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Curricular Policy and Access and Permanence of Students in School

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Abstract

This article presents a study on the access and permanence or equity of the students in schools of General Secondary Education. The research was carried out in two schools, which sought to understand the level of access and permanence of students. The research opted for a qualitative approach as it made a content analysis of interviews and readings. It was observed that the Mozambican educational system was marked by the exclusion of other cultures due to the weak negotiation between the school culture and that of the students, and in this context, there was a systematic and constant abandonment of students. This abandonment occurred for several reasons: cultural issues and fragility of family structures. The research also showed that in schools there was a strong trend toward generalization and harmonization of evaluation practices, without looking at issues of asymmetries between schools. A continuous and constant practice of expressing value judgments was also carried out in order to generalize the students' behavior. Faced with these factors, students have access to school but over the cycle are giving up, which makes it possible to understand that Mozambican public policies still need to maintain an inclusive and acceptability dialog with and from other cultures.

Keywords: curriculum, access, permanence, students, school

1. Introduction

The issue of education policies is one of the priorities and a concern at the global level, with a particular focus on students' access to and staying in school. There has been a concern at the level of governments in the construction of infrastructures in order to receive as many

students as possible. The Mozambican government, for example, has been making efforts every year to build more classrooms to satisfy local demand for schooling.

Nevertheless, educational public policies aim at encouraging and above all the access and permanence of the students in school, there has been a certain abandonment of the students during the school year. What we report is linked to findings made possible by a survey carried out in two schools of the General Secondary School (ESG) in Mozambique, Maputo, in the Municipality of Matola. We relate what was observed throughout the investigation with data published by the Ministry of Education and by the average.

2. International education policies in the context of globalization

This section identifies and discusses international education policies in the context of globalization and, therefore, reflects on the implications of this in relation to educational policies in Mozambique.

This reflection is also intended to identify the meanings that are/ were included and/or excluded over time from the understanding of the context under which Mozambican education policies are/were produced. The interest in discussing globalization in this work is anchored in the fact that globalization permeates teaching and school practices.

Before embarking on a description of international education policies produced in different spaces, it is important to mention that current educational policies in Mozambique emphasize that their successes and challenges have had many contours and a long economic, political, social, and ideological history, largely depending on policy options and funding partners, in each era.

Cooperation and investment relations between Mozambique and international organizations are not recent. These relations began from the period of the National Liberation Struggle around the years of 1964, as it is placed by Presidential Decree No 24/90 of 29 May 1990, which states that:

The cooperation relations between the People's Republic of Mozambique and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, began during the National Liberation Struggle, with the participation of this organization in the development of educational programs of the Front of Liberation of Mozambique, Frelimo [1].

After the establishment of the first Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique (MRC) after independence, education was not only a right, but also an imperative for national development. Indeed, Mozambique has ratified international and regional treaties and ratified them in its national regulatory framework [2].

At the international level, also soon after independence, in 1975, Mozambique signed the UNESCO constitution, where 1 year later (1976) it was admitted as a Member State with full rights by the 19th General Conference of the Organization [3]. However, in order to contribute to the pursuit of UNESCO's objectives in the different areas of its competence and

to receive the benefits of cooperation with that organization, Mozambique was obliged to create, space for a permanent staff dedicated to the treatment of various issues and activities related to UNESCO, whose objective was to coordinate all cooperation between Mozambique and UNESCO in achieving the statutory purposes of the United Nations and, in particular, Programs developed in Mozambique as a result of agreements or contracts signed with UNESCO in the organization's areas of competence [1].

Despite the postulated objectives of cooperation between Mozambique and UNESCO, the fulfillment of these objectives was not done blindly by the Mozambican government, since there was room for negotiation, as the Bulletin of the Republic indicates that it is the responsibility of the President of the National Commission for UNESCO to monitor the negotiation of all cooperation with UNESCO and to sign or address their respective contracts and correspondence addressed to the Director-General of UNESCO.

The dialog between the government and its international partners has been constant and articulated. Cooperation partners share the government's view of their education sector priorities [2], which means there is an ongoing negotiation.

In an attempt to answer it and based on observations of classes and interviews with the managers and teachers of the two schools that were the locus of the research, it can be affirmed that there is no horizontal functionality of the policies since there were spaces for policy adaptations, interpretations, and reinterpretations in each context, although there were strong control processes through quarterly and annual evaluations and through the filling of tables.

However, there have been several world conferences on education, to name but a few, in the early 1960s: (i) Bombay, India, in 1952; (ii) Cairo, Egypt, in 1954; (iii) Lima, Peru, 1956; (iv) Karachi, Pakistan; and (v) Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. All of them defined that, by 1980, two fundamental goals, literacy and universal schooling [4], would be achieved.

These meetings were organized and promoted by the International Community, and among several objectives, in general, the establishment of homogeneous parameters that allowed access to education for all regardless of their social, cultural, ethnic, religious, economic, etc., on the one hand. On the other hand, there was also the commitment to the most pressing problems that sickened the world. According to Ireland [5], these problems are listed below:

Child welfare, environmental, protection, human rights, empowerment of girls, productive employment, reproductive health, and urban development. All linked to the themes of peace, development, and human security.

According to the author, each of the conferences reached agreements on specific issues in a new spirit of cooperation and global purposes, on the one hand. On the other hand, they sought to articulate their themes and action plans to those of other conferences in a deliberate way, strengthening the common understanding of the development process.

The conference held in Jomtien in 1990 in Thailand adopted the concept of basic education, proposing an expanded view of education and not restricted to schooling and childhood, as can be seen in its article 1:

Satisfy basic learning needs. Each person, child, young person, or adult must be able to take advantage of educational opportunities aimed at satisfying their basic learning needs. These needs include both the essential tools for learning (such as reading, writing, speaking, calculating, solving problems) and basic learning contents (such as knowledge, skills, values and attitudes) Human beings can survive, fully develop their potential, live and work with dignity, participate fully in development, improve the quality of life, make informed decisions and continue to learn [...]. The extent of basic learning needs and the way to satisfy them vary by country and culture, and inevitably change over time [5].

In this context, according to the same author, basic education is more than a purpose; it is the basis for learning and for permanent human development, on which countries can systematically build levels and more advanced types of education.

3. Education and training

However, the translation of the expanded opportunities for effective development education to the individual/society will ultimately depend on because of those same opportunities; people will grasp useful knowledge, reasoning skills, aptitudes, and values. As a consequence, basic education should be focused on the acquisition and effective learning outcomes and not more exclusively on enrollment, attendance at established programs and completion of qualification requirements [5].

With regard to Mozambique's adherence to regional policies, it is possible to highlight its involvement, for example, in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Education and Training Protocol and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which aimed at the gradual achievement of equivalence, harmonization, and standardization of Education and Training Systems in the SADC Region. This implies, inter alia, the integration of education systems and the harmonization of different curricula at the regional level, emphasizing the practical component of post-primary education, in addition to universal training of at least 9 or 10 years [6].

In connection with the various conferences, UNESCO noted that there were collective synergies and strong linkages between the conferences in the 1990s and 2000s; once, from different points of view, they approached the main problems of the contemporary world for which education could make a difference, if they could develop policies based on a global vision of education systems.

Therefore, as can be seen from the discussions presented above in the different meetings during the last few decades, the issue of education has always been a priority for all the governments and civil society that participated in the said conferences. She was always seen as the one who would solve various problems that sickened the world. It is in this understanding that we sought to globalize it, even if we recognized at some point the specifics and differences of each society, but it was evident that there were aspects that were sought to maintain and internationalize them.

In the case of Mozambique with more than 40 local languages, in addition to the official languages and over 100 dialects of the respective languages, as well as different ethnic groups and

cultures, the diversity, differences, and challenges are greater when one considers to include and reconcile All needs and differences in a national curriculum, or rather, make it as democratic as possible [7] in a globalized world with deep differences. Moreover, based on the conclusions of Mazula and Ngunga, given these linguistic diversities, there is a relation between the mother tongue of the individual and his/her school performance.

In fact, globalization is an opportunity for the world and for Mozambique in particular because it shortens distances and eases border rigidity and there is greater and faster communication between societies, there is also a greater circulation of information, however it is also a major challenge because not all societies, for example Mozambique, have the same level of economic, technological, and human development.

The essence of the thesis of globalization according to Ball [8] rests on the question of the future of the National State as a cultural and political entity. This thesis is articulated through four interrelated perspectives that refer to economic, political, cultural, and social transformation. Globalization involves the spread of new technologies that have a huge impact on the economy, politics, society, culture, education, and individual experience [8].

For some authors, such as Lingard and Rizvi [9], apart from the fact that the concept of globalization does not have a single uniform meaning and have multiple expressions as dynamic as specific in each context, the phenomenon of globalization is not as new as it stands Lopes [10].

It is a producer of disjunctive flows that have long existed, and these flows characterize the constant movements of ideas, ideologies, people, images, technologies that are only temporarily seen as stable structures or organizations due to the inability of our devices to identify and deal with this movement [9].

These organizations have had very profound influences on national educational policies. It is in this context that Ball [11] argues that it is no longer possible to view educational policies from the nation-state point of view alone, as education is a regional and global policy issue and increasingly an international trade issue.

In the view of Lingard and Rizvi [9], globalization affects the way we interpret and imagine the possibilities of our lives, since the idea of globalization represents both an ideological construction and a social imaginary that determines the discourses of educational policy. For this reason, a good analysis of educational policy implies understanding how the effects of globalization actually work, rather than characterizing it as the general cause of certain political developments [9].

Regarding the impact of globalization in the field of education, one can point to the provision of policies and the consequent submission of less-developed countries, in a greater or lesser sense, to international policies through the evaluation of the Teaching and Learning Process (TLP) by using standardized and internationalized instruments, as analyzed by Torres and Burbules [12].

Moreover, from the standpoint of Lingard and Rizvi [9], educational purposes have been redefined in terms of a narrower set of interests about the development of human capital and the role that education must play in meeting the needs of the global economy and ensuring competitiveness of the national economy.

At the same time, Giddens ([13] apud [8]) states that globalization invades local contexts, but does not destroy them; On the contrary, new forms of identity and local cultural self-expression are, therefore, connected to the process of globalization.

Regarding the context of teaching, policy is mediated by the practices of school principals, just as teachers interpret policy and translate it into practice [9].

Nevertheless, Lingard and Rizvi [9], p. 151, argue that:

The relationship between politics and practice is greatly modified, but if one considers that there is a primordial center of power, then, in the case of curricular policy, the practice of schools remains less relevant in the area of political decision making, but if one considers the politics as diffuse and without center, with multiple contextual centers being produced, hence the practice of schools tends to be considered also as a decision making center and of producing meanings for politics. Since practice ceases to be considered as the other of politics, it becomes an integral part of any policy-making process.

The observation of what happened in the schools, which were the locus of our research, made it possible to observe that students and teachers in classrooms have their own interpretation.

Based on the studies of Ball [8], it can be said that political research implies an analysis of three key aspects: texts, discourses, and effects. That is, policies are always refuted, loaded with values and dynamics, and your product brings together various agreements. They are encoded into representations of what is ordered and what to do. Political analysis implies the decoding of texts, both in relation to the context in which they are encompassed and the context they construct and the effects they have in practice, linked to social effects, often called political results, since investigating policies is not only restricted (norms, laws, resolutions, plans, programs, etc.), but also includes school practices and speeches [8].

However, it can be said in general that globalization has its influences on educational policies, in particular, regarding the individual's pretension to market, which must be imbued with skills, competencies, attitudes, and values as it is argued by Lingard and Rizvi [9] when postulating that the relationship between globalization and education policies is related to the model of the individual's formation, which seeks for to train the citizen with skills, skills for the labor market, openness for training/schooling, at least until high school. From the analyses made, it was pointed out that globalization as a social, economic, cultural, and, above all, educational phenomenon that is at the heart of research does not suffocate, suture, does not unify practices whatever they are, does not homogenize all contexts (Globalization) are adequate, adapts to each context according to the characteristics of the latter because there is always a recontextualization of policies [14]. In fact, globalization itself is reconfigured by context, since it is not passive.

In the Mozambican context, in an effort to appropriate and interpret international policies, such as the Jomtien World Declaration on ETPs in 1990; The Millennium Declaration in 2000, ratified by 189 countries and UN member states to combat poverty, promote sustainable development and access to ETP [15]; The Declaration of the Second Pan African Forum on Children in 2007, which discussed free access to primary education. Among other issues, these policies have been interpreted and implemented through various

national instruments, such as the Government's Five-Year Programs; The Plan of Action for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty (PARPA); National Education Policies; and Strategic Education Plans.

The study carried out by Osório e Silva [16] in Mozambique states that the Government's Five-Year Program (2006–2009) called for equal opportunities and rights for men and women and improved levels of education for citizens (p. 67). In turn, PARPA I viewed education as one of the basic rights of citizens, giving it a prominent role in combating poverty and increasing capacities and opportunities and promoting greater regional and social equity.

Also in the context of international policies, the same authors highlight the influence of the Jomtien conference on the design of national policies in the mid-1990s. In this case, one of the presuppositions of the Government's Five-Year Program (1995–1999) looked at education as a right of every citizen as well as defending the universalization of access and the development of its quality.

The Mozambican authorities, still seeking to respond to the World Declaration of Education for all, committed themselves to universal access to education for schoolchildren. The Mozambican policies, strategic plans, and national programs presented demonstrate the operationalization of international policies through the undertaking of various activities.

This situation demonstrates that when policies arrive in a given context, they are contextualized and recontextualized. Its insertion and suitability depends on the conditions in each context. Your life will depend on negotiating with other factors. In the case of EFA policies, they were not put into operation as envisaged and advocated since Mozambique at the time was in a context that did not allow it to implement the policies as they had been conceived (e.g., economic and social difficulties, policy).

Taking into account Candau's [17] studies, the issue of equality of access, law, and universalization of education, foreseen in such international policies and, in particular, in Mozambique is seen from the standpoint of standardization and homogenization, made through teaching practices, evaluation, and use of teaching materials.

Thus, differences are invisibilized, denied, and silenced, presenting the pedagogical processes a monocultural character, marked by cultural daltonism [17]. These facts end up competing for the dropout of students throughout the school year.

The withdrawal of pupils is also due to the different interpretation of policies, as well as the fact that schools are trained in different ways within the political process, or because they act in different contexts; Either because of the differences of the academic training and professional experiences of the teachers; or differences in times of location and reputation of schools; either because of the absence and/or shortage of staff, differences in the specific local management of schools and the process in which the texts are translated, which allows the occurrence of different results from one place to another [18].

These studies have shown that the basis of differences between schools is not simply a matter of resources or skills and experience of key actors, however important these aspects may be, but it is also a question of differences in interpretations of texts.

In this sense, Lopes and Oliveira [19] defends that there is the formation of hybrid collections when policies migrate from one context to another or when pedagogical discourses are constituted.

It is in this view that Ball, Braun and Maguire defend that putting policies into practice is a creative, sophisticated, and complex process that is also always located in a given context and place. That is, policy-making involves creative processes of interpretation and recontextualization.

In this way, Lopes [20] affirms that in curriculum policies, the contexts are no longer seen as hierarchical, and the circulation of texts between them is not interpreted as an ideological misrepresentation. However, the fact that hierarchies are not established among the contexts in question does not imply that the said contexts have the same power of meaning without asymmetries [20].

Thus, in the context of practice, texts are interpreted in a translation process that will be different from one place to another. That is, there are differences in their understanding and interpretation, and there is creativity and originality.

In another dimension of analysis, the authors discussing competences and qualifications refer that in addition to the evaluation being taken as a tool to gauge the abilities and knowledge of the individual, it is also shifted to a utilitarian and functionalist purpose.

The evaluation aims to determine the degree of effectiveness of the curriculum through internal, provincial and national tests, and the results, especially the negative ones, are considered to be the responsibility of the teachers, who are at the service of the results and not of the learning and human formation.

However, Tura [21] pointed out that educational practice should not be understood as isolated from other social practices, since, despite the relative autonomy of each social system, they are always part of a whole with which they are integrated into the achievement of a common end. Thus education must be understood as a social institution.

The discussion presented throughout this section makes it possible to understand that the performativity installed in schools privileges more the cognitive, mirrored in the results of the different forms of evaluation and gives little emphasis to the psychomotor, the affective and the social or, rather, statistics give little possibility for reading about the individual's human development, over time. Thus schools are driven to perpetuate the inequalities of opportunity among students. Thus, the evaluation process is a classification instrument that punishes, marginalizes, and/or excludes students with poor performance and values of those with good performance. The teacher is the person who quantifies knowledge, a figure respected and feared, given the value given to the assessments. For it is, they determine the insertion of the individual in the labor market, the possibility of its continuity in higher education, etc.

One of the consequences that can be pointed out as a result of such marginalization is the dropping out and abandonment of the students in school, disapprovals, expulsion or change of the students' shift because they have been disapproved of more than two times in the same class.

4. Formation of classes and characteristics of families of students in the schools surveyed

4.1. Formation of classes

As far as the constitution of the classes, they were constituted in average by 60 students, being, mainly, composed by young women. Ten classes (11th and 12th) that constituted the population of one of the schools that was the locus of the research, with 574 students, 459 were girls, corresponding to 79.9% of the school universe. Here is **Table 1** containing the data that illustrates the situation referenced above.

According to school managers, class formation was preferably based on the age of students. In the classrooms, the students sat two-to-two because the desks were of double type; in some classes, the students sat in a numerical order, a criterion established according to the will of each teacher. On the wooden desks, students' names, mathematical/chemical/physical formulas, etc. were written.

During the study, it was also observed that during the first term, of the 1043 students in ESG, 39 students dropped out, of which 29 were boys and 10 were girls. The ages of students ranged from 16 to 21 years.

4.2. Characteristics of the families of students in the schools studied

According to the data produced by one of the schools, the majority of the students who attended this school came from social classes considered to be low, families with low socio-economic conditions, and a low level of schooling.

According to the data obtained through the use of semi-structured interviews with the students, it was recorded that of the five students interviewed, their parents and/or caregivers carried out manual work, such as mechanics, carpentry, commerce, among other professions, where they had a monthly income of a Mozambican minimum wage.

Stream	Section	Boys	Girls	% Girls	Total
11 ^a	Arts	25	76	75.2	101
	Science with Biology	41	72	63.7	113
	Science with drawing	30	8	21	38
12 ^a	Arts	25	102	80.3	127
	Science with Biology	78	70	47.2	148
	Science with drawing	39	8	17	47

^a

Source: Prepared by the researchers, based on the data produced by the school.

Table 1. Describes data about students achievement by Sections (A, B and C) at the School Nossa Senhora do Livramento Comunitary School.

It is noted that only men, in most cases, were engaged in paid work while women were house trained, that is, they stayed at home taking care of children and housework, and some were selling primary products in local markets or in front of their residences.

According to the managers, this school received rejected students from other schools. The students were rejected for the following reasons: excessive absences, failing more than twice in the same class, expulsion from other secondary schools, and, most of the time, indiscipline. From this scenario, it is understood that this school received the excluded, the surplus, those who were left in other schools, who, by this way, would need a specific treatment.

Given the home-school distance and because they often lack the financial conditions to guarantee the return trip, the students were obliged to stay in school until the time of class. While the students stayed in school, they had nothing to eat, situation that influenced his educational process and school performance.

Another situation found in the school is that most of the students lived with relatives of the third grade (uncles, aunts, grandparents, etc.), a fact that, according to the managers and teachers of the schools, was decisive in the support and accompaniment of their students.

It also recorded the transfer of pregnant students from day shift to nightshift classes; pupils considered to be undisciplined and/or in breach of school rules; in some cases, students failed more than twice in the same class.

The classes ranged between 60, 80, and 110 students, mostly consisted of girls. Of the 17 classes (11 and 12 classes) that constituted the population in this school, with about 1298 students, 507 young men corresponding to 39% and 791 young women corresponding to 60.9% were registered. Here are the data, in **Table 2**, that illustrate the above situation.

At school, there were five students dropping out, including four boys and one girl. There was also transference of four pregnant girls from day shift to nightshift. The students sat in difficult conditions as some classrooms were very crowded and had only few desks.

Through the insertion and acceptance of the researcher, among the students, it was noticed that although the students made an effort only to communicate in the Portuguese language, in the school premises, as recommended by the internal rules of the school, during intervals some groups of students communicated in local languages (Changana and/or ronga, above all). It was also recorded that during intervals, students stayed in small groups, debating around the school rules, censoring the leadership and school teachers, among other situations that characterized the culture school.

In the interval period, some students, with minimal financial possibilities, stayed at the school snack bar, so that they could take (sandwiches, hamburgers, soft drinks, biscuits, etc.) and others left the school grounds. Looking from the most affordable, they usually bought bread and pastries. Moreover, some students, who were financially stranded, remained in the classroom, or in the hallways of the school. After the ringing, sometimes it was noticed that the students were still outside the classroom. This practice was extended to the teachers, who stayed in the corridors or in the teachers' room debating on several aspects: politics, economy, work, problems related to the students' school performance, etc.

Stream	Section	Boys	Girls	% Girls	Total
11 ^a	Arts	88	136	60.7	224
	Science With Biology	99	148	59.9	247
	Science with Drawing	62	10	13.8	72
12 ^a	Letters	77	210	73.1	287
	Science With Biology	140	260	65	400
	Science with Drawing	41	27	39.7	68

^a means level school

Source: Prepared by the researchers based on the data produced by the school.

Table 2. Describes data about students achievement by Sections (A, B and C) at Zona Verde Secondary School.

It was noticed that the teachers in every contact they had with the students in the corridors tried to reprimand them on the way of dressing, talking about the use of the mobile phone, among other things.

They are local languages spoken in the southern region of Mozambique and in particular Maputo city and province.

In contrast, some students, especially those of the Muslim religion, had a different understanding of the school uniform:

“The long skirts are good, because the measurements are the same as those of the Church” — Speaks Joana, a student of the 12th class.

In this school too, in most cases, the men were engaged in paid work, while the women were unemployed and/or domestic according to the data produced by the students through interviews.

Indeed, in the remarks of classes held in both schools, it was noted that the classroom was a place rich in differences, with different cultures, religions, habits, experiences, and different experiences. Some divergences and convergences were noted in some moments and aspects in the two schools and classrooms, as were the cases of concern with provincial tests and national examinations, the prohibition of the use of cell phones, the intonation of the National Anthem, as well as the permanent search in formatting the students through a school culture, the rejection of student culture, etc.

Classes were in different ways in relation to the same discipline and teacher. In some classrooms, learning and assimilation of materials was faster and in others they were slightly slow. Such differentiated positions of the students in relation to the teachers were due to the differentiated teaching posture and the way in which they appropriated the school contents.

In addition, due to the above-mentioned data, there was a divergence in the way the schools interpreted and understood each situation. Schools did not have the same way of looking at, analyzing, interpreting, and understanding the same aspect. In fact, the two schools had different practices regarding the absorption, accommodation, and acceptance of the different cultures of the students.

From these observations, it is understood that the teachers sought to blame the students for all anomalous situations that occurred in school, as if they were the only ones guilty and that they had the obligation to have the school culture and abandon their culture, as well as predict everything about the school and teachers expected of them.

In fact, the teaching discourse showed that the classes were not the same and did not behave in the same way in all classes. Each class and teacher received a different treatment, depending on the experience and intervention of each one. In this way, students' behavior and attitudes cannot be predicted. Their behavior and attitudes are always contextualized and coupled with the learning conditions offered by each teacher and school.

Therefore, it can be affirmed that the mediation of classrooms in the classroom to real students should be made taking into account their age groups, their learning and motivational rhythms, their origins, cultures, among other aspects. In this way, it is not possible to try to treat all the students of the school in equal form.

It is argued that without a close and affective relationship, without a stimulus that awakens student's self-esteem, as well as the nonvaluation of (small) learning, there will also be no meaningful learning and value experiences, except the occurrence of the abandonment and withdrawal at schools.

Looking at and analyzing the context in which the classes in the two schools in question took place, from the point of view of pedagogical practices, one can affirm that these occur in different ways, from the lack of objective working conditions for the professional exercise of teachers. The lack of libraries and equipped laboratories, to the differences in terms of the levels of academic training of managers and teachers, their experiences, their vision of education, on the one hand. On the other hand, the differences are related to differences in infrastructure and, in particular, to classrooms, including differences between pupils, in terms of their characteristics, experiences, and backgrounds. Ultimately, each school brings its uniqueness and its particular way of working.

These situations obliged the teachers to have a different intervention and interpretation in each school, class and class, as can be observed in the following statements:

"Teachers we have to act in a block and homogenize our practices" —Words from the DAPs present at the general meeting of the balance of the activities of the first term.

"We have to act and act in block to fight the indiscipline" —Words of some teachers present at the general meeting of the balance of the activities of the first term.

The speeches of teachers and school administrators demonstrated the difficulties of the students in relation to the school culture. There are a number of reasons for students to present difficulties in relation to school culture. We can highlight the rigidity and poor clarity of school rules and the poor negotiation between the culture of the student, the teacher, and the school. Therefore, it should be pointed out that when it is proposed to impose a culture, students resist in introducing some rules of the school.

Regarding the statistical data of the students and students in the two schools, it was noticed that the students were in greater numbers in almost all the classes and/or curricular areas. In both

schools, there were 1872 students, of the II cycle (11th and 12th grades). Of these, 1127 were girls, corresponding to 60.2%, and only 745 were young men, corresponding to 39.7% of the universe.

The curriculum area that contained the largest number of young men was only Sciences with a drawing (young men 172 and young women 53). Being this phenomenon outside the predictions of this research, and above all, having become a curiosity and surprise, we tried to understand it with recourse to the scholastic history of students. In this, it was found that the young men tended to give up during the school year.

These results allowed us to conclude that the girls were more focused in studies when compared with the young men. These data also allowed us to conclude that the families began to believe in the potentials of the girls, as well as freed them to go to school, overcoming the prejudice, according to which girls are weak when compared to young men, and that they only served to take care of housework. By the way, it is understood that by the fact that the girls leave the school less can be supposed that they introjected the school rules better.

This idea is also defended in a study carried out by Ortigão and Aguiar [22] when they found that in the educational literature, there has been an improvement in the performance of women when compared with men. These authors, indicate that this situation is related to a better adaptation of the girls to the school, given the primary and familiar socialization that favors a more orderly and obedient behavior. Girls are more disciplined and organized than young men.

Looking at the girls' and young men's school histories, it was noticed that the girls obtained better results in the evaluations than the young men along the school path, reason why most of the classes were full of girls' students. This meant that while young men disapproved, the boys were retained in the same class, based on school results, situation which often led them to give up before reaching the more advanced classes.

Another relevant point of reference is the fact that although Mozambican society is historically sexist, a greater number of girls were found in both schools.

According to the Assistant Pedagogical Director, the predominance of girls in schools is a widespread trend, not just in that school. He adds that he believes that it is within the scope of achieving the millennium goals, which is the placement or emancipation of the woman. But it is also due to what is presented in the population censuses, which according to INE, the Mozambican population is 26,423,623 inhabitants, of which 13,663,299 (51.7%) are female and 12,760,324 (48.2%) are male.

Another aspect that explains the predominance of girls in schools, according to the managers, is that young men take on social responsibilities very early, which leads them to enter the labor market sooner. But also, some young men have opted for entering the world of drugs, which leads them to dropout of school.

In a study carried out by Osório and Silva [16], dialoguing on gender and public educational policies in Mozambique, emphasize that the Government's Five-Year Program 2006–2009 and PARPA II advocated equal opportunities and rights for men and women and improved of education for citizens, as well as raising society's awareness of women's rights and broadening women's rights information programs.

On the other hand, students' attitudes were a clear demonstration that each class had its own way of being and being, a peculiar characteristic that distinguished itself from others and, therefore, there was no possibility for its generalization and or homogenization.

Unfortunately, some school teachers who were the locus of the research advocated in their interventions at the meetings that it was necessary to homogenize and unify their practices through procedures unique to learners. These are situations that reinforce with what Sacristán [23] stated when he indicates that the school with regard to the schooling functioning patterns tends to homogenize. The school has been, and is, a standardization space. However, it is different, each class presents itself culturally different, although it has some aspects in common, but when analyzed differently, there are differences that deserve to be repaired, respected, and considered. Indeed, any attempt to homogenize, treat students as equal or devoid of differences leads to school failure.

5. Final considerations

In this article, we tried to reflect on the access and permanence of students in General Secondary Education in Mozambique. For this, it was made a bibliographical review and (some) interviews with the teachers, managers, and students of the schools involved.

In fact, it was observed the changes and evolution of the Mozambican educational system over the last 40 years as a nation-state. The referred changes and evolution have been articulated with international educational policies, and reconstituting itself in each time and moment of its evolution.

The richness of the school context was also highlighted in terms of how teachers and students communicated, interpreted, and absorbed the official curriculum.

In this research, it was concluded that in Mozambique, children have access to school, although the persistent doubt is about the number of children who remain in it and those who were approved and about the number of those who were excluded before entering, and finally, those that are excluded within the educational process.

In reports presented by school managers during the balance meetings, although they reported on dropouts, we found that the causes for dropping out of school were not mentioned. This means that the school is not worried or prepared to know the reasons for dropping out.

We understand that in the view of this dropout situation, schools should open up more and more with a view to investigate their practices that may advance the abandonment of students in school. Schools should also be research sites about their activities and/or practices and not just teaching.

In a study carried out by Osório e Silva [16] discussing the dropout of the girl in school, the author pointed out that the biggest problem is that the causes of their withdrawal were not identified so that precise and active interventions could be made. The only thing that was

reported was that the girls' withdrawal was superior than the withdrawal of boys, which this study did not confirm.

According to what is the configuration of the schools surveyed, the students left school because they are not yet prepared to welcome and/or negotiate with their differences that spread in the same. Teachers and school administrators, on the whole, sought, tirelessly, to treat all students as equal, identical, or common.

The data produced by the two schools, beyond coinciding with the Thaphan's study [24], also coincide with that of Tura [25] when this argues that the school instituted a specific culture that has patterns of relationship and social coexistence, Their behavioral expectations, their rites, their discipline, their work and leisure hours, and their didactic-pedagogical procedures, an entire repertoire that is re-elaborated by the educational subjects in their daily life and constitutes the school culture of each teaching institution.

It was interesting in this research to relate social inequalities to school inequalities. In fact, data were produced about socioeconomic situation of students by both schools. According to the data produced by the two schools, it was noted that the students came from social classes considered to be low, with low socioeconomic conditions, and a low level of schooling. Their parents mostly developed low-income jobs, often only men were employed.

Although the school recognizes that it receives pupils with differences in the family provenance of students, as well as the academic and professional situation of parents and/or official representative, the culture and philosophy of the school were based on a context of schools with elite standards and the dominant culture, modeled on schools in the downtown with classes of about 45 students, schools equipped with libraries and laboratories, classrooms equipped with furniture, trained and experienced teachers, etc.

Thus, the curriculum in schools ignores the socioeconomic and cultural conditions of students, who are constantly permeating and characterizing schools. As a result of such practice, there is greater evasion and disapproval in schools, and as a measure, when the pupil failed more than twice, he/she was transferred to the evening course, as if he received the useless ones. In fact, the night course seemed to us to be seen as a period of re-socialization of students, in order to reconnect with the curriculum since this shift has been a subterfuge to receive students who have been disapproved.

As it turns out, students whose parents have a low level of schooling makes it difficult for the children to have a satisfactory situation in school, since within the family there are no people able to support them in their school activities or to have them as models or references. The existence of a family context characterized by a study support environment allows the students to have better school performance [22].

Another important issue, which is referenced by Dubet et al. [26], relates to school segregation and school inequalities. According to the authors, the inequalities among the students depend on the level of social and school segregation of the institutions. That is to say, the way the school receives, distributes, and treats the students in school can also be decisive in its insertion and in minimizing the differences of cultural capital.

One of the major problems of teaching and learning process that the teacher faces is the differences between the students, their styles, and learning rhythms [27] that in the attempt to homogenize of these characteristics ends up marginalizing many students in the classroom and concentrating only on those whose school culture approaches the familiar hegemonic culture. Therefore, the homogenization of students in the classroom, or even in school, in general, can be the main reason for the stigmatization of students labeled as disinterested, who do not dedicate themselves, do not do jobs, weak, among other categories.

It is in this context that Goodson [28] understands that each school occupies a certain position relative to the others, and the student population of each school also occupies a certain position in relation to the populations of students of other schools.

It was notorious that there was a greater influx of students in schools at the beginning of the school year, but throughout the year they abandoned them for different reasons, some of them referenced throughout this text. As suggested by Candau [17], if we want to strengthen the processes of school learning in the perspective of guaranteeing the right to education, we must affirm the urgency of working on issues related to the recognition and appreciation of cultural differences in school contexts.

In this order of ideas, based on the study of Ball [29], the school is not neutral in relation to the perpetuation of school differences and, therefore, to social differences. If the schools surveyed understood that all students were the same, they had the same learning conditions and, therefore, did not observe their differences, they ended up perpetuating and multiplying both social and school inequalities. That is, we cannot analyze the educational processes disconnected socioeconomic issues and the differences between the students.

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