotic education" in building a just society that respects equal rights (Ministry of Education, 2003). The document stresses the need for everyone, in school or outside, to participate in reaching this aim, and that pregnancies among students create a "bad atmosphere" and a "high rate of educational loss (wastage)" which sabotage it (ibid).

The increase in pregnancies among school-age girls has been the subject of wide social questioning, as it has taken place within a developing social discourse which condemns pregnancy outside of marriage as 'bad' and disobedient (Arthur and Mejia, 2006). Within this atmosphere of conflicting messages and lack of clear-cut procedures, very few incidents are disclosed (Leach and Mitchell, 2006; Parkes and Heslop, 2011). This complex situation of gender violence in and around schools needs to be placed in the wider socio-cultural context discussed previously in which a legal system operates alongside a tacitly accepted customary law. Although children's well-being has been on the government agenda for many years, problems with teenage pregnancy seem to persist. As I go on to analyse in Chapter 7, pregnant girls experienced difficulties in completing education and prejudice from community members, while the perpetrators (whether a student or a teacher) faced minor consequences. My impression from fieldwork was that even in the cases where there was a predisposition for denouncing, families were discouraged from doing it due to unspoken social pressure. Instead, 'an agreement' was negotiated between the families, thus falling back on customary law. Although the girl's family gained a sum of money, I was left wondering whether this was the best solution, and most importantly, the solution the girl wanted.

2.3 The education system in Mozambique

The National Education System was introduced in 1983 and the first to be designed by the government after independence. Before 1975, Mozambique's education system was comprised of missionary schools, public schools and private schools. The primary schools were divided in 1929 into '*elementarias*' for the Portuguese and years of '*rudimentarias*' – with simplified curriculum – for the indigenous (Newitt 1995: 440). The public schools,

located mostly in urban areas, were only available to the Portuguese and the ‘*assimilados*’.²⁵ The main target of the ‘*assimilação* policy’ was to take indigenous people away from the influence of their own tradition (ibid). In turn, in the mission schools they were taught to live as ‘good Catholics’ and to be disciplined labourers. The missionary schools catered mainly for the ‘natives’, in the rural areas (Newitt, 1995). Since signing the 1940 Missionary Accord and Statute²⁶ between Portugal and the Vatican, the Catholic Church became the principal provider of education in Mozambique (Sheldon, 1998). These agreements required the curriculum to be under the supervision of the colonial administration and fostered Portuguese nationalism (ibid). Thus until the 1960s the imported curriculum included texts referring to the history and geography of Portugal, alienating the students from their own surroundings in a process of cultural domination. The private schools (usually owned by the church) were only affordable for the well-off Portuguese.

As I learned during my fieldwork, many people considered that some of the characteristics of this very selective pre-independence education have changed in the post-independence education system. Nowadays, education in Mozambique is compulsory and free through to the age of 12 years. However, although the 2004/2005 reform abolished official school fees, an annual matriculation fee of approximately \$5 is still charged (see for example, Handa *et al.*, 2004; Fox *et al.*, 2012). Like in most African countries, entrance into successive higher levels of schooling is based on national examinations (starting from 5th grade) (ibid).²⁷ Schools and universities became mixed-sex institutions.

Today, the National Education System comprises of five sub-systems, namely General Education, Adult Education, Technical/Vocational Education, Teacher Training and Higher Education (MEC, 2010). The education system comprises two primary levels: lower and upper primary. Students who complete upper primary can go on to secondary school – EP1 (Ensino Primário do 1^o Grau) (Primary Education 1st level – 1st-5th grade) and EP2 (Ensino Primário do 2^o Grau) (Primary Education 2nd level – 6th-7th grade). There are various technical and vocational education and training opportunities for graduates of lower and upper primary, or lower secondary; 8th-10th grade (ESG1) (Ensino Secundário do 1^o Ciclo) (Secondary Education 1st level) and 11th-12th grade (ESG2) (Ensino Secundário do 2^o Ciclo) (Secondary

²⁵ Until 1961, indigenous Mozambican citizens could by adopting Portuguese language, culture and habits, become an ‘*assimilado*’ and become a Portuguese citizen at the same time (Pitcher, 2002).

²⁶ Acordo Missionario entre a Santa Se e a Republica Portuguesa

²⁷ There is an internal exam in third grade which should be used to determine a student's promotion, however, very few schools do it.

Education 2nd level), which is the pre-university level; three levels of technical/vocational education – Elementary (1st-3rd year), Arts and Crafts; basic (1st-3rd year), Commercial and Industrial and Intermediate (1st-3rd and 4th year); and higher education (ibid).

Difficulties in provision of education

Mozambique emerged from the civil war with a paralysed economy and a devastated material infrastructure, including its schools, roads, and health centres: “indeed, Renamo²⁸ guerrillas overtly targeted these facilities for destruction” (Handa *et al.*, 2004: 16). The ensuing civil war brought the darkest moments in the country’s history, devastating it throughout the 1980s and leading to the collapse of most of its newly-created buildings and infrastructure. As a resultant, Mozambican education has faced complex socio-economic problems. Provision of education therefore was restricted mainly to the cities in the southern part of the country. The number of EP1 schools (1st to 5th grade) was almost halved from 1983 to 1992 (UNDP, 2000).

Expansion and improvement in the education sector have been critical elements of the government’s long-term and short-term development strategies (UNESCO, 2002). Its Educational Strategic Sector Plan (ESSP) covers three areas of action: availability and quality of education; improvements and relevance of schooling; and the reinforcement of institutional capacity (MINED, 2001). Despite the expansion of the education system throughout the 1990s, the system continues to be inefficient, even given a genuine commitment to providing equitable access to education to all Mozambican children (UNDP, 2008). Lack of access to education, repetition and early drop-out are the consequences of this situation. Drop-out rates are high: 49.5 per cent of girls and 66 per cent of boys completed EP1 and only 28 per cent of girls and 40 per cent of boys graduated from EP2 in 2005 (MEC, 2006). The figures for completion of secondary school are much lower: just 4.5 per cent of girls and 9 per cent of boys complete ESG1, while less than one per cent of girls and two per cent of boys finished ESG2 (ibid).

²⁸ A conservative political party led by Afonso Dhlakama. It fought against the Mozambican Liberation Front in the Civil War from 1975 to 1992 (Kalley *et al.*, 1999).

Table 2.1 Education challenges

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The increase of students is not followed by improvement in the quality of education• There is a lack of classrooms and a significant number of children have no access to school• The combination of failure and drop-out rates (especially among girls) produces considerable wastage• The student/teacher ratio continues to be high• The increase in the number of untrained teachers (particularly in primary schools) and low numbers of female teachers• The language of instruction is Portuguese, which the vast majority of children who start in grade one do not speak• Low institutional capacity• Cultural beliefs which afford little importance to schooling, in particular in rural areas
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Source: Government of Mozambique, 2010.

As presented in the above table (Table 2.1) the quality of education is compromised by many constraints resulting in high repetition and drop-out rates. As I discuss in Chapter 7, teachers with poor general preparation, skills and professional training contribute to this situation. Among various socio-cultural reasons for high repetition and drop-out rates, Benson (2010) argues that the use of Portuguese for instruction is an important impediment to pupils' understanding. An overwhelming number of Mozambican people are of Bantu extraction and are not fluent in Portuguese (Mário *et al.*, 2006; VSO, 2011).²⁹

The dominant ethno-linguistic groups in the research context – Sofala Province – are the Shona-speaking Ndau and Sena (Rosário *et al.*, 2008). As I observed during my fieldwork, however, local languages are used less amongst people in urban areas. Whilst the situation in the city is rather complex because of migration from the rural areas to the city brings in a wide variety of languages, people choose to speak Portuguese in public spheres. Similarly, I noted that young people preferred to communicate in Portuguese in schools although many of them had problems speaking and understanding Portuguese (see Chapter 7). However, I did not observe any gender differences in language use. Moreover, it became apparent that the mother tongue is usually used in the private sphere, particularly in intergenerational communication. In the *bairros* (living quarters) and the city outskirts I often met children and youths speaking local languages; children who were too young to go to school or who did not receive formal education, spoke poor Portuguese or not at all.

²⁹ From 1983 to 2003 Portuguese was the only functional language in the national curriculum. In 2003 Bantu languages were recognized and bilingual education was introduced to the curriculum of primary education. Teaching materials in 16 dialects were prepared for EP1 and EP2 (Patel *et al.*, 2001).

Teacher training and teachers' competence

The increase in the number of students at primary school has led to a shortage of both schools and qualified teachers. According to research conducted in the primary educational sector, the average number of primary school pupils per teacher is 64, and only 58 per cent of teachers in primary school have teacher training (VSO, 2008). The ratio of students per teacher in secondary school is 32 (ibid), and of a total of 1957 teachers in secondary schools, 1766 – almost 90 per cent – are qualified teachers. Teacher training for secondary school includes either nine years of formal schooling and two years at the Faculty of Education, or eleven years of schooling and two years' teacher training in the disciplines they will teach. Teacher training for primary school was lately reduced to 10+1 – ten classes of primary education plus a year of teacher training. There are very few teachers with university education, and those with higher education usually teach in urban areas (VSO, 2008). In addition, in-training service and supervision are unavailable for the majority of teachers (ibid).

Poor quality of teacher training and very few opportunities for professional development affect teaching practice in classrooms. The teachers usually “talk at students and elicit rote responses” (Benson, 2004: 50). Benson notes that this is particularly persistent in Mozambican primary schools, where interaction is limited to ‘*Entenderam? – Siiiiim!*’ (Understood? – Yees!) dialogue “that gives the appearance of understanding and interaction where there is neither” (ibid: 50). Adding to the situation, Portuguese as the only language of instruction (to the exclusions of the local languages) has created a serious barrier for most children in rural areas, where they enter school without knowing the language (MINED, 2001).

Since 1996 new curricula have been gradually introduced in Mozambican primary schools, and also since 2008 in secondary schools (VSO, 2008). The basic education and teacher training curricula have been revised and made more flexible and relevant to the actual needs of communities (MINED, 2001). The primary education curriculum has been organised into logical areas of knowledge comprising personal and social training components to promote ethics, a culture of peace, tolerance and unity, as well as better environmental attitudes, gender and cultural awareness (ibid). The new curricula are intended to be flexible enough to allow incorporation of contents determined by individual schools and teachers, and collaboration with local community interests (MINED, 2001). This complex transition is also affecting the teaching-learning process and students' overall knowledge (VSO, 2008).

In this section I have examined the effect that the war has had on the infrastructure of the education system, particularly on schools in urban and rural areas of Mozambique. I have described some of the educational challenges faced by the system, for example with regards ethno-linguistically diverse learners: in post colonial Mozambique, Portuguese remains the language of instruction generating additional problems for students, and poorly qualified teachers. As I explore in Chapter 7, despite its democratic intentions the introduction of the new curriculum seems to have caused further difficulties for both teachers and students. This is due to the scarcity of resources in infrastructure, lack of teaching-learning materials and methodologies, and lack of professional support for teachers. On the whole, the quality of education is one of the important elements that can also affect girls' education, which I discuss in the following section.

2.4 The gender gap and education in Mozambique

Paula comes from a village close to Marangue, about 20 kilometres from the district capital Beira in central Mozambique. Her mother is a peasant and cultivates cassava, beans and rice, and her father died a couple of years ago. Paula has three brothers and three sisters and all but two go to school. One has not reached school age yet, and one of her sisters is married and works at the machamba (cultivation plot). Paula's uncle helps the family. He used to work as a clerk in town but he lost the job a couple of months ago. He is now doing some administrative work for the local pastor. He wants Paula to continue her education, although money is scarce in his family and he has difficulties paying for it. However, Paula also gets support from a nun who runs a boarding facility in town where Paula stays: 'I like studying and I would like to continue until grade ten', Paula says. The future is uncertain. Paula does not know if she will continue beyond this year. Many of her friends have dropped out of school; some could no longer pay for their education, some wanted to get married, some left due to pregnancy and others failed their exam. In the future Paula does not want to go back to Marangue, 'I want to stay here, in a town!' (Fieldnotes,³⁰ Beira; 12/02/09)

Paula is a Mozambican girl who at the time of my fieldwork was still going to school though for how long, she did not know. Her situation was far from uncommon in Mozambique; poverty is one of the main barriers to girls' education in the country (Helgesson, 1999). Lack of employment opportunities made it difficult for her mother to provide for Paula's education. There were five other siblings (3 girls and 2 boys) in the household and it is uncertain whether they will have a chance to go to school in the future. In times of economic insecurity boys would more likely attend formal education, while girls would be married off.

Gender disparities penetrate all levels of the educational system. With one of the lowest enrolment rates in the world in 2008, it was estimated that about 70 per cent of the school-

³⁰ The quantitative EFA goals are universal primary education, gender parity and halving adult illiteracy (UNESCO, URL). See http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=42579&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

aged girls and 80 per cent of boys were enrolled in primary school in Mozambique and only 6 and 8 per cent respectively began secondary school (UNESCO, URL), and that there was a gender gap at all levels of education. Mozambique is among the 28 countries unlikely to reach any of the quantitative³¹ EFA goals before 2015 (UNESCO, 2002).

As discussed above, the latest statistics show that few children go to school and that girls are less well represented than boys. Furthermore, research found decrease in girls' participation at the higher levels of the education system (Walker *et al.*, 1996). Disparities have also been found between rural and urban areas and between provinces (Mário *et al.*, 2002). Repetition and drop-out rates are also higher for girls, as reflected in the difference in school life expectancy: 5.4 years for boys and 3.8 years for girls (UNESCO, URL).

Although little research has been carried out on barriers to girls' education in Mozambique, it seems that at all levels of the education system girls are less likely to enrol or to complete their education, and their disadvantage already emerges in the initial years of schooling (da Silva and Andrade, 2000). Justiniano *et al.* (2005) identify several barriers (on both the demand and supply side) that impede girls' access to and continuation of primary education. Paula's story reflects some of the constraints that impede girls' education in Mozambique, which are summarised in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Main barriers to girls' education in Mozambique

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct educational costs: girls' schooling is rated below that of boys due to cultural values • Domestic labour demands more of girls' time, negatively affecting their school performance • Family poverty constrains girls' school attendance, for example because they lack proper clothing and their labour is needed • Limited school credibility and little educational relevance • Long distances between home and school affect girls more than boys • Corrupt teachers • Sexual harassment and undesired pregnancy • Lack of alternative models to the traditional woman's role because of a lack of female teachers and other female professionals in the community • Conflict between religious and official education, particularly in Islamic areas • Early marriage and premature pregnancy shortens girls' retention in school
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Source: Helgesson, 1999; Justiniano *et al.*, 2005; Palme, 1998; Walker *et al.*, 1996.

The issues listed in Table 2.2 were mentioned by some of the education officials I interviewed during my fieldwork. For example, the coordinator for gender and special

programmes in the *Direcção Provincial da Educação e Cultura de Sofala* (DPEC) (Provincial Department of the Ministry of Education and Culture), Mrs Almeida, identified gender disparities as particularly problematic:

To be honest this issue gives me a headache. Children are expected to start school at the age of six. In many communities you still see many girls sitting at home ... helping. Some might be sent to school in the age of nine or ten. So when a girl reaches third grade she's already a woman and she's starting to make different ideas in her head ... My father, for example, says 'Why should you invest all the money in your daughter? She is going to marry soon and she'll go away!'
(Interview: Beira, 01/09/09)

According to Mrs Almeida, traditional customs also prevent married women from attending school because it is feared that an educated woman will not respect her husband.

Parents and female students I interviewed complained about the quality of education and poor material conditions in the local schools such as a lack of chairs and desks, and teaching materials. No water supply or toilets, and girls being at risk of abuse meant that schools were identified as not 'girl-friendly'. As Justiniano and colleagues (2005) note, a poor learning environment may be an indirect cause of girls dropping out. In recent years the importance of providing children with a good learning environment by focusing on the girl-friendly school approach has been emphasised in policy initiatives (see for example Bernard and Cabral, 2001).³²

As I have established so far, the Mozambican education system faces great challenges. Despite the commitment of ESSP to providing equitable access to education and improving the quality of education, school-related gender violence is one of the major constraints and obstacles to girl's education in Mozambique (UNDP, 2008). Various agencies are stating that government commits to enforcing existing policies barring sexual harassment and scrutinises barriers to girls' education (ibid).³³ The continuing poor quality of the education system reflects the complex mixture of socio-economic consequences prior to the civil war and past economic mismanagement, as well as an intertwined web of socio-cultural causes (UNESCO, 2002) which I address later in my empirical analysis.

³² See The Girls and Education programme in Mozambique run by UNICEF http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index_18996.html

³³ For specific information see the EFA 2000 Assessment (UNESCO, 2002).

2.5 The fieldwork context

This section considers the fieldwork site in detail by focusing on the complexities of the social organisation and the family, and kinship structure. It should be remembered that across the nation and within each province there is considerable diversity that cannot be captured in the brief examination below.

Beira, where I conducted this research, is the second largest city in Mozambique and has a population of 436,240 (INE, 2009). It is the capital of Sofala Province in the central part of the country where the Pungue River meets the Indian Ocean. It contains the regionally-significant Port of Beira, which acts as a gateway for both the central interior portion of the country and the landlocked nations of Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi (Florêncio, 2005). The city owes its existence to the Beira Corridor, a road and railway line leading eastwards from the coast and providing Zimbabwe with its main outlet to the sea (ibid) (see Figure 2.1).

According to Rosário and colleagues (2008), the Province of Sofala is best described as a province of contradictions in terms of its socio-economic situation. Whilst there has been a rapid drop of important trade with its landlocked neighbours, decrease of its agricultural and industrial base from the colonial period, and problems in fishing industry, improvements in the socio-economic condition of Sofala's population have been greater than anywhere else in the country (ibid). The province is characterised by a high proportion of economically active women and men, a relatively high level of education and favourable health indicators with the one exception of the HIV/AIDS infection rate, which is the highest in the country.

Family relations and kinship

There was one family that I felt I never quite fathomed during the time I knew them because the composition of the group and the location of its members constantly seemed to change. Solange was a student at the secondary school where I ran some of the activities. One day after a workshop, she started to walk with me (...) I met Solange's mother (as I thought) preparing food outside the hut. When I first saw Elsa I assumed she was in her mid-forties. There were several children (although they were not the same children each time I went there). Although Solange had told me there were three women in the household whom I assumed were the mothers of all the children I saw, I did not meet any others. One day when I was passing by I was surprised to see Elsa feeding a baby in front of the hut. I asked whether it was her baby, and she told me her sister had left it with her. Elsa's sister was very sick and so could not take care of the baby. From this conversation I learned that Elsa was Solange's eldest sister. With each successive visit I began to expect to meet her father, Zellas, whom Solange talked so much about. I wondered whether any of the women in the homestead were his wives. Zellas seemed to always be away or working late hours. I sometimes met an elderly man, grandfather to Solange, who stayed with them for a few months and then moved on to other family members, and a young man, Fito. He seemed to behave as if he had some

importance in the family. When I asked Solange who he was she explained me that he was one of the cousins taking care of them when the father was not here.

On one occasion I arrived at the agreed time to talk to Solange only to discover that no one was at home, not even Elsa and the baby. Grandfather was sitting in front of the hut and offered to take me to where they were. On the way he explained that Solange's father had two homes: one here and one 150 km away where he was working on a farm. I wondered whether he also had two families. When we arrived, I discovered that the whole family had moved to a hut at the other end of the bairro. Here they had some animals and cultivated a small piece of land.
(Fieldnotes: Beira, 05/04/09)

The constitution of the household in the extract above clearly illustrates the difficulty of trying to define a 'family' or 'domestic group' by residential location, function or kinship. The members of the family presented in the extract, whom I first met living in one location, were all related, but not all of them lived in the same household all the time. Later I discovered that different family members moved between the two homesteads to take care of the crops and animals. The ways people lived together at the research site varied, resulting in broad heterogeneity between the households. I found it difficult to explore every variation. Regular migration between locations was one of the factors that changed the composition of households, but other factors applied too. Living in the local community provided the opportunity not only to observe people's everyday lives but also to understand the power struggles among women, among men and between the two. Daily conversations with my adult and young neighbours made me aware of the complexities of the social institutions in the local community. I learned that "[t]here are inequalities within families just as there are inequalities between families" (Gittins, 1993: 2), and that differences in class, gender, ethnicity and age should be acknowledged. I also found that the representation of the 'ideal' form of 'nuclear' family (consisting of a pair of adults and their children) changes over time and differs according to context (Iliffe, 1987; Kuper, 1982).

During my fieldwork I observed a great complexity and flexibility of family structure and dynamics in their particular social and cultural contexts. I realised, for example, that the concepts of 'family', 'clan' and 'extended family' are difficult to define clearly. Thus, I question theories that narrowly define family structure as a stable and universal institution consisting of parents and unmarried children living together in relative harmony, as they cannot adequately account for such complex realities (Goody, 1958, 1969; Gittins, 1993).

My fieldwork experience also made me aware of some of the ways in which forms and constitution of marriage (and family) can change as cultural attitudes alter in response to

change and development within the wider community; and that new forms of gender relations and sexuality have been emerging in response to historical events and globalisation processes, particularly in urban areas of Mozambique. The changes in systems of kinship, marriage and sexuality are particularly important for explaining changes in ‘manhood’, ‘womanhood’, and gender relations.

Lobolo and marriage

The two predominant systems of social organisation in Mozambique are the patrilineal and the matrilineal. The river Zambezi, in the middle of the country, is often cited as the border between these systems. The main ethno-linguistic groups in Beira (and most of the Sofala Province) are the Shona-speaking Ndau and Sena, who are patrilineal and predominantly Catholic, although there are many Muslims in the coastal areas (Arnaldo, 2004).

Patrilineal forms of social organisation clearly define men’s dominant role in the society, while reinforcing women’s subjection (Arnaldo, 2004; Bagnol, 2006). Marital relationships are legitimised by the *lobolo* ceremony, which takes the form of the payment of the bride price in the shape of various commodities. Giving of *lobolo* binds the man in fulfilling certain duties and obligations to his wife’s family (Bagnol, 2006). One of the most important aspects of the *lobolo* is that it entitles the man to claim paternity of their children and to control his wife’s labour (Bagnol, 1997; 2006). For the woman, *lobolo* is important because it legitimises both her relationship and her children. In this way a patrilineal marriage involves the permanent integration of the woman in her husband’s lineage and the complete transfer of her reproductive power to her husband’s family. It is an arrangement that appears to give the woman little or no room for negotiation about her sexuality or about the payment of the brideprice. The *lobolo* also defines another fundamental concept of the sexuality of the woman: that the product of her sexuality – her children – likewise do not belong to her (Osório, 2006). In such circumstances divorce is difficult because the brideprice would have to be returned and the woman would be separated from her children.

Sexual practices: polygyny

As I have discussed so far, there are many examples of indigenous practices where the sexual dimension shapes and reinforces gender identities. Polygyny, deeply entrenched across all the ethnic groups in Mozambique, is one such practice. Patrilineal communities are expected to have a higher incidence of polygyny than matrilineal ones because the matrilineal or uxori-local residence of spouses that characterises the matrilineal communities makes it

difficult for a man to bring a new wife home to his first wife's kin unless the two women are related (Lesthaeghe and Eelens, 1989; Lesthaeghe *et al.*, 1994; Kaufman and Meekers, 1998). Although polygamy has been illegal since 2004³⁴ (Rosário, 2008) it is still fairly common, mainly in rural areas.³⁵ Arnaldo (2004) notes that polygamous relationships vary in structure and power dynamics. Among the Tsonga and the Sena/Ndau groups (inhabiting Sofala province), for example, polygyny is considered the best solution to the infertility of the first wife, and in such a situation the second wife may even be a younger sister or other relative of the first (*ibid*). According to some women I spoke to in the field site, polygamy can be advantageous because it lightens the domestic work burden. Women in semi-urban and rural areas can especially find domestic chores and bringing up children too hard, and so ask their husbands to *buscar* (fetch) a new girl into the household. One woman, for example, went with her husband to 'fetch' a 14-year-old girl who was living together with her widowed mother. The couple paid *lobolo* and took the girl home with them and made her responsible for doing the hardest tasks in the household while the older woman took care of the children.

Rosário (2008) argues that maintaining polygamy illegally may actually have further implications for some women, particularly since the law does not eliminate the mechanisms of the patriarchal system *per se* and this may force women to accept, cope with and/or be trapped in polygamous relationships. However, following McNay's notions of globalisation and detraditionalisation, new forms of agency and constraint can be seen to be emerging (McNay, 2000; 2003), and the social structure is being challenged. The question is to what extent change in social organisation can lead to a shift of gender relations. Views on this issue in the community where I lived were divided. However, I heard various opinions on polygamy. Whilst some found it old-fashioned and unacceptable, others suggested that it depends on the situation. Many of the male participants defended polygamous practice, citing their biological needs (Bagnol and Chamo, 2003). They considered it impossible for a man to be satisfied by one woman alone, as noted by Mr Horatio: '*Men are polygamous by nature*' (Fieldnotes: Beira, 13/08/09). Some of the male participants considered relationships outside marriage the norm in their society, as justified by Mr Horatio: '*Why go hungry to bed when there is so much food around?!*' (Fieldnotes: Beira, 13/08/09). I was, however, cautioned several times about confusing *amantismo* – having one or several mistresses – with polygyny.

³⁴ The new Mozambican Family Law was introduced as a part of the Convention on the Eradication of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. See http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session10/MZ/JS2_JointSubmission2_eng.pdf

³⁵ The alternative form – polyandry – by which a woman would be able to have several spouses, is strongly rejected as it is generally considered unnatural and far from common local practices.

It is noteworthy that the participants mentioned that men not only engaged in extramarital relations, women also had ‘friends’ or ‘lovers’ (*amantes*). It seemed that changing social relations in the research context tolerated, to some extent, new arrangements and negotiations diverging from the way of thinking through dichotomies of male domination and female subordination. In Chapter 4 I discuss how within the notion of agency women can act autonomously in the context of processes of transforming gender relations.

Drawing on history and political events throughout the colonial and post-colonial period of Mozambique, in this chapter, I have considered the issues that link to my research topic. In order to provide an understanding of the social organisation of the research context, I have examined the complexities of family and kinship, customary and sexual practices. I have also looked at how people respond to structural constraints and opportunities, and how gender relations are shaped and reproduced by external processes, for example women’s role in the war and its implications. I considered the important role played by an ambiguous legal system in how gender violence is dealt with in schools and communities. Finally, an analysis of the challenges faced by the national education system provides the background for exploring gender violence in schools.

Chapter 3

Searching for the right methodology

3. Introduction

In the previous chapter I stated that researching and documenting the incidence of gender-based violence is a challenging task fraught with methodological difficulties and ethical dilemmas. I also mentioned that throughout my research I sought to learn about violence across different institutions by drawing on the voices of young people. I was particularly interested in how girls and boys learn about gender through social practices and processes, and how they perceive gender relations and power operating within social structures.

In my research aims I make two central assumptions: that young people have first-hand acquaintance with their lives, and that they are competent and reflexive in reporting their own experiences. I also acknowledge that young people are competent social actors and that their competencies differ. Engaging the participation of young people is a complex issue and calls for different approaches depending on such factors as the topic of enquiry, the age and gender of the participant and the context. Due to the sensitivity required in investigating sexual matters, especially where children and young people are involved, I had to pay special attention to ethical and methodological issues that emerged throughout the research. As I show in this chapter, addressing these and many other dilemmas required me to consider my methodology as more than just a linear process with a plan of action: it was also a political endeavour. Leach and Mitchell (2006) point out that research methodology for gathering sensitive data from children and adolescents in developing countries is poorly developed. With this in mind I tried to bring more innovative methodological procedures into my study to address particularly difficult questions in the variety of research settings involved.

In the first part of this chapter I explain the search for the most appropriate methodology for engaging with young people when researching sensitive issues. I look closely at some of the debates on the three different methodological paradigms that I employed in my research, and explore critical issues in relation to those methodologies. I discuss some principal features that these methodological approaches have in common, how I drew on particular aspects of each of the methodological paradigms and how I situated myself as a researcher.

In the second part of the chapter I describe the process of setting up and carrying out the fieldwork in detail. I also highlight some of the ethical dilemmas I had to deal with in the

field and the problems I faced in the process of analysing the data and writing this thesis. Research is above all a pragmatic enterprise, and therefore the process of finding the right techniques to yield the data I needed while at the same time respecting the rights of the participants was an important aspect of my research.

3.1 Researching sensitive topics: a feminist approach to the study

As mentioned in Chapter 1, one of the main aims of my study was to understand the process of gender identity and gender relations formation through different means of learning, and their impact on the incidence of gender-based abuse in the case study setting. In seeking answers to my questions I had to consider whether and how social reality can be understood by the researcher and the researched; why some concepts/beliefs about gender and sexuality have more important implications than others; how people make sense of their experience, and how to understand it; and how power influences the research process and knowledge production. Posing these questions had further implications for the entire research process, including the design, methods, ethics, and data analysis. Central to these considerations were some of the issues posed by the participation of young people in research. The feminist research approach and its underpinning epistemologies guided me throughout the study.

I begin this section by considering some of the important debates and different strands regarding the feminist approach among scholars, and then look specifically at the implications of the feminist approach for my research.

Feminist research methodology differs from traditional research in the following ways: it is not value-free – it actively seeks to remove the power imbalance between researcher and subject and “the view from above must be replaced with the view from below” (Mies, 1993: 13): this further implies that the research becomes a process of **conscientization**.³⁶ The researcher is politically motivated and has a major role in changing social inequality (Eichler, 1997). In other words, feminist scholars call for research methods that challenge “the dualities between theory and ‘praxis’, researcher and researched, subject and object” (Richardson, 1997: 55).³⁷ Thus feminist methodology is informed by feminist epistemology; in particular, who can be agents of knowledge, what can be known and how knowledge is validated, and feminist ontology; the relationship between knowing and being (Landman, 2006).

³⁶ ‘*Conscientization*’ refers to learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and taking action against the oppressive elements of reality (Freire, 1970:15).

³⁷ See also hooks (1984); Collins (1990) and Harding (1991).

Because feminist methodology is particularly concerned with how, or whether, knowledge produced about social life can be connected with the social realities of women, feminist researchers challenge conventional social science research approaches and make a plea for the use of new procedures. They reveal serious problems with assumptions about scientific methods: for example, they argue that quantitative research models are biased because they present distorted knowledge of the world. Eichler's (1991) critique of the masculine positivist social science model, for example, is based on her identification of several issues that embody gender insensitivity, androcentricity, double standards and sex appropriation. Eichler further maintains that social science ignores the reality of women's lives and that knowledge is reflected with a specific orientation in mind: that of men, and more specifically, of white, middle-class heterosexual men. While feminism challenges traditional social science research, it supports its arguments by recognizing that patriarchal values and beliefs in our social world shape both the construction and the definition of how research is carried out and knowledge is determined. In this way the male bias determines the approach to how and why research is done and shapes the interpretation of data.

While many feminist scholars reject quantitative research in favour of a qualitative approach, Harding (1987) argues that it is not the method that makes feminist research different from what she calls 'traditional' or 'malestream' research, but rather the alternative origin of the problems, which concern women in particular, recognizing the researcher as part of the research process and acknowledging that the beliefs of the researcher shape the research. She further argues that the alternative hypotheses and evidence applied to the purpose of the inquiry, which is to understand women's view of the world and assist in their emancipation, is what makes feminist research feminist. In Chapter 1, I similarly suggested that what makes the feminist approach uniquely feminist are the motives, concerns and knowledge brought to the research process. Feminist research entails ongoing reflection on self, process and representation, critically examining power relations and politics in the research process, as well as researcher accountability in data collection and interpretation.

A feminist approach, then, provides not only a method but also a specific perspective on the conduct of research. According to Reinharz (1992), feminists use the entire range of methods employed by other social researchers but they modify them, innovating and improvising in order to create projects responsive to the principles, insights and challenges of feminism. Though Reinharz (*ibid*) argues that feminist research methods differ from traditional

approaches, she fails to address Harding's (1987) point about the theoretical underpinnings and epistemologies that are implicated in specific methods. Suggesting that "feminists must be flexible enough to adapt their methods to the needs of each individual research situation", Klein argues that this ability to be flexible is "one of our powers to bring about change" (1983: 96). Following Harding's (1987) and Klein's (1983) ideas, I want to emphasise that methodology cannot be reduced to the issue of technique: there is a vast area beyond that needs to be explored. Decisions about the specific methods one chooses and how one employs these methods depend greatly on one's epistemological stance.

At this point in the discussion it is useful to explore some of the main perspectives that methodologies applied in feminist research strive to incorporate. As I go on to examine other methodological paradigms employed in my research it will become apparent that they share some common characteristics. In identifying those aspects I use Shields and Dervin's (1993) summary of the following factors: **experience**, **gender**, **emancipation** and **reflexivity**.

As I have explained above, feminist research rejecting positivism is based on women's **experience** of their social and personal world; it treats women's experience "as a scientific resource" (Harding, 1987). It is actor-centred; feminist scholars can bring their own subjective experience to the project researched. Jackson (2006) observes that feminist research does not only encompass the experience of women: it also acknowledges the voices of the powerless, vulnerable and silenced, such as young people and children. In my own case, adopting a feminist approach to my research helped me to recognise and involve young people as experts and authorities on their own experience. From the outset I was genuinely concerned with the lives of girls and boys and with the socio-cultural structures and processes that affect their everyday experience. Including the participants' perspectives and voices in all aspects of the research process can be achieved through a participatory approach. Later in this chapter I discuss the aims and assumptions behind participatory research and the participatory aspects I draw on in this study.

Another perspective that feminist research recognises is that of gender and gender relations as social constructions. In my search for the right methodology, the feminist approach was appealing as it aims to illuminate the fact that human experience is gendered and to analyse the role and meaning of gender in women's lives and in society (see Chapter 4 for different approaches to gender and gender relations in the case study community).

In their quest “to seriously and self-reflexively “deconstruct” our practices so that we can “reconstruct” them with fewer negative consequences” (Richardson, 1997: 118), feminist researchers have striven to develop innovative methodological approaches. **Reflexivity**, or reflective practice,³⁸ according to Ramazanoğlu and Holland (2002), is a practice of recording the narrator’s life and the act of self-interpretation by the researcher that are parallel because both are the products of persons reflecting one another and thereby influencing and changing one another. From the late 1960s reflexivity emerged as a central concern as anthropologists began to question their powerful position as ethnographers representing other people’s lives. This was partly the consequence of post-colonial understanding of earlier anthropologists’ neglect of the outcomes of colonialism, both on the people they had studied and on the process of research itself. It was also an ethical concern because anthropologists may have played a part in perpetuating colonial oppression. Post-modernism brought a general questioning of ethnographic practice and the validity of anthropologists’ representations of the researched (Caplan, 1986). As a result some anthropologists began to be more reflective when producing ethnographic texts in order to give space to those being studied (see for example, Fabian, 1996).

In my case, reflective practice was a helpful method of finding the right and more creative methodological procedures when addressing particularly difficult questions. In other words, feminist research places the researcher on the same plane as the researched – the self-reflective process is an essential outcome of emancipatory research, as I discuss later. Reflective practice attempts to “make explicit the power relations and the exercise of power in the research process” (Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002: 118). An extended period of fieldwork paved the way for my interest in reflective practice. Drawing on the feminist approach I had to openly and honestly recognize my “conceptual baggage” (Kirby and McKenna, 1989: 32) and consider the implications of power in the research process. Reflective practice also encourages other voices to question the researcher’s knowledge and notion of power. As I go on to discuss, power relations in the field are complex and the researcher is not always the ‘powerful’ one. Through reciprocal sharing of knowledge, participants become collaborators in the research project and different possible interpretations of knowledge are made possible, as I observed in my research. In my effort to deal with power relations I maintained reflective practice that helped me to recognise how relationships

³⁸ In my thesis I use the term ‘reflexivity’ and ‘reflective practice’ interchangeably: however, I find Naples’ (2003) use of the term ‘reflective practice’ more useful since it suggests a deeper, more thoughtful process than a response to stimuli associated with ‘reflex’.

in the field blur, and to address ethical dilemmas linked to these issues. In particular it helped me to deal with friendships; the motives and responsibilities they involved were not always straightforward. I recall being bewildered, challenged and at the same time fascinated by the sense of somehow being a totally different person as I worked with different groups of people. The different ways that people ‘saw’ me and treated me clearly altered the way I saw myself. In the second part of this chapter I describe some of the different roles I took on as well as those I was prescribed by different people in the field.

Adopting a reflective approach to the difficulties, practicalities and methods used in the data collection and its analysis was particularly effective. The reflective process facilitated openness and transparency about the choices I made and it made me consider the methodological, epistemological and political influences, contradictions, and complexities at all the stages of research (Naples, 2003). During my research I realised that reflective practice is not straightforward when it comes to data analysis. There is an assumption embodied in various data analysis methods that the researcher, the data and the method are separate entities rather than reflexively interconnected and interdependent. As I state in the second part of this chapter, reflective practice affects not only the research process and the role of the research but also the writing process itself.

However, the process of reflexivity is not exclusive to feminist research: it is also recognised by other research paradigms, notably ethnography. In ethnographic practice reflexivity is grounded in the idea that “social researchers are part of the social world they study” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 14). Reflective practice addresses the process and conventions of writing ethnography – I return to this when discussing the challenges and possibilities of reflexivity in ethnography.

Praxis: the aspect of ‘action’ in feminist research

In my research I draw on **praxis**,³⁹ which the feminist approach shares with other action-oriented paradigms such as participatory research. Praxis, understood as ‘acting’/’action’ challenges the theory-practice relationship and raises problems associated with value-free science. Praxis not only removes the boundaries between theory, methodology and practice in the field (Lal, 1996): it also ensures the dialectical process of collective reflection and action (Israel *et al.*, 1994; Kirby and McKenna, 1989). In doing so, praxis integrates theory and

³⁹ The term ‘*praxis*’ originates from the Greek word ‘*prasso*’, meaning ‘doing’ and ‘acting’ in contrast with the theoretical designs of epistemology; ‘*theoria*’ (Audi, 1995).

action so that each is informed by and changes through its relation with the other (Ristock and Pennell, 1996).

When planning my research I did not anticipate ‘action’⁴⁰ as the consequence of the activities that I facilitated or I got involved in. In retrospect, I acknowledge that action can facilitate building knowledge to change the conditions of the powerless and vulnerable (Jackson, 2006) both individually and collectively. However, this is possible only through reconstructing the notion of power (see Chapter 4). In my research the aspect of action became a part of the methodological framework that enabled me to critically engage with and understand participants’ multiple perspectives. It led me to work toward inclusion, sharing, participation and action while confronting the underlying assumptions in the research process (Reid, 2004). I also recognise that praxis was the way for reflexive practice to involve a particular way of looking at the world and of thinking about the research and the participants. Considering the effect on my fieldwork and directly on the participants, however, action brought a number of challenges. I learned that action is a dynamic process that varies according to context: people’s social and cultural backgrounds as well as the political and economic situation, and also that action can take place on both the individual and the collective level. As I describe later, through action students were able to validate their experience and understanding of their lives (Gordon, 2001). It seemed that during the research process some of the young participants became conscious about certain issues concerning themselves and the world around. In this way action can be an integral part of reflective knowledge and can be conceptualised as speaking or attempting to speak to the participants. In the second part of this chapter I present some examples of the activities where action was initiated and discuss different forms of action that became a part of my research: curriculum development, policy, counselling and activism, which I initiated or became a part of throughout the fieldwork.

As discussed above, one of the most important strengths of the feminist approach to research is its ability to make researchers think differently, and more critically and self-reflexively, about their theories, assumptions and practices. Reflective practice is also an attempt to make explicit the power relations and the exercise of power in the research process. I have also mentioned that reflective practice “opens up possibilities for negotiation over what knowledge claims are made, for whom and within what frame of reference” (Ramazanoğlu

⁴⁰ As one of the stages of the action research cycle (see for example, Grundy and Kemmis 1981).

and Holland, 2002: 119). In other words, it suggests that researchers need to become more critical of truth claims and more cautious about using certain categorisations and concepts in an essentialist way, including the central feminist concept of gender. In ethnography, reflexive practice “acknowledges that the orientations of researchers will be shaped by their socio-historical locations, including the values and interests that these locations confer upon them” (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007:15). Many feminist scholars have identified ethnography as ideally suited to feminist research. In the following section I consider the possibilities and challenges inherent in ethnography.

3.2. Ethnography: a way of looking and seeing⁴¹

In this section I look at ‘doing ethnography’ (Wolcott, 1999: 41-42) in the research process at the methodological level. I begin by considering participant observation as the process of immersing in everyday life in the fieldwork context, then look specifically at the kinds of methodological and epistemological issues that emerged throughout this process.

3.2.1 Participant observation: immersion in everyday life

Participant observation has its roots in traditional ethnographic research and involves the researcher living within the community setting to obtain cultural knowledge of the different forms of social interactions (Jenks, 2000). This approach, as noted by Malinowski (1922), is useful for gaining an understanding of the contexts in which participants live, their relationships, beliefs, norms, events, and perceptions of their world. In other words, it allows the researcher to experience⁴² nuances in the research context that “come directly through all senses” (Wolcott, 1999: 46). The methodology of participant observation, therefore, requires the researcher to become directly involved as a participant in people’s daily lives: their ordinary, usual, typical routines in their natural environment (Jorgensen, 1989). However, it is also important to recognise the variety of the roles adopted in participant observation. In the course of my research I noticed how the boundaries between the complete observer, the observer and participant, the participant as observer and the complete participant blurred (Gold, 1958; Junker, 1960). Participant observation is a very flexible approach, since the researcher does not prejudge the issue by deciding in advance what is or is not important when studying social behaviour. In my case, being accepted by the local community

⁴¹ The title of this section comes from Wolcott’s book *Ethnography. A way of seeing* (1999).

⁴² Wolcott suggests the three new terms experiencing, enquiring and examining in place of participant observation, interviewing and archival research. He implies that these are ‘guidelines for looking’ (1999: 46). For me experiencing, enquiring and examining are wider terms that indicate a variety of activities and involve all the senses.

permitted me to participate in local church ceremonies, traditional rituals and practices such as initiation rites, family celebrations and parties. In this way I could react to events, follow leads, and pursue avenues of research that would not have otherwise been open to me.

In my research, participant observation was a way of looking and seeing that helped me to get a more holistic picture and understanding of what was voiced during the focus group discussions, debates, interviews and informal conversations. I engaged with people in different ways, assuming different roles: working with students and teachers in schools and people in churches; interviewing educational officials; commuting with a *chapa* (minibus) in the area and sitting under the tree when it broke down; waiting at the hospital with a sick child from the neighbourhood; visiting women in the prison; buying products in the local market, and walking around the quarter. As the people from my neighbourhood began to trust me I was invited to take part in their homes and festivities. Children started to come to my backyard to draw and paint and to play games. I recorded (mostly in my fieldnotes) not only “passing events” (Clifford, 1990: 57), but also my role in and personal and emotional responses to those events, which I return to in the second part of my thesis. In this way the researcher is not only an actor in the field but the author of the ethnographic text. My fieldnotes, as those of the anthropologists interviewed by Jackson, “represent a period of anxiety, difficulty” (1990: 28) and are “liminal – betwixt and between – because they are between reality and thesis” (1990: 14). Fieldnotes are the means by which ethnographers transform parts of their lived experience into a written record, and are inevitably selective (Emerson *et al.*, 2001). Hammersley (1992) challenges ethnographic accounts, asking whether it can justifiably be argued that they represent an independent social reality; similarly, Clifford acknowledges that “the belief in ethnography as an original production, a process of pure inscription most perfectly embodied in the field note, is shaken” (Clifford, 1990: 55). The reflective practice that I have discussed here in connection with feminist research has an effect not only on the researcher’s role in carrying out fieldwork but also on the writing process in ethnographic practice.

As stated above, ethnography was a way of looking and seeing throughout the course of my research; however, when planning my research I did not consider ethnography as a methodology that would entirely address my concerns as a researcher. While it proved to be useful and led me to learn about social processes and practices in the local community, such as informal learning through the initiation rites (see Chapters 5 and 6), I saw ethnography as a

very intensive and time-consuming approach. Already in the process of planning my fieldwork I believed that I could draw on some aspects of the feminist approach, ethnography and participatory philosophy as complementary methodologies. My research, therefore, cannot be precisely or exclusively classified as participatory: however, each aspect falls somewhere along Chambers' (2008) continuum, which I discuss in detail in the following sections.

3.3 Participatory research: research, education and action

My primary aim in applying the participatory approach in my research was to enable young people to communicate their ideas in the way the most natural to them. As I have pointed out, gender violence is a particularly problematic area to research, hence its conceptualisation remains muddled, resulting in partial knowledge. In this section I look at the issues underlying my assumptions about participatory research; how participation is understood and the challenges and dilemmas associated with this approach. I begin with the development of participatory research, and characteristics exclusive to it and others that are common to other methodological paradigms.

Early efforts to develop participatory research were related to community-based research concentrating on education, agricultural progression and economic reform. Much work was done with adults in educational contexts through Freire's (1978; 1993) concept of conscientization. According to Freire, by means of critical thinking – conscientization – people reflect on the causes of their situation; their powerlessness and impoverishment. In this sense, participatory research calls for educational processes leading to interactive learning which empowers both educators and learners (or researchers and researched). In the late 1970s and 1980s Robert Chambers brought together diverse rapid rural appraisal (RRA) techniques, resulting in participatory research. The approach evolved to provide a voice to rural communities through the empowering mode of participatory rural appraisal (PRA) in the late 1980s and 1990s (Chambers, 2007; 2008). Participatory philosophy began as a development planning methodology with its own set of values and principles. It focuses on people's "right to determine their own development and recognises the need for local people to participate meaningfully in a process of analysing their situation, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating their own solutions, over which they have power and control, in order to lead to sustainable local development" (Attwood, 1997: 2). In this sense, part of the rationale for adopting a participatory approach to research is that it is a means of avoiding

extracting knowledge from communities for the benefit of knowledge and people elsewhere that do not have a direct impact on community development.

The participatory approach stresses the importance of creating participatory and democratic learning environments that provide the opportunity to overcome what Freire calls the ‘habit of submission’ – the mindset that constrains people from fully and critically engaging with their world and participating in civic life (Freire, 1978). It is only through participating in learning processes in which open, critical and democratic dialogue is fostered, Freire argues, that people develop greater self-confidence along with greater knowledge (ibid). Besides **dialogue**, this process encompasses three core elements: **people**, **power** and **praxis** (Finn, 1994). I have discussed the latter in section 3.1: according to Freire (1978), in the participatory approach **dialogue** includes reflection and action. Dialogue, therefore, is the key element in learning. Through dialogue people can create new critical ideas that can be transformed into action.

In participatory research one of the central aims is to shift the dynamic of **power** relations between researchers and researched by reducing inequalities in power and access to resources. The participatory paradigm, like the feminist approach, “lies not in methods but in the attitudes of researchers” (Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995: 1667). Researchers aim to share equal control of the research process with the participants and leads to a mutual exchange of information, assistance, and benefits (Wilmsen *et al.*, 2008). According to participatory philosophy, researchers and local participants work together in joint inquiry towards action on mutual interests (Brown, 1985). PRA has been described as a collection of approaches and methods “enabling **people** to do their own appraisal, analysis and planning, take their own action, and do their own monitoring and evaluation” (Chambers, 2002: 3). Participatory research is intended to empower ordinary citizens who, through collaboration in the research, can work to improve their own situation by using the research findings. Thus participatory researchers work ‘with’ rather than ‘for’ the researched, breaking down the distinction between researchers and the researched and legitimizing peoples’ capability to produce knowledge (Fals-Borda and Rahman, 1991). In this way the participants become researchers in pursuit of answers to questions about their daily struggle and survival (Fals-Borda and Rahman 1991). Parkes suggests that meaningful participation can “foster a sense of control and agency” (2008: 105). As I explore later, drawing on examples from my fieldwork, the

issues of participation, power and empowerment are ambiguous and convoluted and are hence challenging aspects of the research process.

Above I have explored the participatory research paradigm in which the main goal is twofold: i) considering knowledge and action that would be beneficial for participants and ii) the level of participation and empowerment necessary to address the powerlessness and oppression of the researched. I have shown how the participatory research process is a combination of research, education and action. In the following section I look at the notions of ‘participation’ and ‘voice’ and the implications of social research with young people.

3.3.1 Problematising participation and voice

The underpinning of the participatory approach is that it aims to give a voice to those being researched, assuming that participants are involved as active agents in the research process rather than objects of the research (Chambers, 2007). The paradigm questions the ownership of knowledge, the power relationship between the researchers and the researched, and the stance of the ‘objective’ researcher (Clark and Moss, 2001). In addition, Punch suggests that children are particularly marginalised in an adult-dominated society, and as such they “experience unequal power relations with adults in their lives. In this sense, children are particularly vulnerable in society, especially when their situation involves abusive behaviour on the part of adults in their lives” (2002: 1034). Building on both the subject matter of this research and the philosophy underpinning it, I sought to introduce the concept of ‘voice’ into my research. However, during my initial encounters with youth who might have been psychologically or physically abused by adults, I acknowledged that it was not likely that young people would disclose sensitive incidents in their lives until a relationship of trust and empathy was established. And although I hoped to provide young participants with the opportunity to be heard I had to reconsider how to have their opinions and ideas acknowledged, valued and acted upon. In this section I explore the notion of voice in social research and the challenges and implications of research with young people.

Debates about young people’s voices have in general focused around whether researchers (and adults in general) are willing to listen to children and how to engage with this process. As Lansdown points out, adults in general “do not have a culture of listening to children” (1994: 38). Middleton (1999) implies that adults ought to make an effort to allow novel ways of bridging the communication gap. Komulainen (2007:13) identifies this communication gap as “ambiguities (...) in human communication”. Despite these ‘ambiguities’ Christensen calls

for understanding young participants' "cultures of communication" (1999: 76-77) and for addressing the ways in which children engage with and respond to research. A study from South Africa shows that "power to talk" (Parkes, 2007: 293) in the research process can generate changes in children's approach to violence. In this research I strove to follow her practice of 'the act of looking' and the ability to 'listen attentively' to young participants (ibid: 169).

They were discussing gender roles in their homes ... I joined the circle and I let them talk (...) they were bringing some good examples of their mothers doing domestic work and fathers working in the field or working in the city ... after some time they weren't answering my questions, but discussing freely. I even stopped nodding my head. I was drawn to the discussion.
(Fieldnotes, Beira: 28/08/09)

I found this approach especially important as the culture of communication between adults and children seemed to be problematic in the research context. As I show in the empirical chapters, child-adult relationships functioned within the social organisation of patriarchy. Both adults and young people seemed to agree that there was poor communication within the family: talking about sensitive issues was particularly difficult, as one of the teachers, Professor Momad, explained: "*It's definitely a taboo and you don't talk about it with your parents [laughing embarrassedly] ... a father is there to command and a mother to take care of the family*" (Interview, Beira: 15/08/09): similarly Mrs Almeida contended: "*In our tradition parents don't have this openness with their children*" (Interview, Beira: 1/09/09). The findings show that young people are critical thinkers who are aware of social relations and processes. They are conscious social agents able to construct, negotiate with and shape their worlds (Catan *et al.*, 1996; Fielding, 2001): "*Outside the house everything has its own name. Nothing is kept secret. Young people question why the parents try to hide something (...) young people will find out anyway – if not in theory than they're going to experiment*" (Interview, Beira: 1/09/09) as stated by Mrs Almeida. For this reason it is necessary to "recognize and validate [their] knowledge, experiences and perspectives" (Ivan-Smith, 1998). As I discuss later, this approach can facilitate a process whereby interactive knowledge emerges as the result of the experiences shared between the researcher and the researched (Cocks and Cockram, 1995). The participation of young people also led me to reflect on the limitations of adults' understanding of young people's lives, and the tendency to assume that we already know the answers rather than listen to young people more.

3.3.2 Tensions in the participatory approach

Critiques of participatory approaches to research focus on two different aspects of the paradigm: i) at the level of methodological (technical) limitations, implying the inadequacy of the tools used, for example PRA; and ii) the theoretical, conceptual and political limitations of participants. The methodological critique concerns the value of the techniques, even if only on practical grounds: the lack of any ‘objective’ standards of assessment and quality control by which one might know whether a PRA has been well or badly undertaken, and the high opportunity costs that participatory methods may entail, in particular for the rural poor (Richards *et al.*, 1999). However, more radical critiques go further to question both the theoretical foundations of PRA and whose interests are promoted. This focus is more relevant to my study and I present the main arguments of it in this section.

Critiques of participatory research are concerned that its processes might be appropriated by research agendas that are far from being genuinely participatory. In fact researchers often apply the term ‘participatory research’ to research projects that are entirely designed and led by scientists (Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995) and/or exclude community members from collaborating in many phases of the research, including the application of the research outcome (Simpson, 2000), which is controlled by the researchers. In this way the ideology of participation may be abused. Involving community members in a truly participatory research process does not automatically bring about more egalitarian social relations. Central to these critiques is the issue of the unequal power relations between researchers and research participants. Cooke and Kothari define it as tyranny, which is “the illegitimate and/or unjust exercise of power” (2001: 4). Indeed, it has been argued that researchers, as holders and producers of power as knowledge, should pay more attention to the role of power in the research process; in particular, the ways that researchers – ‘powerful experts’ and participants – ‘powerless subjects’ – mediate and negotiate power relations (Dufty, 2010: 134). Thapar-Björket and Henry observe the ‘dualistic and binary mode of researcher/researched interaction’ (2004: 377). Similarly, England believes that the research relationship is ‘inherently hierarchical’, hence power relationships in fieldwork are unavoidably unequal (1994: 86).

Despite the above critiques, in my research the participation ideology urged me to explore methodological innovation and how to encourage participation. Through reflective practice I strove to understand the power dynamics in the given situations. During the research

activities I attempted to lessen the problem of unequal power in different ways. Firstly, I created a space for the young participants to discuss the issues that concerned them, and I listened attentively (Christensen, 1999). This approach, for example, helped me to discover some issues of child abuse and neglect. Secondly, I employed various innovative methods based on visual techniques as a focus or anchor for discussions (Robinson-Pant, 1995). As Hinton (1995) argues, visual methods alone do not produce understanding; hence I used further debate and discussion to support them. Thirdly, the flexibility of the participatory philosophy allowed me to alter the activities according to the age and abilities of different groups of participants with whom I worked. Later in this chapter I explain how I introduced a 'question box' device to ease communication with primary school students. Finally, I attempted to perform as 'an unusual type of adult' (Mayall, 2000; Christensen, 2004) in an attempt to overcome the power imbalance between me as an adult researcher and the young participants. For example, when asked to participate in a game I would follow the children's rules, and I never tried to resolve conflicts or to tell any of them off when they argued. Later I explore some of the complexities of the power relations involved, and how they imposed unexpected roles that I had to address as a researcher and as an adult. The discussion of power raises other important concerns regarding ethics in social research to which I return towards the end of this chapter.

In this part of the chapter I have drawn on the literature to look at methodological debates dealing with issues of feminist research, ethnography and the participatory approach that are all relevant to my study. The reason for combining the three methodological approaches lies in my belief that academic research does not necessarily have to be research 'on' but can become research 'with' or even research 'by' communities (Cameron *et al.*, 1992). I began this chapter by looking at the feminist paradigm and the factors I considered when searching for the right approach to researching sensitive issues such as gender violence. I have examined experience, gender, emancipation and reflexivity – main methodological perspectives that are often incorporated in feminist research. I have paid special attention to **praxis**, which challenges the binary divide between theory and practice. I have also illustrated how adopting participant observation involved me in a variety of activities which, in turn, led me to observe learning in a variety of formal and informal contexts. Critics believe that the research approach should be made action-oriented to lead directly into social change. The issues that I have discussed in this section – the power of the researcher over the researched, the form of the text, and the relationship of research to practice or policy – remain

problematic in ethnography. While the ethnographic approach allowed me to study local cultural practices, adopting a more action-oriented approach enabled young people to actively reflect on their experiences and analyse social interactions and events through a participatory approach.

I have addressed the notion of voice and how participatory approach embodies the potential for the exercise of power. I have paid special attention to the criticism of theoretical issues in the participatory paradigm that focus on the power dynamics of participation and the role of the researcher. In the following sections I look at how all of these issues affected my research process: setting up and carrying out fieldwork, the search for the right methods to use and ethical dilemmas.

3.4 Fieldwork and its complexities

This section does not only give an overview of the process of my research but also provides an insight into how my specific methodological approach affected the methods I chose and the way I employed them. The epistemological issues discussed above affected the way I defined my role as researcher, how I understood ethical research practice and the role of the research, and finally, how I ensured the confidentiality of the researched.

Given the need for flexibility and time to establish the necessary trust and rapport to enable young participants to comfortably share their experience, finding the right methods which would give me space for creativity and the ability to adapt to, explore and address emerging issues was an ongoing process. In the search for these elements I decided to adopt a combination of methods that would allow for flexible and dynamic engagement with the subject. The idea of bringing different perspectives into the research was central to my research because this would include the voices of both individuals and groups. This approach acknowledges female voices: the voices of the powerless and the voiceless, the vulnerable and silenced (Jackson, 2006).

The main aim of this section is to show that fieldwork is not a linear process or simply a collection of facts: rather it is a process of investigation of a complex world involving people and the knowledge generated in this process. As I found, this process is a dynamic and complex adventure, more complicated than methodological theories would suggest. In this section I look at the dilemmas I had to deal with in different parts of my fieldwork; my entry into the field and my first steps in the research context; the search for and application of

techniques; and some of the challenges and struggles that I faced throughout the course of the research.

3.4.1 Entry to the field

My first experience in the field proved that gaining access involves several governance issues, with gatekeepers playing a critical role (Creswell, 1998). During my exploratory visit to Mozambique in March 2008 prior to my fieldwork the following September, I presented my research to the Gender Office at the *Ministério de Educação e Cultura* (MEC) (Ministry of Education and Culture). I felt general interest in and acceptance of the project and hoped that I had established some of the interpersonal trust that is crucial to social access. This proved more difficult than I had anticipated. On my return in September 2008 I experienced difficulties in receiving the necessary letter of credentials that would allow me to commence my research. Later in this section I discuss how my position in the field was shifting between ‘powerful researcher’ and ‘powerless researcher’.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, I had worked at an educational project in Mozambique between 1996-1997 and had maintained contact with the project and some of my colleagues. I could have gone back to the project to carry out my research in the north of the country: however, I decided to go to Beira in Sofala Province for several reasons. Firstly, I was concerned about how I would step out of my role at the project and to adopt my new persona as a researcher. I found it problematic that my past position could have implications for the research process. I also felt uneasy about being ‘biased’ by the people and cases I had learned about previously. Secondly, I hoped I could collaborate with one of the local organisations which worked with the issue of gender abuse in schools. However, once I got to Beira I realised that this was not possible and I decided to conduct my research alone. Last but not least, I was interested in learning about a new province – a ‘province of contradiction’ (Rosário *et al.*, 2008: 14) – whose characteristics I discussed in Chapter 2.

3.4.2 My first steps in the field: entrance to the schools

On reaching Beira I went to live with Pastor Leo and his family.⁴³ Pastor Leo was the head of the Pentecostal church in the province and thus did not belong to a particular church but was visiting all the churches in the area. He lived in a big house in the city with his wife, Margarita, and five children. He often had people coming over to help him to write

⁴³ When I was in Maputo I learned from one of my friends about Pastor Leo who could help me with accommodation in Beira.

applications for projects, letters and reports. Pastor Leo also organised courses, retreats and prayer sessions for congregants, which were held in the house. Living with the family was a great opportunity to learn about the local people and their customs. I also had the chance to accompany the pastor to Sunday sermons and other services in churches in different parts of the city as well as on its outskirts. As I discuss in Chapter 7, by observing the sermons and talking to other pastors and congregates I gained insights about how issues of gender and sexuality are communicated in different churches and by different people.

All this gave me the opportunity to observe and participate in cultural events, and in this way I gained a better understanding of the local culture. Groups of young girls and women (usually a group of widows) would come to the pastor's house and I was able to spend time with them, talking and listening to their stories. Whenever the women used one of the local languages I had to rely on Pastor Leo or his wife to translate, and this limited my participation in the conversations. This time with the pastor's family was valuable and provided me with a source of questions to be addressed in my study. I was very aware that I was establishing my role in the local community, and when after a couple of months I realised that the pastor saw me as a 'sister' rather than a researcher I decided to move out: *'The situation is becoming uncomfortable. The pastor imagines that I can help in so many different ways, and since he started calling me 'sister', I've felt like 'a part of his mission' (...) I think it's time to move out and move on with my research'* (Fieldwork: Beira, 14/12/08).

Although I had a feeling that the house was always alive, with people constantly visiting and joining the family for meals, I felt isolated from the local community. After a few months I moved to a flat in the middle of one of the *bairros* (living quarters). The households in the area ranged from one-room huts to bigger bloc houses to buildings left by the Portuguese like the one I lived in. The socio-economic status of the community members was diverse and the composition of the households varied (see Chapter 2). Families of nine or more lived in some of the households. Most houses did not have running water or toilets: these facilities were usually outside in the form of a place designated for taking a bath, shared taps and communal pit-latrines. Those who did not have a communal tap would come with jerry cans to fetch water. Some households tried to capture rainwater in tanks. These poor living conditions bore witness to the severity of the poverty that characterised many people's lives in the neighbourhood.

The people still used wood as fuel to cook with and to boil water for bathing. On most mornings I saw women and children picking up twigs and branches. Most homes did not have electricity and used lamps filled with oil or other fuels including kerosene and paraffin. However, the homes and stalls near the main road had electricity. The main road was so badly eroded and full of puddles during the rainy season that it became almost impassable at times. It was usually hard to plan during this rainy season. In contrast, when it was sunny and dry the air was filled with clouds of dust. Along the dirt road there was a small market where local people sold dried fish, vegetables, washing powder, sweets and other small articles (see Figure 3.1 and 3.2).



Figure 3.1 Local market



Figure 3.2 Women selling fruits and vegetables in the neighbourhood

Every day I commuted from my *bairro* to the schools on a *chapa* as they were situated approximately 45 minutes' walk from my house. The schools where I conducted my research were in two different *bairros* (30 minutes' walk between the schools) and were both very poor. Some classrooms were big, with high ceilings; others were too small for the large number of students in each class. Some classrooms were missing windows and doors to keep out the sound of students on their breaks. Sometimes there were not even enough desks or chairs. At times there was no running water in the schools, which also meant that there were no working toilets.

As I suggested in Chapter 1, I was concerned about the problem of gender violence across social institutions, hence I was interested in conducting my research with students and teachers in the local schools. Shortly after I arrived in Beira I contacted the office of the *Organização Nacional Professores* (ONP) (National Teachers' Organisation) as advised by Mrs Ibrahim in Maputo. The process of getting into the schools was cumbersome and my

research depended on the person in charge – Mr Fidelio. Establishing good relations with Mr Fidelio at the beginning of my fieldwork was important because of the power inherent in the position he held. Although Mr Fidelio was helpful, the process of getting into the schools turned out to be complicated and time-consuming.

I eventually got permission to work at the *Escola Secundária de Machangana* (Machangana Secondary School). The first cluster of participants included students, teachers and pedagogical staff from this school. In 1991 the school had been upgraded to a pre-university secondary school with the introduction of grades 10-12, due to the rapid growth of the student population in Beira. It served students from the city and the district. Approximately 1000 students attended lessons in three shifts: morning, afternoon and evening. The evening shift was mainly for adults, those who worked and pregnant girls.

In this school I carried out research activities with a group of tenth-grade students of mixed gender on the morning shift.⁴⁴ Although there were 74 students (25 females and 49 males) enrolled in the class they were never all present for lessons. It was difficult to determine their age. I realised that school age can vary for different reasons: starting education late, poor health, dropping out, lack of money, illness in the family etc. The age span was 16 -18.

The second group of participants were female and male teachers and other pedagogical staff at the school.

Another school I conducted my research in was the *Escola Primária Completa Josina* (Josina Primary School).⁴⁵ Here I ran activities with seventh grade students. The class was large, with 78 students (38 females and 40 males). Similar to the secondary school, not all the students were present at the lessons or for the activities I conducted. In this school I also interviewed the school staff: teachers (two female and four male), the head teacher and the deputy head teacher.

During the course of my research I contacted the *Instituto de Formação de Professores* (IFP) (Teacher Training College) in a small town Dondo outside Beira, to which students came from Sofala Province and other parts of the country. It was a ten-month course and all the students lived in school dormitories. The programme was intense and combined theory and school placements throughout. At the college I worked with two first-year groups; group A

⁴⁴ Lack of transport was the main constraint to doing activities with nightshift classes. I only managed to visit the nightshift 10th grade a few times to get an idea of the differences between the daytime and night-time classes.

⁴⁵ 'Completa' - indicates that the school includes EP1 and EP2.

with 35 students (12 female and 23 male) and group B with 32 students (6 female and 26 male).

To summarise, I initially had difficulty gaining entry to the schools, but eventually was able to form four groups of participants: tenth-grade students from a secondary school; seventh-grade students from a primary school; teachers from the primary school; and teacher trainees from the local training college. This diversity in the sampling provided a variety of perspectives on the research subject.

3.4.3 Research methods: the search for the right techniques and tools

I believed that participatory techniques would entail the maximum involvement of young people, mutual trust and an open forum for debate. Activities were divided to address three different age groups of the participants; those at primary level, those at secondary school and teacher trainees at the local teacher training college. I found that an effective way of carrying out research with young people is to combine traditional research methods used with adults with techniques considered more suitable for use with children.⁴⁶ Thus they are not patronised by using only special ‘child-friendly’ techniques. For example, Hart (1997) believes that collective drawing to describe environment can be empowering for young people, but it should not be assumed that drawings are a simple ‘natural’ method to use with children, as this depends on their actual and perceived ability to draw. As I found in Mozambique, children felt they lacked drawing and painting abilities, which was closely related to their lack of this kind of practice. Since most of them came from rather poor families and lived in a poor area, only a few children had access to television, books and magazines and other visual images. Restricted contact with visual imagery limits the range of visual images that children produce (Bradley, 1995). All this required reflective thinking from me in order to recognise the disadvantages and opportunities of the methods I wanted to use in my research with the young people. In the following section I explore the process of finding the right techniques, their application and the implications for my changing role in different types of activities.

Debates

In the outset of my fieldwork, after the preliminary visits to the local secondary school, I decided to start with debates in two different classes. I made this choice for two reasons; on

⁴⁶ Many researchers have addressed the issue of research methods applied in research with children and young people, for example: Alderson, (1995); Morrow, (1999); Punch (2002).

one hand the majority of the students expressed their interest in participating in the research activities and on the other I thought of using this opportunity as an initiation process to get a general idea of the challenging issues facing local youth. I used the issues emerging from the debates as discussion points at focus group meetings and workshops later in the research.

The debates were an open forum to make it possible for all the students to voice their personal opinions. While I probed where I needed more information or directed the dialogue to themes of concern, it was the participants who did most of the talking while I listened. Sometimes I chose only to listen and observe the dynamics among the students. I did not want to impose any ideas or views, especially in the preliminary stage of my research:

The debate was very interesting. I backed out from the circle and observed the discussion. Some students were very engaged and they took the discussion seriously while others made provoking comments and laughed. Some of the students looked much younger than others (...) I noticed a couple of girls and boys who didn't take active part in the discussions.

(Debate, Beira: 02/09/09)

Sessions with seventh graders

As the debates with the secondary school students appeared to be successful I decided to use the same technique with the primary school students. As in the secondary school, the classes were large, with over 70 students, yet I never experienced all the students being present. The teachers could not give me any clear explanation for this. I observed, however, that there were more students attending lessons shortly before the exams, for revision.

To start with I spent several weeks observing lessons in *Educação Moral e Cívica* (Moral and Civic Education) before I started to interact with the class. After the first few meetings with the seventh graders I noted that the students seemed to be withdrawn. I had the feeling that they were not used to discussion, especially not with an adult and not on sensitive topics such as sexual and reproductive health. I kept asking myself: *'How do I give them a voice, and how do I engage them in the research process?'* The students seemed to be missing the culture of communication (Christensen, 1999) in the structured classroom situation. When I observed them outside the classroom they behaved without restraint and communicated with each other freely. This led me to think that teacher-centred learning in the classroom did not encourage conversation about sensitive topics. I also knew that culturally children are not expected to talk with adults about certain issues. I assumed that they had probably never met an adult who was prepared to communicate on a peer level, honestly and confidentially, and were therefore unfamiliar with opportunities to share their thoughts or be listened to. I was

not sure where to start. I thought: *'If they don't talk with adults at school and at home, why should they talk to me? How do I initiate this relation in the best way?'* I shared my doubts with one of the teachers, who showed me a different perspective: *'They don't know you, yet they know you're different: you talk with them, you listen to them (...) they treat you as a friend'* (Fieldnotes, Beira: 10/09/09).

In the following sessions I used the opportunity presented by the fact that the class was working on issues of adolescence to indicate that I was interested in discussing issues that adolescents might face, and especially sensitive issues. The teacher seemed pleased not to have to go into depth on the topic himself: *'Such a great opportunity to use your knowledge about gender abuse (...) and you can also advise those children on these difficult issues'* (Fieldnotes, Beira: 10/09/09). I was surprised, because in my earlier observations I had found him engaging in the lessons. I wondered whether he saw it as an opportunity to take some time off, or whether he was generously concerned about issues the students might have wanted to discuss. *'He was smiling and quickly packing his papers away (...) 'I think you're going to have really good experience with this group of children', he said'* (Fieldnotes, Beira: 10/09/09). After a couple of sessions he just handed in the register to me and stayed in the teachers' room doing administrative work while I was doing activities with the students. In a way I was happy about this because I observed that the students felt more relaxed when he was not in the room. They were less embarrassed and more open to talk freely about the issues that concerned them.

Today's session was much better; the students seemed to be much more relaxed and more talkative. I wonder whether it was because the teaching situation changed more into a debate; or was it because the teacher wasn't there? By now, they should also know me and feel at ease. It could be the combination of many things (...) I wish we could have changed the setup in the classroom though, to make the situation even less 'school-like'.

(Fieldnotes, Beira: 14/09/09)

The next step was to introduce a device in the form of a question box to help the students to open up. They could drop questions about any personal issue related to sexuality, reproductive health, sexual behaviour, abuse, feelings, love, etc. into the box. The questions were anonymous, with only the writer's gender indicated, and varied from anatomical/medical, such as: *'How does a girl "catch" pregnancy?'* *'Why are my breasts small?'* *'What do I do when I get my first menstrual period?'* Other queries related to sexual abuse: *'How to say 'no' to an adult who wants to touch me?'* *'Is it bad to say "no" to my uncle?'* *'How to stay only friends with my boyfriend?'* (Fieldnotes, Beira: 10/09/09).

I assumed that the questions the students asked were closely related to how they viewed and understood their social and cultural world. I felt that this was the ideal starting point for focus group discussions with them.

Additionally I decided to arrange a session with a doctor as I did not feel I could address certain medical matters. I contacted a young doctor from the local hospital, Dr Carlos, who agreed to facilitate ‘Ask a Doctor’ sessions with his female friend, Dr Louisa (see Figure 3.3 and 3.4). The students were divided into female and male groups at the beginning of the session and later amalgamated for more general issues. These sessions were organised prior to the focus group discussion to make sure that everybody had basic knowledge of the sexuality issues. Interestingly, despite the fact that the sessions were outside the school setting and the students were encouraged to use the facilitators’ names, they persisted in referring to me as ‘teacher’ and to the doctors as ‘doctor’. They remained aware of our different status, positions and identities.



Figure 3.3 Students writing questions



Figure 3.4 ‘Ask a Doctor’ session

At this point in the course of my research I become conscious that my role had been changing from research to facilitator to teacher accordingly to the different activities. While adopting different roles I needed to reflect on the action I was initiating and to consider the next steps. As the intention with action is that one person improves their work for their own benefit and the benefit of others, I felt that the situation required my review of the aims of my study and a re-examination of my methodological approach in order to ensure the research was progressing.

I felt we had exhausted the issues with the seventh graders as they had started to repeat the same topics I thought it was time to get back to the community in order to approach

adults once more to discuss the issues highlighted by the students. (Fieldnotes: Beira, 04/03/09)

I believed that increasing my self-reflection would influence the research process and help me think of new avenues into my research. I thought that I could use participant observation and issues from the sessions to work in depth at another level through focus group discussions with adults from the local community and youths.

Focus group discussions

I conducted focus group discussions with members of the local community, students of the local primary and secondary schools and teacher trainees from the teacher training college. The focus group discussions covered different topics, most of which addressed the issues that had emerged during the secondary school student debates.

Organising focus group discussions with youths was much easier than gathering a group of adults, who were usually busy with housework or taking care of their *machamba* (cultivation plot). The discussions with adults were carried out at the administrative community points after I negotiated and got permission from the community leaders.

As mentioned above, the question box was used as a starting point for the discussions. This approach allowed the students to initiate and direct the dialogue and to be actively involved in the participatory process (Hart, 1997). The activities usually took place after lessons when we could use an empty classroom, or in a hut in the schoolyard, except for the focus group discussions with teacher trainees where the conditions provided by the institute ensured space for discretion and confidentiality. I conducted single- and mixed-gender group discussions to explore different participant views as well as the power relations among them. This way of arranging the groups also allowed me to observe how girls and boys behaved accordingly.

The students chose the subject for discussion from the questions taken from the box. During the focus group discussions the issues regarded as important by the participants were put up on a 'problem wall'. In this way the participants could relate them to their own lives and discuss problems they had encountered and why these problems occurred. For example, '*My uncle keeps coming into my room*'. *The problem: the uncle has authority over his niece. The discussion: does he have the right to exert his authority?*' (Fieldnotes, Beira: 10/09/09).

In the beginning my role was primarily that of observer. I listened rather than spoke, letting the students participate as they wished. All along I was also interested in capturing their

interactions and the different power relations in the groups. It was easy to observe the different levels of development among the students, especially among the seventh graders, and they themselves were clearly aware of these differences. For example, some of the male students were more outspoken than others, and tried to ridicule the shyer boys:

Researcher: *What are the possible consequences of sexual abuse?*

Boy 1: *Pregnancy!!!! [shouting loudly]*

Boy 2: *Oh he doesn't know what he's talking about. He isn't even an adolescent yet. [The boy is looking around for support from the rest of the group. He is obviously proud of his remark.]*
(Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Beira: 10/09/09)

This situation caused disappointment among the students, and 'respect' became the following topic of focus group discussion.

Although my study was not meant to bring change to the local community, after some time working with the young people I believed that they would benefit from the discussions. Although the definition of 'benefit' may vary between adults and children and across cultures, I believed that active participation in research can be an enriching learning process and can help to raise young people's self-esteem. In fact, I realised that the discussions with the seventh graders had had an effect on some of the younger participants. For example, after one of the sessions a very shy girl expressed how much she appreciated the discussion on respect and relationships between girls and boys: *'Teacher, I was so happy that we talked about how we should treat each other. I would never have courage to tell the boys off. I hope they will remember and respect what we talked about'* (Fieldnotes, Beira: 10/09/09). The doctors who ran the 'Ask a Doctor' sessions acknowledged that the experience had made them recognise the cultural problems between adults and young people *'I was brought up in the capital and my parents have always been very open with all of us (...) I didn't realise how difficult it is for young people to approach us adults about issues which concern them and where it is very important to get the right answers (...) but what if the adults can't give them the right answers?!'* (Fieldnotes, Beira: 18/09/09).

Workshops

I conducted five different workshops with the secondary school students and teacher trainees. In designing the workshops I drew on examples of the activities that Leach and colleagues (2003) used in their research with boys and girls in Zimbabwe, Ghana and Malawi. Bearing

in mind that creativity favours a free, artistic mindset and therefore allows young people to link their skills and experience, I selected activities that would involve their skills or to develop new ones by, for example, writing stories or poems. Moreover, the participants were encouraged to act out scenes about their everyday life. Issues of gender and power relations emerged, and the participants had a chance to challenge exploitative and uneven gender parameters in intimate relationships. This activity made it possible for all the students to participate on an equal basis, and the girls in particular became more expressive, outspoken and confident. Furthermore, involving female and male students together was beneficial for both genders, as it could help them to develop an understanding of unequal power relations and take more responsibility for their own actions (see Figure 3.5 and 3.6).



Figure 3.5 Participatory activities with primary school students **Figure 3.6 Students acting**

Semi-structured interviews

I interviewed educational authorities, head teachers, deputy teachers, female and male teachers, female and male students, community leaders, female and male *curandeiros* (traditional healers)⁴⁷, parents, doctors, female prisoners, priests and pastors. Most of the interviews involved a single participant: only a few interviews with students were carried out in small groups, as some were shy about being interviewed alone and asked to do it as a group. In each case I made an appointment with the participant in advance and used a flexible interview schedule for guidance (Denscombe, 2003). Interestingly, when I approached Mr Fidelio, the local ONP chief, to book an appointment for an interview, he asked me what the

⁴⁷ *Curandeiro* - traditional healer. It is difficult to categorise traditional healers in Mozambique, but they can be said to fall into several different types: herbalists; those possessed by spirits of ancestors; and faith healers belonging to African Christian churches (see for example, Nordstrom, 1991; Honwana, 1999; Bagnol, 2003).

subject matter of the interview would be. He wanted to be prepared: *'I want to know what we're going to talk about (...) maybe I need to look through my files (...) so you can get the right information'* (Interview, Beira: 23/10/09). I had a clear list in my mind of the issues I wanted to address and questions to be answered during the interview, but I had thought he would remember the topic I was researching, as he was the one to give me permission to do it. Nevertheless, I left the questionnaire with him and we went through the questions in the interview the next day. I believed that a semi-structured interview would allow in-depth investigation, in particular on questions exploring personal experiences and feelings. According to Denscombe (2003) the semi-structured interview aims at discovery rather than checking information already known; its purpose is to deeply explore the respondent's point of view, feelings and perspectives. This flexible way of conducting interviews lets the participant reveal private stories and feelings. I had a chance to listen to participants' problems and thoughts, and to hear about the fears they faced every day. At times I found it challenging to maintain a dispassionate mind while listening to emotional accounts of the young people's experience. I made a sincere attempt to respect their accounts and accept their realities and to pay dedicated attention to their words and meanings (Kvale, 1996). Interviewing was a valuable activity that enabled "developing a richer and deeper understanding of a human phenomenon" (van Manen 1990: 66). Although the role of the researcher is primarily that of listener, I felt that the interviews should be conversational.

Participant observation and informal conversations

Earlier in this chapter I discussed ethnography as a way of looking and seeing throughout the course of my research. At the beginning of my fieldwork in particular, participant observation provided me with ways to learn about the local community; grasp the social organisation; determine relationships, and understand the communication among the members of the community. I arrived in Beira towards the end of the school year and therefore had to wait to commence my activities in the schools. Living with Pastor Leo's family, as discussed in section 3.4.2, I spent the first couple of months becoming known in the community.

Participating in community, gatherings, discussions and celebrations also gave me the opportunity to learn about indigenous knowledge and traditional practices. For example, through initiation rites for adolescent girls and boys I learned about the role and importance of community-led learning. In Chapter 6 I explore initiation ceremonies carried out in two different ways: one with a group of over 100 girls and boys and the other, a private session

with a *madrinha* (godmother). Informal conversation such as at the vending stall next to my house taught me about the lives, dreams and aspirations of young Muslim girls in the community. I followed two sisters who invited me to the local *madrassa* (Quranic school), where I met many other girls and I had the chance to follow the lessons and talk to the girls and their teachers. As it goes beyond the topic of my thesis I do not elaborate much on this experience.

Discourse analysis: the national curriculum, textbooks and the policy documents

As indicated in Chapter 1, my intention in this thesis as a whole was to explore the link between constructing gender and sexual identities and violence in and around schools in Mozambique. In taking a discourse level approach to textual analysis, I aimed to analyse the text (and illustrations) in the context of school and the education policy.

In Chapter 1 I suggested that school is one of the sites where young people learn gender and sexuality through the curriculum as well as through everyday practices. When doing activities with both primary and secondary school students I became interested in the content of the lessons and textbooks and the teaching/learning processes used. In Chapter 7 I examine what and how students learned in the context of the classroom in fourth grade Portuguese, seventh-grade Moral and Civic Education and fifth, sixth and seventh grade Natural Science lessons dealing with issues linked to gender and sexuality.

The analysis in Chapter 7 looks at the following elements: i) the national curriculum objectives ('the planned curriculum' Kelly, 2009: 11); ii) the content of the textbooks; iii) enacted curriculum in the classroom ('the received curriculum', Kelly, 2009: 11); and iv) text narratives in textbooks. The technique I used was entirely qualitative and I did not look in depth at the political and editorial context of the textbooks (how, where and by whom the textbooks were produced). I chose this form of analysis as it enabled me to focus on the content and contextual significance of the text (Tesch, 1990), consider how text coincides with the images from the textbooks, and examine the way the objectives of the curriculum were delivered and the relationship between teachers and students shaped. I draw on examples from classroom observation from the seventh grade at Josina Primary School and the tenth-grade at Machangana Secondary School.

In this section I have explained how participatory methods allowed young people's voices to emerge and the role of ethnography, and particularly how participant observation, informal

conversation and direct involvement in day-to-day activities turned out to be an in-depth process of learning about the local community during my fieldwork period.

3.5 Challenges, considerations and ethics: reflections on struggles in the field

Before I began the fieldwork I attempted to anticipate ethical challenges which in turn required further methodological considerations prior to my research. The fact that the Research Ethics Committee of the University of East Anglia (UEA) provided the necessary guidelines for fulfilling the ethical requirements when undertaking such fieldwork did not prevent vexing questions from arising in different circumstances throughout the course of the research.⁴⁸ Overall my concern was associated with participatory research and pertained to whether the data collection would meet the ethical standards introduced by the committee. As discussed, in the paradigm of the participatory approach the participants are considered key actors in the research process; therefore at times ethical dilemmas can be ambiguous. During the course of my research I realised that ethical issues are context-specific, hence I needed a more holistic approach to allow for the cross-cultural convergence of norms and values. Consequently some of the ethical procedures required by the UEA required tailoring to the local context, setting and situation. My experience in the field made me realise that ethics are not static but are an ongoing enterprise which requires flexibility and creativity from the researcher.

In this section I reflect on some of the ethical and moral challenges and dilemmas regarding acquiring appropriate informed consent, the confidentiality of participants and other difficult situations I encountered in the course of my research.

3.5.1 Participants' consent: a complex procedure

Given the sensitivity of the research topic I found it important to ask the young participants for their consent to participate in the research activities. In line with Liamputtong (2007), informed consent is particularly important when participants are to be exposed to stress or invasion of privacy or if they are going to be emotionally affected. During my fieldwork I anticipated, however, that gaining informed consent might be problematic when conducting participatory research because of the position of the participants as collaborators in the research process or even as key stakeholders in the study process.⁴⁹ I did not want the participants to feel coerced into doing something against their will simply because an adult

⁴⁸ I also referred to the British Educational Research Association's (BERA, 2004) ethical guidelines.

⁴⁹ See Appendix IV for consent in Portuguese.

was asking them to do so. Before each session I explained the objectives of the activities to the participants and I let them choose whether they wanted to take part, remain silent or leave if they were not comfortable with the content or context of the activities. Although none of the participants explicitly objected to participating in any of the sessions, some remained silent. In several cases it was unclear whether they did so because they did not understand the questions or the activities, and so if they still chose not to take part after I had explained these again I did not pressurise them or insist on their participation.

Drawing on my experience from the field, I think that children's competence to consent to participate in research depends to a certain extent on the context, but most of all on what they are consenting to undertake. Discussions of children's competence to give their consent usually focus on the age of the children concerned. This view is often reinforced by the definition and legal notion of 'child' and 'childhood' as a period of powerlessness and non-responsibility. Along these lines the local belief about young people was that they "lack the ability to make personal choices and decisions, to maintain independence, and to self-determine" (Moore and Miller, 1999: 1034). It is therefore important to bear in mind that constructs of childhood and social attitudes towards children vary around the world. For example, perceptions of a child and the age at which children are considered responsible for their own actions differ in Mozambique from those in the West. However, many of the young people with whom I worked demonstrated not only the ability to make decisions but also appeared to be responsible critical thinkers, aware of events happening around them.

Obtaining written consent from the participants became an important routine that I employed throughout my research. This practice, however, is not common in Mozambique and can have the effect of making people alarmed. For some, being asked to sign a document can make them uneasy and suspicious, and for the illiterate it can be intimidating and embarrassing. For example, on asking Curandeiro Vovo, who was regarded as a wise man in the community yet could not read, to sign the consent form could come across as lack of respect for his powers and abilities, he replied: *'I don't need to read and write (...) I was given the knowledge from higher powers'* (Interview, Beira: 21/10/09). Some researchers argue that adhering to specific ethical rules can affect and even jeopardise the very issue that is being studied (Homan, 1991; Punch, 1998). I had to be especially cautious about procedures applied in the local community where many people knew me. For example, during the consent routine at the teacher training college, one of the female students let me know that she did not wish to be in

any of the photographs: *'I want to participate in your project, but you've got to promise me not to take pictures'* (Workshop, 27/08/09). Also for this reason it was important to take time to build trust and let the process of mutual learning happen naturally.

On balance, although certain procedures such as informed consent as understood in the West are not necessarily suitable for all kinds of research and cultural contexts, I found the UEA Research Ethics Committee guidelines about anticipating potential ethical and moral dilemmas that may arise useful; I also learned that they should be used flexibly to allow room for personal choices by the researcher in accordance with the research context and conditions.

3.5.2 From fieldwork into text: transforming voices, stories and events

Today when explaining to a group of students about 'the final product' - 'the book' I would write after I return to the UK, I realised that there were so many issues in the process of data collection, analysis and writing my thesis that I wasn't sure about. I was opening yet another Pandora's box containing all sorts of question and dilemmas (...) I was looking at a group of students who told me stories, whose voices and perspectives I envisaged including in the text, but I wasn't sure what was the best way to do it (...) and what was my place in the text?

(Fieldnotes: Beira, 06/01/09)

The above extract illustrates my reflections on some of my concerns related to the process of data analysis and transforming the participants' voices, their private stories and the events I participated in into a published text. Although I was absorbed in writing my fieldnotes throughout the fieldwork period and was aware that eventually I would produce the final text I was uncertain about how to approach this. It felt like an elusive task. I pondered about both the theory and the practice of the data analysis. My particular concern, which is an area quite neglected in the literature, was how to bring the voices of the participants into the text and keep their perspectives alive while at the same time recognising the researcher's role in shaping the process of analysis and writing the final product. In the following section I reflect on these processes, looking critically at some of the dilemmas and tensions involved in transforming the data into text.

Writing fieldnotes

As discussed earlier, my fieldwork started with a period of waiting for a letter of credentials from MEC in Maputo. During this period I was mainly taking notes about my daily visits to the Ministry and the conversations I had with the people I approached in the offices. I also managed to visit a few local organisations working with/for young people where I conducted interviews. When I eventually moved to Beira I spent the first months learning about the

community, mainly through observation and informal conversations. Taking notes was not easy in some of the contexts and situations I found myself in. For example, during visits to the communities and churches with the pastor and his family I was the centre of attention, which made me feel uncomfortable and hindered me from taking notes. Sometimes I would try to jot down words and reminders, especially about things that captured my attention – what Clifford calls inscription – “a participant-observer jots down a mnemonic word or phrase to fix an observation or to recall what someone has just said” (Clifford, 1990: 97), but overall I felt tension between ‘doing’ and ‘writing’ ethnography. When taking notes I sometimes felt more like an observer and outsider than a participant or ‘insider’, as viewed by the people in certain situations.

Once when I was invited for a family celebration I was ‘caught’ scribbling words on a piece of paper, ‘*So what are you writing now?! You don’t have to work all the time. You don’t need to write about everything we do. Come and have fun with us. Enjoy the food and the company*’ (Fieldnotes: Beira, 01/03/09). At that moment I realised that people must have been observing me taking notes on various occasions. This conversation made me wonder how my neighbourhood perceived me. I thought that most of the people treated me as a white researcher (this was how the pastor would usually introduce me) studying ‘*the problems of the community*’ (Fieldnotes: Beira, 28/11/08), as one of the older women noted. Thus I was surprised that the family did not consider me merely a researcher studying the ills of the community but saw me as a genuine guest. After this remark, the grandmother of the pastor’s family asked me to explain exactly what I was doing. She engaged the conversation and she involved the rest of the family. The guests seemed interested in my research and expressed some strong opinions: ‘*If you’re looking for sexual abuse of girls in schools you’re in the right place, and the people need to know what is happening here in Mozambique. This is your job, isn’t it?*’ (Fieldwork: Beira, 01/03/09). The fact that the guests questioned me about my ‘job’ made me reflect critically on the consequences of my presence and the research process (Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002). Despite my explanations about the aims of my study I felt that they had certain ideas and expectations of the final product – the thesis – which would solve local problems such as gender abuse.

The important point to stress here is that in many situations note-taking was problematic and often led to ethical dilemmas. Through the reflective process I would envisage my ethical position in relation to the researched and my accountability for the research: ‘*The people at*

the party made me realise the importance of the accountability of my 'job' (...) I know that I should strive to be accountable for the ethical approach to the research and the researched, however it's difficult to say who I should be accountable to – the research community? The ethical committees or the researched?' (Fieldnotes: Beira, 05/04/09).

I often chose to rely on my memory – my 'headnotes' – as Ottenberg (1990: 144) calls them and wrote notes as soon as I could, usually in the evenings if I was lucky enough to have electricity. In this final process of writing the thesis I remember a great deal of detail, some of which is not included in my fieldnotes: awkward situations in daily life in the community, problems linked to my ignorance of the local language, negotiations with the landlord etc. I kept my diary with all the dates of appointments, people's names, events and short 'scratch notes' (Ottenberg, 1990: 148).

I found that sometimes it was easier to voice-record rather than write notes, especially during activities such as focus group discussions, debates and workshops. I usually recorded all the activities, with the permission of the participants, as I facilitated them, and only supported my memory with scratch notes. During the activity I would sometimes jot down words, reminders or quotes, especially about things that happened that could not be captured by the voice recorder. Later in the process of transcription this was a useful practice as I could capture all the non-verbal expressions and the atmosphere (Paget, 1983), adding another dimension to the analysis.

Face to face with the data: analysis and writing up

The process of data collection and analysis was ongoing. I felt, however, that I first started to make sense of the data after beginning the activities in the community and schools. The process of analysis involved reflection on different levels. First, during the activity or straight afterwards I would reflect on and write down the salient issues in my notebook, summarising anything that came into my mind with regard to the participants and the activity. Besides recording the activities I jotted down reminders, phrases and everything else that could not be captured by the voice recorder. The second level included reflection on the notes and listening to the recordings. When I was satisfied with the reflection and notes I began the transcription process.

I already knew Portuguese, which definitely helped make me part of the local culture, yet I was sometimes not sure of certain expressions, slang used by the youth or phrases in one of the Bantu languages. At times the participants mixed languages in one session. The important

thing, however, was for them to use a language in which they could comfortably express themselves. In translating phrases in the local language or other words I did not know I had to rely on my local friends or the pastor. I transcribed all the interviews, focus group discussions and debates myself because I wanted to understand everything that was said and wanted to be sure it was done correctly. Besides, there was nobody fluent in English, Portuguese and the Bantu languages who could do the job. I made sure to keep all the nuances and to include all the non-lexical expressions (Paget, 1983) such as laughter, pauses, and tone and sound of voice. Although the process was time-consuming I wanted to make sure I included all the voices and did not leave out any details. I tried to transcribe the previous set of data before the next activity as much as possible.

During the period of my fieldwork I was sending my fieldnotes to my supervisors at the UEA along with a review of issues emerging from the activities and my plans for how I would proceed. Besides methodological support my supervisors Professor Anna Robinson-Pant and Dr Nitya Rao also provided different perspectives that opened new avenues for exploration. This process helped me to rethink my strategy and to critically engage with the data in order to identify gaps in information. The feedback, for example, made me aware of my ‘generalised statements’ and ‘putting words into people’s mouths’ (pers. comm., Professor Anna Robinson-Pant, 10/06/09). Access to the Internet enabled continuous contact with my supervisors throughout the period of fieldwork, ‘an individual activity’ (Wolcott, 1999: 72) that can become lonely and isolated. It was also useful in terms of moving to the next level of analysis by mapping out emerging issues and making links between the key themes.⁵⁰

The concluding analysis was undertaken when writing up the final product – this doctoral thesis. I found producing this text challenging for a number of methodological and ethical as well as technical reasons and limitations (for example, writing in English, which is not my mother tongue). I was therefore confronted with myself and with my central role in shaping this final product, interpreting and theorising the research data (Harding, 1992). As I mentioned earlier, throughout the process of data collection, analysis and writing the thesis I was influenced by my feminist position. Hence the feminist reflective approach has essentially influenced different aspects of the process; understanding my role in interpreting the participants’ voices (turning them into text) and constructing theory (Harding, 1987; 1991; Wolf, 1996; Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002). Reflexivity has also helped me to “find

⁵⁰ See Appendix V for the example of the analysis of my fieldnotes.

diverse ways of rendering negotiated realities as multisubjective, power-laden, and incongruent” (Clifford, 1986: 15).

Whilst drawing extensively on my fieldnotes in this thesis I have been aware that data does not speak for itself. Decisions about which data to include and what to make my data mean has presented ethical dilemmas. In constructing this “self-reflexive ‘fieldwork account’” (Clifford, 1986: 14) I have found keeping the balance between my position as writer and including that of the participants – the central aim of my study – challenging. The main difficulty has been deciding how far to remain invisible or visible and “when to enter and when to withdraw” (Mitchell, 1982: 237). In selecting the fieldnotes to include I have looked for a wide variety of accounts to show the differences in the participants’ perspectives rather than general views. This approach has also allowed me to represent the richness and complexity of the data.

During the fieldwork I realised that while guaranteeing anonymity and confidentiality is a basic ethical pillar of social research, it presents the researcher with particularly difficult issues, given the cultural and legal differences between societies. These principles are especially significant when working with vulnerable people or groups, particularly in situations where the people concerned are already marginalised. It can therefore be difficult to achieve a balance between authenticity and the exposure of individuals. However, it is also true that research can sometimes play an important role in giving a voice to vulnerable people.

The use of names in the writing process emerged as another ethical issue that I could not ignore. Whenever I have written about my research I have avoided using the real names of my participants and I have never specified where they lived, in order to protect their identities. I felt strongly about anonymity of the participants, however some of the participants wanted their real names in the text, *‘I want my name to be in your book I want people to know about me’* (Interview: Beira, 14/03/09).

Alongside my own fieldnotes, the thesis also contains texts produced by the participants in the form of poems and stories, as well as extracts from the law. In some cases I have included both the original text and the English translation. With regard to original texts I am aware of the potential drawbacks (such as misinterpretation), yet I strove to translate (and transcribe) all the data myself. When I encountered problems with translation I asked the local people for help. I consulted young people when translating slang or song lyrics. I retained some of the

phrases or words in Portuguese or one of the Bantu dialects to keep the real meaning. I have included photographs which vividly transfer the reader into the social context much more than a description in words can. Warren (2002) says that the limitation of language as a medium of articulating experience undermines the efficacy of traditional text-based research methods. However, in this study, neither the written texts nor the photographs take precedence in terms of authority or claims to truth (Warren, 2002). They are complementary and are the product of my own interpretations.

3.5.3 Dealing with difficult situations

As mentioned earlier, power relations often emerged in problematic situations and I experienced my position changing between the powerful and the powerless researcher. There were a number of instances in which people influenced both how I acted in the particular situation and my perception of the research itself. In this way, the people I met and worked with affected my relationships and the way the research was carried out. I learned about several incidences of child abuse and incest in the community and in schools which required intervention from the authorities (see Chapter 5). These situations challenged my ethical and moral principles, and the immense pressure from the people who expected me to act upon these situations was sometimes unbearable. Connecting emotions and research might seem peculiar (and is not often debated by researchers), yet in my case emotions played an important part in the field. Experiencing different emotions motivated me to engage with my research on a more personal level, and thus it was sometimes difficult to ignore emerging situations. When asked for help with the above incidents I explained the procedure to be followed and where help could be found, or I would contact the appropriate person to ask for assistance in the case. However, the decision whether or not to intervene was not always simple, especially when it concerned young people. I thus illustrate the complexities of power relations and how they imposed unexpected roles that I had to address as both a researcher and an adult.

Power relations in the field: 'powerful researcher' and 'powerless researcher'

As stated earlier, issues of power and control are central to my study. Chapter 4 introduces the theoretical framework that shapes the structure of this thesis to show how gender (power) relations and social processes can contribute to the incidence of gender abuse. While Christensen (2004) argues for a move from seeing power as inherent in people and social positions towards viewing it as embedded in the process of doing research, I experienced

both dimensions of power during my fieldwork. In many situations I became aware that the boundary between the power inherent in people's social positions and the power embedded in the research was blurring, which made it difficult for me to act. Power struggles became especially visible in the process of obtaining the necessary credentials from the local authorities. As I explained earlier in section 3.4.1, before going to the field I had not anticipated that this would be such a complicated and lengthy process. When I recognised the important potential implications of my research, I understood why none of the officials wanted to take the responsibility of writing the credential letter.⁵¹

I feel I'm caught in some kind of political game and I'm absolutely powerless. I depend on their decision and I know that showing any emotions or arguing wouldn't help, quite to the contrary, it could jeopardise my research. The situation requires from me patience and determination (...) but how long is it going to take? (Fieldnotes, Maputo: 19/09/08)

During this process, I realised that *'despite the power inherited in the positions occupied by the people, nobody wanted to take the responsibility and I wondered whether it was because of the research topic or lack of clear guidelines for social research'*.

(Fieldnotes: Maputo, 28/09/08)

I decided to go back to the first person I had approached on my arrival in Maputo (and also in March during my first visit) and who had forwarded the reference letter from my university to the head of the department. Mrs Mendoza was the head of the *Direcção de Programas Especiais* (Special Programmes Department) of MEC. I explained the situation to her and asked why it was such a problem, pointing at the letter, which now had several internal letters and a numbers of stamps attached. She said: *'You see, it isn't such a simple thing (...) people like you are coming and investigating and writing all sorts of things and we never see them again. How can I be sure what you're going to write and if I will ever see you again?! (...) let me have a look at this again'* (Fieldnotes: Maputo, 20/10/08). After a couple of days I met her in her office: she was waving the letter, laughing: *'Here it is!' [she seemed pleased with herself for getting the letter]. 'And I don't want to see you here again and I don't want to hear about any problems (...) once you're finished with your fieldwork I want you to come back and show your face'*. I answered: *'This is the best birthday present [for in fact it was my birthday] I could get this year! I promise I'll be back'* (Fieldnotes: Maputo, 23/10/08). I considered this to be one of the best lessons in power dynamics, which taught me how 'power is at its most effective when least observable' in line with Lukes' (2005: 1) notion of power.

⁵¹ See Appendix VI for credential letter.

However, this was not the only occasion on which I had to deal with the power inherent in positions, and I learned that patience and diplomacy seemed to be the only way to approach it.

As I have mentioned before, I experienced how power relations operate in the hierarchy of an organisation and the implications of this for decision taking. Mrs Ibrahim from the ONP, who was responsible for gender issues in the organisation, advised me see Mr Fidelio, who was responsible for the ONP office in Beira: *'Send him greetings from me: he'll help you'* (Fieldnotes: Maputo, 10/10/08). Hence my first steps took me to the ONP office in Beira. At first Mr Fidelio was very sceptical, but as soon as I told him that I had already talked to Mrs Ibrahim in Maputo, who sent greetings, our conversation became somehow easier: *'Oh, Camerada (comrade) Ibrahim [a huge grin appearing on his face] told you to come here' (...)* *he shook my hand and sat down to listen to the plan and the aims of my research'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 05/11/08). With time Mr Fidelio became friendly, yet I felt that he was trying to be very formal and he made it clear that he first had to approach his 'comrades' (head teachers) at the particular schools he had in mind. Although he seemed to be helpful I was concerned that this was going to take time, and I was right: *'This was my fourth visit to ONP. Despite having agreed to meet the head teacher from Machangana Secondary School he didn't come. I feel like I'm chasing a ghost'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 04/11/08). During our introductory visit to one of the schools I felt that it was important for Mr Fidelio to emphasise that I had talked to Mrs Ibrahim: *'Ms. Monika was sent by Comrade Ibrahim from the headquarters in Maputo and I hope we can do everything to help in her research'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 16/11/08). This seemed to work, and I was allowed to start my activities in the school. Eventually Mr Fidelio realised that he did not have time to follow me to the other schools, and simply made a couple of phone calls and I was then able to go alone to meet the head teachers. In retrospect, I believe that he acted according to local conventions and that the local people were aware of the 'people in power'. Similarly, Mr Armando, a tutor from the teacher training college, genuinely advised me to be careful when conducting my research. He considered 'people in power' dangerous and acknowledged that they were in control of the institution:

You have to be careful. If the sharks, the crocodiles – you know whom I am talking about – if they hear that you're trying to investigate too much about politics and corruption they can stop your research immediately. You have to be very careful who you talk to and what you talk about.
(Interview, Beira: 11/08/09)

The conversation I had with Mr Armando made me consider the power embedded in my research, the importance of the politics entrenched in it and particularly the potential implications of the subject matter. Although I did not feel threatened at any point during the fieldwork, it did make me reflect on the implications of my research and my own protection. Reflexivity meant understanding my own political and epistemological stance and acknowledging the critical role of the research and the research relationships. Although most of the ethics regulations in the UK deal with physical ‘harm’, I felt that in my case the ‘harm’ was often invisible and elusive, complex and complicated. With my differing ethical, moral and cultural beliefs and viewpoints I often found myself in difficult situations that made me emotionally distressed. The dynamics of the interactions with different people positioned me in multiple categories. Throughout my fieldwork as I entered into personal and moral relationships with those I studied, continual negotiation of power relations was necessary. I reflect on this through the following stories.

Stories of young girls and the ambiguous roles of the researcher

The most distressing situation I was involved in concerned a 17-year-old girl whom I knew very well. Amanda appeared on my doorstep one evening. She was shivering. She had been forced to have sexual relations with a family member a couple of months before. Amanda had come to me to ask for help after taking some natural remedies given to her by an old woman to terminate the resulting pregnancy. She was in pain. I did not know how serious the situation was and I was not sure how to act. I was aware that abortion is illegal, and I was afraid of the consequences for both of us. I took Amanda to the nearby hospital. The most distressing part of the situation was the reaction of the doctor to whom I explained the case. He responded in a very aloof way: *‘You just pay and we forget about the whole thing (...) and nobody will know anything’* (Fieldnotes, Beira: 26/04/09). Later, Amanda explained to me that this was a ‘normal’ procedure and the only way to carry out a safe abortion. She did not want to lodge a complaint against the perpetrator as he was a family member. As Amanda sadly presumed, *‘the police would certainly tell me off and sort things out in the family and this would bring confusion (...) and nobody would probably even believe me’* (Fieldnotes, Beira: 26/04/09).

Finding myself in a culturally different community was demanding in itself. Accepting the different roles and expectations the local community laid upon me felt like a serious responsibility and a big challenge. I often felt that I was failing the image of the researcher’s

reliability and the confidence and trust I was building with the participants: *'You're working with the issue, you know what to do, and you know how complicated it is (...) why don't you want to help? Why don't you want to do anything about the problem?'* While they saw me as *'the powerful researcher'* I felt completely powerless. I wasn't sure how to act and I didn't want to let them down. (Fieldnotes: Beira, 15/02/09). I remember feeling perplexed about the situations I learned about from young people or neighbours. I often found myself discussing the matter with one of the female teachers responsible for the *Núcleo de Género* (Gender Group) working in cooperation with ActionAid Mozambique.⁵²

This section has illustrated the complexities in my role as a researcher and in the situations I studied. The accounts reveal that research participants are not only objects but also active subjects who have the power “to shape and control the ethnographer and the ethnographic encounter” (Kondo, 1986: 80). The examples of my experience in the field clearly show that research practice cannot be disembodied. As a researcher I entered into personal and moral relationships with those I studied, which demanded that I strive to protect their rights and acknowledge my duty of care towards them. In this process emotions are an essential feature of reflective practice and ethical reasoning (Nussbaum, 2001). As I have illustrated above, reflective practice is a necessary part of one's own research process in order to understand the power relations involved and the implications of doing research. Above all, ethical responsibility does not only end with a precautionary process prior to research: it is an ongoing process which requires a great deal of reflexivity from the researcher.

3.6 Conclusion

The participatory nature of the methodology enabled me to establish a high level of trust with the participants and others. I tried to conduct this research using my best knowledge and resources as a researcher, yet my morals and ethical values were often challenged and I was expected to take difficult decisions in many situations. Such situations are impossible to anticipate prior to beginning research, neither they are included in any ethical guidelines;

⁵² In 2008 ActionAid launched the Stop Violence Against Girls in School Campaign (*Campanha contra o Abuso Sexual da Rapariga na Educação*) in Mozambique. Working in close collaboration with national partner organizations, ActionAid uses a combined approach consisting of community-level initiatives, research and advocacy to improve girls' access to and achievements in education by setting up and supporting girls' clubs in and outside schools (*Clube de Rapariga* (Girls' Club, or as in this particular school, Gender Group), making schools safe e.g. through constructing latrines for girls in schools, promoting the use of codes of conduct for teachers and learners in school. The clubs create space for the girls to discuss their problems and find solutions. Boys were also welcome at the club I visited in the secondary school. They are officially recognised by schools and school councils. See <http://www.actionaid.org/main.aspx?PageID=1304>.

hence I had to act with awareness and understanding of the local context throughout the fieldwork.

In retrospect, my fieldwork was one of the most interesting encounters with another culture I have ever experienced. Sharing life with the local community for 14 months was a challenging and absorbing process. It was not only a busy and vibrant time; it was also engaging in terms of my own development as a social researcher and as a person. I managed to immerse myself in the research process, seeking answers to number of questions as they emerged. I had a chance to explore various innovative methods in order to learn and understand the phenomenon of gender abuse. I managed to get personally close to many people and I listened to their stories; I also gained many young friends among the students who participated in my research, and they often came to me for advice or to share their concerns. Being accepted by the local community permitted me to participate in their traditional ceremonies such as the initiation rites.

All the people I met and the events I experienced enhanced my understanding of social relations and processes in the local community. They make a patchwork of the bigger picture of gender abuse in the research context.

Chapter 4

Reconceptualising learning, gender, power and agency

4. Introduction

Each of my encounters with Mozambique (some of which I have discussed in Chapter 1, section 1.1) had brought new questions about how gender identities are constructed and learned. My ethnographic observation of rites of passage, in particular, initiated new ways of conceptualising subjectivities, agency and power.

I begin this chapter with an exploration of learning in different social contexts. I look at how to understand learning as a continuum and review key theories around formal, non-formal and informal learning: “The three basic modes of education – informal, formal and nonformal – are not watertight compartments. They overlap in places occasionally turning up in hybrid forms” (Coombs and Ahmed, 1974: 233). I focus on how these three domains of learning intersect and overlap, and examine how learning is linked with social institutions. I suggest that conceptualising learning as a continuum from informal to formal can suggest that all types of learning have equal value, and that each of the three elements may appear in any site of learning. This means that the three domains are not necessarily discrete. An important concept supporting the value of informal learning is that of ‘situated learning’ (Lave and Wenger, 1991), which posits that learning takes place through experience in daily life. Learning is conceptualised as a lifelong activity which is shaped by context and culture, and knowledge is acquired through community practices which embody certain beliefs and behaviours. Thus ‘learning’ involves local knowledge and contextual practical experience, and is much broader than what happens in the classroom. This leads to my view that social constructs and social life have a large role to play in learning. Drawing in the literature on situated learning I also bring out ideas about ‘social networks’ as access to learning opportunities and communities of practice.

I then go on to examine the concept of gender and the role of the body and sexuality in constructing individual identity. Drawing on the notions of performativity, agency and power I look at the link between these notions and subject formation, and reconceptualise power using Foucault and McNay to suggest a theory encompassing disciplinary power over the body and ‘agentic’ power of resistance and adaptation. Power seems to play a key role, especially in terms of whether it is men’s oppressive power over women, as traditional theorisation suggests. First-wave feminist theorisation, such as that put forward by Oakley

(1972), and Kessler and McKenna (1978) for example, has often assumed that the oppression of women is rooted in the patriarchal social structures which secure the dominant power of men over women. This assumption, however, has been challenged on the grounds of oversimplification of the notion of power relations and its lack of an explanation of social relations, as well as its problematic view that women are simply the passive, powerless victims of male power (see for example, McNay, 2000; 2003). I then review second-wave feminist theories which examine gender as a lived social experience constructed through cultural norms, which draw on subjectivity and practices of subjection. In the context of this debate, Foucault's work on power has been considered by some feminists to develop a more complex analysis, offering an interpretation beyond a cause/effect analysis of the relations between gender and power which avoids the assumption that women's submission is a simple result of men's possession of power. I review Foucault's discussions of power, particularly with regard to disciplinary power over the body and sexuality. I provide a discussion of Bourdieu's work on bodily practices at this point in the discussion, as the inscription of social norms on the body creates gender and sexual identities through bodily hexis, or teaching the subject through performativity what is socially expected of their bodies.

The main critique of Foucault is that he leaves no room for resisting power or individual autonomy. McNay (2000) attempts to locate an alternative approach, particularly in regard to the account of agency, to move beyond 'the negative paradigm of subjectification' (see also Allen, 2008; Knight, 2004). Drawing on Bourdieu's approach to active dimensions of agency in the processes of identity formation, McNay suggests a generative framework which I will explore in this chapter, and which is central to my analysis. McNay's framework offers a creative view of agency in attempting to explain shifts in power in contemporary gender relations, in particular in sexual negotiation and sexual violence against girls and young women in the research context.

I end the chapter by looking at social institutions and their influence on the construction of gender. As I mentioned earlier, gender relations are constructed not only through interpersonal relations but also through the structure of social institutions: family and community, schools, religious institutions and other bodies of authority (Kabeer, 1999).⁵³ Kabeer's five-point organisational analysis framework is applied to schools and community,

⁵³ I am aware of Kabeer's (1996) distinction between 'institution' and 'organisation', in which the term 'organisation' refers to the specific structural forms that institutions take. Following this idea, schools are organisations: they are part of the educational system within the State (an institution). In my thesis, however, I use the term 'institutions' when referring to schools, as this is a simple and commonly understood term.

to assess how gender identities and forms of learning are accessed through and affected by rules, resources, people, activities and power.

Alongside identifying areas of conceptual importance in this chapter, I also develop a framework through which to analyse my findings about how and what (young) people learn about gender, and how their attitudes towards gender link with violence against girls in the case study community.

4.1 Exploring a ‘continuum’ of learning

The description of my research journey in Chapter 1 (section 1.1) suggested how gender can be constructed through various learning processes in structured and less structured learning contexts as an aspect of broader social relations. As I discussed in Chapter 1, all the social institutions play a role in shaping ideas about gender, and in this sense they are important in identity formation processes. Learning is a complex process (Felstead *et al.*, 2009) that can occur in every context and with varying degrees of formality and informality, unintentionally or planned (Engström, 1999). We are all engaging with learning all the time, and yet the term can be used to refer to very specific aspects and contexts. My aim in the following sections is to provide an analytical approach for investigating formal, non-formal and informal learning, with a particular focus on how these apparently discrete categories intersect or interact along a continuum. This is followed by a discussion of situated learning, a key theory within research on informal learning which informs my understanding of learning as grounded in contextual experiences.

Adopting this tripartite classification of different learning modes into my study was useful for different reasons. Initially, it provided a framework for the research design and for studying various sites of learning; the criteria for where to conduct the research activities; and the type of the activities. This approach also enabled me to reflect on different means, processes and approaches to learning which I discovered in the field, as well as how they are interconnected as important elements of a broader continuum of learning. Rather than seeing them as hierarchically differentiated I will examine in what ways they are intersecting. While learning is distributed across the social order and embedded within social practices, as I have examined in Chapter 1, the discussions of formal, non-formal and informal learning often ignore that independent elements of formality and informality may appear within the opposite learning situation (Colley *et al.*, 2003), for example, that a peer group discussion (informal) may happen within a classroom (formal). I am interested in looking at different meanings of

‘formal’, ‘non-formal’ and ‘informal’ learning as contexts of learning as well as the ‘means’ or ‘approaches’ through which people learn. This framework therefore allowed me to conceptualise learning along a continuum and explore how and where formal, informal and non-formal approaches converged, including the influence of formal, informal or non-formal sites of learning. Using this approach, I also explore what different people meant by ‘learning the right knowledge’; what constituted ‘the right knowledge’ and how/where it was (or could be acquired)? Why was it important to learn ‘the right knowledge’? My questions indicate the distinction between informal approaches and informal sites/contexts of learning.

Next, this classification of different learning modes also provides the structure for my account where separate sections draw on formal, non-formal and informal approaches to learning. To structure the data presented in my thesis I have used Simkins’ (1977) analysis of contrasting characteristics. By distinguishing between non-formal and formal education in terms of purposes, timing, content, delivery systems and control, Simkins (ibid) clearly suggests that formal and non-formal education are distinct, and not intersecting in any ways. Although I argue that these elements do actually interact, these structural distinctions provide a useful framework for the analysis of the sites of learning, approaches and pedagogies. For example, I found Simkins (ibid.) useful when analysing some of the rituals and informal peer groups. Even though they were carried out in informal settings and in a community, they entailed some aspects of formal learning in the way they were organised (see Chapters 6 and 7). Simkins’ framework allowed me initially to identify these distinctions as a basis for exploring how they interacted.

In the following section I examine the key contemporary debates about formal, non-formal and informal modes of learning which provide background information for understanding my further discussions, and particularly the importance of non- and informal learning to situated learning.

Exploring different definitions and ideas about formal and non-formal learning

The definition of formal education and other modes of learning has been much debated (for example, Becket and Hager, 2002; Rogers, 2004; Schuller and Watson, 2009). Formal learning often refers to learning that happens in educational institutions – schools, colleges and universities – but is also defined by its content or educational techniques. For example, Sfard (1998) draws attention to how formal education has focused on the acquisition of skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. For Eraut (2004), formal education has a prescribed

learning framework; is organised in a learning package or event; has a teacher or trainer; offers an award or qualification; and has externally set outcomes. Moreover, it is often seen as inherently superior to any other modality of learning.

Formal education theory, however, has been much critiqued on the basis that the reality of learning is much more complex (Sfard, 1998) than simply what happens in educational institutions and that the theory cannot be contextualised. (Brown *et al.*, 1989). Hence, it is important to consider the process of learning not simply as the acquisition of universal skills, as learning depends on the cultural traditions of the context it is set in. For example the education system, the way teachers are trained, and the way the curriculum is taught are all created within and supported by society, and therefore can be argued are not context free.

Rogers (2004) makes an important point that formal education often increases inequalities rather than challenging and reducing them. Drawing on the debates about how schooling is class-based and enhances the power of those who already are economically and socially advantaged (see for example, Jencks *et al.*, 1973; Simmons, 1980), Rogers (2004) points out the way a formal curriculum builds on theory and externally set aims, and is not based on practical application. He further argues that formal curricula can discourage creativity, problem solving, autonomy and independent thinking, and instead can produce learners who are docile and dependent, and who do not challenge the status quo (*ibid*). Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) also argue that formal education is situated in and reinforces the values of dominant classes.

The division into formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts brings out the features of different models of education, where formal education embeds hierarchical values such as compulsory attendance, admission requirements, standardised curricula, prerequisites and certificates. The type of learning carries value assumptions and formal education is considered as superior to non-formal and informal education, because it embeds discipline and obedience, and is a traditional model preferred by both governments and parents, seen as carrying a higher value, for example opening doors to better jobs (see for example, Colley *et al.*, 2003). Correspondingly, the variety of sites and approaches to learning notwithstanding, knowledge acquired in school is usually formally recognised. Thus, the emphasis put on formal education may hinder the recognition and development of non-formal and informal learning contexts (Klees *et al.*, 1997).

In exploring the meaning of non-formal and informal learning, finding a clear-cut definition was difficult. While there are many different and sometimes contradictory or overlapping definitions, Colley and colleagues (2003) point out that it is only possible to define these terms by referring to the specific contexts in which they are operating. As it appears within much of the literature, the terms are conceptualised simply by what they are 'not' rather than what they are (see for example Billett, 2002). Perhaps the biggest challenge however, in terms of adequately defining the two terms, is: "to make clear distinction between non-formal and informal learning as there is often a crossover between the two" (McGivney, 1999: 1).

Non-formal learning is often viewed by scholars as a process or range of processes, or as a set of educational activities that differ from formal education in their teaching-learning approaches and objectives (Rogers, 2004). It is also considered as a practice managed by professionals outside formal education (ibid). Adiseshiah has argued somewhat differently that non-formal education offers "learning opportunities outside the formal educational system, covering a person's lifetime, and programmed to meet a specific need – remedial, or vocational or health or welfare or civic, political or for self-fulfilment" (1975: 26). In relation to my study I take this notion forward to consider the 'specific needs' that some of the learning processes address, for example addressing sexual and reproductive health during the initiation rites which I will explore in Chapter 6. Following Adiseshiah's idea, for some of the young people the rites were not merely a physical performance: they also provided an element of 'self-fulfilment' whereby they became respectable members of their communities (Adiseshiah, 1975). Similarly, Arnfred (2011) notes that initiation rites in Mozambique are not merely building sexual competence, but most importantly, about becoming a respected member of the community. Initiation rites contain an element of learning from the community, mediated by a non-educational practitioner, which enable young people to progress forward through their new knowledge.

What, then, might we mean by 'informal' learning? Does this 'informality' refer to how we learn, where we learn, what we learn, or the relationship between the activity and what is valued as knowledge today? The term 'informal learning' has been used quite loosely to answer these questions. Some people use it to describe the physical location of learning, suggesting that all learning outside the school – 'accidental' or 'disorganised' – is 'informal'. Others use it to describe the purposes of learning – assuming that all learning that is part of any other activity (for example visiting galleries and museums), rather than for examination

purposes, is informal. Rogers, for example, describes any: “highly contextualised education, where the framing, the subject matter and the process change with each new group which is enrolled, might be called informal education” (2004: 256). While definitions of informal learning in much of the literature are often negative and unhelpful, Rogers (2004) has contributed to moving the debate away from defining informal learning in terms of what formal learning is ‘not’. He sees formal and informal learning as being on a continuum rather than discrete types of learning (ibid), meaning both formal and informal learning can occur in both formal and non-formal spaces.

In order to observe the ‘crossover’ (McGivney, 1999) between formal and informal learning, it is necessary to recognise and accept their fundamental differences. Once we look beyond the contexts of conventional sites for education such as schools, universities and other institutions that offer formal training, allowing context to be extended into the of dimension of learning relationships between individual learners, then the intersections between the formal, non-formal and informal learning becomes apparent. Formal, non-formal and informal learning include both incidental and intentional learning, thus formal learning often includes aspects of informal learning and vice versa. For example, currently some institutions of formal learning in the European Union allow learners to move across different opportunities by integrating ‘informal elements’ such as “individualised curricular approaches, student participation bodies, self-regulated learning, allowing students to choose subjects according to their inclination as well as including ICT as a learning strategy” (du Bois-Reymond, 2003: 9).

In the context of informal learning in communities, Lave and Wenger (1991) point out that this approach is often more effective and relevant than traditional formal learning in schools and universities, which has often been regarded as superior and based on a scientific and rational approach. Simkins’ (1977) framework has helped me in analysing learning spaces ranging from ‘intermediate’ like galleries and museums, to social structures such as the family and community, which we do not tend to think of as learning organisations. Increasing contact and access to informal sources of information and learning through new technology and media seemed to have an impact on changing the social environment and shifting young people’s attitudes towards sexual and gender relations in the field site. Taking into account the poor print literacy rates in the research context, relying on television programmes in

shaping ideas about gender roles and relations appeared to be relevant for young people. This was one kind of informal learning that I investigate in Chapter 5.

This open approach to where and how learning occurs was important for contributing to understanding learning as a continuum. Colley and colleagues (2003) argue that the polarisation of formal and informal learning is not helpful and instead it is important to look at the complexities of all aspects to gain greater understanding of the learning process (Sfard, 1998). The artificial distinction between the three domains of learning is conceptually useful to recognise the different types of learning, but it is important to remember each type is not restricted to a particular site or context, and that elements of each different domain may appear within any other. With this in mind, I employ a holistic approach which considers that all three may be present in any context and that all are as valuable as each other. This leads naturally to a consideration of a different approach to learning which goes beyond the sites of learning, schools and classrooms, and instead focuses on the processes in daily life through which we acquire knowledge.

Situated learning and communities of practice

Learning has so far been identified to take place within different domains, formal, non-formal and informal, and that it is not confined to educational institutions and their rules and structures. Once we allow the context of sites for learning to be extended into a process of participating in daily life, learning can be regarded as a lifelong and lifewide activity (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Swales, 1998; Wenger, 1998). Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that learning as it normally occurs is a function of the activity, context and culture in which it occurs, hence it is 'situated'. This contrasts with most classroom learning activities which involve knowledge which is abstract and out of context (ibid).

This model of 'situated learning' (Lave and Wenger, 1991) sees learning in social interactions where people become full participants in the world and in generating meaning. Such participation shapes not only what we learn and do but also who we are and how we understand what we do (ibid). This body of work argues that we need to understand learning as a social process and to look closely at the socio-cultural context to make sense of learning (Rogoff 2003). In other words, knowledge needs to be presented in authentic contexts – settings and situations which would normally involve that knowledge: for example, the indigenous knowledge that was passed on during the rites of passage I discuss in Chapter 6. Participation – as in the context of initiation rites that I observed – “refers not just to local

events of engagement in certain activities with certain people, but to a more encompassing process of being active participants in the practices of social communities and constructing identities in relation to these communities” (Wenger, 1999: 4). In this sense the ritual represents a significant approach to learning and constructing identities in relation to the values and beliefs represented by the community.

This approach posits that learning is not a result of teaching but is a process of engagement in a ‘community practice’ (Lave and Wenger, 1991) without beginning and end. Thus social interaction and collaboration are essential components of situated learning whereby learners become involved in a community of practice which embodies certain beliefs and behaviours to be acquired (ibid). In this way communities of practice are inherent elements of our daily lives. Wenger (1998) suggests that they are wide-ranging and omnipresent in that they rarely come into explicit focus, but for the same reasons they are also quite familiar. Learning domains are distributed across society and embedded in social practices to such extent that the social order is already a learning context (ibid). For example, the home, the workplace and the community are all held to be the most common domains of learning. The use of communities of practice as a way to think about how learning happens and how gender identities are constructed within a community provides a way of exploring how they maintain and reproduce certain gender identities and roles.

Other researchers have further developed the theory of situated learning. Edwards and Miller (2007), for example, have emphasised the ways knowledge is transferred from one context to another, and how the culture of learning in everyday life can be used in more formal educational practices. Learning in different contexts may involve different types of learning, learning of different ideas, and for different purposes, the value of which might be variable (ibid). Brown and colleagues (1989) advance an idea of cognitive apprenticeship that “supports learning in a domain by enabling students to acquire, develop and use cognitive tools in authentic domain activity. Learning, both outside and inside school, advances through collaborative social interaction and the social construction of knowledge” (ibid: 39). Consequently, knowledge is situated, being in part a product of the activity, context, and culture in which it is developed and used.

Bringing it together: analytical framework on learning

The key concepts I have drawn on to reflect on the process of learning in my study include the idea of a continuum of learning from formal to non-formal and informal approaches, and

‘situated learning’ which provides concepts for analysing how learning takes place through everyday life and repeated social practices. The distinction between formal, non-formal and informal learning as contexts and approaches to learning shaped my research design and sampling decisions around sites of learning to investigate. My point of departure was that all aspects of learning across the continuum are relevant and transferable across different contexts and equally as important.

Through my ethnographic observation I explored learning taking place from and through experience, and participation in different formal and informal processes, drawing on the theory of situated learning. Thus I structured my sampling focusing on learning processes rather than the place of learning, as I wanted to explore how the process of learning affects gender identities. In my analysis, I then explored the complexities of these learning processes; the aspects of ‘informality’ in formal education and ‘formal’ elements in informal contexts of learning. Exploring different modes of learning was also an important part of my methodological approach. For example, when carrying out the activities in schools I was interested to see whether informal learning in the form of discussion groups would be successful or appropriate, and how peer learning could be used in formal settings. In this way, the idea of the continuum enabled me to introduce informal approaches to learning into the school context through the participatory ‘action’ element of my study.

Drawing on Simkins’ (1977) framework, my main focus in my analysis initially was to identify different characteristics of formal, non-formal and informal and to understand how they intersect with each other. As I observed various sites of learning, I was interested in exploring the diversity they represent: what different kinds of learning/teaching approaches they offered and whether different sites were linked in any ways. I looked for a continuum between the school curriculum (for example in the textbooks); non-formal practices in the community; and ways of acquiring knowledge in informal groups and through the radio and television. Looking at learning in each context, ‘situated learning’ suggested an approach for recognising and examining these complexities. Situated learning resonates with the idea of the continuum of learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991) which I have explored above. Rather than looking at learning as the acquisition of certain forms of knowledge Lave and Wenger discussed learning processes within social relationships – situations of participation. This approach has given me an understanding of the nature of learning within communities of practice, and to think a little differently about how knowledge can be generated/acquired. For

example, the broader conceptualisation of situated learning and the notion of community of practice provide an approach for my analysis of the rites of passage which appeared to have a great relevance to young people's lives in the wider framework of the local community.

I started this section by saying that learning is a process that everyone engages with and it can occur in various ways and at different sites. Further to this, as I have suggested in Chapter 1, the process of acquiring gender identities and roles – gender socialisation – begins the moment we are born and continues throughout our lives. The processes of gender socialisation help us to learn to become a member of a community through learning and adjustment of our norms, mores, behaviour, manners etc. Thus, looking at different theorisations of the notion of 'gender' will be the next step in the development of the conceptual framework for the analysis of the empirical data from my fieldwork.

4.2 Problematising the notion of 'gender'

In this section I look at the notion of gender and several interconnected aspects. First, gender is an aspect of subjectivity; we identify and make sense of ourselves as women and men or female and male. Second, gender refers to the cultural ideas, norms and representations of what it is to be a woman or a man. Thirdly, gender operates as social representation, structuring the ways of those so classified within society. All these aspects of gender are interconnected, hence the conceptualisation of the notion becomes complex.

According to the feminists of the 1960s and 1970s, gender usually refers to two distinct and separate categories of human beings – division according to sex into men and women – as well as the division of social practices into two separate fields (see for example, Oakley, 1972; Kessler and McKenna 1978). Rubin, for example, argues that gender "is the set of arrangements by which a society transfers biological sexuality into products of human activity" (1975: 534). The two categories are not merely regarded as distinct and opposed; they are also put into a hierarchy in which one is typically cast as positive and the other as negative, with men's pervasive oppression and exploitation of women seen as a fundamental outcome of the gender division.

This concept of gender has been criticised within the later feminist literature for suggesting a false asymmetry between women and men (Braidotti and Butler, 1994), for being unable to convey inequality and power, and for being politically benign (Evans, 1990). Thorne (1980) and Stacey and Thorne (1985) further challenge the binary view of gender by underlining the importance of sexuality as central to the concept.

The 1980s and 1990s saw the emergence of feminist ideas that challenged the dominant social order and the binary division of gender by deconstructing underlying structures of power. Many of the concepts arising from first-wave feminist thought, based on notions of a patriarchal social system, were criticised for not offering an in-depth analysis of complex social relations (for example, Arnfred, 1995; McNay, 2000; 2003).

The idea of gender as a lived social experience is opposed to the understanding of gender as a structural location which prevails in both materialist and cultural thought. Although Arnfred does not suggest any new relationships or ways of acting she illustrates 'gendered worlds and borderlines' (1995: 5) with empirical reference to northern Mozambique. She suggests that the world seems to be segregated along gender lines in the way that time is gendered, most activities are gendered and space is gendered too (ibid). According to Fialho (1989) in the south of Mozambique tools, crops, trees, fruits etc. are also gendered. Arnfred elaborates further: "two worlds, one male and one female, seem to be coexisting. They are independent and intertwined, but still they are separate and the borderline between them has to be observed" (1995: 6). Whilst gendered worlds are defined by borderlines, these may not be physical borders but normative beliefs and norms, rules and regulations, and ideas about female and male.

Within this binary division, the conceptualisations of gender relations "do not explain sufficiently the types of behaviour and action exhibited by men and women in their negotiation" (McNay, 2000: 2). Consequently, "gender identity is durable but not immutable" (McNay, 2000: 2), hence remaining within a negative paradigm of subjectification. Although new feminist approaches strive to move away from the theories of patriarchal domination and female subordination, they continued to consider gender identity as a sustaining but unchangeable concept (McNay, 2000).

Judith Butler's (1990) attempt to move beyond sex/gender division had been particularly useful in efforts to 'denaturalise' gender and avoid biological determinism – the view that 'biology is destiny' – by highlighting the cultural diversity in constructions of femininity and masculinity. This conceptualisation allowed early second-wave feminists to avoid and challenge biological determinism and to examine the cultural construction of gender. Butler (ibid) challenges dominant understandings of the relationship between sex and gender that view gender as naturally emerging from a sexed body. She points out that gender is the lens through which we 'understand' the body, and that we cannot relate to our human bodies

outside the central system of gender; therefore body (sex) cannot exist prior to gender, as sex must be gendered in order for us to understand it. While 'sex' implies having a particular kind of body that falls into one of two categories, female or male, 'gender' is the way sex gains social meaning through behaviours and processes that define someone as a man or a woman. Implicit to this division into 'woman' and 'man' is the idea that society's perception of masculinity and femininity is the normal and natural way for particular bodies to play out gender based on their sex (ibid). Jagger notes, however, that sex/gender distinction still seems to assume gender as some kind of "cultural overlay on a basic biological category that is taken as a given" (1983: 9).

The operation of cultural norms as helping to construct gender identities can be understood through a poststructuralist lens, which indicates that gender identities are created through the repetition and performance of social constructs. Butler's approach to gender draws on a broadly poststructuralist understanding of subjectivity, rooted in the work of Michel Foucault on subjectivity or subject formation that occurs through "practices of subjection, or, in a more autonomous way, through practices of liberation, of liberty" (1988: 50). Butler (1997), however, remarks that Foucault does not explain satisfactorily the specific mechanisms whereby the subject is formed in submission but is never controlled by it, as the idea of subjects as docile bodies seems to imply. To overcome this weakness Butler (1990) opens up new analytical ground by proposing that gender is a result of power secured through repeated performance of norms (ibid). In contrast to other feminist ideas, Butler (1990) locates human agency within the processes of signification that construct the self. In other words, aspects of the subject such as gender identity and subjectivity are actualised in and through the 'regulated process of repetition' – performativity – of socially-constructed signs and norms (ibid). According to Butler (ibid), gender identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results. For this reason, gender becomes a performance; it is what we do at particular times, rather than a universal who we are. As Butler puts it: "gender is the repeated stylisation of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance" (1990: 33). While McNay acknowledges the process of performance repetition as "inscribes and sediments norms upon the body and permits the emergence of a subject capable of resisting those norms" and "leads to rather exaggerated notion of the internal uniformity of gender norms" (McNay, 2003: 142), she questions the exaggerated notion of internal uniformity, so something to this effect.

Drawing on the work of feminist scholars and Foucault I have provided a brief discussion about subjectivity that is constructed discursively or symbolically, through performativity. McNay (2000), however, questions the extent to which this paradigm is generalised in much recent theoretical work on identity formation to become an exhaustive explanation of all aspects of subjectivity and agency. She puts forward an alternative theoretical framework that through “dialogical understanding of the temporal aspects of subject formation” (McNay, 2000: 4) overcomes symbolic determinism. McNay’s (2000) idea brings a more generative dimension to advance new understandings of female subjectivity as productive potential instead of a negative construct based on the patriarchal system. The generative framework, however, does not reformulate accounts of subjectification, but reconfigures them by rearranging the relations between: “the material and symbolic dimensions of subjectification; the issue of the identity or coherence of the self; and, finally, the relation between psyche and the social” (McNay, 2000: 6). This framework is discussed in depth in section 4.4.

This discussion examines some theories and aspects of gender which contribute to the analysis put forward in this paper. Gender is understood as a complex concept which encompasses subjective experience, cultural constructs and norms, and the performative aspect of social representation. Performativity as a means to construct gender identity is particularly closely linked to the idea of situated learning presented in the previous section, as both draw on the physical and processual aspects of knowledge construction. Agency arises here as a key theme to which I will return, as these notions imply a determinism in identity construction, which is partly addressed by McNay’s generative framework. The rest of this chapter reviews these themes in more detail, focusing on the subjectivity of gender, and power and agency in its social construction.

4.3 Foucault’s work: power/agency and subjectivity

Foucault’s theorisation about power and its relation to the body and sexuality has provided some useful conceptual tools for the analysis of the social construction of gender and sexuality. Although Foucault’s work makes few references to women or to the issue of gender, his analysis of the relations between power, the body and sexuality has inspired extensive feminist scholarship. While many feminists have found Foucault’s analysis of self-formation through an act of constraint particularly illuminating, they have also drawn attention to its limitations. Although many scholars remain critical of Foucault’s inquiry about the categories of the subject and agency, arguing that such inquiry undermines the

emancipatory aims of feminism, others have argued that in his late work he develops a more robust account of subjectivity and resistance which, while not without its problems from a feminist perspective, nevertheless offers a significant resource for feminist theory (see for example, Sawicki, 1988; Butler, 1990). In this section I examine the possibilities and tensions that Foucault's theorisation of power/knowledge brings into the discussion about transformation of the self, subjectivity and human agency.

One of the most significant transformations, according to Foucault, emerges with the shift from 'sovereign power' to 'disciplinary power' (Foucault, 1994: 3-7). He argues that sovereign power existed in medieval European societies, involving obedience to the law of central authority or king, whereas disciplinary power emerged in the post-war age and manifests itself through hierarchical observation, sets of norms and examination (ibid). Unlike sovereign power, disciplinary power shifts the focus of punishment from the masses to the individual, hence it must be enforced by alternative methods. This new form of power reaches into subjects through hierarchies, surveillance and examination: a web of disciplinary regimes of power and knowledge that regulate the body and mind, including our most intimate behaviour and inner thoughts. What interests Foucault (1994) is how those regimes influence how we think, act and feel as 'subjects' of power and knowledge (ibid). Foucault's notion that modern power is involved in producing rather than simply repressing individuals has been used as a fundamental idea by some feminist researchers to reassess interpersonal relations between men and women and to develop a complex analysis of gender relations and power.

Foucault (1982) asserts that power is not static and it is 'never in anybody's hands'. He understands power as exercised rather than possessed, as multiple, circulating throughout the social body rather than emanating from the top down (Sawicki, 1988: 164): "Individuals ... are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising power" (Foucault, 1980: 98). Thus, power is considered to be decentralised across many different institutions in what Foucault calls 'the micro-physics' of power (Foucault, 1994). Foucault maintains that since modern power operates in a capillary fashion throughout the social body, it is best grasped in its concrete and local effects and in the everyday practices that sustain and reproduce power relations. As Fraser notes, Foucault's approach to power gives an original slant to what is often referred to as 'the politics of everyday life' (Fraser 1989: 26). In this conception some people are viewed as having more power than others, as according to

Foucault, there are certain positions in society that provide a way for people to more acceptably act out or portray their level of power such as parents, teachers, politicians etc. Power that can be seen as both positive and negative, that is not confined to the legal framework and it is seen in terms of the regulation of the body (ibid). It is this form of power that is useful in my study in order to examine the context of everyday struggles. Foucault's analysis of micro-level power relations helps me in understanding the mechanics of patriarchal power at the most intimate level of women's experience (McNay, 2000).

Feminist critics of Foucault's theorisation, however, note that in 'the politics of everyday life' Foucault fails to develop an adequate notion of resistance. Hartsock (1990), for example, challenges Foucault's understanding of power that reduces individuals to docile bodies, to victims of disciplinary technologies or to objects of power rather than active subjects with the capacity to resist. This view raises the questions of to what extent individuals – docile bodies – are able to exercise power, and what the links are between the resources to exercise power and the effects of that agency. Critics of Foucauldian theorisation argue that self-formation emerging from constraint does not offer in-depth understanding of the dynamics of the processes of subjectification (for example, Allen; 2000; McNay, 2000; Knight, 2004). In his early work, by reducing individuals to 'docile bodies' – individuals who become passive 'subjects' to power and the channels or sites of discourses of power/knowledge – Foucault seems to foreclose the possibility of agency (Foucault, 1977). He obscures any distinction between power and knowledge and subject and object, hence obstructs faith in individual autonomy and self-identity through rational knowledge of the self and the world (ibid). In his later work, Foucault (1978; 1982) explains that his notion of power implies both the possibility and the existence of forms of resistance. Although he rejects the idea that resistance can be grounded in a subject or self that pre-exists its construction by power, he does not deny the possibility of resistance to power, "where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority to power" (ibid: 95). Yet Hartsock (1990) argues that unless we assume that the subject or individual pre-exists its construction by technologies of power, it becomes difficult to explain *who* resists power.

The notion of 'technologies of the self' (Foucault, 1988) sets out the idea of practice and techniques through which individuals actively fashion their own identities. This active process of self-formation suggests how the seemingly unchangeable processes of corporeal

repetition, or ‘technologies of domination’ (cf. situated learning and social construction of gender identity through performativity), may be resisted through the self-conscious stylisation of identity. Thus, individuals are considered as relatively autonomous in so far as the process of identity formation involves neither passive submission to external constraints nor willed adoption of dominant norms (McNay, 1992). Foucault’s defenders argue that his overarching ideas look into both ‘how human beings have been made subjects’ and ‘how discourses of power/knowledge can disclose ‘new possibilities for change’’ (Foucault, 1992: 208).

In *The History of Sexuality* (1978) Foucault develops an approach to the link between sexuality, the body and power, and how these are interrelated. The main idea behind his history of sexuality is an analysis of the construction of the category of biological sex and its function in regimes of power aimed at controlling the sexual body (ibid). Foucault argues:

The notion of sex brought about a fundamental reversal; it made it possible to invert the representation of the relationships of power to sexuality, causing the latter to appear, not in its essential and positive relation to power, but as being rooted in a specific and irreducible urgency which power tries as best it can to dominate. (Foucault 1978: 155)

In other words, the relationship between power and sexuality is distorted when sexuality is viewed as an uncontrollable natural force that power simply opposes, represses or constrains. Foucault suggests that the phenomenon of sexuality should be understood as constructed through the exercise of power relations entrenched in social structures. In this way sexual identity is constructed through gestures and behaviours, placing it as an anchor point for certain discourses and practices. Sexuality is a central aspect of being human and encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. While sexuality can include all these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, ethical, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors. Sexuality is thus an intensely personal and contextual set of attributes, which mediates experiences of gender through a personal, subjective lens, meaning gender is analytically seen as a fluid concept.

In the context of my research, what I find essential in Foucault’s view of sexuality is that sexuality is the result of the subject’s application of values and beliefs. The issue with which I am concerned is how young people construct their worlds, on the one hand by submitting

themselves to discursive orders and cultural norms which condition their actions and lives, and on the other as social agents in the sense in which they construct, communicate and act (Osório, 2006). I am interested in how these constructions create sexuality and gender identities, how they are constrained by power relations and social structures, and how these might lead to gender violence.

Discourse and voice

Discourse, according to Foucault (1978; 1980) establishes a new form of power over the body and its pleasures: power exercised not merely by law but also by other domains such as medicine and sexology. Foucault emphasises that a discourse may be liberating or oppressive and thus needs continuous examination (Foucault, 1972). Furthermore, he suggests that most discourses are governed by explicit rules, beliefs and principles of exclusion (ibid). Therefore words are never neutral: “All words have the ‘taste’ of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, a particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and hour. Each word tastes of the context in which it has lived its socially charged life” (Bakhtin, 1981: 293). Hence discourse is not merely a group of signs or words referring to content or representation, and it can be articulated both verbally and non-verbally. In the context of my research, discourse is primarily seen in the media and community practices, which reinforce and communicate ‘accepted’ gender identities.

Bagnol and Mariano (2008a) make an important contribution to symbolism and ‘regulative discourse’ (Butler, 1990) in the construction of female identity. They present sexual practices still performed in some parts of Mozambique that are fundamental in the construction of a woman’s identity (Bagnol and Mariano, 2008a). Women apply symbolism to describe sex and sexuality, using expressions such as ‘wealth/poverty’, ‘hot/cold’, ‘sweet/not sweet’ (Bagnol and Mariano, 2008a: 582). This application of semiotics connects women’s bodies to other spheres that describe sex and sexuality. Raheja and Gold (1994) provide a rich account of women’s oral traditions and their use of semiotics in Northern India. The authors present the multiplicity of discursive fields within which social relations are constructed. Women in Northern India are not ‘silent shadows’ (Raheja and Gold, 1994: 3): although in many ways they assent to the dominant ideologies of gender and kinship, they also sing of their resistance to these ideologies. Far from speaking only in language dominated by the male, the women imaginatively scrutinize and critique the social world they experience and give voice to that vision in a poetic discourse of song and story (ibid: 26). The songs are full of sexuality,

fertility and erotic imaginations and are expressed through metaphor, proverbs and other cultural references.

In this way women overcome **mutedness** which, according to Ardener (1975), is the consequence of the unequal power relations that exist between dominant and subordinated groups. What Ardener means by 'mutedness' is not merely lack of voice or complete silence but the fact that 'muted groups' cannot use the dominant (male) mode of expression in their model of reality. The dominant position of male structures in society impedes the free expression of women: "they lack the metalanguage" (Ardener, 1975: 3), hence their speech is muted, muffled and oblique. However, it is not Ardener's intention to demonstrate that men and women do not communicate with each other (ibid). While patriarchy is deeply rooted in men's consciousness and social system, it can be challenged and negotiated, to some extent countering Foucault's disciplinary power and demonstrating women's individual agency. Perhaps 'the metalanguage' is one of the 'borderlines' and a reason why women and men live along gender lines, what Arnfred (1995) calls gendered worlds. During the focus group discussions I observed that women and men found participating in the discussions challenging and that power dynamics shifted when they were confronted with certain issues, as I examine in Chapter 5.

The account I have provided in this section focuses on Foucault's discussion of power and agency, especially expressed through the body, seen here through a gender lens. In the following section I look more closely at sexuality and the (gendered) body. The above discussion highlights feminist critiques of Foucault's disciplinary power, which appears to disallow agency, while also using Foucault's conceptions of power to understand the possibility of self-identity construction.

4.4 Rethinking the body

In this section I address the discussion about the body which became a central issue for many scholars of post-structuralism and postmodernism. Taking into account that sexuality (similarly to gender) is a social construct and that it assumes different characteristics in different contexts, the body and the meaning given to it have to be understood as part of the formation of individual and collective identity. The body itself is formed as part of the construction of identity – it becomes an artefact (Arnfred, 2011). Similarly, for Bourdieu (1977), the body is a public object, although experienced privately, formed and known through social practices and discourses. Social practices inscribe norms on the body, creating

identities through repetition of cultural practices which prescribe social roles in the community. This structuralist argument is countered by the subjectivity of individuals and their capacity to vary rituals instead of repeating them, and to exercise agency.

In my empirical chapters (Chapter 5, 6 and 7) I present the evidence of how gender and sexual identities were constructed by young people within the domains of family and community, school and church in my research site. The ethnographic data from the ceremony of initiation rites presented in Chapter 6 illustrates in detail the means of becoming ‘a man’ or ‘a woman’, adhering to the tradition. In these processes elders and novices collaborate, with the young person typically imitating the elders in developing the desired values, behaviours and motives necessary to become part of the social community. During the rites the body becomes an artefact, and *madrinhas* (godmothers), *padrinhos* (godfathers) and the leader of the ceremony, Baba Joaquin, teach the desirable postures through “repeated stylisation of the body” and performance “within a highly rigid regulatory frame” (Butler, 1990: 33); how to pay respects to elders, how to address members of the family and simply how to act in their company.

Bourdieu describes these practices as **bodily hexis** which “speaks directly to the motor function, in the form of a pattern of postures that is both individual and systematic, because it is linked to a whole system of techniques involving the body and charged with a host of social meanings and values” (1977: 87). In other words, bodily hexis is the expression of all the factors which make up one’s **habitus** embodied in our physical being. Habitus predisposes members of a society to interact in ways consistent with the social norms of their group. It is the social, cultural and physical environment that we, as social beings, inhabit, through which we know ourselves and through which others identify us. These dispositions include postures, speech styles, ways of eating, moving, conceptions of private space, predispositions towards particular ways of thinking and feeling – they are habits of orienting one’s physical and psychological selfhood to the world. In the context of a learning moment, this corresponds closely with situated learning.

Reflecting upon my fieldwork I came to recognise the value of Bourdieu’s work on embodiment, and particularly the concepts of habitus and the field, for “understanding the effects of the intersection of symbolic and material dimensions of power upon the body” (McNay, 2000: 26). The experience from the initiation rites reinforcing young people’s cultural identities were not natural but involved “the inscription of dominant social norms or

the ‘cultural arbitrary’ upon the body” (McNay, 2000: 26). For Bourdieu, the temporality inherent in the concept of habitus denotes not just the processes through which norms are inculcated upon the body but also the “moments of praxis or living through of these norms by the individual” (ibid: 26). The relationship between individual habitus and the social circumstances, or field, from which it emerges is “double and obscure” (Bourdieu, 1992: 127). Certainly, through the participation in the rites (and/or other local rituals), young people, mostly subconsciously, internalised certain aspects of gender habitus, and became deeply invested in the structure of these fields.

For Bourdieu, the temporality inherent to the concepts of habitus denotes not just the process through which norms are inculcated upon the body, but also the moment of praxis or living through of these norms by the individual. In other words, habitus is defined, not as a determining principle, but a generative structure. Initiation rites are thus a moment of active learning in which the habitus is inscribed on the body, which then becomes unconscious. Nevertheless, we perform them without conscious reflection because they are ‘obvious’ and ‘commonsensical’. According to Bourdieu, young people particularly are very attentive to physical characteristics – “a way of walking, a tilt of the head, facial expressions, ways of sitting and of using implements” (1977: 87) – this becomes a practical manifestation of one’s relationship to the social world and one’s place in it, which can be actively learned. Although learning takes place in home and in school, it is the habituation – the repeated and affirmed performance of particular repertoires (including cognitive, affective and bodily) – that form the unconscious dispositions of habitus (Bourdieu, 1992).

As I mentioned in Chapter 1, through rules and hidden curricula schools instruct young people about the gender stereotypes to which they should conform. In Chapter 7, I discuss how teachers in particular, as members of the local community, transmit normative ideas or their own beliefs about gender identities to the classroom. In this way gender is above all a matter of everyday interactions and practices that are inseparable from social arrangements in society which in turn are socially reproduced over generations. Butler views this kind of performative⁵⁴ approach to acquiring identity as very restricted, limiting young people’s opportunity to experiment and manoeuvre (1990). While through performative practices

⁵⁴ In *Bodies that Matter: on the discursive limits of “sex”* (1993) Butler changes the idea of performativity as related to a performance to performativity stemming from linguistics. In this way, linguistic performatives, using forms of speech, bring what they name into being: for example, ‘It’s a girl!’ at a birth brings a girl into being, initiating the process which Butler calls ‘girling the girl’ (Butler, 1993: 7-8).

young people are accepted into the community as respectable members, repetition is also used to resignify and to give new meanings.

In contrast, Moore finds the processes of ‘identification’ and ‘differentiation’ (1994: 2) more important than belonging to a certain category. She raises the issue of how much body praxis, whether understood as bodily hexis or performativity, is an act of self-reflection, and how much room there is for the individual’s agency to experiment. Agency is one of the important aspects of performativity: it allows the possibility of negotiation and manoeuvre and is central to the power processes that I discussed above.

Butler argues that for the subject to be socially constructed does not mean socially determined and hence without agency (Butler, 1990). Rather, since the discursive creation of the self and gender identity takes place within the regime of repetition, processes of gender roles and norms, agency is “located within the possibility of a variation on that repetition” (ibid: 145). Hence agency is not positioned in the subject’s distance from the gender(ed) discourses that form the subject, but instead in the subject’s capacity to vary – rather than repeat – those constituting discourses. While the new theorisation by Butler considers a more relational perspective on female and male identities examining the inherent complexities of gender norms and the implications for resistance, subversion and the emancipatory remodelling of identity, it does not, according to McNay (2003), provide a theory of agency, but rather, an idea of capacity to conceive and execute one’s actions and projects. Thus, McNay suggests that Butler’s conceptualisation to some degree remains within a paradigm of subjectification that is unable to explain the emergence of agency and subject formation (McNay, 2000; 2003). I now consider the approach McNay (2000) puts forward to overcome the shortcomings of this paradigm.

4.5 McNay and generative theoretical framework

McNay puts forward a framework that through “dialogical understanding of the temporal aspects of subject formation” (McNay, 2000: 4) overcomes symbolic determinism, and understands female subjectivity as having productive potential rather than negativity. Drawing on the recent work of Bourdieu, McNay (2000) considers the differences that the hermeneutic perspective makes to understanding certain temporal dimensions within subject formation and agency. Within the active dimensions of agency, Bourdieu suggests the “temporalized understanding of habitus” (McNay, 2003: 143). As discussed above, habitus refers to a set of acquired schemes of dispositions, perceptions and appreciations including

tastes, which orient our practices and give them meaning (Bourdieu, 1992). According to Bourdieu, habitus, or the construction of the body within socio-cultural norms, is understood not simply in unidirectional terms of the body's maintenance of externally imposed norms, and is not to be conceived as a principle of determination but also in terms of the anticipatory dimension of possible events, or the living through of those norms, which allows individual agency (Bourdieu, 1992). Bourdieu argues that although these 'embodied schemes' (Bourdieu, 2000: 467) are products of collective history, they are acquired within individual history and function in practice.

McNay suggests that the significant implication of the generative framework for a theory of agency is that it enables "an understanding of a creative or imaginative substrate to action" (McNay, 2000: 5). Only through conceptualisation of those 'creative' and/or 'productive' aspects of agency can we explicate individuals' responses in unexpected and original ways which may obstruct, support or bring about social change (ibid). This conceptualisation also yields new ideas of "autonomy and reflexivity, understood as the critical awareness that arises from self-conscious relation with the other" (McNay, 2000: 5). The generative framework, however, does not reformulate an account of subjectification, but reconfigures it by rearranging the relations between: "the material and symbolic dimensions of subjectification; the issue of the identity or coherence of the self; and, finally, the relation between psyche and the social" (McNay, 2000: 6). The generative framework allows for a more differentiated account of agency to explain various motivations, creativity and ways in which individuals and groups confront, appropriate and transform cultural meaning. Drawing on this idea, new forms of subject formation and agency can be observed to emerge, bringing about change in individuals' action. This, in turn, results in increasingly complex, plural and uncertain gender relations.

Studies from a number of countries illustrate transformation in power dynamics in the processes of negotiation of sexual relationships, providing evidence that some girls are active agents and resist male control (Bledsoe and Cohen, 1993; Mensch *et al.*, 1999; Leach *et al.*, 2003), demonstrating the imagination and creativity suggested by McNay's framework. Luke and Kurz (2002) uncover the bargaining aspect of the sexual relationship in which adolescent girls achieve their preferences and appear to have a high degree of control over partnership formation and continuance. Some girls are able to choose the number and type of partners with whom they want to be involved. For example, a study of secondary school girls in

Uganda shows that they used explicit negotiation strategies and ways of manipulation in achieving the 'prize' (Nyanzi, *et al.*, 2000). Other research (see for example, Komba-Malekela and Liljestrom, 1994; Luke and Kurz, 2002) indicates that girls often find innovative ways to mislead their partners by making false promises that delay sexual relations. This manoeuvre helps them to take full advantage of their partners and to dispense with those they do not want (Nnko and Pool, 1997; Stavrou and Kaufman, 2000). The evidence also suggests that girls in these studies have considerable control over relationship continuance. 'No money – no sex' is a frequent response reported by a study in Dar es Salaam, where all the girls requested money or gifts from their partners (Silberschmidt and Rasch, 2001; see also Haram, 1995). The evidence appears to confirm that girls can withstand male domination as long as alternatives are available, and that the power differential between male and female can be played out in various aspects of (sexual) negotiation. This demonstrates the active agency and autonomy of girls, as described by McNay, in situations which could be expected to follow a singular normative pattern. The evidence shows that some adolescent girls are agents of change having a degree of control in establishing and terminating their relationships (Luke and Kurz, 2002). However, why some girls are better able to be active agents and some choose other strategies by which to exercise their power remains unexplained. Although some females know strategies and ways to manoeuvre men to secure their interests, it is not enough to state that some girls have something called 'agency' and consider this conclusive, as Parker (2005: 3) argues.

While the conventional account of agency that relies on a dualist view of male dominance and female subordination does not capture the complexities represented in the examples above, the generative account of subjectification and agency enables one to understand how women exercise power and control in sexual negotiation. The discussion of sexual negotiation shows the agency inherent in individuals, the creativity underlying action, which is significantly explained by McNay's generative framework.

4.6 Structures of constraints and gender identity construction

As discussed above, subject formation happens between 'psyche and the social' (McNay, 2000: 6). While the process of identity construction occurs within the social, cultural and physical environment, it is regulated through the rules, norms and practices in social institutions (Kabeer, 1999). What are these institutions, and how do they affect gender relations? A simple definition of institutions could see them as frameworks of ideologies,

rules and procedures. Kabeer (1999) identifies four major institutions that impinge upon men and women, often in an interlocking manner: households, communities (inclusive of religion), markets and states. In this section, I look at the main ideas of this framework and how it can be applied in analysing schools, family, community and church as social institutions in the research context. I apply this framework to understanding how institutions affect both gender identity construction and formal, non-formal and informal types of learning. Kabeer's (1999) framework engages with organisational relations, which are characterised by their five domains: rules, resources, people, activities and power. Application of these categories to the analysis of data from different sites of learning provides insights into power relations framed by the educational system.

Institutional analysis at the level of organisations begins by looking at the **rules**, in the form of an official code of conduct written and/or unofficially exercised through discourse, values, norms and customs. Besides this, in most organisations, including schools and other educational institutions, there is a gendered dimension that regulates relationships in terms of who does what, how it is done and who benefits (Kabeer, 1996). Because rules are crucial in controlling the culture and people in an institution, in my analysis I am interested in looking at the interrelationship between the rules and their construction of and response to gender identities. Who makes the rules and who obeys them? For example, do teachers accept boys' domination of the classroom space at the expense of girls' participation in lessons? Are boys punished more often than girls? Do the rules only control the students? How does the code of conduct deal with teachers who, exploiting their sex and authority, have sexual relations with students? How do the rules understand and sanction against violence, or do they in some way legitimise it through a lack of instruction? How do the rules allow or disallow space for different types of learning?

My analysis of **resources** explores the gendered nature of resource distribution in schools. For example, organisations play a part in mobilising and allocating resources; these may be tangible, such as human resources in the form of education, skills and labour, and material – food, assets, land, money – or intangible, such as information, ideology, contacts or political power. According to Kabeer (1999), resources are often distributed according to social categories; gender, ethnicity, political or religious beliefs. Access to resources in Mozambique plays a very important role in society. I will be interested to look at girls' and boys' access to different resources. Following McNay's (2000; 2003) generative framework I

want to analyse whether the scarcity of resources generates new, more creative forms of agency in order to access more resources, and how this differs across gender. How does the gendered access to resources affect learning? How do resources play into aspects of gender violence?

As indicated by Kabeer (1999), institutions are selective or even exclusive when it comes to **people**. Examination of the composition of the school's staff may reflect class, gender or other categories of social inequality. I use Kabeer's theoretical framework to interrogate my data through the following questions: what is the composition of the staff; who is in a managing position, and who is in charge, and how does this differ by gender? What are the relations among the teachers and facilitators (during initiation rite events)? As mentioned in Chapter 2, there is a serious shortage of teachers, and particularly female teachers, in rural areas. This has important implications for gender issues with respect to teacher mobility and career expectations. How do these differ according to gender? What professional aspirations do teachers have? What is the overall image of a teacher in the eyes of the local people? How do different teachers (particularly by gender) use different forms of learning? How do gender differences affect the ability of pupils to learn in different forms?

Another aspect of the analysis – **activities** – led me to conduct an in-depth analysis of schools' activities and the nature and criteria according to which such activities are distributed. These activities can be productive, in being effective and having power; distributive, in terms of the allocation of resources; or regulative, in controlling or directing according to rules, norms and principles (Kabeer, 1999). They are also the means of achieving goals/ideologies by following their own rules and ensuring routinised practice for carrying out tasks. Certain tasks are allocated to certain social groups, sometimes in the belief that they are most capable of carrying them out, with, for example, girls doing domestic chores in schools while boys' responsibilities are more linked to the use of their physical strength. As girls become very good at domestic tasks by mastering them and boys maintain their other gendered roles, these particular attributes become automatically attached to the different genders, reinforcing the social construction of inequalities (Kabeer, 1996). This institutional activity teaches young people to learn what is socially expected of them, reflecting the role of schools in informal and non-formal learning and in the construction of identities. In Chapter 7 I discuss how gender issues were taught in the local schools and why some of the teachers found teaching gender and sexuality challenging.

In Chapter 7 I also explore the overall teaching and learning activities at the primary schools, which involved little student participation. The teachers spent most of their lessons speaking or reading aloud. Listening to the teacher and repeating his/her words are the main student activities. Can this ‘ritualistic’ teaching be seen as a rational response to teachers’ impossible mission to cover the national curriculum faced with large classes, scarce resources and/or distribution of people? How does routinised practice contribute to controlling student and student-teacher relationships? How does this type of learning impact on the development of agency and identity?

Power, according to Kabeer (1999), is a fundamental part of all institutions and is composed of the abovementioned factors: rules and norms, distribution of resources and responsibilities. The unequal distribution of rules, resources and responsibilities allows more powerful actors to exercise their authority over others. This aspect of power as institutional control, together with the other notions of power I have discussed in this chapter, provide a framework in which to analyse how institutions embody relations of authority and control.

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, in some educational systems certain practices that are often violent are assumed to be beneficial in maintaining discipline in the classroom. Disciplinary practices rule bodily activities in a process of constant surveillance and examination that enables continuous control of individual conduct. The key feature of an institution’s disciplinary practices is the exercise and maintenance of control through the rules, the norms and the routinised and authoritarian nature of that institution (Foucault, 1977). The teacher can maintain control by bodily dominance or physical punishment of pupils, which then come to be accepted as ‘normal practice’. In this way Disciplinary technologies can be a means of controlling, managing, regulating and normalising institutional (desired) behaviour. However, disciplinary technologies target not only the body but also the mind. According to Foucault, constant surveillance initially directed toward disciplining the body also affects the mind psychologically, inducing a state of “conscious and permanent visibility” (1977: 201). The culture of fear and the authoritarian approach to teaching prevailing in many educational systems become not only disciplinary practices but also an end in themselves. The authoritarian form of teaching bestows great power and respect upon teachers (Dunne *et al.*, 2003), sanctioning them to normalise gender-unequal behaviour by policing what is acceptable and what is not and denying pupils room for disobedience (Gordon, 1995). For example, fighting between boys or their intimidation of

girls may be dismissed by teachers as unimportant or as ‘teasing’, excused by expressions such as ‘boys will be boys’ rather than addressed in any serious and systematic way (Miedzian, 2002). Casual or blatant sexualised language is frequently used by teachers in the school or/and in the classroom. In so doing, they normalise gender stereotypes and explicitly connect femininity with sex (Debarbieux, 2003). In this way discourse can act as a means of maintaining the hidden curriculum – subtle messages which are not part of the intended curriculum. Hence the formal education system conveys norms, values and beliefs as well as power relations, as I discuss in detail in Chapter 7. This is important for understanding how institutions contribute to the formation of gender identity through these forms of learning.

In my understanding Kabeer’s approach brings together the two parts of my study: how institutions shape gender identity, and how they use the different types and contexts of learning described above. The institutional analysis framework provides straightforward categories with which to interrogate the link between different ways of learning and gender identity construction, through examining the social institutions which provide learning environments. The final association is to interrogate how and why different forms of learning impact on gender based violence. This framework enables me to analyse the gender inequalities in institutionalised relations that affect the distribution of resources, responsibilities and power. In the context of my study it is useful to examine the institutional construction and maintenance of gender relations through an organisational analysis, as this provides five different entry points, each revealing a different aspect of gender identity construction.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has brought together some of the key theoretical ideas and identifies conceptual tools which I use for the analysis of empirical data in the following chapters. Recognising the links between learning processes (within the notion of the learning continuum and situated learning; subject formation (through performance, symbolism and discourse); and agency and power in relation to violence towards girls across social institutions is the key focus of my analysis. Hence, it is appropriate to draw out from the above discussions exactly which concepts and ideas are useful in my own analysis of data. Since power and agency are ultimately connected to the subject matter, I analyse gender power relations at the case study site through the lens of Foucault’s notions of power. Within this framework, an important question arises about how the powerful secure the compliance of those whom they dominate,

and how some girls manage to use their agency to resist the powerful. Here, McNay's (2000; 2003) theorisation enables me to show how a reconfigured account of subjectification and agency might help in explaining shifts within contemporary gender relations. It is also necessary to look at how some of the main ideas about gender are learned and how gender and sexual identities are constructed across social institutions. Who determines what 'the right knowledge' is, and how and where is this conveyed? What young people learn in reality? Does learning 'the right knowledge' bring about some tensions? Drawing on Kabeer's (1999) framework of institutional analysis I look at social/gender relations across social institutions such as the family and school, church and community. These are some of the questions I explore through the voices of young people, teachers, authorities and parents in relation to the concepts of gender and power relations discussed in this chapter. I provide in-depth analysis of these ideas in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Chapter 5

Informal learning and the construction of gender and sexual identities in the home and through the media.

5. Introduction

In the three following chapters I analyse my data drawing on the notion of situated learning. *'Learning the right knowledge'* – a phrase I often heard in the field – guides me in the analysis whereby I look at what youth learned in informal spaces like the family and media, and what was considered as 'the right knowledge'. In my interviews and informal discussions, parents, educational authorities and teachers, spiritual leaders and clerics as well as traditional healers maintained that young people should be 'learning the right knowledge'. It seemed, however, that different people had different perspectives on what 'the right knowledge' was, yet they shared some ideas in common. For example, Baba Joaquin, the spiritual leader who led the initiation rites in the area of Beira, considered traditional knowledge necessary for young people to acquire (see Chapter 6). Similarly, parents appeared to perceive young people as *'conservadores'* (Interview: Beira, 01/09/09) – conservators of traditions; persisting gender identities and traditional norms and beliefs. Some teachers, however, were concerned about young people who *'lived in two different worlds'* and how the ideas taught in the home contrasted with what they learned at school. Clearly, it was difficult for some teachers to find the balance in addressing this gap. These complex issues made me wonder what actually constituted 'the right knowledge'; Is it reproducing the gender identity and beliefs governing the community? What are the implications of 'learning the right knowledge' for identity construction processes? Who decides what 'the right knowledge' is? How do people (particularly young people) acquire 'the right knowledge'? And who disputes 'the right knowledge'? I also wondered where young people acquired 'the right knowledge'. For all these reasons *'learning the right knowledge'* provided an important perspective for the social construction of gender and sexual identities in the analysis of my data.

This chapter needs to be understood in the context of social relations: family and kinship relations, marriage and sexual practices discussed in Chapter 2. As emphasised earlier, the family has a central place in the research context – as it does in wider society – and plays a determining role in the learning processes of children and young people. Having this in mind, I explore the kind of 'right knowledge' that adults believed young people learned in the

family realm, and how the young people viewed gender relations based on their own experience. Although learning is understood in this paper as a continuum, the idea of unstructured informal learning in the family was a useful discrete entry point for examining ‘the right knowledge’ which was learned through the family. Informal learning, as in the family context, involves exploration and everyday experience. Learning in the context of my research, for example through rites of passage, was seen as preparation for life, mainly for the new generation. This use of the category of informal learning was helpful for understanding the ways in which learning happens in families.

Listening to the young people and adults opened my eyes to a number of issues that I would have never known about if I had not engaged with their lives and their stories. Throughout the process of researching gender abuse I realised that in order to get the whole picture it is also necessary to acknowledge the complexity of gender relations among members of the fieldwork area, as what happens in schools reflects these relationships in the local community. Focusing on interfamilial relations allowed me to examine how (young) people actively create – and sometimes challenge – new gender structures and meanings as suggested by McNay (2000). The emerging new forms of autonomy and constraint (McNay, 2000) indicate that young people generate new ideas about gender relations. My analysis rests within the framework of social institutions (Kabeer, 1999) that are persistent sets of practices, learning processes, power relations, norms, interactional dynamics and ideologies. According to Arnfred relations of seniority are not well investigated and theorisations are not developed, thus the analysis may contribute with some new views on ‘hierarchies of age’ (1995: 13). Following the concepts of subjectification examined in Chapter 4, I will consider how gender and sexual identities are an ongoing ‘product’ of everyday social practices through the material and symbolic aspects of subjectification (McNay, 2000).

In the second part of this chapter I discuss the role of the media in young people’s lives. I examine what they saw themselves learning from the media, particularly from Brazilian soap operas. Drawing on the idea of informal learning (see Chapter 4) I look at how informal sources of information can be engaging and interesting, and what kind of knowledge young girls and boys acquire from them. I also look at how the access to new means of information such as television and informal groups influenced their ideas and the construction of their identities and what possible tensions they created in social relations, particularly in relations with adults.

To explore these issues in depth I use data from my focus group discussions with young people, adults/parents and workshops with young teacher trainees. In my analysis I consider the twofold objective of these activities as well as the power dynamics between the adults and young participants. I reflect upon the range of views and perspectives of the data and what voices may be missing and why.

5.1 Gender and sexuality construction in the family and community

Living in the local community made me aware of the assigned gender roles across the community and among family members. Despite emerging changes in the social relations I have discussed earlier (see Chapter 2), certain gender stereotypes seemed to be persisting within the family reflecting cultural practices, traditional values and belief systems. As explored in Chapter 4 (section 4.2), gender functions as an organising principle for society regarding the cultural meanings prescribed to a female and a male. Gender and sexual identities are established across social institutions from an early age. Boys and girls rapidly learn their respective identities as female and male. Gender norms, perpetuated by family, community, and other social institutions such as initiation rites, construct identities, as discussed in Chapter 4. Gender norms as viewed by most of the elderly people in the research site shape girls to be hardworking, obedient and submissive. With age, girls' responsibilities in the household became greater and their time is increasingly spent in and around the household space. Already during childhood a young boy learns that he has authority over a woman and household, and that he is responsible for their support. It is important for boys to know what it entails to be a responsible leader and a *cabeça da família* (head of the family). As they grow up, boys undertake more activities requiring strength, such as house construction and working on the *machamba* and the amount of time they spend on domestic chores decreases, usually offloaded onto female siblings and the wife (or wives) after marriage. These gender roles meant that the 'right knowledge' consisted, for girls, of learning how to cook and clean and run a household successfully, and for boys, how to be a household head and leader. However, some of the participants, especially young people, challenged these normative and entrenched ideas of gender roles and identities suggesting new views and ideas about gender, and what, therefore, constituted the 'right knowledge' for boys and girls to learn.

As examined in Chapter 4 the social construction of sexual identity is strongly rooted in factors that shape female and male identity. Their representation and how they are

constructed rest on values and norms about social and sexual relations, which are perpetuated through social customs. Beliefs constructed at various points in life whether within the family domain and/or through initiation rites or other community customs determine the social expectations of both men and women in the sphere of sexuality.

In Chapter 1 (section 1.2) I looked at rites of passage as important means of learning that introduce young people to sexual and reproductive life, among other life skills such as: constructing a hut, looking after children and elderly, cultivating land etc. The rituals must take place before marriage in the form of group or individual rites of passage. As I further explore in Chapter 6, seen in the context of a 'gendered worlds' (Arnfred, 1995) paradigm the initiation rites train young men to handle their future sexual life with virility through the expression and exercise of dominance and power. For a woman, the purpose of the initiation is to acquire sexual competence in order to be fully capable female members of community (and wider society) to learn to respond docilely and passively and to satisfy the demands of her partner. In this way a girl learns that the centre of her sexual life lies in establishing a social relationship with another lineage, in the possibility of capturing a high *lobolo* and in the reproduction of her husband's family (Loforte, 2003). However, as Arnfred (2011) argues, developing female sexual competence is not merely in order to please a man; women also seem to stress their own sexual pleasure. Drawing on the conceptualisations of Bourdieu (1977) the body is a public object formed through discourses and social practices. In the field context sexuality (and its expression) occurs within the pattern of values that guide how the local patrilineal community was structured and defined. Thus initiation rites teach young people what is expected of them as men and women, constructing their gender identities and giving them the 'right knowledge' to join their communities as adults.

Before moving on to examine what the young people considered 'right knowledge' and what they thought they had learned in their family and community, I look at what adults saw as 'the right knowledge' that young people should acquire in the family domain.

I organised a focus group discussion in the local *bairro* with a group of three women and three men. The participants represented different ages, marital status and occupations; one of the women (Woman 3) was 35 and married with four sons, educated to eighth grade and was looking for an administrative job: the other two (Woman 1 and Woman 2) were 25 years old, had a limited education (five years) and each had three children. They did not seem to have any aspirations to work professionally. All the men had a job; one was a carpenter (Man 3),

was in his mid 40s and had a wife and three children: the other two (Man 1 and Man 2) were in their 30s, both with two children, and did casual work when they could find it such as unloading lorries, carrying heavy sacks of corn and of flour at the market or working on construction sites. The focus group discussion was organised at the *bairros* community centre. The discussion was carried out in this mixed group, which had implications for the group's dynamics, as I explain later in this section. My focus here was on what adults considered 'the right knowledge' for young people to acquire and what should be learned in the family. The participants were asked to draw on their own experience and give examples from their own relationships. As I analyse the focus group discussion I also look at the dynamics of the group.

In the table below I present their views of the characteristics of gender roles that young people should learn within the family realm.

Table 5.1 Learning in the family

<i>Women's views</i>	<i>Men's views</i>
<i>Woman 1: Our role is to be a woman. To take care of our families, our children, to make sure that our children and husbands have food, to wash clothes, to bring up our children. Young people should obey God's words.</i>	<i>Man 1: A woman still has a very important domestic role. A woman takes care of our homes and our families: in this respect we're very traditional. The woman is the primary caretaker when it comes to elderly and children. They usually don't work professionally, so it's much easier to leave these kinds of problems to her – she is prepared to do this anyway.</i>
<i>Woman 3: We want to obey our traditions, our ancestors. Young girls should know the values that our community represents and they should respect them.</i>	<i>Man 3: A woman doesn't work professionally: for example I don't expect my wife to work. I'm satisfied with her taking care of our house and children. Women should know their place and mothers should teach girls.</i>
<i>Woman 2: I want my daughters to become excellent mothers because young women seem not to care so much: they don't realise the responsibility of being a mother and a wife. Girls they need to remember what God told us.</i>	<i>Man 1: Nowadays some girls want to get an education, and that's fine, but they shouldn't forget to be good wives and mothers.</i>
<i>Woman 3: Women's position in society is very low [lit. 'on the ground'] and we aren't respected by our men. But we depend on them. Only women</i>	<i>Man 3: It's very difficult to change because we are brought up with different tasks. Our lives are divided as man and woman. A man is supposed to hunt and</i>

<i>themselves know how much they suffer. I think for many people [i.e. men] it isn't a problem. It's important for young women to know/learn their position in the family.</i>	<i>do hard work while a woman is expected to do all the domestic work.</i>
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(FGD: Beira, 06/04/09)

In the beginning of the focus group discussion I became aware that the participants found it difficult approaching the subject matter. The women were not willing to start presenting and the discussion was initiated by the men chatting among themselves about what they thought the female role should be and what they should be doing. Interestingly this provoked the women to talk about lack of respect for their hard work and commitment to the family. Whilst listening to the discussion I observed complex dynamics among the participants. Although there were not significant age differences between the participants, I could observe the hierarchies of age (seniority) among the participants; younger women seemed to be shy or even intimidated by the other participants and maybe by the situation. Following Arnfred's (1995) argument about age and status hierarchies in matrilineal communities; relations between women change during a life cycle. Older women use their seniority to 'oppress' young women. Other relations between women, however, are more stable and not just oppressive (Arnfred, 1995). For example, the relations between polygamous wives were often seen by the women themselves as a relation between sisters (ibid). As research from Mozambique shows, relations of seniority, however, are not well investigated and conceptualised. It is, therefore, important to note lacking representation of elders that are a significant group in the social stratification.

The table above shows that both female and male participants linked learning with women's role in the domestic sphere. Following Arnfred's theorisation of gendered worlds and borderlines in the northern parts of Mozambique, women's and men's lives are separated. As she describes: "women go off together hauling water and fetching firewood" and "men spend time with men" (1995: 6). Females' and males' lives in the fieldwork setting are socially and spatially separated for much of the day; women typically spend more time in and around the household doing domestic chores while men engage in other work outside the home (Arnfred, 1995). Although the research took place in central Mozambique, there were strong similarities between what I observed and experienced, and what Arnfred reported from the north of Mozambique. For example, a clear division of gender lives (see Table 5.1 above) observed by the participants who prescribed the role of 'caretaker' for women and 'hunter'

for men. These symbolic characteristics assigned to females and males explicitly resonate with the adults' expectations of their children. Central to understanding how gender and sexual identities are formed is the transformations that individual undergoes in the course of participation in activity in terms of a trajectory of 'legitimate peripheral participation' (Lave and Wenger, 1991). This theory describes the idea that a young person (newcomer) learns through a process of integration from the periphery of the community of practice into the centre, to full participation in the social organism. This type of 'apprenticeship' to expected behaviour shows how adults' expectations and understandings of gender roles shape young people's identities through their participation in social life and community activities. Alternatively, we may understand the process as one of subjectification; the 'production' through a series of actions of a constitutive body such as rites of passage explored in Chapter 6.

In the context of changing gender relations in Mozambique, however, space and activities that used to be gendered have been under transition too (see section 2.1). Clearly, the participants of the focus group represented one of the views upon gender - the binary approach to gender – and the views explored by the group did not leave much room for new forms and restructuring of gender relations.

Returning to the perceptions of the focus group, the structure of power in the gender order is based on assumptions of what it means to be a woman and a man. The institutions of family and marriage embody relations of power that operate through local ideologies and beliefs. Power in this framework, as suggested by Kabeer, governs "the unequal distribution of resources and responsibilities" (1999: 15). In the focus group the women talked about how they are assigned a certain position in the family, which young women should learn to assume. The unequal power relations, seen by the women as their '*low position in society*', underpin their role and (financial) dependence on their husbands. I felt that the comment about women's '*low position in society*' made some of the men uneasy or even defensive in the case of Man 3. It seemed to me that they were not pleased to hear how the women felt about their status in society. As some men attempted to explain, women and men are brought up to perform different tasks: Man 3 referred to the '*division of lives*': '*A man is supposed to hunt and do hard work while a woman is expected to do all the domestic work*'. This rapid change in the group dynamics made me wonder why Woman 3 made this comment, and

when I asked the other two women how they felt about their status, they did not give a clear answer and started to talk about a different issue.

I felt that Man 3 tried to apologise for this order of things. He seemed to genuinely appreciate the effort that women put into domestic work. He explained that he did not expect his wife to work professionally and acknowledged that he was '*satisfied with her taking care of our house and children*'. I became aware that Man 3 felt embarrassed and I could hear awkwardness in his voice. It was not clear to me how he was '*satisfied*' with his wife's domestic role. Looking through Ardener's (1975) lens, men represent the dominant voice in a society. To become respected members of society women must transform their perceptions and models of perceiving into the terms – the language, expressions and genre – of the dominant male groups (ibid). As Man 3 maintained, he did not require his wife to get a professional job and was happy with the domestic arrangements. It seemed to me as if he did not notice the changes happening in the society or he did not want to see the changes to happen?

Reflecting on the data from this focus group discussion it would have been interesting to investigate the changes that have happened in the community in past years. Participation of older people in the discussion could have given more in-depth insights into how gender relations have been changing and from the perspective of time they could recognise individuals' 'creative' response to remodelling of identity (McNay, 2000). Following the idea of generative framework (McNay, 2000) this could also bring more information about women's autonomous behaviour in the past and how they may act now within the context of social changes occurring in the country.

After I learned what adults considered 'the right knowledge' about gender relations I wanted to find out how young people understood the idea about 'learning the right knowledge' and how they experienced it.

Workshops with the students at the IFP provided interesting insights about gender relations and gender roles in social interactions with focus on the family. I organised four workshops with two groups of students, as described in Chapter 3: one group with 35 (12 female and 23 male) and the other with 32 participants (6 female and 26 male). For the activities they were divided into smaller, female and male groups, with 6-8 participants. I conducted similar activities with both groups and I draw here from the data from all the workshops.

During one of the initial sessions I asked everybody to reflect on gender identities in their families and then to analyse them in their groups. I indicated that I was interested to hear about their own experience of the interfamilial relationships; relations between their parents or other caregivers and other members of the family. The groups were asked to compile lists of characteristics of men and women from their discussions (see Figure 5.1 and 5.2).



Figure 5.1 Female group working on female and male characteristics



Figure 5.2 A male student presenting group work

The lists (see Table 5.2) were used as the starting point for debates which I discuss below. This exercise shows how I involved the students in reflecting upon their own situation and how they engaged with the process.

Table 5.2 Summary of female and male characteristics presented by the groups

<i>Characteristics of a female</i>	<i>Characteristics of a male</i>
<i>Domestic worker; educator; sensible; submissive; takes good care of her husband and children; takes care of her husband's extended family, of the old and the sick; sensitive; creative (taking care of the house); sentimental; patient; obedient; needs to listen not only to her husband but also to the elders of the family; 'pode ser loboloda' (she can be married off); she needs to go through initiation rites; she usually cannot study; she suffers; she is beautiful.</i>	<i>Cabeça da família (head of the family); he gives orders; he is proud and always right; he is a politician in the house; he is the one to take decisions at home; he is sexually more active (often exercises polygamy); he maintains the hierarchy in the family/society; he is aggressive; he is responsible financially and socially for creating a family and protecting it; a man always gets the most in the family (food, attention, space); he does not work in the kitchen and he does not wash his clothes; he has authority (woman depends financially on her husband therefore she accepts everything); he is independent; he is better educated than a woman; he does not need to explain himself; he can choose the woman he wants; the initiation rites encourage a man to 'try' as many women as possible before he marries.</i>

(Workshop: Beira, 13/08/09)

When discussing the lists with the participants a very important point was made to start with: to them it seemed that the female attributes were about '*limitations*' in life as opposed to those reflecting '*freedom*' in the male list. It was a valuable observation, however, a few statements on the lists puzzled me and I asked the students whether this polarised view about women's and men's lives could not be challenged. A very controversial debate started with the girls arguing that women have less access to resources such as knowledge and networks to accomplish their work. Some of the girls argued further that women still find themselves '*trapped in a submissive position*' because their husbands have paid the *lobolo* and therefore they have to obey them: '*man is chefe da familia [head of the family] and he is superior. He is the last one to return home without being questioned*' (Workshop: Beira, 13/08/09). The perceptions about this tradition were divided between those who supported it as a form of agreement and security for the girl, and those who thought it was an unnecessary and outdated custom. While some of the female students considered *lobolo* as reinforcement of male power and superiority, others argued that it was a good way of assurance and 'security money' for the couple. I think that the discrepancies could reflect the multiple cultures and differences in traditional practices represented by the participants. As I mentioned in Chapter 3, the participants came from different parts of the country, hence they represented a range of different beliefs and ideas.

Some of the male students observed the responsibility of keeping a woman '*fed*' and '*happy*' otherwise she would find another man. Lack of money can bring a marriage to an end: '*A man without money who can no longer support his family risks his woman leaving him for somebody else*' (Workshop: Beira, 13/08/09). According to the male students a man is proud to be the only bread winner in the family: '*It's a huge responsibility which needs to be handled by a man: our grandfathers and our fathers have managed it, so can we!*' (Workshop: Beira, 13/08/09). Some of the male participants, however, expressed anxiety about the material demands put upon them by their girlfriends/wives and their families. Some of the male participants acknowledged that they will never get married as they simply did not have money to pay *lobolo* and because they cannot guarantee a decent life for their future family, they cannot be considered trustworthy among the members of their community. Consequently, the social construction of what a man should represent might hinder some of those young people to start their own family.

Nevertheless, some of the trainee teachers suggested that often family expectations and social pressure (regardless of the area they came from) influenced their choices and the way they acted. In the process of their identity formation they seemed to undergo physical, symbolic and discursive influence from their respective communities. As I explored Bourdieu's theorisation the body is a public object although experienced as private, it is formed through social practices in formal and informal sites of learning.

Likewise some of the young men pointed to social expectations that also had an impact on sexuality and sexual identity: *'If you don't have a lot of sex the community thinks something is wrong with you'* (Workshop: Beira, 13/08/09). Sexuality seemed to be an important issue that the young people brought up. As some of the female participants assured me, man's ability to satisfy a woman sexually was sometimes as important as his abilities to support her and the children economically. Thus, men's sexual performance preserved a male domination through the sexual satisfaction of the female partner and fulfilling her needs.

Some of the female students also explained that husbands are not usually faithful and that it is culturally acceptable for them to have as many women as they want. This suggested to me that affairs must be 'common knowledge', and the more people know about them, the higher the man's status in the community. This is in line with Bourdieu's (2001) observation that sexual intercourse in many cultures is represented as an act of domination and as a symbol of male possession of a woman. When economic means are out of reach, young men seem to develop sexual capital (Groes-Green, 2009) that ensures respect among young women and community. Changing social organisation (see Chapter 2), allowed new negotiations between genders to emerge and not only men, but also women seem to be able negotiate multiple relations with men (see below).

Similarly to the focus group discussions with adults, the findings from the workshop reflect Foucault's work on micro-mechanisms whereby power and power dynamics can be observed in everyday life. As a few of the participants put forward the idea of sharing financial and domestic responsibilities, questions about *'men's power'* were raised. According to both female and male participants, men do not do domestic work and it was *'unthinkable for a man to cook'*. And even if men wanted to help:

Male 4: *When you try help with domestic work – cooking, washing – some people (your neighbours) might think that your wife put something in your food or she put a spell on you so you don't know what you're doing.* (Workshop: Beira, 13/08/09)

The female students did not seem to like the idea either, not believing that *'a man can support the woman in domestic work'* (Workshop: Beira, 13/08/09). They argued that the general belief is that household tasks do not concern men: *'It is part of the 'silent agreement' that only women take care of chores'* (Workshop: Beira, 13/08/09). I understood that the *'silent agreement'* implied that gender identities are not negotiable, however, a number of examples given by the group showed that they actually are open to discussion. For example, some of the young men argued that *'sometimes women are interested in having control over the house (...) some [women] think they're best at doing domestic chores and we shouldn't interfere'* (Workshop: Beira, 13/08/09). Other male students pointed out that women can demand help from men, as certain responsibilities are open to discussion *'when a child is sick, she should be able to ask my husband to go to the hospital ... otherwise she will miss a day from school [referring to the female colleagues in the class]'* (Workshop: Beira, 13/08/09). For some of the female students this was unthinkable and they expressed scepticism: *'Well, of course we think we are best at domestic work because you never bother to make an effort to show that you can'* (Workshop: Beira, 13/08/09).

On the whole, the debate revealed some important complexities in gender relations (as understood by the students) and possibilities for their negotiation. As according to McNay's generative framework (see Chapter 4); it is up to individual's "creative or imaginative aspects to action which is essential to understanding various modalities of agency" (2000: 21). The nuances in the relationships between women and men that the students came up with suggested the diversity in customary processes represented by the communities the students came from. Consequently learning through different means opens a possibility for the participants to challenge the stereotypes to which their respective community adheres. Surely, the opinion about what constitutes 'the right knowledge' is going to change each time they are going to be exposed to new ideas. Thus, young people's ideas about the 'right knowledge', although strongly informed by social expectations from their elders, were more fluid and subject to individual interpretation and change, than adults'. The negotiations between male and female young people seemed to show new forms of agency and multiple subjectivities. I later suggest (section 5.3) that this agency is developed through new and informal means of learning, such as media.

In these sessions the dynamics among the young people seemed to differ from the gender relations in the adults' group. I observed that the girls were not reluctant to speak and that

their comments provoked some interesting discussions. They clearly disputed many of the ideas and stereotypes established in the focus group discussions with adults. The emergence of these new ideas among young people may be indicating changes regarding gender roles taking place in the research site. This made me wonder if they also challenged these beliefs in their own families, and what implications this had for interfamilial relations. The trainees seemed to feel that they needed to discuss many issues and the workshops catered for some of these debates. In retrospect I could see that the sessions fostered a process of learning through the exchange of ideas and critical engagement in the discussions. In line with Freire's (1970) idea explored in section 3.3, the sessions enabled the process of conscientization and genuine participation by drawing on the young people's experience (O'Kane, 2008). Prior to doing my fieldwork I had not anticipated 'action' as an effect of the activities. However, the workshops with the teacher trainees showed that this learning process was beneficial not only for the students but also for me, the researcher.

After the sessions I wondered to what extent the trainees would challenge the issues they had critically engaged with. The trainees represented the young generation that relies considerably on the media and hence have new ideas about 'the right knowledge' which I discuss later in this chapter. In the discussions they showed awareness of the complexities of gender relations as they challenged the idea of what 'the right knowledge', according to adults was. I observed that often these kinds of discrepancies in ideas provoked clashes and disputes among youth and parents or other senior family members.

5.2 Child abuse in the family and community

Drawing on the concept of cultural perceptions of womanhood and manhood explored above, kinship discussed in Chapter 2 and the perception of 'the child' in the local community (see Chapter 2), in this section I examine interfamilial relationships and child abuse in the family and community. Within the framework of hierarchies of age (Arnfred, 1995) the norms legitimise the accordance of respect and deference to adults (see Chapter 4). Certainly hierarchical relationships may be generous, caring and supportive, and most importantly they are means for most learning in one way or another as I have explored above (see also Chapter 1). It is not my intention to disregard aspects of positive intergenerational relations, but I want to point to the possible elements of conflicts and abuse within hierarchical relationships. As my research is about identifying the link between constructing gender and violence across social institutions, it requires investigation into the family and community. At the same time I

feel that omitting some data could result in missing out important findings contributing to the understanding of the subject matter.

In this section I present stories of young people whom I met during my fieldwork. During this research I learned about the following abusive situations in the home and community: incest and early marriage, and transactional sexual relations between young girls and sugar daddies. The stories illustrate various aspects of abuse, why it occurs and the forms it takes.

5.2.1 Incest

Incest refers to sexual abuse that occurs within the family. In the research context it seemed to be perpetrated by a father, stepfather, uncles and cousins or other male member in a position of family trust, against a female family member. In my informal conversations with community members, different people unambiguously criticised incestuous practices, placing particular emphasis on the moral implications of an adult abusing the confidence of a child and exploiting his position. In the research community, the terms ‘*pai*’ and ‘*mãe*’ (father and mother) are culturally defined and are used not only to identify kinship relations but also more generally to express respect. This implies that an adult addressed this way has a responsibility toward the child as one of his own kin. Neglecting these responsibilities is considered as breaking social custom. Consequently, a man who sexually abuses a child abuses his role both as a father and as a role model. It is important to note, however, that while the family member who perpetrates the abuse is generally considered the offender, however, the child involved might also be partly held responsible for the situation.

‘I don’t want to be his wife!’ Case study: Anna

I met Anna only a couple of times. She was one of the students at the local secondary school. One day when I arrived at school I heard from the maths teacher, Mrs Rosario, that Anna was in trouble. I was worried because nobody knew what was the matter with her. Other teachers commented that lately she had been ‘moody’ and ‘weeping’ whenever she showed up at school. A few days later I found her in the school corridor.

I’m meeting Anna in the corridor. Her eyes are red. She was crying. She doesn’t want to look straight at me. She’s embarrassed. Her eyes are confused and full of pain. Anna’s late for the first lesson and doesn’t have the courage to enter the classroom. I ask her whether she wants to go downstairs under the tree. She’s now looking into my eyes and giving me a tiny smile. We are sitting on a bench under the tree where the sun can’t reach us. Anna is still very quiet, but she isn’t crying any more. I ask her what has happened. She’s murmuring: ‘Oh it’s nothing ... just my stepfather’. She’s looking down nervously and playing with a piece of paper in her hands. Then she continues, ‘He doesn’t want to let me go’. ‘Do you mean he

doesn't want you to go to school?', I ask. She's shaking her head. 'What then?' I ask again. I don't understand what she's trying to tell me. Then Anna's telling me the whole story about her mother, who passed away few months ago leaving four siblings. The siblings are the children of her stepfather. Anna lost her father long time ago. She can hardly remember him and doesn't even know how or why he passed away. Anna's telling me that her stepfather has been trying to 'make her his wife' since her mother's death, 'He wants me to look after the children, cook and clean and be his wife'. What do you mean 'to be his wife'? I ask. Anna looks at me and her eyes are full of tears again, 'He's been trying to get into my room ... but I always put the small children in front of me, so he can't reach me' (...) 'I don't want to be his wife. I don't want him to touch me! I don't want anything from him. I wish I could go somewhere he couldn't find me'. Anna is 16 years old and wants to finish her education. She wants to have a job and be independent. (Fieldnotes: Beira, 28/02/09)

The extract from my fieldnotes illustrates Anna's difficult situation. It shows how her stepfather's exercise of his power could have serious implications for her future life. Shortly before the conversation I had with Anna she had lost her mother and it seemed she had not had time to grieve. Instead she had been struggling against her stepfather's advances. Anna's mother had been sick for a long time and Anna had not had the chance to visit and to get to know her extended family. Now she was forced to stay with her stepfather. She did not know where to turn for help. Anna seemed trapped in this situation. She was embarrassed and exhausted. She did not have the energy to sit in lessons and cried all the time. She told me she was anxious about going back home after school every day, yet she was aware that she had to go or she could be punished for not doing her chores or taking care of the siblings.

I discussed Anna's case with Mrs Rosario, who was responsible for the school's Gender Group and in contact with the local ActionAid office. Mrs Rosario was a very active person and I hoped she would be able to help in this situation. However, I noticed that she talked about the case with a certain hesitation as she explained that it was sensitive and complicated. She did not want to confront the stepfather, as she thought it could create even more problems for the girl.

Anna was just one of many local girls facing a difficult situation with different family members. Other girls I talked to shared stories about uncles and neighbours coming into their rooms, trying to talk to them and touching them in ways they did not like. They had been too embarrassed to share their experience with anybody and were afraid that nobody would believe them anyway.

5.2.2 Early marriage

As discussed in Chapter 1 (section 1.3) early marriage stills occurs in the research context (as well as in the rest of the country) although it is difficult to know the extent of it. As I was told, a girl is expected to give up her childhood and assume the responsibilities of a woman when she marries. This includes engaging in sexual relations with a husband who might be considerably older than she, and who she might not have chosen. In this way, early marriage can be considered as a means of legitimising child sexual abuse. According to the international legislations such as the DEVAW discussed in Chapter 1 this traditional custom is also regarded as commercial sexual exploitation of children in cases where parents marry off a girl for economic profit.

During one of my visits to the outskirts of Beira with a project officer from a local association, Mr Cujena, we visited a few rural households where I talked to the parents and caregivers about the problems they had been facing. This way I learned that many poor families chose to marry their daughters off. Parents explained that this was in done in order to secure *lobolo* or to ensure food and shelter for their daughters. Two cases that I learned of are detailed below:

Adelia

A six-year-old girl, Adelia, was living with her grandmother in a bamboo hut and they had no land and no money to survive. As they were very poor, Adelia had never attended school. She used to help her grandmother working on others' fields to earn enough money for food. Sometimes they worked for just a bag of flour. Poverty forced the old grandmother to marry her granddaughter off. She agreed on lobolo of 500MZN (15USD) with a middle-aged man from the village. The girl did not know anything about it. The grandmother explained to the project officer, 'Once she's married she'll have to work hard, but she'll get food and shelter. As you can see I don't have money to support her'

Mr Cujena went to see the future husband and explained the situation. He gave the money back. Then Mr Cujena sought out the extended family of the girl. He found her uncle and aunt living not so far away. He told them the whole story and asked them if they would take care of the girl. They were happy and welcomed her into her family. Unfortunately Mr Cujena was not able to go back to visit the girl and the family, but he hoped that the family was taking good care of her.

Rosa, a 14-year-old girl, became a second wife

A mother 'sold' her 14-year-old daughter for lobolo of 2500MZN (70USD) to a married man. The mother explained that Rosa was the right age to get married. She further explained that she lives alone and her financial situation was very bad.

Mr Cujena and I went to visit Rosa at her husband's house. She was in the middle of domestic chores. The first wife was sitting next to her. Apparently we had just missed the husband. He had left for South Africa to buy products for his stall. The wife said 'I went with

my husband to the girl's house to pay the lobolo. My husband wanted to have one more woman to help me with all the work in the house'. While we were talking to the first wife she sent the girl to take care of the clients at the stall.

Afterwards we spoke with Rosa. She had been doing well in school and wanted to become a teacher. She was in seventh grade when she was married off. Rosa knew she'd never go back to school. (Fieldnotes: Beira, 15/12/08)

I was perplexed by these cases and discussed the matter of parental power and neglect with Mr Cujena, who has assisted in many similar cases. He explained that some parents marry their daughters off because their position allows them to do so, and others do it because it is in line with commonly understood and practiced norms. Mr Cujena mentioned the growing number of children living with the consequences of HIV/AIDS. The financial burden of caring for orphaned young people often falls on their aged grandparents and other relatives, and it threatens household food security: as a result the children are sent away as labour to other households, as in the cases of Adelia and Rosa. Thus girls' early marriage can be a result of poverty, where parents or carers feel that the children have a chance of a better life if they are married to a man who can materially better provide for them. This is an adaptation of the customary practice of *lobolo*.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the status of the child in the local community and in the country as a whole is controlled by commonly-agreed customary rules as well as by national legislation. This allows parents or other caregivers to make decisions about their children's lives and act upon them. In Adelia's case, after her parents' death, her grandmother took her into her household and supported her for as long as she could. Finally when the grandmother fell sick she decided to 'exchange' Adelia for the *lobolo*. The continuation of traditional rules similarly determined Rosa's life. At the age of 14 she had to leave her education and her dream of becoming a teacher to become the second wife of a man she did not know. As the *lobolo* was paid to her mother she was now expected to live up to a role of a wife. Although the institution of *lobolo* traditionally has a deeper meaning in marriage and kinship, the purpose and content of the practice has been changing. In neither of the above examples was the *lobolo* meant to ascertain the continuation of the lineage: rather they illustrate the transformation of the practice as determined by poverty. In the absence of formal insurance mechanisms, brideprice provides an important security-enhancing institution, which can alleviate poverty and to some extent ensure the value of the wife and therefore her good treatment. It is unclear how much early marriage occurs, but it is clearly more prevalent in the poorer sections of society, and seems to be an economic strategy and often a last resort.

Exploring familial relationships in the research context has brought out the complexities in relations across such social institutions as the family and the community. My underpinning assumption was that what is happening in the schools reflects the situation in the home and the community, and for that reason I chose to expand my study to the proximity of the school to examine relations between parents and their children and social relations in the community. The findings show that kinship and familial relations in the fieldwork site have important implications for young people's lives and their future. The above examples reflect Foucault's work on micro-mechanisms whereby power and power dynamics can be observed in everyday life (see section 4.3). In this way, like other institutions the family is a site of the reproduction of hierarchical power relations.

5.2.3 Commercial sexual exploitation: *titios* and teenage girls

Participants in this study suggested that it was not uncommon for local girls to engage in commercial sexual activities. In most cases poverty was mentioned as the main reason that leads young girls to sell their bodies in exchange for money or material goods. As I discussed in Chapter 1 commercial sexual exploitation is a common phenomenon across the globe although it takes different forms and strategies.

In the research context I found out that apart from sexual relations with boys some adolescent girls chose to engage in relations with older men – 'sugar daddies' or *titios* (uncles). Affairs with sugar daddies, as often opposed to relations with boys, can be seen as a transaction that is usually consensual. In conversations with young people I learned that sexual activities are frequently exchanged for financial and material goods in the local area.

Sugar daddies are often seen in the literature as a phenomenon associated with both age and economic asymmetries, and they are believed to limit young women's power to negotiate safe sexual behaviour and hence have serious implications for their sexual and reproductive health (Bagnol and Chamo, 2003). As I discussed earlier (see Chapter 2), diverse socio-cultural and economic factors may be involved in sexual relationships between teenage girls and *titios* in the research setting. In this section I explain some of the circumstances behind why some young women engage in such relationships and the men's motivations. I present the stories of two girls I met while doing my fieldwork. First I look at their reasons for maintaining relationships with *titios*. Then I summarise my findings about men's motivations, which I gathered from informal conversations with men. Finally I look at how men's and girls' motivations interact in the framework of transactional sex.

Below I present extracts of the stories of two girls that I got to know during my fieldwork. The first is about Laura, a 16-year-old who I met at a local restaurant. While Laura was waiting for her *amante*⁵⁵ we engaged in a conversation. Laura seemed to be a very friendly young woman. She shared her story over a couple of times that I met with her:

Laura's story

Laura (L): *It was a decision I took in a moment. I was walking home from school. I wasn't in a hurry. I didn't want to go back to the chores that were waiting for me and I didn't want to listen to my parents' quarrels. My father was drinking again last night and my mother would be lamenting about her life.*

Suddenly a car pulled up and a man looked out of the window. He wanted to ask me something. He said he wasn't sure he was going in the right direction. We started to chat. He was nice. He asked me if I would like a soft drink. We sat at the nearby stall and talked. He asked me what I was doing and so I told him I wanted to study and I wanted to become somebody important. He was laughing at first. Then he told me I was pretty and asked whether I wanted to see him again (...) We met again and we went for a walk on the beach. Talking with him was different to talking with my boyfriend. Armanio knew something about life and he treated me as a proper woman. I told him about my boyfriend, but somehow Armanio didn't mind. He said that it's just a kind of brincadeira (game) with my boyfriend. I continued to meet him and our relationship was becoming more intimate. He started to bring me small presents. The first time I didn't want to take it, but then it was easy (...) He was nice to me and he was buying me things: clothes, shoes, earrings etc.

Researcher (R): *What about your parents? Didn't they notice the new clothes?*

L: *They were too busy with their own lives, and I think my mother found out but was probably happier not to discuss it with me. Anyway it was better for her, as I stopped asking for money. If it wasn't for Armanio I wouldn't be able to continue studying.*

(Interview: Beira, 02/12/09)

Vera was Laura's friend, and like Laura she was also seeing an older man, but for her it was not her first such experience. When I met Vera she was 17 years old and had dropped out of school some time earlier. Vera had had sugar daddies since she was 15. Her account shows that her first affair with a sugar daddy was anything but sweet:

Vera's story

Vera (V): *I started seeing the first man because I wanted nice shoes and a mobile phone. I was at secondary school, 15-year-old. You see, my mother couldn't provide me with all these things: she could hardly afford a second-hand uniform for me and my siblings. I wanted to come to school and be able to show my friends something new. My girlfriends were so jealous when they saw me with my new clothes and earrings and other things. They envied me so much. I was driving around in a car and he was taking me to the beach and we were eating out.*

Researcher (R): *So what did you have to do in return?*

⁵⁵ In the conversations the girls referred to sugar daddies in different ways; '*amante*', '*titio*', '*namorado*' (boyfriend) or simply '*homem*' (man), suggesting a lack of emotional connection.

V: Well, we had sex.

R: Had you ever had sex before you met this man?

V: No, but he showed me how to do it and what he liked. It was fun.

R: How old was he?

V: Thirty-nine, I think. He had a family. But it didn't matter because we met often and he spent time only with me.

R: Did he promise to marry you?

V: [laughing] No, no! Who would want such an old man?! It was only to get stuff; clothes, a mobile phone, earrings and shoes. I wanted to have nice things just like any other girl. And then eating out and being treated as an adult was good fun.

R: So what happened? Are you still seeing him?

V: [her face changing suddenly] I got pregnant. We never used condoms. And when I told him he beat me up. He was furious. I don't even remember how I got home. I hurt all over my body. I was crying. I fall asleep, and in the evening I woke up with more pain. I was afraid and didn't know what to do. My mother wasn't at home and so I went to see my auntie. She called for my mother. When my mother arrived she started to punch me, screaming: 'You whore! How could you do it! You have brought shame on this family!' She threw me out of the house and hasn't wanted to see me since (...)

In the beginning I stayed with some members of our extended family, I promised to help them in the house, but this was causing conflict in the family. As soon as they realised that I was pregnant they didn't want me to live with them any more.

Eventually I dropped out of school. I didn't have a place to stay and my stomach was growing. I still had some money, so I went to see a local woman to 'take it out'. I didn't want to have a child (...) After I recovered I started seeing another man. I knew that this was the only way I could support myself (...) sex was an easy way of getting material and financial support.

And the amante I'm going to meet now is my third man. He's got money and I'll try to 'stick to him' for a long time. He can buy me many things.

R: Were you thinking about going back to school?

V: [taking her time to answer] Mmmm ... I don't know. I think it'd be difficult. Now when I know different this life and I know how to keep myself alive... I'm not sure!

(Interview: Beira, 02/12/09)

Both girls agreed that they had chosen to engage with older men mainly for financial reasons and that sex had become the key to monetary transactions. Although the girls felt they had no other alternatives for maintenance and “*giving sex*” was an easy way of getting material and financial support’ it did not appear that they engaged in these relationships due to poverty. Vera, for example, wanted ‘*nice shoes and a mobile phone*’ and seemed to enjoy showing off her new things to her friends. Laura’s situation at home was difficult, with a father who drank a lot and an unemployed mother who was trying to make ends meet. Laura felt that her parents were occupied with their own problems and probably did not even notice. Yet when talking to her I had the impression that she was not poor and got involved in the relationship with a *titio* because he ‘*treated her as a proper woman*’ and showed her affection. In contrast

to the prevailing discourse about poverty as represented by local people such as Benito and female secondary students in Chapter 7 (section 7.2), these interviews made me aware that some girls chose to engage with sugar daddies in order to gain extravagant commodities and affection. These 'specific needs' produced an opportunity for learning whereby the girls learned part of the sexual expectations of being an adult woman.

As I learned from the girls, sometimes it was better not to tell anyone about their affairs with sugar daddies because people in the local community were inclined to be judgemental. For example, girls who got pregnant were often blamed for it because they '*invited*' men with their lascivious behaviour. As I show later, sugar daddy relations was not accepted among the population and could provoke exclusion from both family and community, as happened in Vera's case. Despite the negative discourse Vera seemed very open with her friends about the relationship and it was important to her to present it as a source of new materials: clothes, shoes and jewellery and thereby status among her friends. To return to the issue of sexual abuse and poverty, in Vera's case transactional sex was not only about earning money to meet her living expenses. Through the relationship she gained not only possessions but also higher status among her friends; she had used her sexuality to form a higher-status identity. She expressed satisfaction at possessing something that her girlfriends envied. This reasoning behind entering into a sugar daddy relationship exposes some of the creative aspects of the approach to agency (McNay, 2000) that girls can manifest. The relationship is a true transaction, with both parties getting something they desired. So girls here have learned to use their sexuality to their advantage, outside of culturally accepted behaviour, in order to gain possessions and status. This is not reflected in the focus groups discussions described above as part of the 'woman's role', showing how individuals can use their creative agency to adapt or to flout social expectations to their personal advantage (McNay, 2000). In this way, these girls also learned through action that relationships can be negotiated to their advantage. Their 'agentic' power raises a question whether their identity become outside the norm that they are unable to find a husband and to 'rejoin the mainstream'? However, as discussed earlier, some girls, feeling trapped in a bad socio-economic situation, paying for their school uniforms, books and other supplies with difficulty, entered into a relationship without thinking much about the consequences. Vera's main motive was her desire for status and possession, but what are men's motives?

Informal conversations with men revealed that they hardly ever admitted to engaging in transactional relations with adolescent girls. Even the men that I knew were involved in such a relationship denied it, and they talked about it as if it did not regard them. I wondered whether they were afraid of the consequences and did not want to get into trouble with the local community. Maybe they did not feel they could trust me, or they were simply embarrassed. I supposed that they rarely – if ever – talked about this issue with a (white) woman, yet they spoke openly to me about it.

The men explained that transactional relations with teenage girls are motivated by a variety of interlinked reasons, but it was clear that age is an important factor. The men mentioned that in most instances they seek out adolescent female partners for two reasons: for sexual satisfaction and the greater erotic stimulation of a young woman; and to gain status among their male friends. Relations with teenage girls are unproblematic for older men: *'Whenever they want, they get [sexual favours] and they even don't have to ask for it. A little gift makes a girl happy so she is willing 'to pay for it' and everybody is happy'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 06/02/09). Consequently these relationships are established with unequal power relations and economic asymmetries and seem not only uncomplicated but also safer and cheaper than using prostitutes. These inequalities embodied in relations with sugar daddies have important implications for young women's ability to negotiate safe sexual behaviour. Relationships with sugar daddies apparently carry a great threat of HIV infection for young women (see for example, Luke and Kurz, 2002). *Titios* control the conditions of sexual intercourse, including the use of condoms and violence, and they are often engaged in parallel relations as in Laura's case. Apparently sugar daddies enjoy diverse partners, as some of the men observed: *'It's good to have many possibilities and to keep them open'*. Usually sugar daddies are married with families, but this does not hinder them from having sexual relations with one or more adolescents at the same time. This suggests that *titios* are in a position to decide what kinds of relationships they want. While transactional relationships are more liable to violence, none of the girls shared their experience of violent partners.

The sugar daddy phenomenon is a multifaceted factor in the framework of gender relations and the stories of Laura and Vera represent only some of its complexities. Young girls had different motivations for getting involved with *titios*. Some girls, for example, engage with older men not only for financial reasons but also seeking affection and experimenting with how to be with a man and how to be 'treated as a proper woman'. I wish I had had more

opportunity to conduct focus group discussions and/or interviews in pairs with older men and young women together in examine in depth how their motivations interacted. Informal conversations with my female neighbours brought some insights about how wives viewed the relationships between older men and young women. In Chapter 7 (section 7.4) I discuss the motivations for women ‘turning a blind eye’ and why they decided to stay with their partners. I was particularly interested in learning Emalia’s view as I was aware that her husband had mistresses, as was she. She admitted that she was financially dependent on her husband and did not want to ask her parents to pay the *lobolo* back. Emalia thought that young girls had better chances of ‘*catching older men (...) especially if the money is good: they would do anything*’ (Fieldnotes: Beira, 05/11/09). She saw girls’ bodies as an important asset: ‘*What can I do with this body after giving birth to so many children?!*’ (Fieldnotes: Beira, 05/11/09). Emalia did not appear angry or bitter. She seemed to accept her powerlessness in the situation.

Above I have covered some of the aspects of relationships between older men and young girls. Engaging in intergenerational relations is a means of economic survival for some girls, while for others it is a way to benefit from possessions, status and affection. Drawing on two stories I have examined some of the motives that lead girls and older men to enter into transactional relations and the consequences. Relations between adolescent girls and older men – their sugar daddies – in the fieldwork setting involved both age and economic asymmetries. Although such relationships limit young women’s power to negotiate their sexual behaviour it is important to remember that they were not passive. In seeking new forms of agency Laura and Vera actively started their relationships with their sugar daddies and were not subject to male domination. Vera, for example, was able to negotiate her position at the beginning of the relationship, although once she got pregnant the man withdrew. In this way, both girls also challenged the notion of the ‘right knowledge’ represented by other members of the same community. Although it is difficult to draw general conclusions from the two examples above, it is clear that new forms of gender identity and agency emerged in the context of the research.

The section above discusses issues of abuse which I discovered in my research. The forms described here are specific to girls, and thus constitute violence as a direct result of gender.

I now turn to discussing how young people learn the ‘right knowledge’ and create their gender identities through informal learning.

5.3 The role of informal means of learning

In this section I examine the role of the media in young people's lives. I examine what they saw themselves learning from the media, particularly from Brazilian soap operas. I look at how access to new means of information such as television and informal peer groups influenced their ideas and the construction of their identities. By exploring how young people used the informal peer groups to discuss the issues and share knowledge they gathered from television, I consider the link between the media and informal means of learning.

To explore these issues in depth I use data from the focus group discussions with youth, adults/parents and workshops with young teacher trainees. I consider the twofold objective of these activities as well as the power dynamics between the adults and young participants, using Arnfred's (1995) approach to hierarchical relations and the notion of muted voices silenced by the structures of dominance of Ardener (1975). I also draw on the notions of agency and multiple subjectivities in young people's discussing and constructing opinions and identities. Through the discussion of new knowledge in informal peer groups, young people's gender identities are formed through critical examination of information presented in the media.

I chose to explore media's influence on young people's construction of beliefs about gender relations because the media was a recurring topic in the interviews, focus group discussions and debates. During my fieldwork it became apparent that young people learned not only via formal and non-formal approaches but also informally. I realised that the media is a critical factor shaping young people's ideas about everyday life and gender relations, particularly in urban areas where they can access television, radio, the Internet, newspapers and magazines easily. In urban areas such as Beira, television is commonly available although not in every household, whereas in rural areas radios are far more common. In a country with a low print literacy rate, visual or aural media as a source of information are of high importance, and in my study site of Beira, television was the most important form of media distribution.

During one of the debates with the secondary students I found that many of them participated in various campaigns, clubs and informal meetings where they had a chance to explore issues concerning relations, feelings and sex with their peers. In this section I examine what they had learned from the media, looking particularly at the popular Brazilian *telenovelas* shown

on television⁵⁶ which represent quite a specific genre, and seem to be associated with a range of social changes in Brazil. Thus in my analysis I will be interested to look at what happens when telenovelas are ‘transported’ to the Mozambican context and how the young people translate this knowledge for use in their lives and what kind of information they acquired at informal young people’s meetings.

5.3.1 The media

In most of the interviews and focus group discussions adults raised questions about the media. They usually expressed the view that the media has a negative influence on their children and on people in general. They held the media responsible for changing belief systems and young people’s acquisition of new values. One mother, Mrs Pinto, a 43-year-old mother, for example, shared her concern about the kind of ‘truth’ young people learn from television:

...from the TV and other media (...) Because many children think that showing their stomach is normal, as they see TV stars and singers doing it. They want to imitate imaginary life on TV. And it’s against our tradition, because the African tradition tells [women] to cover ourselves in our capulana and not to show the body. Our children imitate the stars, showing their stomach and back, but they don’t understand that this is just for the show. They don’t understand that stars don’t walk naked like this on the streets. They’ve got clothes to change into after the show. And the soap operas showing rich men and beautiful women! It isn’t our reality. We can’t live like some kind of TV series. (Interview: Beira, 01/09/09)

Mrs Pinto was genuinely worried as she considered soap operas detrimental to traditional norms and beliefs. She argued that the media is causing widespread deterioration of the culture. Mrs Pinto cynically said that young people think what they were learning from the media is ‘*the truth*’ about life. She felt that exposure to the media is affecting the young generation very negatively: watching television and getting wrong ideas is not ‘learning the right knowledge’ and is definitely not desired by parents. For example, the use of cigarettes and alcohol by celebrity movie stars, constant exposure to sex and excessive violence. As Mrs Pinto noted, young people are at a stage in their lives when they want to be accepted by

⁵⁶ Brazilian *telenovelas* usually replicate those in other Latin American countries. They are a distinct genre different from soap operas. Telenovelas have an ending and come to an end after a long run (usually around a year). The telenovelas are more realistic than Latin American ones, and apt to raise controversial subjects to which many Brazilians can relate because of its realistic depiction of the different social classes. The films often have convoluted subplots involving three or four different settings. They have a complex plot; there is no black-and-white cut between good and evil characters, with the hero/central character often representing weaknesses like promiscuity, drinking, stupidity, excessive ambition, etc. And the enemy showing features or motivations that attract sympathy, like abuses suffered in the past, family problems, poverty, etc. (see for example, Kottak, 1990; Oliveira, 1993). Some of the most popular Brazilian telenovelas shown on the Mozambican television: *Viver a Vida* (Living the Life) and *Alma Gêmea* (Soul Mate).

their peers and to be loved and successful, and she found it unfortunate that the media creates the ideal image of handsome men and beautiful women and teaches young people about affairs and mistrust. According to Mrs Pinto, young people wish to live this kind of ‘soap opera life’, yet the reality is not so glamorous: it is very different and difficult.

Mr Armando, a tutor from IFP and the father of a five-year-old girl, shared Mrs Pinto’s views. At the interview, above all he regretted the deterioration of tradition and norms. He observed that older generation cannot understand young people and *‘the new order of life’*:

I’m afraid we’re losing our culture and our traditions because of the influence that comes through the media and white culture. I told you about soap operas and that people are trying to live this kind of life, to copy it. That’s why some parents are worried about the future of their children. (Interview: Beira, 11/08/09)

According to him, young people’s exposure to soap opera generates new ideas about life and suggests new beliefs and mores. He felt that young women are particularly vulnerable. Girls learn from the media that dating many partners will bring them glamour, money and gifts. Mr Armando feared that this could have important implications for the HIV/AIDS situation:

Traditionally a woman was faithful to her man: nowadays people are getting new ideas from soap operas from Brazil they are watching and they are trying it out in life. They are experimenting with different partners. Women think that if they are dating many partners they’re going to receive gifts and drive fast cars. Their lives will be glamorous (...) but they don’t think about the danger of HIV/AIDS and other diseases. (Interview: Beira, 11/08/09)

This extract from Mr Armando’s interview suggests that the adults recognised television as a new source of learning: however they did not find it a good way of ‘learning the right knowledge’. Listening to the parents I understood that some of them experience intergenerational differences in communication – generation gap. Young people learned not only new information from the media but also ‘cool jargon’ and ways of dressing that were unfamiliar to their parents. During the interviews some parents expressed differences in values, and they simply accepted that young people have different ideas: *‘We’re already tired of these girls, they don’t obey anybody and when you try to speak with them they get even more malandras (naughty), so it’s better to leave them’* (FGD: Beira, 06/04/09).

Since most of the adults mentioned soap opera’s bad influence on youth I was interested to learn what young people themselves thought about the films and whether they thought they learned anything from them, or whether they provided the ‘right knowledge’. During one of the debates with the tenth-grade students at Machangana Secondary School (53 students aged

16-18: 20 female and 31 male), I found that almost all watched soap operas and really enjoyed them. They explained that because very few households own a television they often watched in groups. They said that *'it was much more fun to watch it together'* and they could also comment on what they watched. It seemed that many were aware the soap operas did not show reality; however I was not sure how many took the programmes' messages seriously. This extract from a tenth-grade student debate illustrates some of their opinions:

R: Do you like soap operas? Can you learn anything from them?

Class: *Yes yesyesssss Nooo noooo [opinions is divided]*

Female 2: *I think that the soap operas are educational but the problem is that people don't know how to interpret them. Some people understand things wrongly.*

Female 7: *Soap operas are good. They show people doing bad things and good things and it's up to each individual to find out how to understand it and apply in his/her life.*

Female 2: *I think they show things we shouldn't be doing. Girls watch this kind of life and then they want live the same life in reality ... they want their boyfriends to have nice cars and money to invite them out and to buy clothes, shoes etc...*

Male 1: *Soap operas teach good things and bad things. For example, the women often want to have nice clothes and to be adored by men. We take it literally and we copy it because for us it's the model we want to follow. It can be very dangerous for us young people.*

Male 2: *I don't have a clear opinion. First of all the most important thing is that we have to realise that Brazilians produce soap operas reflecting their own lives. People here want to copy and imitate their lives, but we need to remember that Brazil is a rich country and our country is very poor. In Mozambique the level of unemployment is very high ... How can we imitate their lives?! It's impossible. People want to drive nice cars, drink and wear nice clothes... However, soap operas also tell some good stuff if we know how to understand it and how to apply in our lives. Some show why it's important to tell the truth, and why cheating in a relationship is bad, and why it isn't a good thing to have many boyfriends!*

(Debate: Beira, 02/09/09)

In general the young people believed that it is important to understand the messages of the soap operas and distance themselves from what they communicate. However, I hoped they were aware that even in Brazil people do not live this kind of life, as it became apparent that the students knew that the way the media portrayed certain issues could have an impact on the way they view themselves. As they expressed: *'It is important to know how to interpret the messages from the programmes'*. Some felt that negative media images of relationships could also suggest to young people to get involved with several partners at the same time. A few of the male students mentioned the negative impact on how young people dress, for example with girls wearing short skirts and small blouses. They also mentioned the stereotype of the 'macho man', which for many young men has become the example to follow. Young men living in this kind of imaginary world wanted a car to drive around in and show off, to pick up girls and drink in pubs: these were some of the consequences of

watching soap operas, in the students' opinion. Certainly, this process of informal learning provided some stuff for discussion and thinking for the youth.

These mixed opinions and both positive and negative portrayals in the *telenovelas* demonstrate the nuances of informal learning. Here, young people are learning the 'right knowledge' not just through positive example and social expectations in their community, but also through negative examples, and through critically analysing and discussing media with their peers. The distance provided by learning through television rather than direct experience may enable some young people to be more critical about the lessons presented and to exercise agency in forming opinions about the subject matter; but at the same time it may result in the desire to mimic a lifestyle which is actually unattainable in the context. If *telenovelas* shape young people's identities through creating aspirations or demonstrating life choices as a learning experience, then it is important that the lessons are applicable to the context. Thus the form of learning through television can be critical and stimulating, but also aspirational in the creation of gender identities. It is interesting to consider how young people parse the information presented in *telenovelas* into the 'right knowledge' for their context; something which appears to be achieved through informal peer discussion, described below.

Besides watching television, the young people listened to the radio and watched programmes for adolescents about issues that concerned them. For example a very popular radio programme *Clube dos bradas*⁵⁷ (Buddies Club) on Rádio Moçambique addresses school-related issues such as exams, violence against minors, children's rights, nutrition, environmental awareness, health and hygiene, HIV issues such as stigmatisation and prevention, and other matters relevant to young people and their parents. As I learned from some of the secondary school students, they were also exposed to various programmes and campaigns run by local organisations, associations and projects such as *Geração Biz*. In the following section I discuss other informal means of learning in which the young people in my research setting participated, and how they translate the information presented through media into the 'right knowledge' and how gender identities are created through this peer discussion.

⁵⁷ Since 2000 UNICEF has been funding radio programmes for children in cooperation with Rádio Moçambique to create more opportunities for children and adolescents to exercise their rights and possibility to express their own views. See http://www.unicef.org/mozambique/pt/participa_4696.html.

5.3.2 Meetings in informal groups

As informal learning is by nature never organised but occurs in daily life (Coomb and Ahmed, 1974), I assumed that this ‘learning in the streets’ was one of the ways that young people construct knowledge. However, some of the programme facilitators

I interviewed made me aware of certain pitfalls related to informal means of learning. Mr Semo, for example, was uncertain about the quality and the content of what young people learned, and whether it was the ‘right knowledge’. He seemed to be genuinely concerned, saying:

The information young people get is ‘scattered’ ... It’s acquired informally: some from friends, in the street, in a bar, in the local mill etc... it’s coincidental and not satisfactory. I’m afraid what young people know in general about sexual relations, for example, is that a man is supposed to be on top of a woman (um homem fica ensima de uma mulher). We need to create a place to talk with young people, either at school or in another setting, but in a proper way using proper methods. (Interview: Beira, 4/09/09)

Some young people, however, met informally in the local communities. I visited two groups. One was meeting regularly in a private house in the local *bairro* and another was based at one of the schools. Both groups had been initiated by the local Christian organisation, and although each had a young facilitator they were self-regulated. As far as I could understand, in both groups the facilitators were members of the local community trained by the Christian organisation. It was difficult for me to find out whether it was normal for young people to take part in such gatherings, and whether there were many of this kind of groups operating in Beira. From my conversations with the local pastors I knew that different churches organised youth groups, but they were closely related to the church. It was difficult to classify any of these as strictly non-formal or informal means of learning, lending credence to the idea of the continuum of learning. However, the styles of learning employed could have had further implications for the approaches and the messages discussed during the meetings, and especially if they were normatively Christian. Young people also met to discuss troublesome matters outside the facilitated meetings. My impression was that young people were using the meetings partly to discuss their own experiences but also to discuss issues raised in the *telenovelas* and other media programmes aimed at them. In this way, informal learning environments were used to discuss and construct opinions and gender identities in the process of subjectification.

On my first visit to the group that met in the local school, Group 1, the young people discussed gender relations and the expectations of men and women embedded in society. The other group, Group 2, debated questions of sexual behaviour and relations and sexual abstinence. I found the discussions very interesting, especially those of the young participants (16-17-years-old) in Group 2, which I use here as an example. As I learned during this discussion, some had boyfriends and girlfriends but did not have sexual relations. It struck me that almost all of them had decided to be sexually inactive for a certain period of time. Some had not had sex for six months, others for less. The participants explained that this was their choice and gave different reasons. One girl said that she did not want to engage in sexual relations as she had not found the man she wanted to marry, and only wished to do it with somebody she knew she would marry: *'I don't want to have sex with random boys anymore (...) I want to wait for the 'right' one'* (Fieldnotes, 28/08/09). Another girl expressed that it was not easy to set boundaries and many boys did not understand when she said 'no': *'boys don't respect us [girls] (...) they don't understand we don't want to have sex'* (Fieldnotes, 28/09/09). This last example shows the imbalance of power in gender relations, with boys expecting to get what they ask for, and demonstrating a lack of respect for girls' choice; but also the possibility of girls' agency. The discussion I heard showed that both boys and girls chose whether to or not to have sexual intercourse.

During the meetings the youth showed clearly the ability to act upon their lives and to make choices they found right for them. Following the generative framework the girls' response addressed the difficult times of poverty, HIV/AIDS, uncertainties and changing gender relations. The girls showed new possible ways of exploring these boundaries and negotiating sexual relations. As some of the girls explained to me, for example, they did not want to engage in sexual relations with the 'short-term boyfriends or the boyfriends they did not feel in love with. The group used each other's ideas and experiences of how to discuss this with a partner. They considered how not to hurt a partner's feelings, as for many young people sex is important in relationship. This bears out the discussion of agency, which allows each individual to make choices over and above social expectations, and also the importance of peer discussion as informal learning. The discussion itself, based on sharing experiences, is a learning moment in which individuals form their identities. Its informal nature, allowing exploration, shows the existence of agency, as each participant forms their own individual opinion, and how this subjectification creates a gender identity.

During the Group 2 meeting I noted that the facilitator's role was to observe the conversation, and he only interrupted to answer specific questions about matters such as HIV/AIDS or pregnancy. Otherwise he let the discussion flow and questions emerge. I found this practice very appealing and appropriate to the age of the group: the supervisory assistance of the facilitator served as useful support, but only when necessary (see Figure 5.3 and 5.4). In this way the power relations between the participants and the facilitator were in balance and the meeting proceeded in a friendly atmosphere. This practice allowed informal learning in a situation which could easily have been structured as a formal environment: with an older (senior) person instructing a group (class). The continuum of learning thus allowed me to see the choice made to structure the environment as informal, in order to allow young people to explore their own ideas and through doing so, construct their opinions and identities.



Figure 5.3 Group activity about feelings **Figure 5.4 Discussion about sex**

I noted the maturity and serious engagement of the participants. I asked them how they learned about important matters, as it seemed that they had some excellent ideas. The group explained that they had been meeting for quite some time and that they devoted time to thinking and looking for information: on television and the Internet, in books, and from older siblings and friends. They told me that it was almost impossible to get magazines and that the only ones available were from South Africa and very expensive. Television appeared to be an important source of information, as discussed earlier, and they brought ideas raised in the *telenovelas* to discuss in the meeting. In this way, media and informal learning are linked. I asked them whether they had heard of sexual abuse, and if it existed in the local area.

Apparently the local newspapers sometimes describe cases of sexual abuse in the schools and communities, but the young people did not always have access to these.⁵⁸

In this section I have illustrated how the informal process of ‘learning the right knowledge’ through different channels works for young people. I have looked at how they constructed knowledge using different forms and sources of knowledge such as television, radio or their peers. These new forms of knowledge mean that young people’s interpretation of ‘right knowledge’ may be different from the older generation’s, as they draw on different sources and arrive at opinions through different means of learning. Information in the local community was ‘scattered’ (unreliable), thus it was difficult for young people to construct their knowledge. I have presented some of the adults’ concerns about these forms of learning and the lack of reliable sources and programmes promoting sexual and reproductive health, demonstrating the contested nature of the ‘right knowledge’ between adults and young people. Drawing on a variety of data, I have shown different kinds of interactions between girls and boys in diverse settings in the fieldwork locality.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have looked at the informal ways in which young people acquired knowledge in the process of constructing their identities. In the first section I examined what young people learned about gender identities in the realm of the family and community. Drawing on the idea of Kabeer (1999) of social institutions as persistent sets of beliefs, I explored the intricacies of what adults and youth understood as ‘the right knowledge’ and I looked at some of the implications of learning the right knowledge. In my way of investigating the link between learning and constructing gender, and gender violence I examined some of the forms of abuse I learned about in the research context.

Using the characteristics of womanhood and manhood from the workshops with adults and teacher trainees I have explored perceptions regarding gender identities and roles. My analysis of the adults’ focus group discussions brought some important views pointing to ‘gendered worlds’ (Arnfred, 1995); where men are main breadwinners and women spent most time in the domestic domain (usually with other women). The female focus group participants tried to express that on the one hand that they were proud of their role, and on the other that it was difficult to be a woman and to live up to the expectations of the community. However, it was difficult to work out to what extent they complied with this role and how

⁵⁸ See Appendix VIII for article about a case of sexual abuse in the local school.

much they negotiate and strategise within the set of certain constraints. What struck me during the discussions was the fact that the men seemed to be satisfied with their wives' complete commitment to the domestic realm. This made me wonder whether the local men genuinely appreciate women for the work they do as caretakers of the household. In contrast, the young participants pointed to the complexities of gender and gender relations in the context of gender restructuring. Following the idea of the generative framework (McNay, 2000) the students critically engaged with the issue of gender roles and how far these are negotiable. Drawing on their own experience they challenged behaviours persisting in the society. In the context of transitions (see Chapter 2) the young participants contested some of the norms of division of responsibilities and labour.

In retrospect, I realised that both women and men must have experienced a great pressure from the community, in particular the young participants found it difficult to adhere to certain norms and expectations. According to the students, social institutions and the discourse constructed across them expected particular identity and behaviour. Also Woman 1 and 2 referred to 'God's words' – the discourse of the local churches, as I go on to discuss in Chapter 7. Drawing on the concept of habitus (Bourdieu, 1992) the youth felt influenced by the 'external' socio-cultural norms. While the construction of 'embodied schemes' (Bourdieu, 2000: 467) is the result of common history, they are acquired within private history, space and practices.

In this chapter I have also considered how these research activities (debates, workshops etc.) had a double purpose: they were educational, as they engaged the young people in the debate through critical thinking, and they also provided rich data (and knowledge) for my research. Although I strived to understand the complexity of the construction of gender identities, I felt that some of the issues remained unclear. For example, to what extent gender roles were negotiable within the marriage, family domain and across kinship? From my participant observation I learned that different individuals adopt interpersonal strategies through manipulation or bargain of every day actions and behaviours. In Chapter 7 (section 7.3) I discuss the attitudes of women who were aware of their husband's affairs, but chose to ignore this kind of behaviour in order to secure material conditions for their children and themselves.

Although I came across a few examples of child abuse in the research context, certain harmful behaviour from parents and caregivers occurred. Some of the forms of the abuse I

examined above were directly or indirectly linked to traditional gendered practices, such as early marriage and *lobolo*. From my observations, some people seemed to agree that early marriage is a form of sexual abuse. Poverty was considered by many as one of the main factors underpinning early marriage. At the same time, early marriage was also seen as a survival strategy for a girl herself like in the case of Adelia whose grandmother could not support her. While incest was recognised by most of the participants, it was difficult to understand the perception about how to deal with incest within the family or kin. In light of ambiguous legislative framework and little capacity to enforce the law as I discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, many cases never reach the court. Other forms of abuse towards children that the participants mentioned that are not discussed in this chapter are physical and physiological violence.

When it comes to relations between girls and sugar daddies it is not clear to what extent girls engaged in these relations through coercion or consent. As I have examined above it is also difficult to determine how some girls have the agency to do this, and how it changes once they are involved. Laura and Vera possessed agency and the ability to use it. These examples, however, show that agency is not fixed but evolving and shaped by gender relations. The girls had an objective and were able to negotiate sexual relations with sugar daddies in exchange for money and gifts. Although Arnfred (1995) considers relations of seniority within family and kin, the examples of the relations between girls and *titios* brings some new contribution to the way power dynamics work in hierarchies of age. When talking to the girls I wondered whether they had different strategies or skills in negotiating the relations they got involved in? I also wondered how the girls learned to adopt different behaviour and whether their capabilities would change according to transition processes between gender.

In the second part of this chapter I looked at the media and its role in young people's lives. Among many new sources in the media, Brazilian soap operas appear to play a significant role in constructing their ideas about gender relations and sexuality. However, the findings point to certain drawbacks of acquiring knowledge from uncertain sources, as the information is 'scattered'. In my analysis, therefore, it was important to address how the young people decided what is 'right knowledge'. The difference between the views of the adults and those of the young people regarding what constitutes 'right knowledge' became particularly explicit during the research activities. While some of the adults emphasised traditional gender identities, discussions with and among young people challenged these ideas, suggesting that

they can be negotiated. For example, some of the female participants in the informal groups suggested that sexual relations could be negotiated and the girls wanted to decide for themselves when they were ready for such activity.

My analysis of the data has also revealed that although adults valued traditional practices and had certain expectations of their children they were aware that young people engage in various activities and acquire knowledge from different sources. Some parents clearly did not approve of certain new ways of learning such as by watching Brazilian soap operas. The young people seemed confident about how to make sense of soap operas, yet many parents saw them as a negative influence on their children. However, they approved of the young people meeting in their informal discussion groups (see section 7.2.2). I wonder, however, whether the fact that these were set up by a religious organisation, hence promoting Christian beliefs and mores, influenced parents' support for this source of knowledge. Clearly, the evidence shows that learning is not an individual act, but a strong social aspect of learning – a process of engagement in a 'community of practice'.

It is difficult to classify the different means of learning discussed above as they vary in structure and purpose. People learn in different settings, hence the boundaries between non-formal and informal approaches to learning are not straightforward. For example, the informal young people's groups meeting in the *bairros* were set up at somebody's house. However, they seemed to be more formal in the way they were organised; the groups were not spontaneous but followed a topic and were attended by a facilitator. My intention, therefore, is not to categorise these activities but rather to recognise the process of continuum of learning.

In the following chapter I move to the community context – the context 'around' schools – focusing on the initiation rites and how young people benefited from them in terms of learning about gender and sexuality identities and gender roles in the context of the community.

Chapter 6

Community-based learning and/through initiation rites

6. Introduction

In this chapter I draw on my ethnographic account of two distinct forms of initiation rites in the local community. Mozambican initiation rites are deeply rooted in tradition and take place in different contexts and forms, in groups and individually. Initiation rites appeared to be an influential experience in the young people's lives. Arnfred (1995) makes an important observation that it is not important *when* a child crosses the boundaries of gender and age, however, after rites of passage different rules apply in the adult world. Hence, in the process of becoming woman or a man, rites seem to introduce the young initiates to "respect the boundaries of the respective worlds" (Arnfred, 1995: 8).

Drawing on the idea of learning continuum (see Chapter 4), I reflect on the event as a process of non-formal means of learning. I consider the rites as non-formal according to Simkins' (1977) conceptualisation; the purpose, content and delivery approaches of the rites. It is a non-formal experience as it is a moment of learning outside the formal educational system, but addresses a specific learning need as a process of self-realisation. Although I classify the event as non-formal learning, yet there seemed to be strong elements of formal learning.

My analysis brings out, in particular, the overall objectives of the initiation rites including the practices and the fundamental beliefs introduced during the event. In the first section of this chapter I discuss the group ritual which was conducted with over 100 young people. The importance of the family, respect for elders, gender roles and traditional values, sex and bodiness were the key contents of the ritual. I examine why it was important for the young people to understand these principles and the underpinning 'right knowledge' in this process.

The second section describes a private one-to-one initiation ritual which focused more on intimate matters of sexuality and reproductive health. Drawing on my ethnographic observation I illustrate how the session of elongation of the *labia minora* or *puixa-puixa*⁵⁹ prepared the female initiate for marriage by instructing her in sexual behaviour and the elongation procedure. My ethnographic account of the initiation rites illustrates how girls and

⁵⁹ *Puixa-puixa* - local practice of elongating vaginal labia - *labia minora*.

boys acquire knowledge about gender through which their sexual identities are formed and reinforced.

The analysis in this chapter draws in particular on the key concepts related to the processes of gender and sexuality identity construction discussed in Chapter 4. To examine the process of the construction of gender identity I draw on Butler's (1990) concept of performativity and Bourdieu's (1977) theorisation about habitus that is embodied in our physical being, and power as existing in relationships in line with Foucault's (1977) theorisation. 'Situated learning' (Lave and Wenger, 1991) is also an important approach for understanding the physical process of learning bodily norms. I also consider the notion of power through the dominant discourses of 'the right knowledge' among parents and other members of the community and how they influence the process of subjectification (Foucault, 1978; 1980). Using Kabeer's (1999) framework of social institutions I look at the structures of constraints and gender regimes embedded in the context of the puberty rituals.

6.1 The event

As I go on to discuss in Chapter 7, the church plays a powerful role in shaping ideas about gender and sexual beliefs in the research setting. However, very few churches that I visited encouraged the initiation rites, and certain procedures connected to the ceremony were not accepted in Christian belief. As some clerics explained, during rituals souls may be offered to certain spirits and this is regarded as '*the work of the devil*'. The missionaries saw it as their responsibility to fight against and eliminate the initiation rites. Neither were procedures connected to sex and sexuality accepted by the Christian faith as they breach the Christian canon. In interviews with clerics prior to the event of initiation rites I learned that many religious groups do not support local traditions. Pastor Jonatan, for example, asserted that many of the local traditions contradict Christian ideas. While some churches forbid *curanderismo*,⁶⁰ *kupita kufa*,⁶¹ initiation rites and other rituals, other religious groups try to promote better understanding between the church and the local community by supporting some traditional practices. According to Elisabeth, a missionary, some churches allow a fusion of Christianity and indigenous practices such as funeral and widowhood rites and the blessing of fields, people and their homes.

⁶⁰ *Curanderismo* is a mind-body-spirit healing approach steeped in tradition and ceremony. It aims to enhance wellness at many levels and is used for disabilities, money problems, unsuccessful marriage, love and soul issues.

⁶¹ *Kupita kufa* or *kulowa kufa*, a practice by which a man sleeps with a woman whose husband or son has just died to put the spirit of the deceased to rest (see for example, MHRC, 2005).

Taking into account what I learned about the view of indigenous culture represented by some of the pastors, this event was unusual. I was surprised to find that the initiation rites I was observing were organised and run by Christian missionaries at their centre outside the city. I was puzzled, because what constitutes ‘right knowledge’ is not straightforward and includes different deeds in different learning contexts. I found ‘right knowledge’ and how it is supposed to be acquired ambiguous, as it appears to mean different things in different institutions or even to different people across an institution. Because of this, I was not expecting Christian missionaries to be supporting indigenous initiation rites as this ‘right knowledge’ contradicts the ‘right knowledge’ put forward by the church.

On my arrival at the initiation ceremony I learned that there are no clear rules for which traditions are allowed by different churches. A missionary from South America, Padre Paolo, explained: *‘We don’t have any problems connecting traditions with the church’* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 22/05/09). In fact he saw this as a positive aspect of the church’s mission and its active engagement with community life rather than, as I suggested, opposing the rules of the church. His remark made me realise the variety of religious groups and indigenous cultures that intersect with one another. Throughout the event there were several points where the Christian dimension was integrated into the ceremony. For example, part of the event took place in the centre’s chapel, where the initiates were introduced to the history of humanity and to the most important events in Jesus’ life. I found the paintings on the walls fascinating: they integrated the lives of local ancestors, slavery and the life of Jesus in a very educative manner. Moreover, the presentation emphasised the close connection between religion, humankind and culture: *‘It was as if they walk hand in hand’* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 22/05/09). Throughout the event I got the impression that the main aim besides passing on the Christian message was to encourage the young people to maintain the positive aspects of the indigenous culture, family values and respect, similar to the ideas discussed in Chapter 7.

Before presenting an account of the initiation rites I look at why they are an important means of community learning and parents’ motives for having their children participate in them.

During the course of my fieldwork I observed that the community and the family are primary means of learning and play a central role in children’s learning process, especially during the early years of childhood. The fact that some children were brought up in the community and did not receive formal schooling before the age of six or even later had important implications for the construction of their identities. Some girls would probably never go to

school, and thus community-based education was the only learning they would receive. Hence the importance of non-formal education in the context of community can be regarded as crucial for some young people like Adelia whose story I told in Chapter 5 (section 5.2.2). Clearly, through the rites of passage, a girl becomes a woman; learns how to control her behaviour; and how to respect boundaries.

After participating in the group and individual initiation rites, I conducted a series of single and mixed-gender workshops with students from the local teacher training college to find out how important the initiation rites are for young people, and focus group discussions (single and mixed gender) with parents to learn about their views on the issue.

Opinions among the students were divided. The overall view was that *'initiation rites are there to force girls into early marriage'* which is *'not healthy'*. Both female and male students viewed the ritual as a barrier to girls' education: *'Girls are forced to get married after the rites (...) and they can't continue studying'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 13/08/09). Yet according to a small group of the female students, the initiation rites serve to pass on 'right knowledge' and how *'to be a woman'* in the home. I was particularly surprised to hear male students' disapproving reactions: *'Many men [fathers] maintain tradition [rituals] and they don't allow their women to study'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 13/08/09). Their opinions were divided. Some were genuinely concerned: *'I'm afraid we're never going to develop if we're going to continue to listen to these traditions'* and others believed it necessary to *'reproduce what our forefathers introduced and practiced'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 13/08/09). The workshop produced different voices regarding the implications of the traditions taught in the community: in particular, girls were considered by both female and male students to 'suffer' most, having to give up schooling to devote their lives to family. I was surprised to learn that some of the students showed concern about the consequences for the nation. Their views echoed the ideas of the Frelimo movement in the 1970s which considered initiation rites 'primitive' (for socio-historical background see Chapter 2).

By contrast, mothers in the focus groups expressed positive opinions about the puberty rites. While most of the students saw the rituals as *'bringing negative consequences'* into their lives, these mothers saw the rites as *'good and necessary'*. They saw them as the way to become a *'complete woman'* with the practice marking the beginning of womanhood and reinforcing the female role in life and marriage:

Of course it's very important for a girl to go through initiation rites. Once she is married and gone to her husband, he'll discover that this woman isn't complete. She's missing some qualities he would like her to have. (FGD: Beira, 06/04/09)

According to some parents, the initiation rites teach traditional values, beliefs and mores constructed in the community. Some parents, therefore, emphasised learning '*bom comportamento*' (good behaviour) as one of their main motivations for sending children to the ceremonies. As I found out later, parents are often judged by the way their daughters behave. Though boys usually do not face the same kind of attention the mothers expect them to grow up as '*bom povo*' (good people). Clearly, social practices and discourses have a great influence in the process of identity construction as argued by Bourdieu (1977) and Foucault (1978; 1980). Taking Foucault's theorisation further, discourse triggers a new form of power over the process of subjectification (ibid). In this way, the discourse represented by the parents and the community places expectation about acquiring certain knowledge ('the right knowledge'), thus becoming respectful members of the community.

Young people often did not have a choice about participating in the ceremony, as pointed out by Mr Semo: '*Initiation rites should be a voluntary act rather than a requirement*' (Interview: Beira, 04/09/09). According to him, young people should be informed about the different elements of the process and the importance of the puberty rites and be allowed to make the decision to attend themselves. It should be a positive experience and an event that they want to be part of. Mr Semo argued for a change to parents' approach to including their children in the decision-making process, as initiation rites can have a big impact on young people's adult life.

The initiation ceremony, therefore, was a very controversial topic for both parents and their children. The rites were viewed not merely as an important means of attaining continuity of culture and tradition but also as reinforcing gender roles. The rituals represent a complex process and are practiced in different forms across society. They have their origin in the traditions of the past, yet the major objective is to prepare the young people for contemporary adulthood while maintaining the local culture. The main concern in puberty rites is learning that leads them to acquire traditions and practices and to empathise with other members of community, as well as learning to understand the symbols, skills, feelings and desires considered appropriate for a person of a particular gender and age. Among many other functions, these seemed to be the fundamental underpinnings throughout this event and I present them below drawing on my ethnographic observation of the ritual.

6.1.1 The lesson about respect, compliance and *habitus*

Over 100 girls and boys aged between 6 and 26 are gathered at the local training centre run by missionaries outside Beira. They all come from different places; some have travelled in the back of a pick-up the whole day, others come from Beira and a few have come along with their parents. They have one thing in common; they want to be introduced to adulthood and thereby gain full status as community members through the traditional rituals.

A bell rings and everybody is called to a big tree behind the chapel. Baba Joaquin signs to the young people to lower their heads. Everybody is looking down. He shouts ‘Tiritise’.⁶² The participants answer ‘Tiritise’. Brother Abilio and other young brothers play music and everybody sings in the local language (see Figure 6.1).

Baba makes signs in the air. The atmosphere is kind of mystic. For the ceremony he wears a colourful shirt/tunic, colourful trousers and a Muslim prayer cap. He holds a stick which he uses often to gesture with. He sits under a huge tree on a little wooden stool with his legs covered with a capulana.

Baba Joaquin opens the ceremony by telling the young people that the most important thing in their lives will be establishing a family and building a house. Then he starts by marking the borders of the ‘house’ with flour. Madrinha Maria walks behind him with a container of flour, followed by Brother Abilio beating a drum rhythmically (see Figure 6.2). Baba Joaquin invites the participants to enter the ‘house’. They take off their shoes and line them up in rows along the flour wall. Madrinha Maria and Brother Abilio are making sure the shoes are in a straight line. She looks very serious. She is harsh and biting in tone, ‘What’s this? How are you putting your shoes? Is it an exact line according to you?’ She kicks some of the shoes. A few girls and boys help to make the line perfect.

The participants find a place on the reed mats spread out inside the square of flour: girls form rows on one side and boys on the other. The girls are instructed to hold their arms crossed in front of their bodies and the boys to keep their arms behind them. They must remember to hold this pose throughout the whole weekend.

Baba Joaquin sits on the same kind of mat directly under the tree in front of them. Brother Abilio brings him some instruments and a stick.

The ceremony starts with instructions for the female participants. Madrinha Maria shows them how to arrange their capulanas correctly. The cloth is supposed to hang at a certain length and to be straight without any crinkles. The girls practice fixing their capulanas. Maria walks around checking how they are managing, ‘The capulana is not just an ordinary piece of cloth. You are supposed to know how to wear it! I told you! ... Nobody should be able to see your ankles! Make sure your capulanas are fixed properly so they don’t fall off when you sit down and stand up’ (see Figure 6.4). Afterwards the girls are instructed on how to sit down holding their hands behind their backs; then to kneel and then to sit with their buttocks to one side. Their hands are supposed to rest in the lap with the thumbs hidden in the palms. They are told to drop their heads and to look down to show submission (see Figure 6.3). ‘You don’t want somebody [‘somebody’ is in the masculine form] to think you’re not showing respect!’ shouts Maria. Now they are taught how to stand up without supporting themselves with their hands, and how to sit down again. They repeat the procedure a few

⁶² *Tiritise* - ‘we are together’ in the local dialect, Ndaou.

times. The girls giggle. Madrinha Maria walks around the group, pointing and poking, making the girls sit straight. Finally they are instructed in how to show respect to guests and elders, and how to leave a room facing them and bowing as they go. Maria tells them that only when they are outside the room are they allowed to turn their backs on the guest/elders. The girls are having problems holding the sitting position for a long time. Their legs hurt. Maria dismisses them: 'You can now stretch your legs and change to the other side'.

Baba Joaquin emphasises how important it is for a woman to show her respect and obedience: 'Imagine that your relatives are coming from far away for a visit and you don't show them respect. Your uncle or grandfather will think you haven't received right education at home, and this is very embarrassing for your parents. You don't want to humiliate your parents and yourself, so remember the lesson'. He asks a few girls to demonstrate how to stand up and sit down.

Once the girls have been taught the basics Baba Joaquin teaches the boys how to sit with their legs crossed. The male group is practicing now. Some of the boys have problems with their balance and make a lot of noise pushing each other and laughing. Only then I can see them laughing and being more relaxed, like 'normal teenagers'. The girls make fun of them and laugh at them.

Suddenly Baba Joaquin stands up and runs around amongst the participants. They are not sure how to react. It looks rather funny. He shouts, 'Up on your feet!' He looks closely into some people's eyes, 'Sit down! Up on your feet! Sit down!' Baba repeats it a few times, making fun of how different people sit down, 'Girls, you have already forgotten how to sit?' He goes back to his seat.

Baba Joaquin stands up and the whole group goes quiet. The girls look down. He acts as if he is angry, pointing with his stick at a boy who just laughed: 'Now show me how you can sit down without making any noise.' The boy's face becomes serious and he shows the procedure several times: up and down, up and down. Joaquin nods and points at another boy, indicating that he should do it now while some of the other boys begin to chat. Madrinha Maria walks towards the group shaking her head to show disapproval of their behaviour.

Once the whole group is quiet Baba Joaquin starts to talk about the ancestors and how important it is to remember some of the symbols that they brought into their culture. He asks the boys whether they know how to clap and what different types of clapping mean. As I understand it, only men make clapping gestures. Baba puts his hands together leaving a little bit of space between his palms to make a special sound. He asks the boys to do the same. They clap together, 'When clapping, you need to know what it means and when it's applied. It can be used to greet, to express gratitude, to express appreciation for a meal or food, before work etc'.

In the meantime some of the girls look up again and sit in the wrong position. Their legs hurt and so they slowly relax their posture. Madrinha again walks around the group telling them off and asking them to sit properly. It is very difficult to keep this kind of position for a long time. I try to do the same and I do not find it comfortable. Some girls say that their legs are stiff and they hurt. Madrinha tells them to change to the other side: 'And remember to look down. What's going on the other side'. The girls drop their heads again.

The boys are clapping rhythmically together with Baba Joaquin. I sit and observe over hundred young people going through an initiation which is meant to turn them into adults – into better and more responsible human beings. Some of them look very poor but are wearing their finest clothes for the occasion; others have quite modern clothes (usually from second

hand shops or the market). Nevertheless they all look very neat. (Fieldnotes: Beira, 22/05/09)



Figure 6.1 Baba Joaquin welcomes all the initiates



Figure 6.2 Baba Joaquin marking borders of the house

This extract from my fieldnotes describes a community-based learning event. As evident in the account above, the body becomes a means of construction of gendered identities – of distinctive self expression for women and for men. The initiates practice the bodily postures throughout the whole event; the ways of sitting, of looking down and of holding their hands – boys crossing them behind their backs and girls them in front – are practiced over and over again throughout the event. The postures, gestures and facial expressions are not merely nonverbal communication but also represent socially-sanctioned ideals of female and male behaviour. This is done by enforcing ‘the perfect pose’ with Madrinha Maria *‘pointing and poking’* the girls to sit up straight and keep their heads down, and Baba Joaquin instructing the boys to stand up and sit down repeatedly, teaching them through situated learning.

Habitus is exhibited in the initiate’s obedience in assuming the ‘perfect pose’ – position of legs, hands, head, eyes and gestures – as they are taught to consciously express submissiveness and respect to family members, especially elders, guests, neighbours and strangers. Before the ceremony can start Madrinha Maria instructs the girls how to fix their *capulanas*. She is not pleased to see their trousers sticking out and their ankles uncovered.

She instructs the girls, *'the capulana is not just an ordinary piece of cloth. You are supposed to know how to wear it!'*⁶³ The girls are required to take pride in their body as emphasised by Madrinha Maria. This is achieved through what Foucault (1988) describes as 'practices', 'aesthetics' and 'techniques' in the process of subjectification. As Foucault refers to the construction of the self (Chapter 4, section 4.3), a person – a subject – is a 'form' (1997: 290) hence can/must be moulded. Building on Foucault's idea, Butler (1990) developed the idea of performativity through which gender identity is shaped. According to Madrinha Maria, these 'aesthetics' are important not merely in the construction of one's identity but also as a means of expressing respect towards elders of the family. Respect is shown through dress code and posture, as emphasised by Madrinha. Physical communication, therefore, is culturally constructed and hence context-dependent and can provide clues as to attitude or manners. The body becomes memory and acts as 'storage' for the principles embodied in it. In so doing, people acknowledge, legitimate and reproduce the traditional values and social forms of domination and power relations.



Figure 6.3 Girls performing the posture



Figure 6.4 Amended *capulanas*

As I discussed in relation to Butler (1990), gender is not a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity somewhat constituted through performativity over time. If performative repetition of acts is the basis for the construction of gender identity, and gender is not a seamless identity, then possibilities for gender

⁶³ I was told that a *capulana*, besides having numerous practical functions in the domestic sphere, for travelling and for carrying children, also has a more traditional meaning, especially at traditional ceremonies such as weddings, funerals and official events like elections, hence it comes in different patterns. However, I also observed that young girls did not wear the *capulana* as often as their mothers or grandmothers did.

transformation are to be found in the arbitrary relationships between such acts or in different contexts. For Bagnol (2003; 2008b), gender identities come about through the inner feeling that every individual has of belonging to the feminine or masculine gender. This learning occurs throughout one's lifetime, and rites of passage are one of the many processes of establishing one's gender. In her reasoning Bagnol makes an important point about self discovery linked to agency (ibid). The ceremony seemed to fail to account for individual agency in choosing ideas and behaviours in constructing one's gender. Going back to the event, it seemed that the initiates also took control of absolute docility as the strategy for constructing their own gendered identities. From the perspective of Foucault (1977), disciplinary practices like these rituals subject the body to activities and to a process of constant examination that enables a continuous control of individual conduct. Although during the event power is exercised through instructions, rules and orders, Foucault (1978) considers the possibility of resistance to power. Resistance in the context of the rites was exercised with a certain caution, and the initiates seemed to know the boundaries and rules within which they could negotiate and manoeuvre. For example, a group of girls tried to hide from morning gymnastic (as they explained to *madrinha*, they did not have proper clothes). As I go on to examine in the analysis of the relationships in the classroom in Chapter 7 that some girls and boys experimented with their school uniforms, hairstyle or accessories. In line with McNay (2000) gender identities are not natural or unchangeable: they are dynamic and shifting constructions. It is, however, striking why the young initiates patiently put up with all the exercises and treatment that took many hours every day throughout the weekend.

As I have established so far, the event was constructed within a framework of directives, rules and control whereby desirable behaviour and gender identity were taught to the young initiates. This reflects some aspects of formal learning, although taking place in a non-formal environment, showing how the learning domains do not operate independently but intersect. Taking Kabeer's (1999) framework of the institutional construction of gender relations, I analyse the power dynamics governing the event below.

The gender order in the context of the rites was encouraged by the facilitators, who paid attention to clear gender identities and reinforced them by treating the female and male initiates differently. For example, the girls sat on one side of the square and the boys on the other. In this way the division was made explicit, with certain rules prescribed for girls and others exclusively for boys, and they were expected to behave accordingly. This separation

was maintained throughout the ceremony and most of the activities, except meals and morning gymnastics, were organised in separate female and male groups.

As in the data from the local schools and churches described in Chapter 7, the event drew my attention to relations between the young initiates and the facilitators. The young people seemed to submit to certain roles imposed during the rites: however, as I saw in other situations, they challenged socially-sanctioned norms and beliefs and in some cases acted upon the facilitators' demands (for example, girls who engage in sexual relations with teachers and sugar daddies in Chapter 5). Madrinha Maria came across to me as strict and unapproachable. I had the feeling that the initiates were afraid of her. When she was kicking the shoes the young people reacted immediately and rushed to put them in order

As I observed the relations with the initiates became an instrument of power. The atmosphere was serious and any attempt at making fun or misbehaving (in the eyes of the facilitators) was disciplined, as in a formal learning environment. Yet some of the participants tried to avoid the strict regulations during the rites. During the introduction by Baba Joaquin some burst out laughing when they lost their balance practicing sitting down and standing up. When from time to time some of them whispered to each other, their names were immediately taken down: *'Group leaders, don't hesitate to write the names down. We don't want this kind of behaviour here'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 22/05/09). Although I did not know whether there would be any consequences it looked as if the misbehaving participants found this embarrassing.

From the beginning of the event I became aware that Baba Joaquin held the highest rank. He was clearly respected by everybody at the centre and was allocated more resources than other facilitators (Kabeer, 1999): for example he had a separate table in one of the refectories and was served food by the young facilitators. However, despite his powerful position Baba Joaquin managed quite naturally to make people comfortable in his company, although I observed that other facilitators approaching him behaved according to the 'unwritten rules'. For example, Madrinha Maria would bow and look down until he started talking to her. After she was dismissed she would look down again, take a few steps backwards and only turn her back at a distance. Baba Joaquin would give a sign or a gesture with his hands to make himself more approachable and the situation more comfortable for the younger facilitators.

From Kabeer's (1999) perspective, the allocation of resources and respect in the community are earned by age and social position. Age in the local setting is believed to confer wisdom, so elders in the community and family are revered and honoured. Similarly Arnfred (1995)

talks about relations of seniority and status governing intergenerational relations as well as among women and men.

Respect was one of the key norms to be learned by the initiates. In particular the girls were taught to show their respect to elders through their behaviour. As Baba Joaquin pointed out at the beginning of the ceremony:

Imagine that your relatives are coming from far away for a visit and you don't show them respect. Your uncle or grandfather would think you hadn't received the right education at home, and this would be very embarrassing for your parents. You don't want to humiliate your parents and yourself, so remember the lesson.

Baba Joaquin's admonishment to the young people to '*remember the lesson*' about respect for elders and guests seems to make the initiates responsible for not humiliating their families. Respect and attentiveness are important values in the social institution of community and family. Indeed, the importance of respectful behaviour towards elders and other adults was centrally positioned in this 'formation of adulthood'.

Despite the fact that the importance of respect was pointed out throughout the rites, my experience of what it represented remained ambiguous and varied in the local community (and it definitely failed to agree with my personal understanding of 'respect'). People were inclined to speak of '*falta de respeto*' (lack of respect) rather than identifying what 'respect' itself meant to them. It was clear that the older generation felt that there was a *falta de respeto* among young people. The young people referred to 'respect' in the form of expectations, for instance how their parents expected them to participate in ceremonies at churches or community events as a means of learning 'the right knowledge'. For example, some of the initiates took part in the rites mainly out of respect for their parents' wishes and to show respect for their ancestors.

The event made me aware of the fundamental objectives of community learning. The underlying assumption of the elders, the facilitators and the parents was that the event conveyed 'right knowledge': the obedience and respect taught through the initiation rites were primary values and considered 'right deeds'. Consequently, this particular community-based practice became a domain of learning. Following the idea of Lave and Wenger (1991) acquiring knowledge within this approach was also a matter of commitment to the 'community practice' whereby through interactions with the facilitators and other participants the initiates shared common beliefs as well as generated new ideas.

6.1.2 The family values and gender roles

Joaquin is making a 'Trrrrrrrrrrrr rrrrrr' sound with his tongue, paying his respects to the ancestors in the local language. Suddenly he makes a sign for quiet. The girls are allowed to stretch their legs again. There is silence. Baba looks round and divides the young people into groups, telling them to choose a 'mother' and a 'father' – leaders responsible for their groups.

When everybody is sitting quietly in their groups Baba Joaquin talks about the importance of family: 'Family is the main and the most important element in our lives. You are nothing in this world without your family! Please don't forget how important it is to establish and take care of your own family. One day you're going to die, and you're going to become ancestors yourselves, and you want to have your grandchildren talk about you. Be good family members – good husbands and wives'.

Baba Joaquin tells the young people about the importance of women: 'I respect women very much. Even if it's just a newborn baby girl, one day she'll be a woman and a mother. Therefore I've got big respect for women. Without women there would be no life, and life is very important. Our richness is in children – the more the better. That's why our grandparents practised polygamy.'

Baba Joaquin continues to talk about family: 'In a family nobody should be excluded. You should stick together. If a family isn't united different bad things happen. You should remember that family, language and our culture are important and you shouldn't forget them. You shouldn't forget your roots! Be proud of your mother tongue. Nowadays many young people don't speak their dialect any more. They are already losing their roots, their culture. Don't forget your identity! You want to become somebody, but how can you become a doctor, a teacher, a director if you don't know how to behave and the values of your culture? Remember how important initiation rites are for you and your culture. Nobody should get married without going through the preparation, the initiation. Only then are you ready to enter adult life. Nobody should get married not being a virgin. Sex is allowed when you become an adult and you belong to the mature sphere of life' ...

Now Baba explains the traditional meanings of different signs and gestures: 'You are African, and you were born with traditions and traditional beliefs. Before starting to eat a man is supposed to drop a little bit of food on the ground to show respect to his ancestors. The same if a young man wants to marry: he is supposed to prepare a little bit of masa (local food) and offer it to the ancestors, asking them for help in finding a good woman: not a beautiful woman but a good woman and a good wife! A wife who will wait with hot water to wash his tired body after hard work, a wife who will make sure there is food on the table every day, a wife who will take care of his children'. (Fieldnotes: Beira, 22/05/09)

Once the initiates had learned the desired postures and Baba Joaquin had talked about respect he then moved on to explain to the young people *'that the most important thing in your lives is going to be to establishing a family and building a house'*. I found the opening scene, when Baba Joaquin was marking the borders of the 'house' with flour, appealing in its implicit expression. I noted how the scene metaphorically emphasised the importance of the institution of the family and perfectly underpinned one of the fundamental messages communicated throughout the event: that family is *'the main and the most important element of our lives'*. As in the Christian message, family is not merely considered a form of social structure – *'you are nothing in this world without your family!'* – it is also a site of security. Baba Joaquin, therefore, encouraged the young participants to create their own family: *'Please don't forget how important it is to establish and to take care of your own family!'* and reminds them of the responsibility linked with having a family: *'be good family members; good husbands and wives'*. The initiates learned about inclusion and unity – important aspects of the institution of the family – that Joaquin considered features of strength. As he emphasised, family is the only security system one can count on, therefore maintaining good relations in the family is crucial. I learned in the fieldwork setting, however, that the complexity of the family structure (see Chapter 2) can often make relationships problematic.

The extract illustrates how the organisation of the family and kinship are the primary sites of construction of gender relations. Baba Joaquin views the family as the woman's domain of responsibility and the only institution in which she has a central, defining role. The community-based learning shares similar beliefs which are also held by other institutions such as the church. Here the female role is associated with domestic work, rearing children and rendering services to male family members. Throughout the rites the initiates learned that a woman has multiple responsibilities and work linked to the family and household: as the *dona de casa* (woman of the house) and as housewife, wife and mother. This discourse relates to Kabeer's (1999) 'gender-specific forms of disadvantage' and situates women as an inferior category. Women in the fieldwork locality are more likely to be illiterate and not have a professional career, as noted by the participants during focus group discussions in Chapter 5. Some girls, such as Laura and Vera, did not comply with the institutional rules and values, choosing instead to challenge them by engaging in relationships with sugar daddies.

Going back to the event, it was not only the actions that explicitly assumed the established differences between a man and a woman but also the discourse used by the facilitators,

which, reflecting wider community discourse, reinforced the norms. Foucault (1972) points out that discourse is governed by rules and beliefs and in this way may be a means of maintaining inequality and exclusion. As the extract illustrates, Baba Joaquin and Maria both offered discourse about how culture and tradition shape gender roles as distinctive patterns of behaviour for men and for women. For example the girls were taught to show submission – *‘they are told to drop their heads down and to look down’* – while the boys were instructed on how to be the leader of their family and provide a good example, and when clapping they learned how to *‘express gratitude, to express appreciation for a meal/food, before working’*. The discourse also reflects the general perception of gender roles in social structures – *‘everybody knows their own place’* – as asserted by Madrinha Maria:

In our culture a man is the chief. He has his own place in the home and at the table. Nobody else is allowed to take it. It’s only his. Women are expected to give birth to children and raise them. They make sure that there’s always food on the table. A wife prepares a bath for her husband whenever he comes home. She needs to be obedient and submissive in whatever she’s asked to do.
(Fieldnotes, Beira: 22/05/09)

In the evening of the first day the female and male initiates were divided into smaller groups and more intimate topics were introduced. I joined one of the girls’ groups. During the session with Madrinha Maria it appeared that the main objective of these activities was to make the female role in the family explicit. Once more Madrinha stressed the importance of having children: *‘Our richness is in children – the more the better’* and the family as the core of society. She spoke of how to be a good mother and how to share life with a man: *‘Companionship with a balance you need to remember your duties and responsibilities you are expected to be lovers, mothers, educators and mediators in the house’* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 22/05/09). The next lesson was about sex and sexual relations.

6.1.3 Sex as a ‘serious matter’: lesson about sex

Baba Joaquin starts the session on sex talking about choice and freedom. ‘Of course everybody is free, but you need to know how to use that freedom. You need to be able to use your freedom. You need to learn to make choices. This is the place where you can learn more about it. Your culture, religion and traditions make you special. Everybody is unique. Remember your uniqueness. Respect your body. Don’t play with your body (brincadeira com corpo). Sex is a serious matter. Everything in this world is to be loved. Girls and boys! Your bodies can easily be used and abused. Remember! You’ve got a will and you can make choices. Some girls don’t even know how and why they get pregnant. At your age you’re supposed to study and enjoy life. Marriage comes later. You have to be careful about the signals you send. Some of you are wearing very short skirts and little blouses. Don’t do this

to yourself. Have respect for your own body and respect others. When your grandfather comes for a visit, wear some proper clothes, treat him with respect in the traditional way. Remember who you are and what your roots are. Remember where you are from!

'Before, young people were living longer than old people: now it's changing. We are losing many young people. Modernity is good when it's used in the right way. You can't live in modern times without knowing who you are and what your traditions are. You are the ones to lead this society, you need to know'. Baba is making a sign: the males are clapping and the females are looking down. (Fieldnotes: Beira, 22/05/09)

Baba Joaquin was the only person I heard in the field talking about '*uniqueness*', meaning individuality. In this lesson he stressed how precious and unique everybody is. In so doing, he expressed his concern about young people's sexual behaviour – in particular about girls who accidentally become pregnant, '*some girls don't even know how and why they are becoming pregnant*'. It was unclear whether he was alluding to the general expectation (as also preached by some pastors) that a girl should be a virgin when she marries as a fundamental concept in the construction of her identity. He stressed that there is an appropriate time for everything in life and that during puberty young people should '*study and enjoy life*'. As he continued, he reflected on the real value of marriage '*marriage comes later*', again stressing the importance of the right timing for it.

In the first part of the section of the ceremony described in the extract above Baba Joaquin talked about respecting one's own body as an aspect of sexual behaviour. His discourse about sex as a '*serious matter*' and the body as not to be '*played with*' seems to be an attempt to control their sexuality for the stability of the community, as suggested by Foucault (1984/1992, see section 3.1). Baba criticised young girls for '*wearing very short skirts and little blouses*', finding it disrespectful and misleading: '*you have to be careful about the signals you send*'. He asked the female initiates to be dignified and to treat elders with the respect they deserve.

Baba Joaquin expressed great concern for the young generation and its future in the era of HIV/AIDS: '*Before, young people were living longer than old people, now it's changing.*' He seemed genuinely worried, as the situation in the province is serious: '*We are losing many young people*' – but he laid the responsibility on the young people themselves: '*You are the ones to lead this society*'. At the end he talked about tradition as a reference point for the young people to hold in the contemporary world. In this way he again emphasised the importance of traditional values: '*You can't live in modern times without knowing who you*

are and what your traditions are.' He appeared to be referring to learning 'right knowledge' through the initiation ceremony and asking the young people to follow its fundamental messages about respect, sexual behaviour and the importance of family.

In this section I have given an idea of how the initiation rites were led in the framework of community learning and what key messages were conveyed by the facilitators. The above analysis has demonstrated how the fundamental values of the family and gender identities embedded in the family and wider community are addressed in these rites of passage. The body played a central part in the construction of gender identities through the performance of the desired posture and ways of paying respect, through situated learning. The discourse dominating the event encouraged the initiates to pay attention to tradition and indigenous knowledge and respect. Respect was required not merely for the learning of the behaviour and attitudes considered appropriate for a given gender, but also for the discourse explicitly supporting the commonly-understood stereotypes. The way Baba Joaquin viewed young people's sexual behaviour seemed on one hand to reflect his concern about their lack of respect for their own bodies and on the other to control their sexual and reproductive rights.

The analysis also shows how the relationships between the participants and the facilitators and between the facilitators themselves influence the reproduction of hierarchical power relations, as in a formal learning context. However, it was difficult for me to sense the extent to which the facilitators engaged with their roles and how far they expressed their personalities in their interactions with the young people. I was also unsure whether the initiates were aware of this and if so, whether they too were acting certain roles.

In the following section I present a different form of gaining 'right knowledge' through individual introduction to adulthood.

6.2 Individual initiation rites: a different approach to learning about sexuality and gender roles

Madrinha Sara applies an oily liquid made of herbs and plants, which makes the vaginal lips softer and more flexible and helps to reduce the pain, and then she starts to pull the girl's vaginal lips. Her movements are rhythmical and confident. She has been doing this for many years. The girl's eyes wander around the room. She looks terrified, but she doesn't say a word. From time to time her facial expressions show pain and discomfort. Her thin body is shivering. Some movements cause more pain and her muscles contract, but she lets Madrinha continue.

(Fieldnotes: Beira, 04/05/09)

I have started this section with an account from an individual initiation session, which had a more intimate character than the group puberty rites. Drawing on my ethnographic observation I explore the ritual, which encompassed learning about sexual behaviour and the elongation of the *labia minora* carried out by Madrinha Sara on Manuela, a 12-year-old girl from a village outside Beira. I look at why going through this ritual is considered to be 'learning the right knowledge' and why altering the female sexual organs is such an important act for both men and women in the research area.

I expected the ritual performed by Madrinha Sara to be an act of humiliation, yet what I experienced was an engaging lesson in sexual behaviour. Madrinha Sara has been doing this ritual with girls and young women for over 20 years. She seems to be a warm and happy 53-year-old woman. She lives in a fairly large three-bedroom house in a small village outside Beira. Madrinha is well known not only for doing *puixa-puixa*,⁶⁴ but also for her knowledge of herbs and medicine. *Puixa-puixa* is a procedure for the elongation of the vaginal *labia minora* (*matangi*) and is one of the most widespread vaginal practices in Mozambique. The procedure is usually directed by elderly women and is preparatory to sexual activity and marriage. It involves pulling the inner lips of the genital organs with regular movements while applying castor-oil.⁶⁵ The apparent objective of the elongation, according to Madrinha Sara, is to enhance sexual satisfaction (of both partners) during intercourse. However, I learned that the size of the *matangi* used to be a source of pride. The elongation of the labia used to be common practice: young women would do it for each other; a group of women would sit in pairs opposite each other pulling on each other's lips. Apparently '*the longer the better*', as Madrinha stressed. During community meetings women would sit in a circle exposing their organs (they did not wear underwear in the past) to show the size of their labia. Although it is no longer common for the young generation to show off their organs, the size of the labia is still significant when finding a husband.

I tried to comprehend exactly what Madrinha Sara's function was and why she was not a *curandeira*. People (usually women) look for counselling and advice in medical and emotional matters; young women, for example, ask for help with '*matters of the heart*', and when they had difficulties finding a husband they believed that Madrinha could help them to '*catch*' a boy they liked. Madrinha Sara is also a specialist in preparing traditional medicine. She spent hours looking for plants and seeds in the area. She showed me one of the rooms in

⁶⁴ *Puixa-puixa* or *kupfuwa* - local practice of elongation of vaginal labia – *labia minora*.

⁶⁵ *Ricinus Communis* – castor oil plant.

her house which was full of boxes, small bags and jars of all sizes; on the walls dried plants, animal hair, bones and roots are hung. Madrinha told me that her house was the best place for doing the ritual (and other procedures) as she has everything handy. People therefore come to her house. Sometimes she is asked to go to group initiation rites like the one described earlier, to introduce girls to sexual intercourse between a woman and a man, hygiene and other issues they should know about when ‘stepping’ into adulthood. However, during such rituals she did not perform *puixa-puixa* or any other procedures related to sexual behaviour. These require intimacy and hence are done in private. According to Madrinha, these days young women go to her for *puixa-puixa* as they realise that most men still find it attractive. Unlike these young women, girls aged 8-12 are usually sent by their mothers. Madrinha Sara asserted that girls grow up and become mature earlier nowadays.

While practices of female mutilation are seen as detrimental to women’s health and well-being and reinforcing of women’s subordinate position (for example, Althaus, 1997), in this community, traditional rites such as *puixa-puixa* are recognised as ‘sexual capacity building’: they are a means of introducing young girls to sexual and reproductive health, marriage, childbirth and maternity. They are also taught the importance of hard work on the farm or the importance of fishing, trading and other livelihood activities depending on the area they come from.

Returning to the ritual, in the atmosphere of trust Madrinha Sara first showed Manuela various movements in bed called *dança da barriga* (stomach dance). She patiently practiced different positions with the girl; how to move the hips and lift the body in order to achieve sexual satisfaction. ‘Now, I’m a man and you have to try to lift me up with your hips. Try! Try again! Lift! Up!’ (Fieldnotes: Beira, 04/05/09), Madrinha instructed Manuela. The girl seemed to trust her as she followed Sara’s instructions. Madrinha Sara also taught Manuela how to attract a man with a belt made out of small shells and beads (see Figure 6.5 and 6.6).



Figure 6.5 Madrinha Sara instructing Manuela about body movements



Figure 6.6 Madrinha Sara shows how to use a bead belt to attract a man

In the end of the initiation Madrinha Sara initiated the girl in labia elongation. As the extract above illustrates, the procedure was unpleasant and even painful. Madrinha Sara explained that Manuela must continue doing the procedure at home for some time and then come back to have the length of her labia checked. If Manuela was unsuccessful Madrinha Sara would then have to help her with the procedure. Madrinha Sara answered all the questions the girl posed without embarrassment or awkwardness. During this ritual I understood Madrinha's important role in teaching young people sexuality and reproductive health. It was clear why parents (mostly mothers) chose Madrinha Sara to initiate their daughters into adulthood. She was the right person: she was professional and trustworthy. As this was my first experience with vaginal practices, I tried to find out why Madrinha Sara and other young women in the village talked about *matingi* as a very powerful act necessary to 'catch a man and make him to stay' (Fieldnotes: Beira, 04/05/09). From informal conversations I realised that through this prevailing discourse among both female and male community members *matingi* was a powerful thing to have. Like women, men found *matingi* an important factor in sexual life. Three young male teachers (aged 25-28) at the primary school where I observed classes acknowledged in an informal conversation that *matingi* was a characteristic of 'a real woman' and that they found it necessary as it made sexual interaction more pleasurable. As one of them explained: 'Our grandfathers' wives had it, our parents did it too, and so we appreciate a woman with *matingi*. It's in our culture' (Fieldnotes: Beira, 22/05/09). It was then that I began to understand why Madrinha Sara was concerned about the fact that as an unmarried woman I did not want to proceed with *puixa-puixa*.

From conversations with the teachers I also learned that while some girls go through *puixa-puixa*, boys' circumcision is also practised individually or through initiation rites. In urban areas this is nowadays usually done in hospital and at the much younger age of two or three. In rural areas it is still led by local traditional healers. The teachers noted that marking the passage to adulthood happens in boys' life, at 14 to 16, and thereby they become productive and community-oriented responsible adults in society. They receive guidance about their responsibilities to the community and as the head of a family, as illustrated in the description of the group ceremony. One of the teachers told me: *'When I was a teenager my father arranged for a friend – a young man – to talk to me about girls, sex and all this stuff I couldn't talk with my father about. Apparently he didn't want to explain all these things to me himself'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 22/05/09). Interestingly, I realised that male circumcision is not as important as *matingi* as it is seen as a hygiene procedure. It did not seem to have any significance for sexual relations, I heard from women and men.

Bourdieu (1990) suggests that young people in particular pay special attention to physical dispositions of the body, hence ready form their gender and sexual identities. The *madrinhas* instruct pubescent girls entering the rituals to become young women ready to marry. During the process of *puixa-puixa* the girls discover their bodies through imitating the sexual act and learn their role in sexual intercourse. This connects to my earlier point about the performative construction of gender identities (Butler, 1990) and situated learning. With the passing on of secret knowledge of *puixa-puixa*, sexual seduction, attraction and charm as a lover and a woman the girls shaped their sexual identity. Importantly, the *puixa-puixa* ritual is a female-only ritual and thus could be seen as female control of female sexuality – it is always commanded by a *madrinha* or several *madrinhas*.

Elisa, a 27-year-old female teacher, regretted not having had the chance to go through the initiation rites:

I think it's important for our culture, for us and to know our roots. I, for example, I wish I had gone through the initiation rites. I feel the lack of it. I was born in the city, but my parents came from a village. Because of some social factors my parents didn't think it was important for me to learn 'all of these traditional things', as they would put it. (Interview: Beira, 26/10/09)

Elisa believed that she could have used the knowledge she would have gained from the rituals in her teaching profession. She felt that she was missing a part of her identity:

I wish I'd had the chance to be 'prepared' and properly introduced to my adulthood. My grandmother wanted to teach me about all these things, but my parents didn't think it was important. Then you think, 'Epa [oh!], where do I come from?' I think most people here in the city don't continue with the tradition. (Interview: Beira, 26/10/09)

Elisa wished she could pass traditional knowledge on to her daughter.

Another female teacher, Nila (43-year-old) explained that in her experience, the traditional way of instruction on sexual matters was through fear. She had learned nothing about sex at school, but she had heard some terrible stories in the community. Her recollection of initiation rites was rather upsetting. Fear should lead to obedience and respect:

I remember our parents and grandparents saying 'You can't talk to a man because he burns'. And we were living in fear. It wasn't the truth, but we were afraid and because of the fear we didn't have sex. If a man wanted to 'provoke me' I would say 'Iiiii...I don't want you! You burn!' (Interview; Beira, 01/09/09)

In talking to young people and parents I became aware that discussing sexual matters with young people was one of the biggest taboos in the local community. My observations in church was that clerics do not want to teach these sensitive issues and expect parents to be responsible for preparing their children for adulthood (see Chapter 7). During focus group discussions with adults of the local community it became apparent that parents were afraid to provoke their children to sexual relations. Parents in particular expressed how explanations and open discussions about sexuality with young people were dangerous because the latter could lose their respect and fear. Consequently some parents thought it was not appropriate to discuss sexual issues with their children. Yet this view contradicts the public acknowledgement of such group rituals as those conducted by Baba Joaquin or individual ones led by Madrinha Sara. I wondered whether the lack of communication between parents and children is the main reason why some parents choose to give this responsibility to another person, a relative or an elderly *madrinha* for girls or a *padrinho* for boys. As one mother noted: *'It can't be just anyone, you know, it needs to be a wise person who knows something about it and she knows how to explain it to a girl'* (FGD: Beira, 06/04/09). Parents expected the person to have the knowledge and to be skilled in communicating with young people.

The account of the individual initiation ritual in this section has presented an insight into the preparation for adulthood in a private and informal setting. Individual initiation sessions convey knowledge about sexual behaviour and vaginal practices to girls and young women,

through situated learning and bodily hexis. The elongation of the labia, as presented in the account, alter the female organs to enhance woman's and man's sexual satisfaction during intercourse. Thus this kind of vaginal practice plays a fundamental role in empowering young women and girls. Through the account I have emphasised the important function of the *madrinha*, a skilled and knowledgeable practitioner whose role it is to communicate the most intimate matters to young people.

6.3 Conclusion

The initiation rituals opened my eyes to the influence of community-based learning in young people's lives. My ideas about the role of community learning had been vague. From my observation of the group rites led by the community and the private session taught by Madrinha Sara I learned that the main objectives are to instruct young people about the fundamental aspects of traditional values and mores, about gender roles and about sexuality. Through performativity the body in the initiation appeared to be a central means by which the young people define their gendered identity among the initiates – the self – and sexual identity in the process of *puixa-puixa*. The rites are an important part of the construction and reinforcement of socially desired femininity and masculinity, and for the elders and parents they constitute 'learning the right knowledge'.

Since sexuality is one of the pillars of traditional family morality, command of discourse about sexual matters is still an enormous challenge as it is different from day-to-day communication. What struck me most during the rites, especially the individual one, was the intimacy of the procedure and the trust girls must have in Madrinha Sara. Although Manuela seemed at times embarrassed, she surrendered and let Madrinha perform the procedures.

The notion of the learning continuum enables me to analyse the initiation rites in terms of purpose, content and delivery methods and to compare these with other means of learning (Simkins, 1977). While the objectives of formal education are identified in the school curriculum, the puberty rites draw on indigenous knowledge, with the main aim to 'construct' a respectful community member. According to Baba Joaquin, the initiation rites enable the young person to gain '*capacity*' through learning about the traditional beliefs and values of their forefathers. The rites are intended to transform the initiate into '*a new, better person*' – a knowledgeable and respectful member of the community. This process is informed by the traditional system of values in which kinship and family have a central place, similar to the ideas represented by the local churches which I will explore in the following chapter. Baba

Joaquin symbolically created a house for all the participants at the beginning of the ritual. In contrast to school, the initiates were encouraged to use Bantu languages and to acknowledge their roots.

As in school, the structure of the rites is gendered and hierarchical, displaying elements of formal learning: as Baba Joaquin pointed out, *'everybody knows their place'*. Reflecting on my visits to schools and churches I realised the importance of the medium and the way messages are interpreted and communicated, whether to students at school or to congregants in church. The facilitators of the rites seemed to determine and dictate what 'right knowledge' was. Baba Joaquin's discourse was similar to that of most of the parents, who viewed the initiation ceremony as an important part of *'stepping into adulthood'* and *'learning the right knowledge'* (FGD: Beira, 06/04/09). When discussing this matter with young people I realised that although they acknowledged the traditions they did not see the initiation rites as enabling them to negotiate their rank in the local community. For many young people, what was important was *'having a job and earning our own money (...) this is what we see counts in the community, not the tradition'*: this was how to *'become somebody worthy of respect'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 23/03/09). Hence some young people disputed their parents' view of 'right knowledge'. Young boys particularly saw traditional ideas and customs as *'old-fashioned'* and *'outdated'* and attributed them to the *'old times'*. Yet there are still some who want to participate in the rituals, such as Manuela and other girls who found it empowering and ensured a *'good catch'*. What constitutes 'right knowledge' remains, however, ambiguous. In the following chapter I look at knowledge constructed and transferred in school and in the church; and how learning through these means helped young people to construct their gender and sexual identities.

Chapter 7

The implications of what young people learn about gender at school and church

7. Introduction

School and church are two important formal institutions that play a central role in constructing gender and sexual identities in the local community. Although their messages about gender and sexuality, and approaches to teaching differ, both are important agents shaping people's ideas and attitudes about gender and gender relations. Rather than seeking polarised beliefs and messages I decided to bring together the intersecting ideas across these two institutions following the concept of continuum of learning (see Chapter 4, section 4.1).

I start the chapter by looking at what and how young people learned about gender relations and sexuality in school, given that sexuality plays a significant role in shaping individual identity. Though the curriculum provides a wide range of information linking indigenous knowledge with science, it remains unclear what students really learned in the local schools. Drawing on the voices of students and teachers I delve into the power dynamics, in particular, I look into how the hidden curriculum was executed. I then go on to explore the implicit and explicit forms of gender violence that emerged from my data. I sketch a picture of the verbal and physical exertion of power by teachers in the local schools. Though I learned about cases of sexual abuse towards female students in the local schools, it was difficult to conclude the extent to which they occurred.

In the second part of this chapter I consider the role of the Pentecostal church (represented by various religious groups in the field site) in the learning process and how they reinforce unequal gender relations in the research setting. To illustrate the messages communicated by the local churches I draw on examples of sermons during which the main principles from the Bible were presented, and discuss how the underlying messages influence socially-sanctioned gender identities. I show the different approaches to teaching young people about gender issues, sexuality and reproductive health represented by the local clerics.

Before moving on to the data from the local schools I set up an analytical framework with which to analyse the data in this chapter. I provide clarification on what the term 'curriculum' encompasses and my approach to curriculum in this chapter. Many variations and interpretations of the term 'curriculum' have been offered, resulting in an extension of meaning including not only intended learning outcomes (as manifested in curriculum

documents) but also ‘hidden’, unintentional effects and how teachers interpret curriculum documents (Mac an Ghail, 1994; Swain, 2004; Dunne, 2008). Kelly makes a useful distinction regarding the educational curriculum, with ‘total curriculum’, which is not merely a ‘collection of separate subjects’, but planned as a whole; ‘hidden curriculum’ which embraces social roles, attitudes and behaviours learned by pupils in schools (resonating with ‘informal learning’); ‘planned curriculum and received curriculum’ that echo what actually is taught in the classroom and the attained curriculum, respectively (‘formal learning’); and ‘formal curriculum and informal curriculum’, formal activities taught within specific periods and extracurricular activities respectively (2009: 8-14). All these approaches to the term ‘curriculum’ are central to my analysis as they enable me to bring out different meanings of the term and their significance in the given context.

Using Kelly’s (2009) classification I look into the content of the planned as well as the hidden curriculum and the interpersonal dynamics between teachers and students and among students. As mentioned in section 4.1 (see also Chapter 1, section 1.2), formal education – school – is a powerful socialising agent and plays an important role in the transmission of gender roles. Thus school can serve to reinforce the power dynamics and gender stereotypes embedded in wider society. In so doing, it encourages the construction of unequal gender relations, much of which stems from teachers’ own perceptions and attitudes towards gender (see for example, Leach and Mitchell, 2006). But it is also a critical site of contestation, as it can challenge inequality and dispute gender and sexual identities.

7.1 What do young people learn in school about gender and sexuality?

In this section I look in detail at the recently introduced primary education curriculum, which, according to Mrs Almeida - who coordinated gender and programmes in DPEC, is *‘very well prepared (...) it’s a good guide for schools and teachers. It was created using all the possible resources it’s a modern, creative curriculum and it helps to develop children’s minds and to correct some errors children get on the streets and taboos from home’* (Interview: Beira, 01/09/10).

During the interview with Mrs Almeida I had the impression that she felt positively about the changes and intentions represented by the new curriculum. She stressed its new approach to learning and teaching processes and its competency-based and learner-centred focus. According to Mrs Almeida, within the framework of the new curriculum schools are free to plan and organise their teaching and learning in ways that best meet the students’ needs,

'therefore the implementation of the curriculum depends on the teachers' beliefs and knowledge and their interpretation of the aims' (Interview: Beira, 01/09/10). As anticipated in the curriculum, students should learn transferable skills and knowledge applicable in the local context (INDE/MINED, 2003). While this is what is intended by the planned curriculum, what actually happened in the classrooms did not always correspond with the prescribed aims, showing the difference between planned and received curriculum. As Mrs Almeida mentioned, the curriculum is meant only to be a guide, leaving room for teachers' own ideas and approaches, methods and teaching materials. I begin by looking at two dimensions of the curriculum: the aims of the educational programmes and how these were reflected in the textbooks used in teaching; and the implementation of these objectives in the classroom. However, my intention is to explore not the whole content and the aims of the curriculum but just the subjects and sections of textbooks relevant to sexuality, sexual and reproductive health and gender. The second element of the analysis involves looking at illustrations in the textbooks. In many cases pictures tell a story on their own or in combination with written text. Often students' opinions and attitudes are shaped by illustrations even before they read or are introduced to a text. This approach to discourse analysis reveals the level of gender sensitivity of texts and illustrations (for example, Kabira and Masinjila, 1997).

By studying examples of the national curriculum and through classroom observation I look at the intentions and objectives of the programme and how these were delivered in the classroom. I also examine how institutional gender regimes (Kabeer, 1999) were constructed through rules and practices as well as through the 'hidden curriculum', how this contributed to forming gender identities, and how gender roles and gender relations learned informally in the community and at home were translated into the formal context.

7.1.1 The national curriculum: what is intended and what is enacted?

When studying the aims of the national curriculum and how they were promoted and enacted through the programme I became aware that although gender relations are not addressed explicitly, ideas about gender beliefs often emerge implicitly across different subjects and themes. From early primary education, ideas about gender relations are introduced through topics on family and friends. For example, in fourth grade (EP1) one of the objectives of the Portuguese curriculum is to teach students about the importance of the family. They are introduced to the social and economic roles of various family members and are expected to

be able to identify the activities of different family members and the responsibilities shared within the household. It is important to note that while the school curriculum introduced the traditional gendered division of labour, young girls and boys were encouraged to actively participate in domestic chores. During classroom observations I noted that male students were inclined to maintain gender stereotypes, for example when a male teacher, Professor Tivane, explained different utilities and he said that both man and women can cook, a male student replied: *'Hey, I don't cook because I'm a man'*. When he was challenged by the teacher – *'Who says a man can't cook?'*, the boy answered promptly, *'(...) everybody knows that only a woman should cook'* (Interview, Beira: 15/08/09). Much older students at secondary school and teacher training college seemed to have the same idea about domestic work, stating that *'the kitchen is a female domain'* (Workshop, Beira: 13/08/09). These views illustrate that school has the potential to either challenge or reinforce gender-specific identities and gender roles. In the interview Professor Tivane seemed to be aware of his role in reproducing or changing beliefs among students about gender roles. He also acknowledged that relations between women and men had been undergoing restructuring, particularly in urban places, whereas rural areas stayed unchanged. As Professor Tivane observed many students could become confused as they received different knowledge at school than in the home.

The fourth-grade programme instructs students to treat their family members with respect and to show their gratitude for the effort their parents put into the family wellbeing. The curriculum stresses the importance of cultural values and norms and family customs. Rules and discipline and how to behave according to these are important. Respect, discipline and obedience were represented throughout the programme, emerging in the school curriculum. As I discuss in Chapter 6, these are also essential values underpinning the initiation rites in community-led learning.

Another example representing gender specific roles is the illustration (see Figure 7.1) on the cover of the seventh-grade Civic and Moral Education textbook *Ame o Próximo* (Love Your Neighbour) (Fenhane, 2008).



Figure 7.1 Gender activities (Fenhane, 2008: cover)

The image depicts the stereotypical gender division of labour, with men doing the physically hard work and women taking care of the family and domestic work. In the picture the man is shown dressed in uniform with a spade ready to dig a hole. Two women are working processing food and a third is carrying a baby and has a box on her head. A boy is playing with a wheel and girl is walking away from the hut in the middle of the illustration. Interestingly, this is the only picture in this textbook that makes explicit reference to customary gender roles in traditional societies such as Mozambique.

As I discussed in Chapter 4, sexuality is an important factor in shaping gender identities, as well as a regulatory aspect in maintaining unequal power relations. Sexual education is not taught as a separate subject in Mozambican schools; however some topics are taught as part of the natural science curriculum, which in primary education (EP1 and EP2) encompasses sexual and reproductive health, aspects of human sexual anatomy and body image, sexual intercourse and other aspects of human sexual behaviour (INDE/MINED, 2003).

From the fifth grade onwards students start learning about the human body and health issues. According to the curriculum they are expected to become familiar with vocabulary related to the reproductive, urinary system and general knowledge of hygiene; to understand the importance of human reproduction; to become familiar with the reproductive organs and their function, and to comprehend the reproductive process. The fifth-, sixth-, and seventh-grade programme encourages *autodescobrimento* (self-discovery) and sexuality. The unit (under the same name) is designed to identify and teach about the changes in the human body during puberty; to discuss issues linked to having or not having children and to explain pregnancy

and the consequences of early pregnancy. Students should be able to recognise the differences between their own body and those of their friends and much older individuals.

In the fifth-grade textbook *Eu e a Natureza* (Nature and Me) (Mondego, *et al.*, 2004), Chapter XII, *Autodescobrimento e sexualidade* (Self-discovery and sexuality) (p.73) introduces:

- Transformações que ocorrem na puberdade (changes occurring during puberty)
- Gravidez e parto (pregnancy and birth)
- Consequências da gravidez na adolescência (the consequences of adolescent pregnancy)
- Prevenção da gravidez na adolescência (preventing pregnancy in adolescents)

The chapter does not go into great detail about these topics but simply presents a concise introduction to each. For example, regarding the physical changes that occur in girls' and boys' bodies during puberty (Mondego, *et al.*, 2004: 74) the textbook explains that besides physical changes there can be psychological effects of puberty such as sudden changes in behaviour. The text explains that the physical changes occurring during puberty could make one curious about one's body, therefore students are encouraged to discuss them with their parents and to look for information elsewhere. It is made clear that sharing their everyday experience is important for young people constructing their sexual identity.

Like the fifth-grade textbook, in the sixth-grade textbook, *As Maravilhas de Natureza* (The Wonders of Nature) (Gomes *et al.*, 2002), Unit 7, Self-discovery and sexuality, goes into much more detail. It presents information about family planning, women's health and contraception, reproductive rights and responsibilities, decision-making, relationships, responsibility for preventing sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV/AIDS, and sexual abstinence (Gomes *et al.*, 2002). The textbook also introduces important factors when making life-important decisions. Young people are taught how to obtain information, help and counselling regarding these matters outside the school. In this way they are encouraged to reflect on difficult situations and the consequences of their decisions in their lives. Here reference is made to important agents such as the family, the community, the church and the school and their role in the decision making process.

I found it interesting that the subject explicitly introduced initiation rites in the community and/or the region. As Mrs Almeida explained: *'Initiation rites aren't practiced in the whole of the country, therefore it's important to tell children about these kinds of activities (...)*

because it's African tradition. I think it's positive and I think we need to preserve what is ours' (Interview: Beira, 01/09/09). In this way the new curriculum reflects a neutral or positive association with the culture by allowing space for aspects of indigenous traditions to be learned as well as 'modern' aspects.



Cerimónia de ritos de iniciação

Figure 7.2 Initiation rites (Gomes *et al.*, 2002: 73)

The illustration above (Figure 7.2), although not very detailed, shows a traditional scene from an initiation rite. In the background young girls are dancing while older women are cooking. The dancing girls are showing their naked upper bodies and are wearing small traditional skirts made of leaves. They have bracelets or bells on their ankles. The text explains that the rituals are a necessary preparation for marital and social life and that the ceremonies are gender-specific. Girls are taught about personal hygiene, menstruation and their family responsibilities to husband, children and home. Boys learn how to construct a house, take care of the family, hunt and defend themselves against animals. The text mentions that male circumcision often takes place during the rituals. As argued by Arnfred (2011) (see Chapter 1 and 6), rites of passage do not merely equip young persons with practical skills, but they also indicate acceptance into a community. Initiation rites are presented here as the way into the adult world; they allow young people to take part in the conversations of groups of elders, and after participating in the ritual they are ready to marry.

For young people who had participated in initiation rites, drawing on both this school material and their experiences creates a strong link between formal education and non-formal and informal means of learning. For these students it was easy to make the connection between school and community reality. In this way community-based learning is acknowledged and the importance of cultural values emphasised. This corresponds with Mrs Almeida's comment about the curriculum helping to preserve local culture and traditions.

The curriculum is particularly important in areas where initiation rites are not practiced any more and children only learn about them from the older generation.

I found it striking that in Unit 8, Reproductive Health (Gomes *et al.*, 2002: 77), in the same textbook various contraception methods are described in depth. The textbook introduces several methods that it recommends for young people (see Figure 7.3). As it explains, while condoms worn by males are mostly used there is also a condom for females, besides other types of contraceptives. Clearly, the content of the textbook reflects the view of Mrs Almeida who saw the new curriculum as ‘modern’ and ‘creative’.

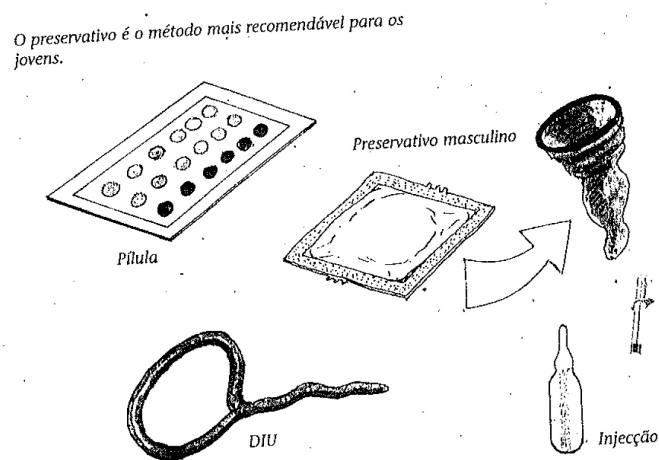


Figure 7.3 Contraception methods (Gomes *et al.*, 2002: 79)

This is followed by a section on The Responsibility of a Man and a Woman in Pregnancy Prevention (ibid: 80) which explains the implications of teenage pregnancy. It is made clear that pregnancy should be a common and responsible decision of the man and woman concerned. The conclusion of the unit encourages both girls and boys to take responsibility for preventing unwanted pregnancy (Gomes *et al.*, 2002). The unit explicitly points out women’s ability to negotiate around their reproductive function. On reading this section I became aware of the availability of various contraceptive methods in some of the pharmacies in the city.⁶⁶

The seventh-grade programme follows up most of the same topics. Issues related to puberty and sexuality are explored in depth in Unit 11, Self-discovery and Sexuality (Grachane and Müller, 2004: 96) in the textbook *O Segredo da Vida* (The Secret of Life) (ibid). Students are expected to learn about friendship and love and the importance of these relationships during

⁶⁶ I was surprised to see the contraceptive pill in a Portuguese-run pharmacy. It was very expensive at 500 MZN (USD16.5).

puberty. They are made aware that lack of knowledge and experience makes young people, especially girls, vulnerable, and hence they often become victims of sexual abuse. Students are instructed that ‘a person should not feel intimidated, should not submit to pressure from someone else who is much older, more powerful or violent, to have sexual relations against their will’ (ibid: 99). These incidents should be reported. Young people are encouraged to seek help in the school or from other authorities outside it. The textbook presents puberty as a difficult period which requires support, and young people are strongly encouraged to consider their parents as counsellors and good friends. As I discussed in Chapter 6, this was problematic for the young people and parents I talked with. Parents in general found it difficult to discuss sensitive topics with their children, and they in turn struggled with the idea of approaching their parents for the same reason. In Chapter 6 I examined how young people relied on other adults, particularly *madrinhas* and *padrinhos*, for knowledge about sexuality and reproductive health.

Returning to the seventh-grade textbook, it is important to note that in the text sexuality is presented as one of the fundamental aspects of human development. It is acknowledged as an integral part not only of the personhood of every human being but also of human rights. Students are made aware of gender inequalities constructed socially by cultural customs, norms and values. In a section entitled *Respeitar a diversidade de valores* (Respect the Diversity of Values) (ibid: 100) they are informed that inequalities constrain women’s sexual autonomy and that it is necessary to challenge them. The textbook emphasises that both women and men have equal sexual rights and thus have right to sex as a part of their development process. The illustration *Direitos sexuais das mulheres* (Women’s Sexual Rights) (Grachane and Müller, 2004: 100) (see Figure 7.4), in the same section refers to the basic sexual rights of women: every woman has a right to choose a partner; not to be forced to have sexual relations; to decide whether she wants to be sexually active; to privacy and confidentiality in her sexual life, to negotiate when and how she engages in sexual relations; to information about sexuality, family planning and protection from STIs and AIDS.

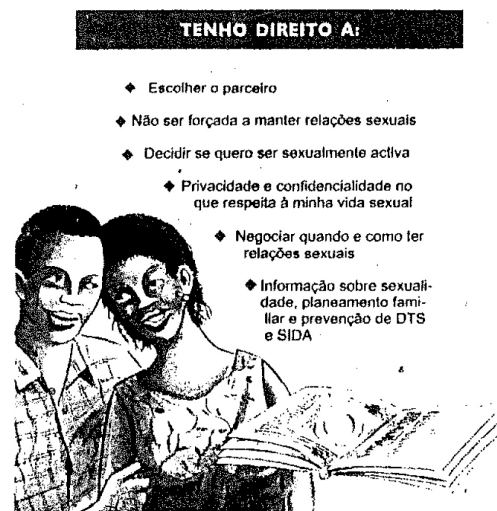


Fig. 6 Direitos sexuais das mulheres.

Figure 7.4 Women’s Sexual Rights (Grachane and Müller, 2004: 100)

In the seventh-grade programme the reference to initiation rites takes a different perspective to that of the fifth grade: it introduces the concept of virginity (Grachane and Müller, 2004: 101). The textbook states that girls used to be expected to maintain their virginity until marriage. Nowadays, deciding whether to remain a virgin is a personal choice and depends on various cultural and religious factors as well as personal norms. The section explains that religious leaders used to advocate sexual purity before marriage. As I go on to discuss, however, the church still supports virginity and encourages young people to abstain from sexual relations until marriage. Supposedly, nowadays men accept that women have sexual relations before marriage. Nevertheless, girls are encouraged to consider the consequences when ‘giving up’ their virginity simply to satisfy their curiosity or to show their independence. Virginity is a controversial issue in the local culture and was the subject of argument between the school, church and community.

The seventh-grade programme also addresses other topics generally considered taboo in the local community. For example, the textbook supports different sexual orientations and presents homosexuality as acceptable. As noted, young people often kept their sexual orientation secret because they were afraid of brutal reactions from their parents and the local community. Encouraging openness about sexuality, the section refers to the abolition of the law against homosexuality some time ago.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ It is not clear what the authors of the textbook mean by this. The law did not state explicitly whether different sexual orientations are lawful or not. Article 71, paragraph 4 of the Penal Code orders ‘security measures’ against those who

Another example of a taboo topic challenged in the textbook is masturbation, which is presented as natural behaviour, and for young people especially as an important part of the process of discovering one's body: "It is natural practice and a way of putting off beginning your sexual life" (Grachane and Müller, 2004: 103). It is seen as requiring discussion, especially during puberty, as a central part of self-discovery.

As the above section illustrates, the underlying assumption is that young people should acquire broad knowledge about sexuality and gender throughout their primary education. I became aware of the growing discrepancy between the intended aims of the curriculum and the enacted curriculum. During the debates with the seventh-grade students I realised that many of the students found the material abstract and difficult to understand. It is also necessary to remember that language could have been an obstacle for some students to acquire new knowledge (see Chapter 2, section 2.3). Two male students expressed their worries about passing the exam: *'It's difficult to follow what the teacher explained'* and *'we have to find out how to learn the stuff as we don't have the books'* (Debate: Beira, 23/06/09). This necessitated the mechanism of routine – 'ritualisation' – in the classroom, and in a sense made it a necessary condition for students to learn something during the lessons. Therefore, students' knowledge remained a serious issue due to inconsistency in the delivery of the programme, lack of teaching materials and textbooks and other issues discussed in Chapter 1.

As I suggested in Chapter 1 education is also a means of encouraging hidden messages transmitted by the curriculum and teaching-learning processes. In the following section I engage with Kabeer's (1999) institutional analysis looking at the power relations between teachers and students, rules and practices operating in the schools I visited. Also applying Foucault's conceptualisation of power and knowledge I consider power relations between teachers and students.

7.1.2 Teacher-student interactions: transacting the hidden curriculum

Elisa,⁶⁸ a young female teacher at Machangana Secondary School, described interactions between teachers and students as *'complicated'*:

habitually commit 'vices against nature'. 'Security measures' (as stated elsewhere in the Code) can include hard labour, internment in an asylum and debarment from professional activities (OSISA, URL).

⁶⁸ Some participants were happy to be called by name, others used their title Sra. (Mrs), Sr. (Mr), Prof/Profª (male or female teacher), *'formador'* (somebody who forms - tutor at the IFP) or their academic titles such as Dra (Dr – female) and Dr (Dr – male) which were, however, often not accurate anyway. A person with education to tenth- grade and a year of university training would call himself/herself Dr/Dra.

'Unfortunately I think male teachers are used to their superiority and they actually enjoy it. They don't accept that the teaching-learning process should be a dialogue. Therefore students don't have the courage to approach them... and teachers don't allow them to either. It's a little bit complicated.... Especially for girls, it's difficult to approach male teachers. The general perception among students is that the teacher has a knife in his hand and therefore students are afraid, but also because teachers don't permit such proximity These relations perpetuate because of the traditional hierarchy in the society, the authority that thrives at home and in the community. I don't know, maybe also because some teachers lack better pedagogical/psychological preparation'? (Interview: Beira, 25/10/09)

In this interview Elisa pointed out the complexity of the traditional norms that perpetuate and institutionalise the notion of male superiority and dominance. From the way she responded I sensed that she was actually sorry or maybe even embarrassed about the situation. When I asked how she felt about it, she told me several stories about male (usually older) teachers who misused their power over students, particularly female students, making their lives miserable: *'I don't want to know what they are doing with girls. I just know that it isn't right'*. Elisa pointed out some important facts about the hierarchies and power relations embedded in stereotypes. As a young female teacher she did not feel she could challenge her male colleagues. *'They are the same age as my father, and I would never question my father'* (Interview: Beira, 25/08/09). Despite the fact that Elisa had a university education, she did not have the confidence to approach her colleagues. This suggests that the hierarchical organisation of the institution of school reinforces and maintains beliefs rooted in the community, and affects not only interactions among the staff but also the dynamics between teacher and students. As Elisa suggested, the relations between teachers and students, as well as between students, were complex.

However, when visiting the schools I became aware that even if teachers did not necessarily voice their views on the differences between male and female, the ways in which they treated, disciplined or failed to discipline their students contributed to the implicit objectives of the curriculum. I often witnessed this kind of situation at the primary schools. Bullying and verbal abuse among primary students were often ignored by teachers and justified as a natural part of growing up. According to male teachers, teasing and harsh language among peers was tolerable as part of *'normal standards in the school culture'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 15/05/09). In this way boys' bad behaviour was excused and they were encouraged to continue this kind of abusive attitude. Teachers saw it as *'a natural way of marking territory'* and *'showing who's the strongest – as men do'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 15/05/09). By overlooking or ignoring it in the classroom the teacher encouraged the violent behaviour whilst silencing

the victims. The girls did not oppose; they simply complied. I wondered why they did not ask the teacher for help. Did they know that the teacher would not react, or were they afraid of further consequences from the boys?

When I asked girls at that primary school what they thought of the boys' behaviour they stated that as long as it *'didn't involve any beating they could bear it'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 15/09/09). Students were often left in the schoolyard without supervision during the breaks and most of the time they just played, but sometimes girls complained about boys *'teasing'* or *'chasing and cornering'* them. Having discussions with the girls made it clear that they were often not sure how to react to the boys' advances: *'It isn't that they are always just joking, but that's what our teacher says'* (Debate: Beira, 02/09/09). Asking for adult (teacher) help was not always the best solution.

In all the schools I visited, teacher-student relations were marked by discipline and obedience-reinforcing traditional norms of hierarchy and unequal power relations. Physical punishment, verbal abuse and bullying often occurred in the schools. Although any physical act involving students is against the Teacher's Code of Conduct (Centro de Integridade Pública, 2008) it was practised in the schools I visited. One of the male teachers acknowledged this: *'No, it's not normal and it's against our rules. Unfortunately there are teachers who use this way of punishment. And I know that some of my colleagues hit students on daily basis. Unfortunately, it's going to take time to change'* (Interview: Beira, 15/08/09). According to some of the female teachers: *'Sometimes it's impossible to control students, you lose control and you shout (...) calling names isn't serious and students know that We don't really mean it, it's just when we get angry and we feel helpless'* (Interview: Beira, 25/07/09). The situation also reflects power relations between teachers and students, as I discussed in Elisa's reflections on teachers' authority and control.

But not all students seemed to become passive victims of power (Foucault, 1977). Some students challenged the rules with their noncompliant behaviour. According to Elisa, some girls tried to *'push the boundaries by wearing/transforming the uniform in their own way. We're constantly fighting with our female students who wear very short skirts and open shirts showing their breasts. Girls explain that they're wearing the uniform, but their shirt is transparent'* (Interview: Beira, 25/10/09). Elisa explained this as a way of showing off and showing their own identity, and the uniform *'forces everybody to be the same'* (Interview:

Beira, 25/10/09) she said. When I asked about male students, she seemed not to be bothered, explaining that *'boys are just boys'* (Interview: Beira, 25/10/09).

This account of the situation in the schools and classrooms has provided a picture of the rules and practices in operation and how these affected power relations between teachers and students as well as teaching-learning processes. However it is not my intention to create the impression that the situation was due to teachers' unsatisfactory delivery of the programme. Of course various external factors, such as for example large classes, lack of teaching materials and textbooks, also played a part.

Authority and control (represented mostly by male teachers) teach the young people that masculinity is associated with power while femininity involves obedience, acquiescence and making oneself attractive to men. Some teachers considered boys more intelligent than girls, who they viewed as overly preoccupied with clothes, romance and love affairs. *'You know some girls are only looking for trouble'*. *'What sort of trouble?'* I asked. *'You see, girls only think about pretty clothes and lovers. Their heads are in the sky. They aren't interested in studying'* (Interview: Beira, 25/10/09): this was Mrs Mendoza's view of 'naughty girls'. In fact, during my research, I met girls who had different aspirations; some wanted to become educated whilst others were interested in finding a husband or a lover, a sugar daddy. I learned how some girls challenge normative ideas and beliefs about gender roles, for example by entering in relationships with older men as I explored in Chapter 5. In the following sections I examine relationships between teachers and female students motivated by transactional sex that female students use to secure better marks or an exam pass.

7.2 Gender abuse in schools: a complex issue

Drawing on the issues that emerged during the interviews with teachers and the workshops with students I discuss here some of the reasons why gender abuse occurs in schools. In this section I reflect on various factors that contribute to the complexity of sexual abuse in schools, why violence is often context-specific and why it is essential to consider situations individually when attempting to understand why they take place. To illustrate this I quote voices from within the secondary school student debates and look at specific cases of teachers forcing female students to perform sexual favours. I also draw attention to some of the views of educational authorities, however, none of them could confirm the extent of the issue in the area. It seemed that only a small number of cases were reported to the authorities. The Gender Group led by Mrs Rosario at Machangana Secondary School was launched to deal

with sexual abuse among other issues concerning female students in the school. Mrs Rosario explained to me that though few cases are reported during a school year, the number increases close to the exam time. Therefore it is not my intention to assume that sexual relations between students and teachers were ubiquitous, however they did occur in the local schools.

Discussing gender violence with the students made me aware of the term '*sexual corruption*' which both male and female tenth-grade students used to describe sexual abuse in school. According to some of the male students, sex is a '*currency*' of corruption and it usually involved the extortion of sexual favours, rather than money, from female students in return for better marks or passing the examinations held at the end of each semester. These situations revealed the asymmetric power relations between teachers and students and teachers' exploitation of their authority, as well as socially-constructed attitudes toward gender roles.

However, it appeared that sometimes girls also made advances towards their teachers initiating sexual intercourse. For example, some female students knew that they could manoeuvre their teachers by offering sexual favours in exchange for better marks. Their behaviour was commonly considered '*provocative*' and '*manipulative*'. The general discourse among teachers and educational authorities as well as the students themselves generally viewed girls as responsible for many incidents of sexual abuse.

7.2.1 Teachers forcing sexual relations on female students

Working with students over a period of time helped to build trusting relationships, yet I was aware that sexual abuse was not an easy topic for discussion. I decided, therefore, to approach the debates about this issue in a different way and arranged focus group discussions in two parts.

The activities took place in Machangana Secondary School in the late afternoon before the night shift started when the school was almost empty except for a few people working in the office. I conducted the focus group discussions in a hut at the back of the schoolyard to ensure privacy. The activities were carried out with two similar groups of: 55 tenth-grade students in group A (23 females and 32 males, all aged 16-18) and 44 tenth-grade students in group B (13 females and 31 males, all aged 16-17). The participants worked in small mixed teams of 5-7.

During the first part of the focus group discussions I presented the beginning of a fictional story about a girl, 'Mariana', and asked the students to imagine how the story continued and how it could develop. I did not suggest the topic of the session to the students and I let them work freely with their ideas. Their stories were used as the background for the debates in the second part of the discussions. Earlier I had conducted sessions on poverty, gender and education, children and human rights, traditions, sex and sexuality, and therefore I cannot determine whether their ideas were influenced by any of these activities. Nonetheless, the diversity of the stories created by the groups was surprising. This suggested two things to me: on the one hand the students had different abilities, and on the other they might not have tried this kind of exercise before. While some of the accounts were very simple and short, others engaged with Mariana's story in depth. Here it is necessary to acknowledge that the students knew about the research objectives and that the story could have been pointing to certain issues I wanted to learn about.

Below I introduce stories representing the main ideas across the 11 groups:

Story: *Mariana is a student at a local secondary school. She is a very intelligent girl. Her dream is to become a doctor. Mariana knows that it is very important to pass her final exams...*

Story 1:

Mariana had been working hard in order to be able to continue studying. She didn't think the exams difficult: she was quite confident about passing them. Unfortunately, it turned out that she failed one subject. Mariana was devastated. She couldn't afford to repeat the whole year just for one subject! She wanted to study medicine. She was sitting in the schoolyard wondering what to do. Mariana was afraid to go back home: her father would probably kill her! Her parents had big plans for Mariana. They wanted her to continue studying to become a doctor. While Mariana was sitting there in the schoolyard her teacher approached her. He saw her crying. The teacher knew she had failed the test and offered his help. Mariana wasn't aware of what he really meant. 'How is he going to help me?' she thought. A few days later she received the information that she had passed the exams and was very happy and went to the teacher to thank him. The teacher asked for his reward: 'So what do I get out of it?' Mariana was shocked. 'What do you mean? I thought you wanted to help me?' The teacher got angry: 'You silly girl, everything has its price! If you don't listen to me I'll make your life hell and you won't be able to study at this school any more'. Mariana got scared and started to cry. He told her to meet him that evening or he would make her life a misery. When they met he pulled her inside his car. The teacher raped Mariana and left her in the street. Mariana was ashamed and afraid to go back home, 'It's my fault! I'm so stupid! How could I have believed him?' She walked on the beach, not knowing what to do. Finally, in the middle of the night, she went back home. Mariana's father met her in the door and started to ask questions. When she told him the story he beat her so she couldn't show her face in the streets for days.

Story 2:

Mariana was known as a hard working student, but she didn't have any luck and failed her final exams. She asked the teacher for help: 'Teacher, please help me, you know that my future depends on this exam'. The teacher answered, 'Mariana, you know what you're asking me is very difficult. You know how things are... we can come to an agreement. You give me 500 MZN (14USD) and you pass'. Mariana was a very poor student and didn't have the money. The teacher suggested a different solution, 'Then we can meet in my house to talk about it'. Mariana was afraid, but went to see the teacher. He then forced her to have sex with him. Ever since then Mariana hasn't been well. She has psychological problems and can't carry on with her studies. People in the community make fun of her and she's become very lonely.

Story 3:

Mariana was afraid to fail the exams, so she wrote the answers on a piece of paper and during the exam she used it. At some point the teacher noticed this and came up to her and took the paper from her. Mariana started to cry. She was very anxious about the situation. After the exam she went to talk to the teacher, but he didn't want to listen to her: 'You know the rules. You were stupid enough to cheat!' She begged him to let her pass. Finally the teacher agreed and told her to meet him to discuss the situation. Mariana didn't think too much about it: she had a dream, a goal to reach. In the evening they met in a bar. The teacher was very nice to her. They talked, and he bought her a few drinks. Then he used the situation and forced her to have sex with him. Unfortunately she ended up becoming pregnant and her dream of becoming a doctor turned to dust. The teacher didn't want to know her any more. Her family didn't want her to live with them as she had brought shame on them. From then on Mariana had to support herself and the child.

(Debate: Beira, 17/09/09)

The discussions that followed the presentations of the stories revealed that the students were aware of incidents of violence involving their female friends or taking place at school. A number of important issues emerged in the discussion of Mariana's story.

First of all, the groups expressed that the accounts, although fictional, were typically representative of any girl '*fighting to get an education*' in the case study context. Some female participants felt that in general there was no expectation that girls would do well in school as the domestic responsibilities resting on them seemed to be of a main concern in many homes. As one of the girls noted, '*my grandfather says I'll marry anyway and then I'll end up in my husband's house, so I might just as well learn how to be a good wife instead of studying some kind of nonsense*' (Debate: Beira; 17/09/09). This suggests that some of the girls must face persistent ideas about gender roles in their homes according to which they are expected to marry early and raise a family. However, these aspirations may have also been motivated by the socio-economic situation at home, as the family and parents would expect to receive high *lobolo* for their young daughters which I explored in-depth in Chapter 2 (section

2.5). This situation highlights the issue of what is the ‘right knowledge’ to learn: how to be a good wife, or formal education?

Some of the girls shared stories about teachers’ comments on their appearance, telling them how beautiful they were or how nice they looked with new *tranças* (plaits). They also observed that *‘sometimes teachers create a situation to ‘catch a girl’ by giving her low marks and forcing her to have sexual intercourse with him’* (Debate: Beira 17/09/09). Some of the boys reacted critically to these arguments, saying: *‘Many of you girls just want to catch a teacher (...) You know if you put a short skirt on and unbutton your blouse you’ll ‘invite’ the teacher’* (Debate: Beira 17/09/09). Pointing to girls’ immoral behaviour and how it often leads to sexual corruption corresponded to the second version of Mariana’s story.

Another interesting emerging topic was ‘sexual corruption’, and the young people asked important questions, trying to define what sexual abuse is and what it is not. For some, sexual abuse is *‘when a female student wants to get to a place in school and goes to bed with the administrator or teacher’*; for others it is *‘when a man/boy has too much sex with a woman/girl’*, *‘when a man does something against girl’s will’*, *‘when a man make a girl drunk and then has sexual intercourse with her’*. Others mentioned *‘when a female student has sex with a teacher in exchange for better marks’* (Debate: Beira 17/09/09). Interestingly, the latter observation brought forward the idea of ‘transactional sex’ and ‘transactional relations’ which, according to the students, was not widely spoken of but was accepted in the local community. The male participants supported the idea of such a transaction, arguing that *‘she gets good marks and he gets sexual satisfaction’* (Debate: Beira 17/09/09). These different perceptions of sexual abuse reveal the complexities of violence against girls in schools. Here the students used the second version of Mariana’s story as an example of ambiguity. According to some of the students, what happened to Mariana was not a violent act but rather a ‘sexual transaction’: it was her own fault and she should take responsibility for the consequences. This view was shared not only by the students but also by many other people I discussed it with. This highlights aspects of Kabeer’s agency, in which the girls are not passive victims of violence, but are at least partly controlling the situation. I analyse more examples below in which many people talk critically about the ‘immoral behaviour’ of girls.

Ultimately the students agreed that it was impossible to define sexual abuse without taking different circumstances and personal factors into consideration. They consider it very complex and context-specific and hence difficult to determine:

It's 'flexible' when sexual abuse happens and it depends on many factors Sometimes the girl is guilty because she provoked the teacher, but then the teacher should know better (...) then teachers use situation to abuse female students [Teachers] know that everybody wants to pass. (FDG: Beira 17/09/09)

During the discussions I became aware that the incidence of sexual abuse increases at the end of school year: *'Just like Mariana, everybody wants to pass the exams Some people study, others don't'* (Debate: Beira, 17/09/09). When discussing the final story above, the young people noted that in general girls are more vulnerable as they are exposed to sexual abuse from teachers in school, often followed by early pregnancy: *'Unfortunately the girl always loses in this situation; she can't continue in education as she has to take care of the child She usually stays alone and the father's gone'* (Debate: Beira, 17/09/09). As I explained in Chapter 2, pregnant girls are allowed to continue their education but are required to change to the night shift.

When I asked the students where they could go for help in this kind of situation they seemed puzzled by my question. I probed to find out whether they would ask for assistance in the family or from other relatives, from somebody at the school or maybe in the church. The students explained that reporting a case was very complicated and in most instances no consequences followed. The female students noted that *'it's embarrassing enough for a girl If she denounces a teacher the whole school is going to know Sometimes it's better to stay quiet'* (Debate: Beira 17/09/09). As I learned in the field, many local schools had ineffective policies or none at all by which students and parents can voice concerns or expose assailants. As observed by the students, *'even if a student or parents complain, little is done and the girls suffer because they have to bear the consequences. They stay at home taking care of the baby and the teacher goes free'* (Debate: Beira 17/09/09).

Moreover, the students expressed that people in general were insensitive and critical in such cases and it could even end up with the exclusion of the girl or her whole family from the community. Therefore some families *'handled the situation in private'* as they would be anxious if *'people talk about it'*, as stated by some of the students. To avoid unnecessary gossip parents would look at the possibility of abortion in case their daughter was pregnant or would force the teacher to 'pay a fine'. According to the customary rules, a man who makes a girl pregnant is obliged to take responsibility for it and take the girl for a wife. This practice has been changing and nowadays many young men refuse the burden of a family at an early age and the girls stay with their parents, accepting some money if they are lucky.

Another aspect of sexual abuse in schools that emerged during the discussions was associated with female students ‘failing intentionally’. According to the participants some teachers press female students to perform sexual favours by giving them low marks and/or threatening that they would fail their exams, so many female students comply and act in accordance with teachers’ demands.

The general feeling among both female and male students was that teachers have authority and control over the students and female students are particularly vulnerable. The participants agreed that male teachers especially used their superior position to spread fear and ensure students’ compliance: *‘With some teachers you don’t want to discuss, you just do what you’re told’* (Debate: Beira 17/09/09). These arguments are similar to Elise’s observations about hierarchical relations between teachers and students as well as to what I experienced when observing lessons in primary and secondary schools.

But what happens to the students who refuse to engage in sexual relations with their teachers? What kind of consequences do they face?

I learned about an eighth-grade female student, Joanna, at the secondary school where I carried out activities. Joanna had found herself in such a situation. During my interview with one of the male teachers, Mr Remigio, he brought up Joanna’s case as an example of a student who did not want to *‘perform sexual favours’* for her teacher. Mr Remigio had taught Joanna and considered her one of his best students. Hence he was surprised when he found out that she had not passed her final exams. Mr Remigio found that his colleague had given her low marks throughout the year and at the end of the school year had tried to force her to have sexual relations with her in exchange for passing the exam, but she had refused. I was surprised when Mr Remigio mentioned that the teacher was one of his best colleagues, and when I asked about his reaction to the situation he said, *‘I couldn’t do much because my colleague is from the opposition and it’d be seen as a political game between us (...) despite the fact that he’s my friend: and I don’t know the truth, I don’t know the real story and what happened’* (Interview: Beira, 25/10/09). The case was not reported and the girl dropped out of school. Like my earlier example of Mr Armando facing problems with managerial staff representing different political ideas, it seemed that Mr Remigio had similar issues with his colleague. This suggests that institutions are highly politicised and this has implications for (power) relationships among the staff.

In this section I have discussed factors contributing to the abuse of female students in institutional structures whereby exams, better marks and admission to school are achieved in transactional relations between administrative staff or teachers and young girls are particularly vulnerable and face serious consequences of those relations. The conversation with Mr Remigio shows an example of a teacher wanting to intentionally fail a female student in this way trying to force her to perform sexual favours. Joanna dropped out of school after refusing sexual relations with her teacher. The dominant discourse among the young people and in the community considers poverty the main motive behind girls' advances towards their teachers. However, educational success, among other factors, is another crucial reason for these advances, as I explore in the following section.

7.2.2 Why do some female students make advances to their teachers?

As rightly reported by the female students in the previous section, in some instances girls make advances to their teachers, provoking sexual relations. Surely young women are led by their own motives when engaging in a relationship with a teacher? Certain reasons were common to many such incidents. The extent to which girls engaged in relations with their teachers through coercion or consent remains unclear. In this section I introduce the main perceptions that I gathered about why some female students are interested in pursuing sexual relations with their teachers.

Seen from Kabeer's perspective that 'power cannot be given; it has to be self-generated' (1996: 229) (see section 3.2) these examples show that agency is the ability to define one's goals and act upon them. These girls demonstrated the ability to act upon their situations to change them. They might have not had complete power over the teachers, but they had control in the given moment. Their behaviour was against all the traditional norms and beliefs as they challenged the idea of female submissiveness and lack of power. The examples also show how individuals are 'simultaneously undergoing and exercising power' (Foucault, 1980: 98), thus shifting gender relations (McNay, 2000).

When I discussed sexual abuse with various people, poverty was seen as one of the main factors contributing to female students' involvement in sexual relations with teachers. For example, the female secondary students mentioned that girls are vulnerable as they often do not have the money to pay for a school uniform or supplies, and teachers and other men may offer financial support in exchange for sexual favours. People chose to use poverty to explain many unfortunate situations such as sexual abuse. This made me wonder where they got this

idea from and whether it had anything to do with access to the media, exposure to news from other countries and the ‘poverty discourse’ in the newspapers and politics.

Some female focus group participants observed that although students face abusive behaviour from some teachers, *‘not all teachers are bad’*. Moreover, they affirmed that some female students seek attention: *‘Different girls are interested in different things some want to study, but some want to marry young and a teacher’s a good catch’* (FGD: Beira, 17/09/09). In these situations girls are usually eager to marry a teacher rather than aiming merely for transactional sex, as in the case of Morelia, a 17-year-old who lived on the outskirts of Beira. She came from a poor family and told me that she was looking for a husband, *‘somebody who will take care of me for the rest of my life’* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 17/09/09). This is linked to the general idea of teachers being seen as a good source of money.

In his interview, a young tutor from teacher training college, Benito, mentioned the seriousness of persistent poverty and how little *‘can make girls happy’*. Benito said that many girls had tried to ‘get him’, but he was not interested:

Researcher (R): *I’m trying to understand why sexual abuse occurs in schools.*

Benito (B): *I think the main reason for sexual abuse in places like this is poverty. As far as I can see it happens because many mature female students are looking for shelter, a home, security because of their bad financial situation. Actually, it takes very little to make girls happy. Secondly it can happen in exchange for marks. Often a girl exchanges sex for money and money for marks.*

R: *What about you? Have you experienced girls making advances?*

B: *Aaaah – I can say that students have tried. Yes, they are trying. But I know my place. And of course they are trying because they are looking for money, security and good shelter. They know that I have a reasonable salary. I have enough money for transport, food, hygiene, clothes and more. It’s enough for a young person.* (Interview: Beira, 11/08/09)

This extract from my conversation with Benito shows that some female students are forced to think strategically, and securing their future is their main concern. Some girls consider a teacher *‘a good catch’*. Marrying a teacher gains a young woman respect and social status in her community, particularly in rural areas. Marriage to a teacher ensures not merely social status but also financial stability and support. A girl who marries a teacher does not have to worry, according to Benito: as a state employee her husband will never be unemployed. He argued that often *‘very little can make girls happy’*: shelter and financial security is what many young women aspire to in their lives and some achieve it by engaging in sexual relations with a teacher.

The prevailing discourse about girls engaging in transactional sex, as represented in the interview with Benito, assumes that sex is a means by which girls obtain gifts, meet their living expenses or pay their school fees. It is particularly interesting to analyse the rationale behind the dominant discourse. Mainly elderly people tended to say that girls ‘*invited troubles*’ by wearing short skirts and blouses showing their stomachs. Similarly, Baba Joaquin made a point during the initiation rites about the signals girls send with their bodies and the potentially serious consequences of this.

As identified by the students, ‘*fighting to get an education*’ is another motive for making advances to teachers. This practice appeared to be widely accepted by the teachers, some of whom ignored it and refused the girls what they wanted. A conversation with a young secondary teacher, Paolo, illustrates how some girls attempted to seduce teachers, especially the younger ones, in order to get better marks. In his account Paolo describes a situation he got involved in with one of his seventh-grade female students:

Researcher (R): *Do you sometimes receive money for ‘helping’ students [to pass exams]?*

Paolo (P): *[gives an embarrassed smile] Well ... [starts to laugh, then gets serious again] Yes, many students offer money to make sure that they pass the exams.*

R: *How does it happen, and how much money are we talking about?*

P: *It differs, sometimes it’s 200MZN (4USD), sometimes 500MZN (14USD). A student comes and asks you for ‘help’. Sometimes you might not even want the money because it’s somebody who always participates in the lessons and you would pass him or her anyway. But this is the part of the game. Sometimes people feel offended if you don’t accept the money. And then again a teacher earns so little... [a pause. After a moment he continues with a smile.] So what can we do?*

R: *Is it only happening in the night shift?*

P: *No, not only then [shaking his head]. But younger female students don’t have money so they usually ‘do it a different way’.*

R: *[unsure what he is talking about] What do you mean?*

P: *[reaching for his mobile phone in his pocket under the white apron that teachers in Mozambique wear] I’ll show you a message from one of my students in seventh grade. [he seems to be shocked. The text shows a penis and a short text: ‘Life is fun, so let’s try it!’] You see what I mean. I’m not that sort of person. I don’t want to do things like that.*

R: *[trying to provoke him] Why not? And why is the girl sending you this kind of message? Did you talk to her afterwards?*

P: *Of course I talked to her! You see if I became her lover all her friends and the whole school would know. As soon as they knew that I’m her boyfriend, I could lose all respect. Girls would know that it’s easy to become my girlfriend. What did I do with the girl... hmmm... I told her that I didn’t like it and she should stop sending me stuff like that.*

R: *[finding this hard to believe] What was her reaction? Won’t she make up some stories now?*

P: *No, I don’t think so. Well, I hope not!*

R: *So is this how it usually happens between a teacher and a student? Have you heard any stories from your colleagues?*

P: Of course, many of them are very open about it. For many of my male colleagues it's a cause of pride, they feel superior and they have good fun talking about it! Well, usually the teacher and the student go somewhere to have a drink and then both of them are very eager and they find a place... and that's it.

R: How do other teachers react when they hear all the stories?

P: They only talk about it when they're with other male colleagues and when they know they can joke about it. (Interview; Beira, 03/06/09)

Throughout the conversation I had the feeling that Paolo was embarrassed, but because he was just about to start a lesson I did not have a chance to find out whether this was because of his own experience or whether the general situation made him feel uneasy. A few days later I returned to our conversation to find out what he actually felt about the situation. According to Paolo, female students approached him often, mainly with the aim of getting better marks or to pass exams. Some asked him out for a drink or a walk on the beach. Others made an effort to smile and be nice to him, as he observed. *'Thank God the students have to wear uniforms! Can you imagine what would happen if we didn't have them! [grimacing] I can imagine some students walking half-naked imitating stars and celebrities from soap operas. It's enough with some girls exposing their bodies on the streets attracting men's looks'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 09/06/09). Paolo further explained that *'a teacher is also a human being, he has his needs and he can be tempted'*, thus justifying teachers' immoral behaviour. It seemed that although he tried to excuse his colleagues, he himself was afraid of losing the students' respect and maybe also that of the staff. I wondered if he knew of the disapproving stories spread by students about his colleagues and whether he talked about it with the rest of the staff.

Apparently it was prestigious to have a teacher for a lover. Despite the fact that some girls expressed an interest in him Paolo did not want to engage in relationships with students as he was concerned about his professional image at the school. He did not want to *'lose all the years of study and hard work over an affair with a student'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 09/06/09). Neither was he interested in supporting a girl financially when he had his own family to take care of.

During our discussions I got the feeling that Paolo found girls who made advances to him and other teachers shameless. According to him they did not respect themselves or their own bodies. He explained that many girls in urban areas look for transactional relationships rather than aiming for marriage with a teacher. Finally he made reference to the *'informal*

payments' (bribes) made by some girls in exchange for financial or material goods from older men – sugar daddies – as I discussed in Chapter 5 (section 5.2.3).

In this section I have focused on the incidence of sexual abuse at the local schools through the voices of teachers and students. I have explored the complexities of how the institutional dimension (for example, exams and marks) contributes to abusive behaviour by teachers and other personnel. The interview with Paolo, a secondary school teacher, has shown how the system of bribes works in the local context. While students attending the school's night shift (usually mature, working students) have money to pay for better marks and/or exams, female students attending the day shift offer sexual favours in exchange for an exam pass.

The participants' different views reveal that girls are not always the passive victims of violence in the school domain and that the circumstances surrounding sexual abuse are not straightforward. I have shown that while some female students become victims (for example, Joanna in section 4.3.1), others challenge the compliance ascribed to females by the local community and use their agency to achieve their objectives. From this perspective agency derives from one's capacity to change and dispute socially-constructed beliefs which points to the possibility of changing gender identity, problematised by McNay (2000). The findings show how some girls are active agents who are able to negotiate strategies and resist male control. Looking through the generative framework it is interesting to observe that some girls are capable of finding responses to their life situation (McNay, 2000). The question, however, occurs how the girls use the experience gained through the relations with teachers in the construction of their identity.

The data from the local schools demonstrate the complexity of the notion of agency and contribute to the understanding of changing gender dynamics between teachers and female students, however schools are not the only sites contributing to the processes of subjectification. In the following section I look at the main messages of another powerful institution – the church – and how they are transmitted and how they contribute to the construction of gender relations in the research setting.

7.3 How does Pentecostalism influence dominant ideas about gender roles?

Although the church was not my prime research focus, I realised that I could gain important insights into beliefs about gender by observing sermons and talking to clerics and congregates at the local churches. Living with Pastor Leo and his family for the first few months of my fieldwork (see Chapter 3, section 3.4.2) gave me the opportunity to visit

various churches and to talk with pastors and congregants. There were many different religious groups in the area, but I only managed to visit a few. All the churches I visited seemed to share the same fundamental beliefs, as they were all denominations of Pentecostal Christianity.⁶⁹

From the outset of my research I realised that the church plays a significant role in many aspects of local community life, most notably in its attempt to preserve the concept of the nuclear family. In so doing, the church affects not only family life but also the construction of gender roles within the family and wider society. The churches I refer to in this section believed in the Bible's divine inspiration and inerrancy and the authority of the Sacred Scripture. I focus on three of the main aspects that underpin this belief: the importance of family, indissoluble marriage and the sanctity of life. I look at how biblical tracts were used locally and how they were interpreted by clerics⁷⁰ and local people. While the general opinion among the pastors was that the church is inflexible with no room for divergence from these beliefs, observing the sermons I heard various interpretations, which I explore here.

As mentioned in section 3.4.2, during my first few months in the field I often followed Pastor Leo and his family to Sunday sermons and other services at various churches. After the sermons I would write down the questions and issues I wanted to discuss. Pastor Leo was especially helpful in answering questions related to the Bible. He helped me to make connections between what I heard during the sermons and what I observed in everyday community life.

I was surprised to see so many people in the little church. First, after I entered the building I realised how poor it was. I saw people wearing what I assumed were their best clothes. Women and children sat on one side of the church and men on the other. Women assisted the priest throughout the sermon. They also formed a little choir and read the passages from the Bible. Men were responsible for collection of the offerings. (Fieldnotes: Beira, 18/11/08)

After Sunday sermons I often talked with the pastors. Most were interested in my research and engaged enthusiastically in discussing issues they deal with in their communities. The conversations made me particularly aware of their view of the family as a 'vital cell of society' (Fieldnotes: Beira, 18/11/08). I discussed the way biblical tracts present the

⁶⁹ See Appendix VII for charts with the Christian denominations and the churches and religious groups in the research setting.

⁷⁰ I use the term 'clerics' here to describe missionaries, priests, pastors, brothers and other persons working with a religious group or church.

institution of family and gender issues and how they are interpreted in the church with Pastor Munha, a very charismatic 34-year-old cleric from a Pentecostal Church of Luna. Like all the pastors I met, he was married with children and lived with his family in the local community. When I met him he proudly introduced his pregnant wife: *'This is my wife Josefina [placing his hands on her stomach and smiling] and our miracle'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 16/11/08). After one sermon I asked him why he related to the family as *'the first natural society'* placing it *'at the centre of social life'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 16/11/08).

There must be a reason why the Sacred Scripture repeatedly underlines the importance and centrality of the family, he said. Ephesians 2:19 says: 'You are members of God's very own family and you belong in God's household with every other Christian'. The book of Genesis narrates the creation of the first man and woman and the family is portrayed as having a central role in creation. Without a family you are nothing! We need to love, to have children and to be loved. (Interview: Beira, 18/11/08)

This conversation with Pastor Munha suggested to me that the family is not merely a unit or community of persons but a space where moral values are taught and society's spiritual and cultural heritage are passed on: *'A family is essential to ensuring women and men in their roles and promoting love, social responsibility and solidarity'* (Interview: Beira, 18/11/08).

As Pastor Munha stressed during his sermon:

In current times, when all the diseases and insecurities thrive in our society, when everything is turning upside down – infidelity, divorce and violence – it's in the family that we're learning how to be good wives and husbands.... God created a woman and a man – different, but equal. We need to remember our roles that were given to us. (Interview: Beira, 18/11/08)

Although Pastor Munha presented a rather ambiguous and yet traditional view of gender, he also acknowledged woman's supportive role, referring to Genesis 2:18: *'Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to live alone. I make a suitable companion to help him'* (Good News Bible, 2005: 3) (Fieldnotes: Beira, 18/11/08). Although Pastor Munha acknowledged the equality of men and women he stressed the binary division and ascribed gender roles (see Figure 7.5 and 7.6). According to Pastor Munha Pentecostalism reinforces man's authority and praises woman's role of mother and wife.



Figure 7.5 Pastor Munha preaching



Figure 7.6 Congregates receiving blessings from Pastor Munha

Margarita, Pastor Leo's wife, who held prayer group meetings for women, had a different view of gender roles. I was surprised to learn about her role. I always had seen her at Pastor Leo's side. However, I heard Pastor Leo consulting her on various matters. As far as I understood, her role as 'Pastor's wife' and as a mediator in women's issues was important: for example she helped a group of widows with problems such as lack of money and food and health issues.

Margarita opened her prayer with words from Genesis 3:16: '*Adam's role is to be Eve's master*' [raising her hands and shouting]'. ... *thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee* (Good News Bible, 2005: 3)' (Fieldnotes: Beira, 03/12/08) (see Figure 7.7 and 7.8). Margarita preached about women's role and position in relationships, referring to the biblical story of the creation of a woman:

Sisters, we were created because God realised that Adam needed a helper: 'God marched all of the animals past Adam' (Genesis 2:19-20) looking for a suitable animal. Finding none suitable, God created Eve out of one of Adam's ribs. In Genesis 2:27, Adam later asserts his authority over Eve by naming her: '... she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man' (Good News Bible, 2005: 3). (Fieldnotes: Beira, 03/12/08)



Figure 7.7 Margarita preaching for women



Figure 7.8 Women participating in service held by Margarita

Margarita went on to portray man's dominant role as the master who rules over his family, and the compliant wife:

This is our responsibility: to be a good woman and a good wife. Listen to your husband when he is coming home from work. Make him a nice bath when he is tired and prepare his food. Don't just sit there pretending to be angry and unhappy. Smile and don't be afraid. God sent us to be Adam's helpers and to support him. But don't be afraid to share your thoughts.
(Fieldnotes: Beira, 03/12/08)

On the way back from the sermon I asked Margarita whether she thought men should take a superior position and she said: *'The Lord wanted us to be different (...) otherwise it would disrupt our traditions, the lives we've been living since our forefathers. Yes, we are equal, but a woman has a special responsibility. That's why she was sent by God to support the man'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 03/12/08). This suggested to me that Margarita made connections between the Bible and the everyday life of the local people. During her services she engaged with women's situation, using examples of single congregants, and advising about how to be a good wife and mother. While Margarita acknowledged the differences between man and woman she also encouraged women to be more open and outspoken. Following biblical literalism Margarita implied that women have an important role, not merely as wives but as supporters, mediators and helpers. Hence they should be good listeners, should engage in a conversation with their husbands and should not be afraid of sharing their thoughts.

As presented above, both Pastor Munha and Margarita had common conceptualisations of the nuclear family emphasising the traditional social structure. They shared their enthusiasm in expressing that the wife should be a support to her husband, reflecting the biblical passages but also local ideas. Within the family it has traditionally fallen to women to take care of the

home, children, and older relatives who require care. Men are expected to earn a living to support their family while women uphold the ideal of motherhood central to the beliefs expressed by the church. While Pastor Munha saw woman and man more as equals, Margarita stressed man's superiority in the marital relationship. Crucially, according to both Margarita and Pastor Munha, the family, founded on marriage between a man and a woman, is important both for natural reasons as the principal place of interpersonal relationships, and for supernatural reasons as a divine institution.

The findings show that the idea of the indissolubility of marriage has a central role in reinforcing gendered roles and the obedient position of women because the structure of marriage has traditionally been dominated by the male. The concept of unbreakable marriage, therefore, is important in the construction of masculinity because it protects marriage as a secure arena for reinforcing male authority and power, which cannot or should not be contested by the woman as marriage is a sacred space which should not be challenged. The institution of marriage in the fieldwork setting underpins man's domination and the culturally accepted power hierarchy. This Pentecostal ideal sustained some women's subordinate position as well as their subordinated image in the community, and made it difficult for them to challenge socially-sanctioned stereotypes. However, the issue of power and control in individual marriages remained ambiguous and it remains unclear to what extent women negotiated their position in the relationship by acting the obedient wife. As I discussed in Chapter 1 (section 1.2), Pentecostal patriarchy, however, suggests a possible new position of women. Female converts see themselves to be obedient above all to God (Burdick, 1993). A woman must only submit to a man when he fulfils his duty as God's chosen leader as stated by Smilde (1997). Therefore women may be encouraged to negotiate new power relations, particularly with the husbands who do not follow God's will. In this way, the Pentecostal church may be a means to emerging new forms of autonomy and constraint and gender restructuring within the generative framework of McNay (2000). As argued by McNay these new gender relations can no longer be considered through dichotomies of male domination and female subordination (ibid).

I discussed the issue of unbreakable marriage in the light of the Christian faith with the women in my neighbourhood. Older women in their mid-50s gave me two reasons for indissoluble marriage: the first was that '*in the name of the sanctity of marriage many people are encouraged to stay in the relationship*'; but most of the women stressed the simple fact

that *'they depended financially on their husbands and if they decided to divorce they would not have anywhere else to go'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 19/04/09). As it appeared to me from the conversations Pentecostal men and women generally have certain assumptions about their respective roles in the home (and the family); both understand what is expected of them, and as such, issues once considered taboo, such as divorce, are still discouraged. Marriage then is extremely important to support these gender roles.

One of the younger women, 34-year-old Emalia, was aware of her husband's infidelity but depended on him economically: *'where would I go with my children? I can't go back to my parents and I can't support my children alone'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 05/11/09). Shortly before this conversation she had given birth to yet another child and seemed to be very content with her life, despite her unhappy relationship with her husband: *'My husband is happy with a baby and that's the most important thing'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 05/11/09). I noted that while the older women referred to the sanctity of marriage, the younger women were concerned with their financial situation and their ability to have babies. As 25-year-old Salema said, *'if you can't produce [give birth] nobody wants you for a wife'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 05/11/09). The women saw a strong connection between being able to 'produce' and successful marriage. The sanctity of life was an important value among the local people and a fundamental message taught in the churches I visited.

Shortly before Christmas I attended a service conducted by Pastor Mario at the Pentecostal Church of Jesus' Heart. He preached from Genesis 1:28 about the first command ever given to woman and man: *'be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth'* (Good News Bible, 2005). During the sermon the pastor expressed his concerns about young people and their *'loose' style of life'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 19/12/09) and its consequences. Abortion in the research setting is prohibited not only by the church but also by law and the cultural beliefs that I explained in Chapters 2. Yet from my female neighbours I heard stories of women – and not only young women – in despair seeking traditional healers or older women in rural areas to help them to terminate unwanted pregnancies, as in the story of Amanda in Chapter 3 (section 3.5.3). Amanda belonged to one of the local churches and she was devoted to her faith and what she did was a sin according to the Bible. It is unclear whether Amanda took this decision because she did not want to have a child with a man she did not love. Nonetheless, it is important to remember that fertility is the fundamental social value, recognised by the church as a miracle, and children are seen as gifts from the Lord. This

strong pro-life stance affects women as it indirectly opposes their right to make choices regarding their body.

The pastors' views of birth control were divided. Some asserted that all applications of birth control including natural methods are wrong because they reject childbearing. Others, such as Pastor Munha, who referred to HIV/AIDS issues in his sermons, left the choice of contraception to the couple. Most of the clerics encouraged fidelity and/or sexual abstinence, addressing young people in particular. According to Pastor Munha:

Premature pregnancies, HIV/AIDS and STDs are clearly undesirable, potentially fatal, but they are entirely preventable. The best thing we can teach our daughters and sons is to save sex for someone who is willing to make a permanent commitment. But it is not good enough just to say it; we have to live by example, teach strategies for how to stay out of risky situations, and teach our daughters how to be assertive. (Interview: Beira, 18/12/08)

While the general implication is that both genders are required to remain 'sexually pure' until marriage, only women were looked down upon if the expectation was not met. Pastor Munha had strong ideas about girls' assertiveness and the consequences of pre-marital sex, referring to Deuteronomy 22: 20, 21: *'But if (...) evidences of virginity are not found for the young woman, then they shall bring out the young woman to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death with stones'* (Good News Bible, 2005).

The women from the local community engaged with the local church where they could seek help and support. The church also offered new avenues for sharing thoughts as in line with Chesnut's (1997) reasoning about women's engagement in non-traditional roles through the church discussed in Chapter 1 (section 1.2). Although it was difficult for me to determine in what ways women benefited from the prayer group meetings, clearly for some women, like Margarita, these meetings provided opportunities to develop leadership skills. In other cases, female gatherings in churches also served as an open forum for women to speak in public. According to Brusco (1995) women are encouraged to form new networks outside their kin where they can speak without restraint. From my observation, however, the meetings embodied the hierarchies of age and status present in the community. Following Arnfred's (1995) argument in Chapter 5 the relations among the women were restricted by the hierarchies of status and seniority. Margarita, for example, had a 'leading and decisive voice', whereas some of the younger women came across as conforming to her leadership and directions.

The above analysis reveals the dominant role of the church in the construction of beliefs about gender roles. Drawing on my ethnographic data I have explored different views on gender in the research setting as well as interpretation of biblical texts. Pastor Munha and Margarita shared similar views about the institution of marriage and the central role of family but offered different interpretations of biblical tracts regarding gender. Drawing on the ideas of Pentecostalism the preachers cast a man as a master and leader and a woman as a helper and supporter, thereby reinforcing stereotyped gender roles entrenched in the institution of family and wider society. Intertwined in this thinking about gender, and particularly gender roles, is the idea that gender is a physical attribute that is God-given.

The local churches also seemed to have influence establishing young people's ideas through preaching and teaching about gender and sexuality.

7.4 How does the church address teaching young people about gender relations and sexuality?

In the above section I have explored the messages of biblical tracts and their different interpretations. In this section I deal with how the church addressed and communicated beliefs in the local community. Churches are a similar learning environment to schools, with a senior status person delivering a lecture or lesson to a lesser-informed congregation. Following from the analysis of the curriculum and practice in the schools, this examination provides insights into how ideas from the Bible were taught in the local churches, and how they influence young people's gender identity construction.

Although the church was an important centre of learning in my research setting, most clerics found it difficult to teach and preach about issues of sexuality and gender relations. The interviews revealed divided opinions about the church's responsibility for instructing young people. Some of the pastors found talking with young people about these troublesome issues challenging, while others considered it part of their responsibility at the time of the HIV/AIDS pandemic to inform not only young people but the whole community about sexuality, reproductive health and gender relations. As a young pastor from the local Baptist Church explained:

Very few churches are [teaching about sexuality] (...) pastors don't even want to hear about discussing sexuality in the church! Some of them say maybe outside the service, but it's unthinkable to do it during sermons. Others say that these kinds of issues don't belong to the church, yet the truth is they don't know how to talk about them. They don't know how to deal with these questions. (Interview: Beira, 21/08/09)

Pastors generally preached on family matters and issues between wife and husband, as the examples in the above section illustrate. When visiting churches I found that many clerics were not confident about instructing on sensitive issues such as sexual reproductive health for two main reasons. On the one hand they did not have the necessary training⁷¹ and thus were reluctant to teach something they were not trained in, and on the other (like some of the teachers) traditional norms created barriers preventing them talking openly about sex and reproductive health.

I asked 58-year-old Pastor Jonatan from the Jesus Christ Pentecostal Church why sexuality was rarely taught in church. He presented the strong view that *'sex education is a basic duty of the parents. It isn't to be taught in church. It's a serious matter and it must always be carried out under parents' attentive guidance'* (Interview: Beira, 05/01/09). According to the pastor, parents were responsible for teaching 'the right knowledge' as sex education should address the uniqueness of every individual and *'no one knows the child better than the parents and only they are capable of giving moral education in this sensitive area'* (Interview: Beira, 05/01/09). Sexuality is a gift from God to be enjoyed within the confines of marriage, chiefly for the purpose of procreation, whereas homosexual relations are considered as a sin by the Pentecostal movement. Young people should learn in the intimacy of the family, and learning 'the right knowledge' through formal education is not the best way of learning. The pastor believed that parents are 'capable' of addressing sensitive issues such as sex. This, however, was not what I heard from parents who did not feel comfortable talking about these issues with their children, and hence relied on the members of the community – *madrihnas* and *padrihnos* – to do so, as I discuss in Chapter 6.

Nevertheless, some churches, for example the Baptist Church, offer premarital training for couples. During a year-long voluntary course couples are advised on family planning, pregnancy, the importance of sexual relations and their emotions. Issues of equality in the relationship, respect and fidelity are also taught according to the church's canon. Not all the pastors offered pre-marital courses: *'Only a few had the knowledge and the experience to take on this responsibility'* (Interview; Beira, 21/08/09).

Another example of training for young people was that run by the Jehovah's Witness Church, where groups of young people meet regularly to discuss religious matters and other important

⁷¹ Many of the local priests and pastors do not have higher education. Most have primary education and training/mentoring in the local community with another pastor.

issues of adolescence and adulthood. When I asked a middle-aged congregant, Tomas about the church's position on sexuality, he answered me very seriously:

In our church it's very strict. We have special materials and meetings where brothers teach young people about sexuality (...) And we read the Bible to prove that this sin is not approved in the Bible: for example, in Corinthians Chapter 6, Verse 18 it condemns sex before marriage. (Interview: Beira, 11/08/09)

According to Tomas the church trains young people as facilitators who are responsible for the groups. The main underpinning message of the meetings is *'how to be a good Jehovah's Witness'*. The church supports its members with brochures dealing with difficult issues such as sexual relations and fertility. The teaching of young people occurs within this religious framework.

Some Pentecostal pastors that I met offered counselling for couples through prayer and conversation; however not many people used this kind of help. When I asked a group of women in my neighbourhood about church counselling they reacted with laughter and shaking of heads. Apparently some people did not seek support outside the home *'to wash their dirty clothes'*: they found sharing their problems with a pastor embarrassing. One of them explained: *'My man would think I must be crazy (...) he would rather to go to a curandeiro than talk to our pastor'*; another, much younger woman said: *'My husband would say that I've been unfaithful and now I'm trying to run away from what I've done'* (FGD: Beira, 06/04/09). In fact husbands wanted to deal with the problems themselves. Some women implied that they might be afraid of *'losing face if there was something wrong with their "sexual ability"'* (FGD: Beira, 06/04/09), in particular when there were problems with conception. I wondered how often people sought help from religious leaders with these kinds of issues. According to Pastor Leo it was not common, and he usually helped couples with more general issues rather than talking about sexual problems: *'It isn't easy to talk about sexual issues with couples (...) it's a sensitive topic. I'm not sure we [clerics] all know how to advise in this kind of matter?'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 14/03/09).

Like teachers, clerics view sex education as a subject too thorny to tackle, to the extent that some would like to see parents taking responsibility for teaching about this sensitive issue. These are issues that need to be placed in the context of my comments in Chapter 3 about power relations in the field and writing up of the data. The circumstances of my visits to the Pentecostal churches were as a 'sister' – a powerful white researcher – accompanying Pastor Leo, the head of the Pentecostal church in the province. Another aspect that I have omitted

from my account of the services for women is how much the women understood (which also applies to other services I attended). The service was conducted by Margarita in Portuguese and interpreted by two women into Ndaou and Lomwe. Very few women responded to what Margarita communicated and I did not speak any of the Bantu languages so could not judge how the women translated her ideas.

7.5 Conclusion

I began this chapter by presenting the objectives of the national curriculum, focusing on subjects related to gender, sexuality and reproductive health in EP1 and EP2. The assumption behind the curriculum is that students should be equipped with the knowledge – ‘the right knowledge’ – necessary to become respectable members of the community according to the ministry of education (INDE/MINED, 2003).

The examination of the textbooks illuminates that the representation of gender identities, in particular in the illustrations, is ambiguous. For example, as I described in section 7.1.1 the cover of the seventh-grade Moral and Civic Education textbook (Fenhane, 2008) depicts socially-sanctioned stereotypes in a traditional context such as Mozambique. In contradiction to the illustration on the cover, however, the text in the same textbook promotes discourses acknowledging women’s right to make decisions about their body and sexual relations. The curriculum for sexuality and reproductive health recognises sexual diversity and encourages young people to be open and honest in sharing their feelings with their parents and friends.

The analysis in this chapter has revealed the gaps between the aims of the official school curriculum and the situation in the classroom. Among many other factors (mentioned in Chapter 2), teachers found teaching about sensitive issues linked to gender and sexuality as intended in the curriculum challenging. The school curriculum drew attention to issues of adolescence, sexuality and sexual and reproductive rights and introduced various contraceptive methods. In recognition of their limitations some teachers such as Professor Tivane chose either to leave out the difficult sections or discuss the issues superficially, dreading personal questions. Others made use of ‘ritualisation’ in the classroom to control the topics they taught. It is important to recognise, however, that students’ insufficient command of Portuguese (as discussed in section 2.3) and their traditional upbringing in many families increased their insecurity and confusion about the contradicting messages they received. Lack of openness about sex and sexuality in the home means that young people have to learn at school or in other institutions like the community and church, however, all institutions

analysed here have shown reluctance or inability to take responsibility for teaching this, except for the initiation rites.

Looking through the lens of changing gender structures (McNay, 2000) the Pentecostal movement seems to stand at a cultural crossroads. The findings show how the church influences traditional cultural views of gender relations that uphold male domination, in so doing the Pentecostal movement appears to favour patriarchy. While gender relations and religious leadership in the modern church and its impact on its ecclesiastical formation is ambiguous, church provides an important means of constructing gender identity (see for example, Chesnut, 1997; Drogus, 1997; Zents, 2005).

Unlike the school programme, Pentecostalism endorses a different approach to sex and sexuality. Sexuality in general (and homosexuality in particular) seems to be seen as misdemeanour and immorality: quite simply, as sin. I found it interesting that the issue of sexual diversity was not addressed at all by the preachers I heard in different churches, and nor were the pastors eager to discuss this issue with me. Pastor Leo explained that they *'didn't know of many cases and until now they haven't had to deal with it'*, implying that their knowledge was not broad and *'the only way people dealt with the problem was by visiting a curandeiro'* (Fieldnotes: Beira, 03/03/09). This comment showed that the church and also the community view homosexuality as a problem.

While the school curriculum took a more liberal approach to virginity, the church's stance on sexual purity before marriage was explicit; and while the church took a strong pro-life view the issue of contraception remained ambiguous. My ethnographic data show the diversity of interpretations of biblical tracts and the ways in which the messages are conveyed. The variety is due not only to the variety of churches that I visited but also to the clerics' personal beliefs and approaches to gender and sexuality. The way the church addresses sexuality and sexual and reproductive health seems to depend on the ability of the preachers and their approach to these issues. The account I have provided in this section has shown that some clerics find instructing young people about gender relations and sexual behaviour problematic. Most of the pastors are either not equipped to communicate such knowledge or simply assume that it is the parents' responsibility to prepare their children for adult life. Although some churches such as the Baptists and the Jehovah's Witnesses offer counselling for couples, the general approach to this kind of service and how much help people requested from the local religious groups was not clear. Much of this work could be done confidentially

and people did not discuss it openly because they feared humiliation. Although it seemed that both teachers and clerics struggled to communicate on sensitive topics I was also made aware by tenth-grade students that *'there are many programmes and organisations making presentations about sexuality and related subjects (...) some of us are members of clubs and young people's groups where we can learn ... [pauses] if we want'* (Debate, Beira: 02/02/09). So alongside school and church, young people learn about gender issues and sexuality in more informal ways explored in previous chapters (see Chapter 5 and 6). This conceptualisation in line with the learning continuum presented in Chapter 4 (section 4.1) reinforces the idea of knowledge acquisition in different sites of learning.

The purpose of presenting various views about gender-based violence in schools was to bring out some of the complexities involved and show that abuse in schools takes implicit and explicit forms. I found the framework of Dunne and colleagues (2003) particularly useful for drawing out the nuances of the violence I came across in the local schools (see Chapter 1, section 1.3). Some of the violent acts occur within the hierarchical institutions that govern authority relations, which are not in principle defined as having a sexual nature but are instrumental in serving sexual purposes. Whilst the findings point to single cases of sexual abuse, forms of verbal abuse and physical violence seemed to occur frequently in the local schools. As it also became apparent, in some cases, girls exercise their agency and involve themselves in relations with teachers with the aim of financial support or better marks. Their action analysed through the lens of the generative framework reflects the changes of the social structures taking place in the society.

Chapter 8

Learning gender: reflecting on gender violence in and around schools

8. Introduction

My aim in this thesis has been to explore the link between violence against girls and young women and learning gender across different social institutions. While the literature suggests that gender-based violence is linked to how people perceive gender, what emerged throughout my research was that certain socio-cultural practices are strongly implicated in gender-based violence across social institutions. In the field I found such practices less than straightforward and rather ambiguous. I found that often explicit physical abuse catches people's attention while other, implicit forms of violence as well as those embedded in the learning processes, often remain silenced and are hence unexplored. The forms of violence explored in my thesis fall somewhere along Bourdieu's continuum of 'symbolic violence' (2001: 33), which he defines as unconscious and unmotivated domination maintained through everyday social practices (ibid). This reasoning has guided my exploration of the link between constructing gender and sexual identities, and gender-based violence across social institutions.

8.1 Theoretical framework revisited

In this chapter I am returning to the research questions posed in Chapter 1 with the aim of examine:

- *How is knowledge of gender and gender relations acquired?*
- *How can gender relations (as power relations) affect gender violence?*

I have drawn out specific findings from my detailed ethnographic accounts – for example my comparison of the prescribed and enacted school curriculum – as well as reflections on my participatory activities – for example debates with young people about violence in schools – that may be relevant to programme planners. While my analysis points to a variety of learning processes whereby young people learn about gender and sexual identities and gender relations, I have not so far discussed tensions and conflicts along with connections between different sites of learning. To conclude this discussion I revisit the key concepts introduced in Chapter 4.

Continuum of learning: tensions, conflicts and connections

My research, whose overarching objective was exploring how gender identity construction contributes to violence in and around schools in Mozambique, was led by two main questions. The first was: *how is knowledge about gender and gender relations acquired?* This discussion is guided by a conceptualisation of learning as a continuum from formal to informal, discussed in Chapter 4 (section 4.1). To investigate the tensions and conflicts along with the connections between different sites of learning I looked at what constitutes ‘right knowledge’ according to the adults and the young people in my research setting, and how this knowledge is constructed through formal, non-formal and informal approaches to learning.

The findings show that young people in the research context acquired knowledge in different sites of learning acquiring knowledge from formal as well as informal means of learning such as school, church, informal groups and television. My analysis, drawing on my ethnographic fieldnotes, using data from my workshops, debates, focus groups and interviews with young people and adults/parents, reveals that there are different understandings of what constitutes ‘right knowledge’. For example, adults valued the ‘right knowledge’ given through traditional initiation rites, while young people also valued the knowledge they gained through the Brazilian telenovelas discussing relationships and sexuality. Furthermore the ethnographic data illuminate the complexity of perceptions of gender roles and gender relations conveyed by those different sites and means of information.

In Chapter 7 I explored two institutions, school and church, and the knowledge communicated by teachers and clergymen, in formal environments. Drawing on my observations of classes and sermons I realised that teaching and preaching about gender and sexuality issues are fraught with a number of dilemmas and difficulties. As I witnessed across the dominant institutions (family, school and church), the knowledge about sex and reproductive health was rather difficult to pass to the young generation. Thus tensions around teaching sexuality and reproductive health appeared between the family, school and church. The analysis of the textbooks illuminates clearly the objectives of natural science across the national curriculum. The findings show, however, that teachers did not always find it easy to communicate the knowledge around sexual reproduction to the students. A similar situation was found in the local churches. While some pastors believed that parents should support their children in forming their identities by introducing young people to sex and reproductive health this seemed to work against traditional hierarchies of seniority. In contrast, in the

community-led learning, adults other than parents – *madrinhas* and *padrinhos* – acted as young people’s confidants and teachers.

In Chapter 6 I examined two distinct approaches to initiation rites – group and one-to-one sessions – and the role of *madrinhas* and *padrinhos* in these informal learning contexts. *Madrinha* Sara, for example, taught girls about sexual behaviour, sexual interaction, physical and emotional intimacy and hygiene (see section 6.2). *Matingi*, the elongation of the labia minora, which was taught through this practice, was acknowledged by the local women as well as men to be a significant entity of the adult female body. Manuela learned about her own body and sexuality as she was initiated into *matingi* (see section 6.2). This type of learning, following traditional approaches, was seen by adults as ‘right knowledge’ or ‘the right way’ to construct gender and sexual identities. There was a marked reluctance from all social institutions analysed here (family, church school) to discuss sexuality with young people, except initiation rites. This indicates that initiation rites, while not practiced by all people, are a socially sanctioned process of learning about these issues; an acceptable form of learning. In the context of church, the right knowledge was conveyed by reading the Bible and its interpretation. The personal explanation of biblical literature often offered reflection of the local problems as seen in Chapter 7 (for example section 7.3). This, however, raises certain questions about how the Pentecostal movement addresses transformations occurring in the society. As I discussed in Chapter 2 (section 2.1) due to socio-historical and economic reasons, gender relations have been undergoing significant changes. The findings show certain connections and similarities in messages communicated in the initiation rites and church. For example, both sites of learning promote emphasised the important role of the family and community as well as reproduction. This could be, of course, due to the fact that the rites were led in collaboration with the church. Nevertheless, the importance of the family and home is made explicit by the clerics and the *madrinhas* and *padrinhos* during the rites of passage. A more complex area is individual identity. *Madrinha* Sara taught sexual behaviour and reproductive health that are central to the processes of subjectivity and construction of individual identity. In the context of initiation rites, however, the emphasis seems to be on maintaining traditionally-constructed gender and sexual roles. Also there appears to be little connection between what is conveyed around for example sexual rights during the rites and in the national curriculum.

Nevertheless, not all the young people in the research setting seemed to embrace those processes as ‘the right knowledge’, and they sought other sources of information. As I explored in Chapter 5 (section 5.3), alongside the formal and non-formal means of learning the young people also relied on informal learning through the media and from their peers. Modern means of learning, however, brought about certain worries among parents, as they did not consider the media as reliable. While the findings illuminate that mainly parents did not consider the media as ‘the right way’ to learn, some young people seemed to view television programmes critically. The debates with the tenth-grade students showed their awareness of that the Brazilian soap operas represented an ‘imaginary world’ which could not be ‘translated’ into every-day life in Beira.

Drawing on various examples from formal, non-formal and informal sites of learning I attempted to draw attention to some tensions, conflicts and connections underpinning these different sites of learning. What emerges from this discussion is that although the perceptions of what constitutes ‘the right knowledge’ about gender and sexuality and how it is acquired by young people differs, certain values and ideas such as the value of family and respect are common across the continuum of learning. From the discussions with youth it also became apparent that mass media helped to challenge certain ideas about gender roles and gender relations.

Gender, subjectivity, power/agency reconsidered

Having explored the conflicts, tensions and connection between different sites of learning, I will now consider my second research question: *how gender relations (as power relations) affect gender violence?*

In Chapter 2 I introduced the fieldwork site with a focus on family relations and kinship as well as gender relations in the wider society (section 2.1). As I suggested in Chapter 2, gender relations have been undergoing changes with implications for the institution of marriage and sexual practices (section 2.5). It is within this socio-cultural and historical context gender and gender relations emerge to be complex and changeable.

In attempting to offer a more nuanced understanding of gender and subjectivity I considered the idea of gendered worlds and borderlines suggested by Arnfred (1995). Similarly to the evidence from northern Mozambique (ibid), I realised that the world in the community in Beira was also divided along gender lines. Space and time was gendered; women seemed to spend time with other women fetching water and firewood and they took care of their

children together. The worlds of women and men in the North (Arnfred, 1995) as well as in the research context seemed to be somewhat intertwined and yet separated. As it emerged in the study, gendered spaces are separated by physical borders as well as by normative boundaries, rules and practices governing social institutions (Kabeer, 1999). Thus an important part of the process of becoming woman and man is learning to respect the borders and rules of the respective worlds. In Chapter 6 I examined how initiation rites introduced young people to those rules and boundaries – knowing the ‘rules of the game’ (as put by Bourdieu). In so doing, the body undergoes formation through repeated exercise of socially-constructed norms to forge individual’s habitus. While habitus reflects the social structures in which it was constructed, it also carries within it the origin of new creative responses that are capable of transcending the social order in which it was produced. Following Bourdieu’s conceptualisation, within the limits of its structures there is room for creativeness and improvisation “enabling agents to cope with unforeseen and ever-changing situation” (Bourdieu, 1977: 72). Thus habitus can be considered as ‘generative structure’ (Bourdieu, 1992). This approach can facilitate fresh theorisation about multiple, fluid and dynamic gender identities and gender relations. For example, in Chapter 7 (section 7.2.2) new gender identities among school girls became apparent as they engage in sexual relations with teachers in exchange for better marks or passing exams.

Through this lens individuals are agents who think strategically and who are “simultaneously undergoing and exercising power” (Foucault, 1980: 98) in everyday struggles. The findings suggest that each individual is the source of a complex set of social relations, hence power is linked with people’s room for manoeuvre. The examples show how girls engaging in relations with sugar daddies exercised power by dominating and undergoing power at the same time. Though Vera and Laura (see Chapter 5, section 5.2.3) chose to get involved in the strategic relations with older men mainly to obtain material goods, yet it is not clear whether they considered the consequences of their actions.

In the analysis of the process of the identity construction I have drawn on the generative framework, as suggested by McNay (2000) (see Chapter 4, section 4.4). While the framework takes into account creative and inventive agency, however, it does not suggest what it is and how to analyse this kind of agency.

In this section I have discussed the ambiguities and questions arising when analysing my data about the messages conveyed in different sites of learning in the research field. As it became

apparent social structures in the field were not static but evolving, shaped by gender relations that I only fully understood when analysing my data and revisiting the theoretical framework from Chapter 4.

8.2 Wider implications of my research

I believe that my work can offer methodological suggestions for other researchers (and practitioners) looking at the issues of gender violence in and around schools. The design of my study also embraces two important dimensions: the educational and methodological. My research methods – through participatory action and learning – have implications not just for research methodology but also for planning and implementing interventions to address violence towards young women and girls. I believe that the approach I have used could be adopted in other countries and may perhaps be useful for future researchers interested in innovative approaches and tools in participatory research, and means of learning about gender, sexuality and gender relations in a traditional community. The thesis can be read in different ways: as emancipatory, exploratory and practical. For example, as emancipatory – as a critical lens – which looks at local people’s perspectives to understand how they are shaped and reproduced in the research community. If we choose to read it as exploratory, it includes descriptive facts about the local community, social relations and processes, beliefs and belief systems. Others may read it with the practical aim of finding out how this study informs social and educational research and practice. I merge these perspectives here as I address the methodological, educational and policy implications of the research.

8.2.1 Methodological implications for research involving young and vulnerable people

This thesis explores how to ethically research a sensitive topic with young and vulnerable people. In Chapter 3 I discussed how to negotiate entry into the field (the schools and communities), meet participants, be reflexive and deal with power and confidential dilemmas. Because my research involved young people it was important that I behaved as ethically as possible. I did not want to do ‘hit-and-run research’ but rather to create mutual benefit with the participants also gaining experience and knowledge. Through my feminist approach I intended to present not merely a ‘scientific discussion’ but also ‘moral and political’ (Harding, 1987: 2) engagement through the research process. As I discussed in Chapter 3, one of the most important strengths of the feminist approach to research is its ability to get researchers thinking differently, and more critically and self-reflexively, about their theories, assumptions and practices. My reflective practice was also an attempt to explicate the power

relations and exercise of power in the research setting. I saw this approach as critical of truth claims and cautious about using certain categorisations and concepts, including the central feminist concept of gender, in essentialist ways. In the process of my research I became ‘an unusual type of adult’ (Mayall, 2000; Christensen, 2004). When working with the young people I sought research tools that would enable their maximum participation and help to overcome power imbalances. A few situations that I found myself in made me aware of my different roles as ‘an unusual adult’. For example, in section 3.5.3 I reflected on the story of Amanda, who asked me for help with a difficult situation. Although I found my role in this ambiguous and distressing, I was aware that Amanda had come to me because she trusted me and knew she could count on me to help.

In Chapter 3 I argued for bringing young people’s voices into the research for better understanding of gender relations issues and how these contribute to the incidence of gender abuse in and around schools. I thus made two assumptions: that young people are not merely ‘passive recipients of adult socialization’ (O’Kane, 2008: 125) but have knowledge about their lives; and that they can communicate about their experiences competently. My assumptions could be related to what O’Kane sees as a recognition of young people i) as social actors in their own right and ii) able to construct and determine their own experiences (2008: 125). According to O’Kane, participatory activities can provide “communication strategies which engage children, build upon their own abilities and capabilities, and allow their agenda to take precedence” (2008:140). Adopting this approach guided me about how to work with the young participants and how to draw different views into the research. In this way the study gave the young people a voice; a chance to be a source of knowledge. They were allowed to be the experts. My question box, for example, gave a platform to the students’ many personal questions which previously had had no one to answer them. As I described in section 3.4.3, this tool enabled the seventh graders to open up and discuss issues that bothered them. With their questions being answered by medical doctors at ‘Ask a Doctor’ sessions, the students felt that their problems were being taken seriously and that they could trust that their questions would be addressed professionally.

Another pedagogical approach I employed in my research was creating a fictional story. In Chapter 7 (section 7.2.1) I drew on this activity, which allowed young people to analyse sensitive issues such as sexual abuse, domination, bribes and morals. My idea in designing this tool was to enable them to explore what they might have encountered or heard of in their

school or community. Using the story of Mariana, a fictional personality, the students could present their difficulties anonymously and bring up topics that were difficult to discuss.

In retrospect, introducing the young people to these innovative ways of expressing their feelings and analysing their thoughts meant that they were offered an opportunity to open up and work in an environment of trust and equal power relations. Thus creative ways of verifying data with young people have been recorded: the thesis documents new ways of enhancing ethics and validity in a non-western culture which could inform institutions and organisations working in this area.

8.2.2 Programme implications for educational interventions

This research also contributes to the development of educational approaches on sensitive issues by suggesting both content and methodology. The thesis explores the use of the problem-posing approach to education rather than the banking style (Freire, 1970) can promote reflection, awareness, critical thinking, agency and change. Such a method also allows for the possibility of challenging the existing hierarchical structure in school because an effective participatory approach to learning needs to be open, friendly and trusting. As I have suggested in the thesis, students must feel free to consult their teachers, and vice versa. This is difficult in an authoritarian environment. The debates from the primary and secondary schools showed that students were eager to share their ideas, had good suggestions and wanted to be heard.

The National Curriculum covers many important topics on gender, sexuality and reproductive health, as I discussed in Chapter 7. However, teachers faced difficulties in enacting the curriculum. Among various other factors, they named a lack of teaching materials and large classes as the main obstacles to delivering the curriculum. These problems could be addressed by alternative programmes such as ‘Auntie Stella: Teenagers talk about sex, life and relationships’,⁷² (Kaim, 2002) which has been successful in other Sub-Saharan African countries. The programme provides a forum for young people to discuss teenage concerns and discover information not provided elsewhere. Peer education works on the principle that

⁷² ‘Auntie Stella’ is unique in that it uses a website as its format (www.tarsc.org/auntstella) and is therefore easily accessible (teachers can download the material for use in class). Both print and website formats use the model of a newspaper problem page with questions answered by an agony aunt. The activities are made up of 33 questions (not clear) posed by Zimbabwean teenagers aged 13 to 17 such as: ‘I’m scared of rape – what can I do?’, ‘Should I have sex to pay my school fees?’ etc. The activities are flexible, as they can be used with small single-sex or large mixed discussion groups (Kaim, 2002). They can also be used individually, allowing a person to work at his or her own speed with the most personally relevant concerns. Working in a group allows open discussion and the opportunity to learn from others’ experiences and responses.

the best people to address young people are other young people, and this is a usually easy intervention that can reach even the 'hard to reach' (for example, Campbell, 2003). Although the programme does not directly address gender violence at school and in the community, the majority of the questions deal with sex, relationships and gender relations. As my research shows, to target gender violence it is necessary to focus on these areas.

My research has examined a lack of capacity among teachers, parents and clergymen to deal with issues of sexuality with young people. Consequently the information seemed to be unreliable and the young people had misconceptions about sexuality and reproductive health. As I have discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, the adults found it difficult to talk about sex and were too embarrassed to broach the topic with young people, whether at home, at school or in other settings. There is a strong need for capacity-building in adults: only when they themselves are informed and confident can they educate their children (Freire, 1970). This capacity building would facilitate the implementation of gender-centred pedagogical approaches and participatory teaching methods as well as early education in sexuality, which is imperative as children are forming gender mores and coming to sex increasingly earlier. As Campbell (2003) argues, sexual behaviour change is likely to come about as the result of the collective renegotiation of sexual and social identities. For example, as I discussed in Chapter 4, if women are not in control of their own bodies they cannot control their sexual health. Women in the local community needed to enhance their self-confidence and empowerment in order to be able to engage in safe sexual behaviour. Drawing on my own experience, a good starting point could be a community debate about gender issues to which both men and women are invited. The focus group discussion presented in section 7.1, for example, enabled women to discuss unequal power relations in the community and wider society and to express their disappointment in their '*low position*'. The participants seemed aware that this would not change without women's economic empowerment. In support of this, various authors have found that conditions of poverty and generalised disempowerment deprive people of economic or psychological confidence and the flexibility to reshape their life-worlds (Campbell, 2003; Collier, 2007; McMichael, 2004). Campbell (2003), for example, explains that creating circumstances that enable behaviour change is more important than concentrating on the behaviour change itself. Although Tepper (2000) notes that the most pressing needs for young people are training and employment first and sexual health services second, my research found that the young people in the study setting were equally interested in learning about issues concerning them such as sexuality and reproductive health.

As my findings have shown, parents and other adults could also benefit from learning to be lifelong mentors and open sexuality educators. Sexual education and capacity building is not only for young people but is necessary for parents and teachers too. As Tepper (2000) puts it, learning about sex from family, school and/or the church results in fewer negative consequences than learning about sex from the media, a point which concerned parents (see Chapter 5). *Madrinhas* and *padrinhos* have the indigenous knowledge necessary to prepare young people for adulthood, making them trustworthy mentors in the local community (see Chapter 6). According to many parents they teach the ‘right knowledge’ essential to the construction of gender and sexual identities. Drawing on *madrinhas*’ and *padrinhos*’ experience training of parents and other educators about life skills would be beneficial for passing on knowledge to young people.

It was beyond the scope of this study to work in depth with the parents and other adults. With time and resources, the research could be continued with a focus on the parents and further dialogue with other key stakeholders in the community. Mentors, consultants or researchers could build teachers’ capacity to develop gender-awareness groups. I did not have a chance to explore violence towards boys, either, in particular sexual abuse; a future study could encompass this.

8.3 From policy to practice: strengthening national commitment and action

Despite Mozambique’s ratification of international conventions on women’s rights, their provisions are not always respected by state law or in practice. While there have been some important changes to the Family Law to address domestic violence, the situation regarding the abuse of minors across social institutions remains ambiguous. In this section I shed light on existing policies and their enactment in reality. The recommendations here arise from my analysis of the findings and of the two policy documents; the Dispatch 39/GM/2003 and the Code of Conduct (see Chapter 1 and 2).

Mozambique’s law is characterised by plurality and ambiguity in its interpretation. My analysis of the 39/GM/2003 Dispatch, which addresses sexual harassment and sexual abuse, revealed several limitations. Instead of protecting girls in general, the Dispatch establishes the transfer of pregnant female students to night shifts. Amendment and reinforcement of the legislation in accordance with international standards is needed to protect girls from violence. The policy is awaiting revision by the MEC and partners (ActionAid, 2010).

As the Government of Mozambique (2001) has stated, it seeks to improve its school inspections. This should be encouraged in conjunction with clear policies and regulations about education quality. Although the Code of Conduct was established to discipline teachers who abuse girls, enactment of the code has hitherto not been reliable. Clearly stated and regulated policies at all levels should improve accountability in the education system: in particular, disciplinary systems that lead to dismissal, removal of professional status and prosecution in the public court of teachers found guilty of abusing girls are needed.

As my findings have shown, some perpetrators get away free when the justice system fails through lack of proof or the absence of a law addressing the violent acts committed. This situation is dangerous for victims, who remain at risk from the perpetrator if charges are dismissed. Given the nature of power relations within the school, students felt unable to seek legal recourse (see section 7.2).

Sexual abuse in schools often occurs in the context of corruption extending throughout the public sector. As I discussed in Chapter 7 (section 7.2.1), the intentional failing of female students is a common way for teachers to force sexual relations in exchange for exam and grade passes and better marks (Helgesson, 1999; Government of Mozambique, 2001; USAID, 2005). Unfortunately there are no initiatives in Mozambique that target sexual abuse in schools apart from a couple of campaigns against violence towards children (Machel, 2006; UNICEF Mozambique, 2006; ActionAid, 2010). Based on my findings, I argue that initiatives should target gender relations in order to address sexual abuse. Also, following the idea that participatory methods are more effective than didactic ones for changing behaviour, the gender-focused 'Auntie Stella' programme using participatory methods, is successful elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa and is recommended for use in Mozambique

Following my observation of the local community I acknowledge the importance of creating protective networks and establishing confidential complaint systems for girls and women. This could be done in various ways; by appointing adult counsellors or independent women who are not tied to the teacher/head-teacher power structure and who have clear links outwards to the police and courts as advocates for girls in every school. Gender clubs established by ActionAid in some of the local schools could also assist in this kind of initiative by equipping teachers with skills and tools to manage situations such as Anna's in section Chapter 5 (section 5.2.1) and creating support networks.

However, certain constraints to the process of strengthening national commitment must be

considered. Socio-cultural factors rooted in everyday practices have important implications for changing perceptions of gender-based violence in the local community. For example, changing power dynamics across social institutions remain a significant constraint to transforming gender identities. As I experienced in the field, lack of resources and capacity, particularly in rural areas, often restrains initiatives by both external and internal actors and the everyday struggle makes it difficult to mobilise local people to engage with issues that concern their children and communities.

The recommendations presented above are intended to support existing policies and raise consciousness of the rights of girls and women in Mozambique and specifically in the research context.

8.4 Conclusion

Using an ethnographic and participatory approach I set out to explore the link between learning gender and gender violence in the local community. At the heart of my research is an exploration of the different ways in which young people acquire gender in formal, non-formal and informal learning settings. I concluded that different learning sites have a significant influence in shaping young people's identities and ideas about gender, sexuality and gender relations. I used the notion of formal, non-formal and informal learning as a continuum rather than trying to categorise learning into different contexts. My analysis of formal learning in schools and churches, non-formal learning led by the community members and informal learning via new/modern information platforms has shown that the 'right knowledge' about gender communicated to young people is different in each institution. The evidence in the empirical chapters illustrates different learning processes that might implicitly and/or explicitly lead to gender violence. For example in the process of the identity construction whether in the home or through the initiation rites young people learned how to assume certain roles required from a man and a woman. While some of the lessons might be positive (like learning about sexual and reproductive health), others restrict them to certain behaviours such as submissiveness, thus limiting young people's 'agentic' power (McNay, 2000).

This challenges some of the assumptions held by the group of adults (parents and *padrinhos* and *madrinhas*) about what constituted 'the right knowledge' and who decides this, and points to the diversity of perceptions in the local community, especially between young people and adults. I believe that social structures are not static and are changing over time due to globalisation and development. Young people absorb knowledge and shape gender

identities in their youth through formal education and informal means of learning, meaning that when they are adults in the future, the social institutions of gender that they create will be different from those in existence now.

I consider participatory methods beneficial as they allow researchers to gain an understanding of the problem in the given context and participants to explore their own perceptions of the subject and engage in addressing the issue of violence in their own communities (Chambers, 1997; Leach *et al.* 2003).

The research findings can be applied to inform local educational programmes aimed at raising awareness and may help in creating initiatives for and with young people. It is clear that there is a need to examine and revisit policies about gender violence at the national level. Those initiatives need to encompass all social institutions in addressing the problem. I recognise that change will be very slow, especially when dealing with such a sensitive issue and when the recommended approaches challenge deeply-rooted beliefs, attitudes and behaviour about gender.

APPENDICES

Appendix I

The aims and objectives of the education at the *Escola de Professores do Futuro*

Escolas Primárias nas áreas rurais. Lidam com todos os aspectos para um período tão longo no qual poderão encarar muitas dificuldades e encontrar soluções para ultrapassá-las. O período inclui o ensino actual nas escolas, cooperação com os directores, colegas, parceiros e as crianças, trabalho comunitário e muito mais. Os estudantes continuam com os seus estudos através de material que levam da EPF, e mantêm

se em contacto permanente com a EPF durante todo o período.

7º e 8º Período

- Voltado para EPF, cheios de experiências, os estudantes aprendem habilidades básicas para estabelecer e gerir uma Oficina Pedagógica, desenvolver os programas e dominar a tecnologia.

No fim vem os exames finais.

Escola de Professores do Futuro - O Programa		Curriculo	Horas
Período 1, 2, 3		O Mundo no qual Vivemos	144
1 3 meses O Mundo no qual vivemos		Mozambique - o nosso País	144
2 3 meses O Nosso País Mozambique		Português & Didáctica de Português	150
3 1 mês Continuamos a Construir a Nossa Escola		Matemática & Didáctica da Matemática	95
JUL AGO SET	OUT NOV DEZ	JAN	Ciências Naturais & Didáctica de C.N.
Período 4, 5		Metodologia de Línguas e Línguas Bantu	80
4 8 meses Prática Escolar e Estudos Complementares		Geografia & Didáctica de Geografia	100
5 5 meses Especialização e as Disciplinas da Carta de Humana People to People		Didáctica de Educação Visual	20
FEV MAR ABR MAI JUN	JUL AGO SET OUT NOV	Comunicação Geral	44
Período 6, 7, 8		Inglês	110
6 11 meses Estudo profissional como parte da Formação de Professores Trabalho comunitário e estudos		Educação Musical	40
7 A Oficina Pedagógica		Educação Física & Desporto	156
8 Exames Finais		Ofício	60
DEZ JAN FEV MAR ABR MAI JUN	JUL AGO SET OUT NOV DEZ	Sociologia de Educação	200
		Pedagogia/Didáctica geral	348
		Psicologia	200
		Educação Cívica e Moral	60
		Organização e Gestão Escolar	330
		Construção (continuamos construir a nossa escola)	180
		Disciplinas da Carta - o Trabalho comunitário	760
		Prática Escolar	1.380
		Oficina Pedagógica	40
		Especialização	280
		Exame Final e Conclusão	140
		Total currículo	5.160

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O Programa de Formação de Professores em 8 períodos

O programa de formação de professores é um programa de 30 meses desenhado com uma progressão para alcançar o resultado final: Professor bem formado, pronto para levar a cabo a sua tarefa como educador na escola e na aldeia.

O programa está subdividido em períodos, cada um com o seu objectivo e carácter específico.

1º período

- No primeiro período de 3 meses, o programa leva os estudantes da sua vida diária para "O Mundo em Que Vivemos". Através de estudos e cursos, os estudantes enquadram-se por si próprios no mundo inteiro, adquirindo uma perspectiva ampla.

2º período

- É um período de 3 meses do "Nosso País" - com estudos e investigações, levando os estudantes às condições básicas naturais e sociais do seu próprio país, políticas contemporâneas e, também, contem visões para o futuro.

3º período

- Um mês dedicado a "Continuamos a Construir a Nossa Escola" - onde os estudantes concentram-se em tarefas práticas dentro da construção e manutenção, horta e jardins.

- O período inclui planificação, organização,

liderança e habilidades práticas à sua tarefa de professor.

4º período

- Os próximos 5 meses na EPF as actividades são divididas entre "Práticas Escolares e Estudos Adicionais", com uma combinação produtiva de ensino com prática diária nas escolas primárias circunvizinhas e estudos individuais em cadeiras integradas no Currículo da Formação de Professores.

- Dentro deste período os estudantes escrevem um livro acerca de ensino, intitulado "As 100 Grandes Perguntas Pedagógicas".

5º período

- A seguir é tempo para se concentrar - neste período de 5 meses a manchete é "Especialização e Disciplinas da Carta". Os Estudantes escolhem uma ou mais disciplinas para se especializarem, e adicionam as Disciplinas da Carta. As Disciplinas da Carta inspiram-se da Carta de Humana people to People e são dedicadas a diferentes aspectos de desenvolvimento comunitário. Este é um período concentrado aos estudos com tempo para aprofundar mais.

6º período

- Este período é um dos mais significantes: 11 meses de "A Profissão do Ensino como Parte de Formação do Professor". Os Estudantes deixam a EPF e vão dar aulas como Professores das

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Source: ADPP Mozambique (internal document).

Appendix II

Characteristics of formal and non-formal education

TABLE 1 IDEAL TYPE MODELS OF FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

FORMAL EDUCATION	NON-FORMAL EDUCATION
A. PURPOSES	
<p>1. <i>Long-term and general</i> Formal education is expected to provide the basis for an individual's whole future life. Therefore (even in technical fields) it is general in character.</p> <p>2. <i>Credential-based</i> The end-product of formal education is the acquisition of qualifications and certificates which enable individuals to obtain specific socio-economic positions in the wider society. Rewards are therefore deferred.</p>	<p>1. <i>Short-term and specific</i> Non-formal education meets short-term learning needs of individuals and communities. It therefore emphasises the learning of specific knowledge and skills and the inculcation of specific attitudes which result in immediately functional behavioural changes.</p> <p>2. <i>Non-credential based</i> Non-formal education produces learning which is immediately valued in the context of the individual's or community's life situation. Rewards are tangible and may include improvements in material well-being, productivity, self-awareness, ability to control the environment, etc.</p>
B. TIMING	
<p>1. <i>Long Cycle</i> Formal education programmes are rarely less than one-year in length and usually last for much longer periods, often ten years or more. One level of study leads immediately on to the next.</p> <p>2. <i>Preparatory</i> Formal education is child-centred and future-oriented, and provides the basis for future participation in society and economy.</p> <p>3. <i>Full-Time</i> Formal education takes place full-time and does not permit other parallel activities, especially productive work.</p>	<p>1. <i>Short Cycle</i> Non-formal education programmes are quite short, rarely longer than two years and often much shorter than this. Length will depend on the period required to achieve the learning objectives in question.</p> <p>2. <i>Recurrent</i> Non-formal education may relate to children or adults, depending on the immediate learning needs arising from the individual's roles and stage in life.</p> <p>3. <i>Part-Time</i> Non-formal education is part-time and activities may be timed in a variety of ways to meet the needs and convenience of learners.</p>
C. CONTENT	
<p>1. <i>Input-Centred and Standardized</i> The basis of the curriculum for formal education is a well-defined package of cognitive knowledge with limited emphasis on psychomotor or affective considerations. The content is standardised across large groups of learners.</p> <p>2. <i>Academic</i> The curriculum is founded in theory and isolated from the environment and social action.</p> <p>3. <i>Clientele determined by Entry Requirements</i> Clienteles are defined in terms of their ability to cope with the level of education being offered. Literacy is essential (except at the lowest level) and successful completion of lower levels is required for admission to higher levels.</p>	<p>1. <i>Output-Centred and Individualised</i> Non-formal education is task- or skill-centred and designed to produce quite specific changes in learners. Units are discrete and variable and may be related to the precise functional learning needs of individual participants or small homogeneous groups.</p> <p>2. <i>Practical</i> The curriculum is dictated by the particular uses to which the learning will be put and consequently is closely related to environment of the learners.</p> <p>3. <i>Entry Requirements determined by Clientele</i> Non-formal education is geared to the needs and interests of the potential clientele. Specific characteristics such as literacy or formal educational qualifications are not essential for admission.</p>

12

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Table 1. Contd.

FORMAL EDUCATION

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

D. DELIVERY SYSTEM

1. *Institution-based*
Formal education takes place in highly visible and expensive institutions called 'schools', whose sole purpose is educational.
2. *Isolated*
Formal education programmes are isolated from the socio-economic environment and from social action. Learners are removed from their own environments for substantial periods.
3. *Rigidly structured*
Formal education is rigidly structured around the parameters of time and the participants' age and/or performance. It involves uniform entry points, is graded into uniform units, is sequential and continuous. Clear inter-relationships exist between different programmes.
4. *Teacher-centred*
Formal education involves a labour-intensive technology and emphasises teaching rather than learning. Authority and control is vested in formally qualified and certified members of a teaching profession.

1. *Environment-based*
Non-formal education takes place in a variety of settings but emphasis is given to locales such as the work place or home which are not education-specific. Such specific facilities as are used are minimal and low cost.
2. *Community-related*
Non-formal education is conducted close to where learners live and work and the environment is functionally related to the learning which takes place.
3. *Flexibly structured*
Non-formal education programmes have varying degrees and types of structure, but a variety of relationships and sequences is possible within them. Programmes are discrete and few relationships exist between them.
4. *Learner-centred*
Non-formal education uses a variety of resources and technologies. Emphasis is on learning rather than teaching, and a variety of personnel (often not professional educators) are utilised as facilitators rather than teachers.

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5. *Resource-intensive*
Formal education utilises expensive plant and staff, involves a high opportunity-cost of student time and largely draws its resources from outside the immediately surrounding community.

5. *Resource-saving*
Non-formal education economises on resources by utilising community facilities and personnel (especially at slack times) where possible, by keeping specific facilities low-cost, and by part-time study.

E. CONTROL

1. *Externally controlled*
Curricula and standards are externally determined and publicly controlled or supervised by national bureaucracies.
2. *Hierarchical*
Internal control is highly structured and based on role-defined relations among teachers and between teachers and learners.

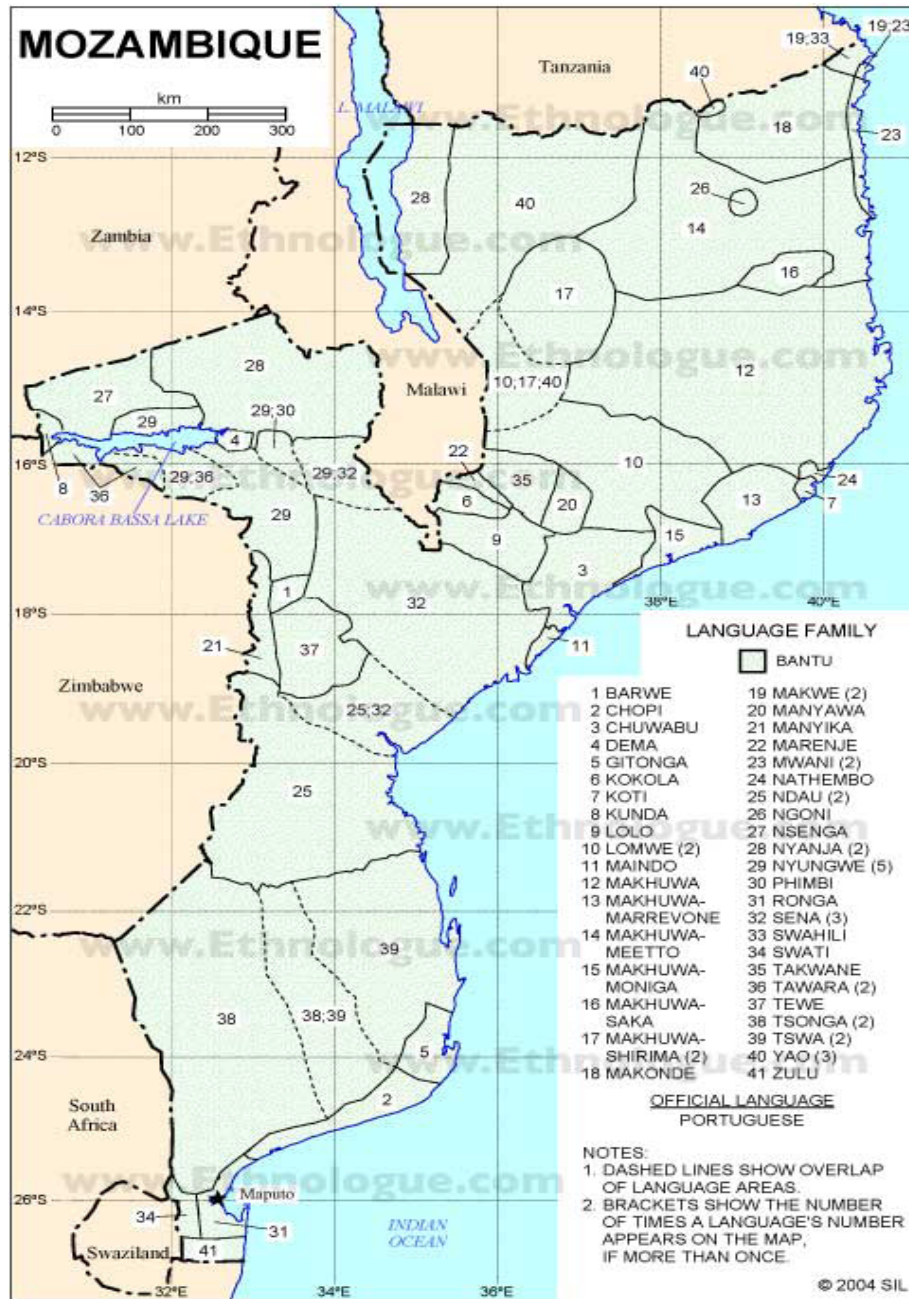
1. *Self-governing*
Control is unco-ordinated, fragmented and diffuse, involving a variety of agencies, often non-governmental. There is substantial autonomy at programme and local levels, with an emphasis on local initiative, self-help and innovation.
2. *Democratic*
Substantial control is vested in participants and the local community.

15

Source: Simkins (1973: 12-15).

Appendix III

Bantu tribes and languages represented in Mozambique



Source: Gordon, R. Jr. (ed.), (2005) 'Ethnologue: Languages of the World' (15th edition). Dallas, Texas: Summer Institute of Linguistics International.

Appendix IV

Consent to participate in research

O consenso de participacao na pesquisa sobre o abuso de genero nas escolas e na comunidade.

Eis e a oferta de participacao numa pesquisa feita pela Sra Monika Oledzka-Nielsen, de departamento de Estudos de Desenvolvimento da Universidade de East Anglia, Norwich, Reino Unido.

A sua participacao neste estudo e inteiramente voluntaria. Por favor le as informacoes em baixo e nao hesita perguntar em caso de tiver qualquer duvida, antes de decidir se ou nao participar na pesquisa.

O objectivo da pesquisa

A pesquisa pretende investigar a constructo social do abuso, e particularmente, procura de:

- Investigar porque a escola (comunidade) e um lugar com perigo da violencia para as raparigas?
Como e porque a violencia acontece?
- Quais sao as implicacoes do abuso baseado no genero?
- Qual e a nutura e padrao do abuso das raparigas nas escolas?
- O constructo do abuso (os niveis diferentes da coercao e os niveis de consenso).

Privacidade e Confidencialidade

Nenhuma informacao sobre voce, ou fornecida pelo voce nao sera divulgada para os outros sem a sua permissao escrita.

Quando os resultados da pesquisa serao publicados ou discutidos, nenhuma informacao que revelara a sua identidade sera incluida.

Participacao e retirada.

A sua participacao nesta pesquisa e enteriamente voluntaria.

Se voce decide de participar, esta livre de retirar o seu consenso e nao continuar em qualquer momento.

A assinatura do participante

Eu confirmo de ter lido e entendido as informacoes em cima. Eu foi dado a oportunidade de fazer perguntas que foram respondidas a minha satisfaccao.

Assinando este formulario, eu concordo de participar na pesquisa em cima descrita.

O nome de participante

Assinatura

Assinatura da autora da pesquisa

Eu tinha explicado a pesquisa para o sujeito e respondido todas as perguntas dele/a. Creio que o sujeito percebe as informacoes que constam neste documento e livremente concorda de participar.

Assinatura

Appendix V

Analysing fieldnotes: a more detailed look at the process

Emerging Topics	Sub-Topics	Data that informs the issue	Emerging Issues/ Questions/Concepts
Sexuality	Sexual mores	Community of Chibabava burnt the hut of the woman who was 'sleeping around' – Casa of Chibabava – Mr Cujena Death of a teacher – six 'wives' showed up for the funeral Traditional medicine – <i>madrinha</i> – to make vagina contract – appearing as Mando – a story about a female student who was provoking him showing her underwear in front of the blackboard Paolo – 'dirty' message from a female student	Church discourse and system of beliefs of gender and sexuality
	Polygamy	Benito – he would only date a woman only with intention marrying her – interview_Dr.Benito Mando – his religion tells him to be faithful to his wife IFP – workshop_NI – female and male students' positions on polygamy varied	
	Traditions related to sexuality	Critique of 'sexual traditions' – interview Mando Using condoms against the tradition – Mandu – 'natural sex' Importance of initiation rites – interview Mrs. Almeida, Dr. Benito, Mr Semo	Western discourse of harmful traditional practices Competing discourses regarding initiation rites Positive and negative aspects of initiation rites; objectives of initiation rites Symbolic: violence implications/influence for/in shaping identities Changing throughout the time (here also the role of church) Initiation rites in urban and
	Initiation rites - informal education	Ceremony of initiation rites – Nazare Interview_Almeida_DPEC, Debate_10_Grade	

			<p>rural areas</p> <p>Role/importance of <i>madrinhas</i></p> <p>Ambiguity/double morals (virginity)</p> <p>Initiation rites taught in school (nature science)</p> <p>Importance of initiation rites for gender relations (relationship)</p> <p>To what extent does classifying <i>lobolo</i> within the concept of ‘commercial sexual exploitation’ act to sensitise society on gender relations marked by the subaltern status of women?</p> <p>Can initiation rites in any ways be empowering for young people?</p>
Gender power relations	Gender roles (in transition) – new femininities/masculinities	<p>Educated women are getting divorced – Mr Semo</p> <p>Accepting new/changing gender roles – Mr Semo</p> <p>Different gender roles – changing gender roles - IFP_workshop</p> <p>Women’s position in the society – female perspective – Goto-FGD_Women, Workshop_IFP</p> <p>Girls’ negotiation strategies - Debate_10_Grade</p> <p>Leo is telling the story about Sara’s mother who was a policewomen and just after promotion she was killed by her colleagues because they were afraid of her power</p> <p>Girls using men for gifts – Debate_10_Grade</p> <p>Youth – competition – Debate_10_Grade</p>	<p>Emerging new families; single headed families; orphans living with extended families</p> <p>Girls forming new identities into more individual (new femininities)</p> <p>How have power relations been changing? Why?</p>


Appendix VI

Credential letter

1

Visto
António
29.08.08

DPE
Para a decisão efetiva
Duarte M. Miguel
29.10.08




REPÚBLICA DE MOÇAMBIQUE
MINISTÉRIO DA EDUCAÇÃO E CULTURA
DIRECÇÃO DE PROGRAMAS ESPECIAIS

Credencial

Para efeito de Pesquisa no âmbito de Género, está credenciada a Senhora Oledzka – Nielsen, estudante da University of East Anglia, a apresentar-se na DPEC e SDEJT para trabalhar com alguns professores e alunos das escolas conforme a Credencial da Universidade em Anexo.
No final do trabalho a estudante deverá deixar uma cópia do relatório de trabalho.

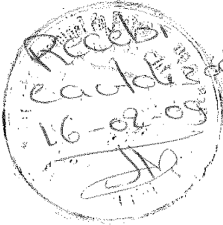
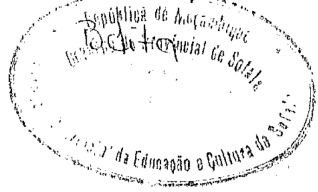
P' Director
Armando S. Ubisse
(Inst. Técnico Ped N1)



T
Miguel
11/02/09

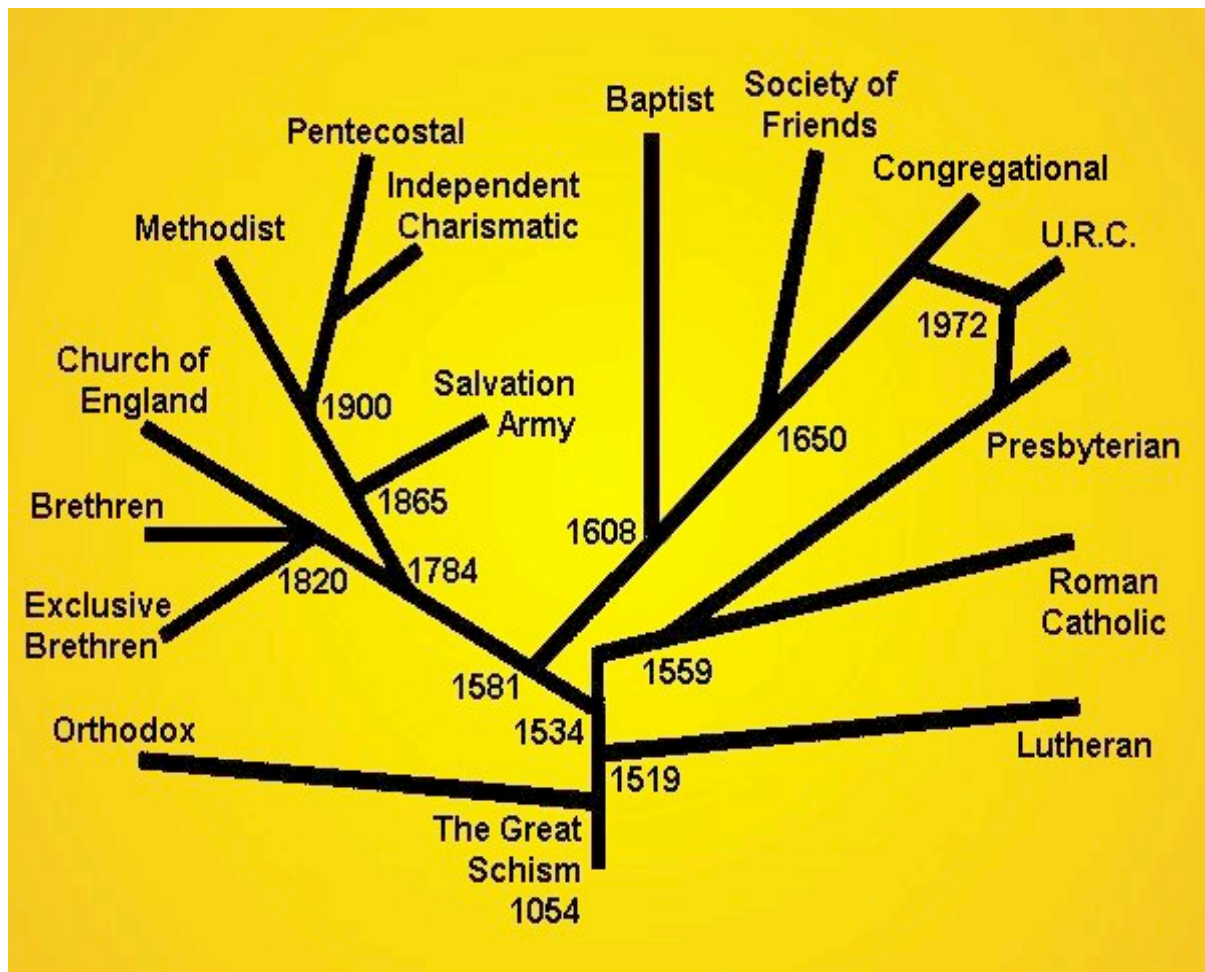
Recobido e autolizado
12/2/09
JS

Visto
Autorizo a realizar a actividade prevista
Beira, 29.10/08



Appendix VII

Christian denominations and the churches and religious groups in the research context



Source: <http://www.request.org.uk/main/churches/denominations/denominations01.htm>

Cinco professores expulsos por terem engravidado alunas

Por ANTÓNIO CHIMUNDO

Cinco professores foram expulsos sob a acusação de terem engravidado suas próprias alunas no distrito de Chibabava, no sul da província de Sofala, revelou à nossa Reportagem o director dos Serviços Distritais da Educação, Juventude e Tecnologia, Mouzere Alberto Manuel.

Contra outros dois professores, nas mesmas condições, foram instaurados processos, disse Mouzere, acrescentando que, um destes, por ser do quadro, o seu caso vai ser encaminhado para a Direcção Provincial de Educação e Cultura de Sofala, que, por sua vez, fará chegar às estruturas competentes para a tomada da decisão final.

"Nós já demos a nossa proposta, na qualidade de instrutores do processo, e esperamos que as estruturas superiores tomem a decisão final", afirmou, para depois referir que, em relação aos outros cinco professores, cujos nomes não mencionou, **"rescindimos os contratos com eles, porque se nós queremos que a rapariga esteja na escola, não devíamos continuar a trabalhar com os mesmos"**.

Abordamos a administradora de Chibabava, Ana Bela Santiago, para comentar o caso, tendo dito que tem um sentimento de amargura, primeiro porque se trata de um crime, visto que uma criança não pode procriar.

"É uma situação caricata, porque sendo um professor que está a ensinar e, ainda por cima, conquista as próprias alunas menores de idade, quando devia ser o contrário, uma vez que ele é conhecedor da legislação em vigor no país" — sublinhou.

Na sua óptica, a situação constitui preocupação. Por isso nos encontramos que mantém com as comunidades e os próprios professores, faz apelos no sentido de serem vigilantes e denunciarem os que se envolvem nesta prática.

"Temos um índice muito baixo de raparigas nas escolas. Então, não deixemos os professores a engravidar as alunas menores de

idade" — acrescentou Ana Bela Santiago.

No distrito de Chibabava existem 428 professores em Chibabava. Destes, 157 são professoras. Em 2008, 342 professores constituíam o efectivo do corpo docente naquele distrito, onde estão matriculados no presente ano lectivo 27.437 alunos, da 1^a a 12^a classes.

DESISTÊNCIAS

O professor continua a ser um dos que contribuem para que nas escolas haja desistências de alunos, no distrito de Chibabava, daí que o sector esteja a tomar as devidas medidas para estancar o mal, disse a nossa fonte.

No ano passado desistiram 837 alunos, 404 dos quais são raparigas. Embora haja uma redução substancial, comparativamente a 2007, a situação continua preocupante para o Serviços Distritais da Educação, Juventude e Tecnologia, segundo as palavras de Mouzere Manuel.

Em 2007 foram registados 1.207 alunos desistentes. **"Há uma redução substancial, mas ainda nos preocupa sobremaneira, porque o número continua elevado, pois tivemos um universo de 23 mil alunos e desistiram 837 alunos. O número é elevado, quanto a nós"** — sublinhou.

"Estamos a trabalhar para que este ano não aconteça o mesmo cenário" — afirmou, explicando que a sensibilização está a envolver os líderes comunitários, chefes dos postos administrativos, das localidades.

No ano passado foram feitos 12 encontros com o intuito de se analisar a questão da rapariga na escola. Até aqui, sabe-se que ainda não foram atingidos aqueles níveis desejados, pese embora tenha sido dado um passo gigantesco nesse sentido, de acordo com o nosso entrevistado.

As motivações das desistências, no geral, são casamentos prematuros e trabalhos domésticos para o caso das raparigas, e a procura de emprego, quanto aos rapazes, que acozem para a vizinha África do Sul, onde a maior parte da população masculina frequente.

Appendix IX

The Code of Conduct

CÓDIGO DE CONDUTA

ORGANIZAÇÃO NACIONAL DOS PROFESSORES

Av. Eduardo Mondlane, nº 49; Maputo - Moçambique

PREÂMBULO

Os Professores em Moçambique, representados pela Organização Nacional dos Professores (ONP), têm duas responsabilidades fundamentais: ensinar e promover a divulgação do conhecimento científico. A par destas responsabilidades assumidas, os professores em Moçambique crêem no valor e na dignidade do homem; reconhecem a importância suprema da procura da verdade; encorajam o saber e defendem a promoção do cidadão.

Estes valores e objectivos só podem ser alcançados se a liberdade de aprender e conhecer for protegida e a liberdade de ensinar garantida. Com este Código de Conduta os professores reafirmam a sua responsabilidade em exercer a profissão em conformidade com os mais altos padrões de ética.

DECLARAÇÃO DE PRINCÍPIOS

O presente Código de Conduta é uma declaração pública que estabelece os princípios que devem guiar e inspirar a prática profissional dos professores moçambicanos.

1. Este Código de Conduta estabelece os valores fundamentais da profissão; estabelece princípios que guiam o comportamento dos professores, individual ou colectivamente, no seu exercício profissional;

2. Este Código de Conduta define os deveres fundamentais dos professores no exercício das suas funções; defende a protecção da liberdade de aprender, da liberdade de ensinar e da igualdade de oportunidades educacionais para todos.

PRINCÍPIO 1:
Compromisso Com os Alunos

A primeira obrigação profissional dos professores moçambicanos é para com aqueles a quem ensinam, razão de lundo do Ser Professor. Neste sentido, os professores devem:

- Promover o crescimento dos alunos, explorando, de uma forma integrada, as suas potencialidades ao nível intelectual, físico, emocional e cívico;
- Respeitar a dignidade e a personalidade individual dos alunos;
- Ajudar os alunos a desenvolverem a sua identidade própria, a aprenderem mais sobre a herança cultural dos moçambicanos, respeitando a diversidade cultural, linguística e étnica que caracteriza o nosso país;
- Engajar os alunos na busca de soluções honestas para os diferentes problemas;
- Manter e desenvolver relações profissionais com os alunos baseadas nos melhores interesses destes;
- Basear a sua acção na aprendizagem constante e tirarem maior partido dos conteúdos programáticos estabelecidos;
- Não avaliar os alunos com base em considerandos de ordem étnico, regional e racial;
- Encorajar os alunos a pensarem criticamente

os assuntos sociais e culturais;

- Proteger a confidencialidade da informação sobre os alunos.

PRINCÍPIO 2:
Compromisso Com os Pais e Encarregados de Educação

Os professores reconhecem que o seu trabalho sairá mais enriquecido se houver uma colaboração com os Pais e Encarregados de Educação, encorajando, por isso, a sua participação na educação dos seus filhos. Na sua relação com os Pais e os Encarregados de Educação, os professores devem:

- Envolvê-los na tomada de decisões sobre as matérias extra-curriculares relacionadas com a educação dos alunos;
- Estabelecer com os encarregados de educação relações honestas e baseadas no respeito mútuo;
- Respeitar a sua privacidade;
- Respeitar o seu direito de informação sobre os seus educandos, exceptuando nos casos em que o professor julgar que essa informação não será no melhor interesse dos alunos;

PRINCÍPIO 3:
Compromisso com a Sociedade

Os professores consideram a sua profissão um compromisso de confiança e responsabilidade para com a Sociedade, sobretudo porque a sua missão consiste na preparação do Homem para a vida na Sociedade. Neste sentido, os professores têm obrigações para com a Sociedade e, por isso, devem:

- Apoiar activamente as políticas e programas que promovem a igualdade de oportunidades para todos;
- Trabalhar de forma conjunta para o desenvolvimento das escolas e dos centros de ensino e formação, promovendo os ideais democráticos;
- Ensinar e promover os valores comumente aceites na Sociedade e encorajar os alunos a aplicá-los e a apreciarem criticamente o seu significado.

PRINCÍPIO 4:
Compromisso para com a Profissão

Tendo em conta que a qualidade dos seus serviços influencia a Nação e os seus cidadãos, os professores devem emvidar todos os esforços para manterem e promoverem altos padrões profissionais, promovendo um clima que encoraje o julgamento da qualidade profissional e contribuindo para atrair os mais inteligentes para a profissão. Neste sentido, os professores devem:

- Colocar em primeiro plano o seu papel como Educador Profissional, através de uma prática responsável;
- Considerarem-se como aprendizes e engajarem-se no seu desenvolvimento profissional;
- Serem honestos e verdadeiros quando tiverem que fazer declarações relativamente às suas qualificações e competências;
- Contribuir para o desenvolvimento e promoção de boas políticas de Educação;
- Contribuir para o desenvolvimento de uma cultura profissional aberta;
- Tratar os colegas com respeito, trabalhando com eles de forma cooperativa e colegial, sempre em benefício do aluno;
- Apoiar os novos colegas que chegam à profissão, sejam eles professores de carreira ou professores contratados;
- Proteger a informação confidencial sobre os seus colegas, exceptuando quando ela é requerida pelas autoridades competentes e quando tem em vista propósitos meramente profissionais.

PRINCÍPIO 5:
Compromisso de Integridade

Em Moçambique, mesmo que não se possa generalizar, os professores são contactados com práticas desviantes como a cobrança de subornos e rendas, o comércio de notas e ingressos, o assédio sexual dos alunos, muitas das quais acabam tendo gravidezes precoces e ficam sujeitas, também, à contração do HIV. Os professores moçambicanos sabem que essas práticas minam a qualidade de ensino em Moçambique, comprometendo os esforços de desenvolvimento sócio-económico em curso. Por isso, os professores devem:

- Absterem-se de usar a sua profissão para obterem vantagens ilícitas e imorais;
- Absterem-se de cobrar aos alunos, Pais e Encarregados de Educação, valores em dinheiro ou em espécie e favores sexuais, em troca de passagens de classe ou de ingresso no sistema de ensino;
- Absterem-se de manipularem as notas com o objetivo de tirar vantagens ilegais;
- Absterem-se de assediar sexualmente os alunos;
- Recusar e denunciar as tentativas de suborno que sejam da iniciativa dos alunos, Pais e Encarregados de Educação;
- Declarar junto dos seus dirigentes nas escolas os presentes recebidos por ocasião de datas festivas como o Dia do Professor.

Este Código de Conduta foi elaborado em consulta com professores de todas as regiões de Moçambique. A ONP aplica o espírito e o conteúdo deste Código de Conduta para a elaboração e publicação de regulamentos de disciplina.

Source: Centro de Integridade Pública, 2008.

Appendix X

Dispatch number 39/GM/2003

[Teachers must:]

- abstain from using their profession to obtain immoral advantages
- abstain from taking bribes in the form of money or sexual favours from students, parents or caregivers to pass the class exam or to gain a place in school
- abstain from manipulating marks to the illegal advantage of students
- abstain from the sexual abuse of female students
- report attempts at bribery by parents and caregivers
- declare school gifts received at occasions such as Teacher's Day to the management

Source: Centro de Integridade Pública, 2008 (my translation).

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