



**Artigo original**

## **THE STATE OF GIRL'S EDUCATION AND VIOLENCE: THE CASE OF THE MANHIÇA DISTRICT**

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**ABSTRACT:** This article presents the results of a study carried out in Manhiça District, Maputo province, Mozambique in the framework of the 'Stop Violence against Girls in School' project. The study aimed, amongst others, at (i) eliciting accurate data and identification of current trends and patterns of violence, discrimination and inequalities in education and girl's lives in Manhiça District, and (ii) identifying perspectives and finding out experiences of girls, boys, communities and key stakeholders in relation to problems of violence, discrimination and gendered inequalities. Specifically, this article discusses the state of girl's education and violence taking into account gender aspects and inequalities. Fifteen primary schools were surveyed and key informants included pupils, teachers, head teachers, school management committee members, community leaders, women group leaders and District officials from education, health and police. The findings indicated that, while physical violence is more often perpetrated in schools, psychological and sexual violence happen more often in homes and villages, with girls as the main victims of violence in comparison to boys. The study concludes that violence and inequalities are still affecting girls and children seldom report cases of violence they suffer. Further conclusions indicate that, although the Government has been issuing relevant legislation to protect women and girls, their implementation is still wanting. The study recommends a holistic approach in contesting and reporting violence against girls in schools through improving dialogue mechanisms between community stakeholders, District officials and justice systems to ensure protection and support for girls. The study was carried out between June and July 2009 and the final report was prepared in January 2011.

**Keywords:** Girl's education, violence, gender inequalities.

## **A SITUAÇÃO DA EDUCAÇÃO DA RAPARIGA E VIOLÊNCIA: O CASO DO DISTRITO DA MANHIÇA**

**RESUMO:** Este artigo apresenta os resultados de um estudo realizado no Distrito da Manhiça, província de Maputo, Moçambique no âmbito do projecto 'Fim à Violência contra as raparigas na Escola'. O estudo tinha como objectivo, de entre outros (i) obtenção de dados precisos e identificação de tendências e padrões actuais de violência, discriminação e desigualdades na educação e na vida das raparigas do Distrito da Manhiça, e (ii) identificação de perspectivas e descoberta de experiências de raparigas, rapazes, comunidades e parceiros chave relativamente aos problemas de violência, discriminação e desigualdades de género. Especificamente, este artigo discute a situação da educação da rapariga e violência tendo em conta os aspectos de género e desigualdades. Quinze escolas primárias foram inquiridas e informantes chave incluindo alunos, professores, directores, membros da comissão de gestão da escola, líderes comunitários, mulheres líderes e funcionários distritais de saúde, educação e polícia. Os resultados indicaram que, embora a violência física seja a que frequentemente é mais praticada nas escolas, a violência psicológica e sexual acontecem com mais frequência nas casas e vilas, sendo as raparigas as principais vítimas de violência em comparação aos rapazes. O estudo concluiu que a violência e as desigualdades continuam afectando as raparigas e que as crianças raramente reportam casos de violência que sofrem. Conclusões adicionais indicam que, embora o Governo tenha estado a estabelecer legislação relevante para protecção das mulheres e das raparigas, a sua implementação ainda não é uma realidade. O estudo recomenda uma abordagem holística para contestar e reportar a violência contra as raparigas nas escolas através de mecanismos de diálogo nas comunidades parceiras, oficiais distritais e sistemas de justiça para garantir a protecção e apoio às raparigas. O estudo foi realizado entre Junho e Julho de 2009 e o relatório final concluído em Janeiro de 2011.

**Palavras-chave:** educação da rapariga, violência, desigualdades de género.

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## INTRODUCTION

The aims of the study was to gather accurate data and identify current trends and patterns of violence, discrimination and inequalities in education and girls' lives in Manhiça District, as well as identify perspectives and find out experiences of girls, boys, communities and key stakeholders in relation to violence, discrimination and gendered inequalities. The article emphasizes the state of girl's education and violence taking into account gender aspects and inequalities. In this regard, the literature review and theoretical discussion focus on aspects related to policies on gender and education, policy impact on education access and equity in Mozambique, and legal and judicial context on children's rights and violence.

### Gender and Access to Education

Nowadays, the issue of gender disparity in access to knowledge and education has been a great concern, particularly in developing countries (MUNGUAMBE and COSSA, 2010). Langa (2005) states that to benefit from education there is a need to build a society in a perspective that there are no inferior sexes or genders and more poor than others. Lindsey (2011) indicates that the issue of gender has been occupying a prominent place in scientific investigation and in the media reports attempting to reduce, in some extent, the confusion in the use of sex and gender concepts. The author refers that in Sociology both concepts are standardized referring to areas with different content. In this regard, sex refers to person's biological status and is typically categorized as male or female while gender represents social, cultural and psychological characteristics, linked to men and women and that defines them as male or female in a given social context (LINDSEY, 2011).

Concerning the access to education, girls worldwide have low access to education

than boys (Delors, 1996). For example, one young girl in each four does not go to school while for the boys is only one in each six. This situation is confirmed by the UNICEF which reveals that worldwide girls constituted more than 50% of the infant population with no access to school. More of them are girls that have already lost both parents due to infectious illness. For instance, more 15 millions of children aged 15 years have lost their parents to AIDS (UNICEF, 2008). This situation is associated with the poverty, gender discrimination, inequalities, violence, sexual abuse and exploration in which girls are subjected (UNICEF, 2010). Yet in this regard, UNICEF (2010) indicates that in developing countries girls face, in general, more difficulties than boys to enter school and remain in. School fees are additional barriers often not avoidable and when families are poor they have to decide between girls and boys whom to send to school with the girls always the last chosen.

Munguambe (2010) in her study about access and girls' school retention refers that 80% of the girls with low access to schooling in the world live in Sub-Saharan Africa, Southern and Eastern Asia, and Pacific. UNESCO (1995) indicates that about two third, that is, 565 millions of the illiterate adults worldwide, in 1995, were women, most of them from the developing regions of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Important to highlight is the fact that the existence of illiterate women in the world is a consequence of low access to schooling by girls (UNICEF, 2006).

In order to reverse the situation, in the last decades, movements favoring gender equality in education were created, namely, Convention of Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Pequim Platform, and the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs). From 150 millions of children, worldwide, aged six and eleven years old and currently out of

school, more than 90 millions are girls and in some areas the girls enrollment remains under 60%. For example, Mozambique stays amongst the six countries that still have a long way to go towards achievement of parity between girls and boys in accessing primary education.

Regarding the rights to education, the Mozambique Constitution (1990) establishes the education as a right for all citizens and defines the increase of the schooling rates in basic education as a priority in order to ensure that basic education is accessible for all. The MDGs report for Mozambique shows the government commitment in the education area regarding the aims and objectives established in the Millennium Declaration. Thus, the Ministry of Development and Planning in their policies for economic and social development acknowledges the importance of supporting the accomplishment of the complete primary education by boys and girls by 2015. For example, one of the objectives is to promote gender equality e empowering women and girls in the education sector (MPD, 2008). Yet, according to this Ministry's report, a growth should be seen in terms of the indicators of education coverage. For example, the gross rate of schooling in primary education in 2007 was 94.1% being 90.9% for girls. The completion rate for girls in public schools was 28.8%. The gender parity has registered an improvement from 0.83 in 2004 to 0.90 in 2011 with significant reduction in disparities among the provinces and districts with more lower and higher percentages of girls between 2004 and 2011 (MINED, 2006). Furthermore, the boy and girl rates and percentages of schooling show a relative increase from 45.3% in 2004 to 47.5% in 2011, although with the trend for a differentiation favouring boys. For instance, in 2011 girls represented 47.7% and 46.3% of the school effectiveness ( $n = 5,313.993$ ) in Lower and Upper Primary

Education, respectively (PEE, 2012 – 2016). It means that despite of this virtual increase and effort from the educational sectors to increase access to education, particularly for girls, a challenge still persists in terms of adopting more effective strategies aiming to reduce gender disparities in all educational levels as well as reducing the number of children without access to schooling.

### **Gender and Human Rights**

The relation between gender and human rights seems to be originated from a tautology because talking about human rights at global levels, men and women are all integrated, that is, there is no way of separating men and women when it comes to human rights (OSÓRIO, 2007). According to this author, human rights for women mean more than fighting against more explicit and malicious violence. She argues that human rights for women mean fighting against subtle violence embedded into the daily life and taking the form of archaic culture. In this regard, talking about human rights implies talking about the human right for a woman in a particular way because, according to different legal dispositions, human rights should be guaranteed effectively and equally for both man and woman.

Historically, the First Human Right Declaration was formally launched in 1787 during the French revolution and the equality of rights was recognized among the human beings but, in practice, women were excluded from their use and decision making (OSÓRIO, 2007). As a result, a “Universal Declaration for Human Rights (1948)” inaugurated, at international level, a set of deliberations towards the protection of women rights. Nowadays, it is seen as “omnipresent” specimen of the issues linked to the feminine universe in the United Nations, national public policies, non-governmental platforms, and in daily life (TELES and BRÁS, 2009).

The 1990 decade was determinant for the enlargement of the human rights for women as coincided with the need of reflecting on development taking into account social aspects. The human right conferences in Vienna (1993), Cairo (1994) and Beijing (1995) contributed to the systematization of the debates concerning the right for the minorities (OSÓRIO, 2007). These events were crucial to strengthen the discussion on human rights in the private sphere without ignoring the issue of family as it is here where the first identity are constructed and the individuals learn to grow from males and females to men and women (Idem). In Mozambique the principle of equality between men and women was firstly claimed during the liberation war in the 60s and 70s.

### Gender Violence

Various studies on gender, violence and education have been carried out at the national context, by WLSA – Mozambique, universities and other organizations with interest in gender, thus calling attention to inequalities within gender relations. A study carried out by WLSA – Mozambique on social and sexual identities of young people that attend first level of general secondary education and entitled “Socialization at school: family and school education and gender violence at school” was published by Osorio (2007). This author analyses the mechanisms employed by school either to brake (or impose) the dominant ideology in its gender dimension or under which formal education can promote, through its rituals and codes, a worldwide vision allowing to question the order and cultural dominant frameworks. Results of this and other studies revealed that the system of education in Mozambique has the role to incorporate knowledge and values that can cover the social needs or, at least, to cover what the dominant ideology considers as “fundamental knowledge”. In the

Mozambique education there is an autocratic relationship between teacher and pupils which does not allow, or makes it difficult, the intervention of young people as subject of education. This means that teachers are seen as the leading transmitters of the legitimate knowledge and not subject to debates and questioning (OSORIO, 2007). The school, portray this framework as an arena to reproduce and legitimate the dominant culture knowing that pedagogical practices have sufficient time span for the dominant “arbitrary culture”, as expressed by Bourdieu, to be learnt by pupils.

Another study also by WLSA – Mozambique on ways of living and perceptions of the victims of domestic violence analysed and discussed the means of violence in order to make it visible about what women understand as violent actions from the side of their husbands or partners and then identify ways of resisting and self-protection (ARTHUR and MEJIA, 2005). The study also seeks to explore the perception of women about their rights, as wives and mothers, the limits of their husbands or partners’ authority and the domestic violence targeted to them. The results show that violence is not an isolated episode, but a constant practice of physical and psychological violence that appears, in particular, through physical aggression in various forms and the corresponding consequences, humiliations and lack of respect. The reaction from the victims of domestic violence includes being submissive throughout until protection measures are taken such as reporting. According Arthur and Mejia (2005), reporting mechanism seems to trigger issue of violence, even knowing that the awareness rates for reporting actions are far behind from those of violence itself. In summary, the study clarifies the reasons and mechanisms adopted for reporting by women and the choices of either formal or informal centre and solving the conflict (through counselling centres, residential



authorities, Mozambican Women Association (OMM) offices and Associations of victims) depends on corporal and social variables like age, schooling and profession of the victim. In this particular study, empirical evidences showed that women aged between 20 and 55 are those victims of violence who seek assistance from the bureaus, and most of them are between 20 and 30 years. Women who seek for help through the bureaus are much younger than those who go to local structures like OMM or community/local judges.

Somehow, the choice of the reporting mechanism shows how women of different ages and different educational levels become aware of violence and evaluate the possibility to report to one or another structure. This choice can be based on women's expectations in relation to the way how these structures will mediate the case.

### **Policies on Gender and Education**

Similar to other countries, Mozambique has shown a commitment to attain specific goals in relation to the MDGs, which include the achievement of the universal primary education and the elimination of gender inequalities in the primary and secondary education by 2015. In addition, the country has been committed in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in all sectors of the society. In the education sector, it is intended to guarantee that the opportunities to learn are equal for all citizens.

Attaining universal primary education by 2015 means that 100% of children aged 5 years or more should be attending the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> levels of the primary school, that is grades 1 to 5 and 6 to 7, respectively. By signing up the MDGs the Mozambican Government is putting efforts in provision of education for all children and to reducing gender inequalities despite the prevalence of the differences. In fact, as started earlier, women are in a

disadvantageous position in relation to access to education.

The Strategic Plan for Education and Culture (2006-2011) and the Action Plan for Reduction of Absolute Poverty consider the expansion of access to education and the improvement of the quality of basic education as essential and vital to create and support new opportunities for poor people as well as for marginalized groups, including women. The PARPA II assures that all citizens – boys, girls, women and men – have the same opportunities to acquire basic knowledge and required ability to make their life better, as well as to ameliorate the life in their community and the country.

Furthermore, the general 2006 Gender Policy - *Ministério da Mulher e Acção Social* (MMAS) – Ministry of Woman and Social Action, (2008) supports the Strategic Plan for Education and Culture (2006-2011) in the extent that it promotes women's access to education and literacy including vocational, scientific and technological training. This action is taken to develop women's capacity for socio-professional integration, through the sensitization of the society to the need of reducing the domestic overload assigned to women and girls providing them with enough time for study and recreation (MOÇAMBIQUE. MMAS, 2008). In theory, it is clear that the Government has the intention to change society's mindset regarding women's rights and roles in the Mozambican society.

In order to assure gender equity, the Gender Policy and Implementation Strategy approved by the Ministry Council in 2006 defines some strategic actions to be implemented in the public and private institutions in several domains. The Policy seeks, among other issues, to bring about awareness for increased participation of woman in politics, in decision making bodies, and to promote her access to an influential positions in the society; to

develop a sensible policy to gender; to create gender unity; to guarantee respect of the guiding laws in relation to work and women's rights; to develop strategies of inclusion of themes regarding human rights for women; equal and equitable gender issues including prevention and elimination of HIV/AIDS pandemic within the education school curricula; to promote access and training to women in courses or areas, which are traditionally male dominated, and promote training and upgrading courses on gender issues (MOÇAMBIQUE. MMAS, 2008).

### **Policy Impact on Education Access and Equity in Mozambique**

The Mozambican Government is engaged in reducing gender disparities and promoting gender equity due to global commitments related to the MDGs. In this regard, the local education policy was changed to accommodate gender issues and it becomes necessary to accomplish gender equity in many aspects of the education system at all levels. Access, enrolment, attendance, retention and completion rates have improved over the past ten years and gender gaps have been reduced, although not eliminated entirely.

The expansion of access to education and the improvement of the quality of basic education have created vital opportunities for girls. This has also been accompanied by the introduction of gender issues in the curriculum, which also create room for teachers to address girls' education. However, the number of girls who enroll and complete the first level of primary education remains lower compared to the boys.

Data from the Ministry of Education showed that in 2007 the net enrolment rate in the 1<sup>st</sup> level of schooling (initial cycle of basic education), specifically from grades 1 to 5 the national average - nearly reached 95.5%, compared to 69.4% in 2003. This rate increased significantly from 2003 to

2007 and a slightly gender difference was observed between boys (97.1%) and girls (93.1%). This fact shows a significant reduction of gender disparities possibly due to the implementation of the Government policies and measures to achieve gender equity in education.

On the other hand, the Gender Parity Index (GPI) from gross enrolment rate does gradually increase between 1998 (0.73) and 2008 (0.91), suggesting that the gender gap is reducing over time. It means that gender parity in the context of access to primary education is close to be attained, and it also shows the extent of the efficacy of the education policies addressing this specific issue. Yet in this regard, official statistics showed that the GPI of the Gross completion rate, particularly for EP1, grows from 0.60 in 1998 to 0.81 in 2007. It shows that the gender gap regarding the completion of grade 5 decreased over time. In the same period the GPI from EP2 went down from 0.62 in 1998 to 0.60 in 2003, and then went up from 2003 to 0.75 in 2007. This suggests that the intent to attain primary universal education was affected as gender gap for this level rose during the first 6 years and dropped in the following 4 years. Overall though, completion rates and gender parity have improved considerably over the last 10 years.

### **Policy Impact on Education access and Equity in Manhica**

In the context of the Manhica District, there was an evolution of the school network and enrolments in the District. From 2004 to 2007 the EP1 school network decreased from 65 in 2004 to 45 in 2007 as the Complete Primary Schools (EPC) had risen in the same period from 22 to 42. The EPC offer the first 7 years of schooling and comprises both EP1 (Grades 1-5) and EP2 (grades 6-7) levels. Despite the reduction in number of EP1 schools operating in Manhica District, the school network improved slightly in that period from 89 to 93. Important to highlight here,

is that some EP1 schools were turned into EPC, meaning that they extended the grades offered from 5 to 7. This means that the number of EP1 schools dropped and that of EPC rose. Although the significant improvement of the existing school network and number of teachers, there is an insufficiency for the remaining levels of schooling in the District, namely technical and higher education (*Ministério de Administração Estatal* (MAE) – Ministry of State Administration, 2005).

Data from the Education Statistics indicate that the Manhiça primary education was served in 2008 by 87 public schools. The cycle 2 of primary education (EP2) comprised of grades 7 and 8 had a total of 32.529 pupils. The secondary education was offered in 5 schools (2 public and 3 community) with 5.337 pupils in ESG1 (Grades 8-10) and 655 pupils in ESG2 (Grades 11-12) during the same year (MOÇAMBIQUE. MANHIÇA, 2009). There are also 2 religious schools that offer primary and secondary education from Grades 1 to 10.

Regarding the literacy, in the Manhiça District more than half (58%) of the population is illiterate. The female population illiteracy rate is greater (68%) than male population (45%). Of about 55,286 inhabitants in school age, 37,187 are women who never attended school. A gender difference in school attendance is also apparent. In fact, from 22,080 inhabitants, only 9,854 women go to school, and the remaining 12,226 are men (MAE, 2005). Primary age girls fare better: of children aged 10-14 years attending school 52% are female. The figure reflects a later school entrance from the majority of the rural children, particularly girls.

### **Legal and Judicial Context on Children's Rights and Violence**

In light of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Mozambican Government engaged the

commitment to protect children against all forms of violence, exploitation and abuse, in order to guarantee a healthy life for all Mozambican girls and boys (UNICEF, 2006). In this context, the Mozambique Government agreed, amongst others: (i) to adopt appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures against all patterns of physical or mental violence, sexual violence, harm or cruelty, abandoned or negligent treatment, bad treating or exploitation, while the child been under parents' custody, legal representative or any other person in charge of the child; and (ii) to recognize children's right to be educated, making primary education compulsory and gratuitously available for all (PEE, 2012-2016).

Despite the absence of specific law addressing the cases of Violence Against Girls in Schools (VAGS), there are some instruments dealing with similar cases, but with some constraints. For instance, the Dispatch N°39/GM/2003 (MOÇAMBIQUE. MINED, 2003), the Teacher Statutes, the Code of Professional Conduct of Mozambican Teachers to mention some (ONP, s/d), the Law of Domestic Violence Against Woman, and the Law for Promotion and Protection of Children's Rights.

The need to protect children against all patterns of violence find echo in the Basic Education General Regulation (MOÇAMBIQUE. MEC, 2008) as well as in the Teachers Code of Conduct, mentioned earlier. In addition, the Teacher Statutes comprise terms that with resort to analogy may be accommodated within the subject under consideration. Indeed the Basic Education General Regulation (2008) points out a range of teachers obligation in relation to their peers, hierarchic superiors, pupils, administrative staff, assistants and parents (MEC, 2008) which includes, among other, respect and non violence. Measures that should be

taken as regarding to cases of pregnancy and sexual harassment in schools are emphasized in the Dispatch N°39/GM/2003. Such procedures apply both to the causers of the pregnancy and perpetrators of sexual harassment, as well as to the pregnant girls attending day shift.

## METHODOLOGY

As a theoretical perspective, the methodology section of this study begins by addressing the issue of gender and violence as discussed in the literature worldwide. The section ends by presenting the methodological approach of the study and the way used to collect and analysing data.

Gender and violence in schools as a field of research is recent. Therefore, literature on this issue is limited and its focus has been on sexual harassment and abuse (LEACH and HUMPHREYS, 2007). As a result, studies conducted in Mozambique in this regard are scarce. For these authors, the consciousness of the existence of gender violence in schools in countries of the South, the so-called developing countries, arose from the convergence of a number of dissimilar anxieties in gender and development, and are linked to the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) held in Thailand in 1990. Concerns on girls' access to formal education accompanied by the vigorous message that schooling leads to positive social and economic outcomes were expressed in this conference. Such concerns, initially, masked the truth that schools might strengthen gender inequalities and represent unsafe settings for students. Therefore, as Leach and Humphreys (2007) point out, from mid-1990, several studies (HALLAM, 1994; GORDON, 1995; ODAGA AND HENEVELD, 1995) aiming to investigate girls' low participation in education in Sub-Saharan Africa were conducted and brought disquieting findings. Male teachers sexually harassed girls; female and male

teachers had negative attitudes towards girls, including verbal and physical abuse in the context of the classroom<sup>1</sup>.

Cultural practices which include parental preference for a wife and mother role for their daughters have pervasive influence on the situation of girls (MUIRU and MUKURIA, 2005; OXENHAM, 2008), putting them in a disadvantage position when compared to boys. In fact, in many societies, including Mozambique, poor families prefer to send their sons to school instead of their daughters. While these cultural practices reinforce the power of boys, who are educated to subject girls, they weaken even more the fragile power of girls. In the context of school, it will not be surprising that boys become perpetrators of violence against girls, as also described by Leach and Humphreys (2007) and in the *Encyclopaedia of School Crime and Violence* (2011). Accordingly, both male students and teachers are perpetrators of sexual abuse and or harassment of female students.

Brooks and Higson-Smith (2004) describe a study conducted by a Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) in South Africa aiming to identify sexual abuse in children. The study focused on one primary school and one high school in four settings with socio-cultural differences, namely a former white urban suburb in Gauteng, a black urban township in Gauteng, a black rural settlement in KwaZulu-Natal, and a coloured township in the Cape Flats. The findings suggest that gender violence varied significantly across the eight schools involved in the study. Some schools almost did not have cases of gender violence. Some had widespread cases of this phenomenon. In these schools, the most common forms of violence were verbal and physical bullying of girls and beating against girls from

<sup>1</sup> For ethical issues names of schools are coded.



grade 1 to high school. Sexual harassment in the form of sexual comments and threats, touching and kissing were noticed as early as amongst girls in grades 3 and 4.

With regards to location of violence, girls were vulnerable to verbal sexual harassment, assaults, hitting and rape in their way from and to school. Furthermore, while girls in primary schools were more vulnerable to rape in their communities than at school, girls in high school appeared to be vulnerable both at school and in their communities.

Since violence against girls is not a phenomenon confined to school as mentioned earlier, there is a need for tackling it in a collaborative way, involving all social actors in and around school. In light of this, Cowie and Jennifer (2007) suggest the whole-school community approach to address violence in schools. In short, their approach tackles violence in schools as a 'collective challenge'. It involves the school community, including children and young people, teachers, school nurses, school management, non-teaching staff members, parents, governors, the local community and external organisations. In this study, violence and gender are conceived as interconnected terms, given that "all violence is gendered" (LEASH and HUMPHREYS, 2007, p. 108). In light of this situation, no attempt to define gender and violence separately will be taken. Rather, the terms are synthesised in the phrase 'gender violence'. The concept entails different types of violence that take place in school and in the community including physical, verbal, psychological, emotional as well as sexual violence. It also encompasses the fear of violence, both between female and males as well as among females or among males" (LEASH & HUMPHREYS, *ibidem*).

For this particular study, a mixed methodological approach of quantitative and qualitative methods was used to

provide in-depth data about violence against girls and generate findings which can be measurable and helpful in ensuring rigorous, credible and persuasive research. A number of diversified data sources were involved in the study, namely girls and boys in and out of schools, teachers, head teachers and School Management Committee (SMC) members, parents and community members.

The instruments used to gather data for this study are (i) pupils' quantitative instrument; (ii) pupils' qualitative interview; (iii) girls' focus group discussion; (iv) teachers and head teacher's survey; (v) head teacher's qualitative interview; (vi) school records instrument; (vii) school management committee and school board interview; (viii) parents focus group discussion; and (ix) interviews with community leader, women's group leader, district education officer, district health officer and police. Apart from the instruments (ii) and (iii), all other were administered in all 15 schools.

In addition, four schools in different communities in the district were selected for additional qualitative data collection using in-depth qualitative interviews and focus group discussions with girls and boys in school, and with girls who were out of school. These communities were selected to reflect demographic variations within the project area and were interviewed. In order to ensure that younger as well as older children were included, three age cohorts were included: 8 -10 years, 11-13 years and 14 -17 years. Sampling bias was reduced through randomly selecting children for inclusion using class registers. A total of 536 pupils (356 girls and 180 boys), 15 head teachers and 90 teachers, and 12 community leaders, 75 parents and 3 District officials were informants during the baseline study.

Descriptive statistics using SPSS were used to analyse quantitative data. The qualitative analysis examined variability within each group, looking for example at

why two girls might have very different perspectives. The analysis also considered how responses varied from school to school, and how socioeconomic characteristics of a school or community might influence the responses. As well as being analysed independently, the qualitative and quantitative data were also looked at together. For example, where quantitative findings raised questions, these were investigated further in the qualitative analysis, and the qualitative data was used to help understand and explain emerging patterns in the quantitative data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses the findings of the study focusing on the following topics: policy and legislative context; gender and education; gendered patterns of violence and contesting violence.

### Legislation and Policy Framework at School Level

At school level, the Basic Education General Regulation (MOÇAMBIQUE. MEC, 2008) and Teacher's Code of Conduct lay out some policies relating to violence. Teachers are banned from applying corporal punishment and taking advantage of their position of authority in any way and have a duty to respect the dignity of pupils. Sanctions include suspension of teacher and investigation. Despite wide dissemination of this Code the knowledge amongst pupils is low.

Half of schools in the study claimed to have some written procedures on reporting abuse. However, none presented one and none had a specific policy addressing violence against girls in schools. Probably they were referring to the Teachers' Code of Conduct. Teachers' knowledge on policies or laws at national level is extremely low, while one in five knew of a school level policy. Approximately 40% of schools took action on teacher and pupil

conduct policies; however such policies were characterized as ineffective in most schools. Similarly, training teachers in gender, violence and life skills was reported in some schools but also characterized as ineffective.

Research participants talked widely about teenage pregnancy and the majority blamed girls for allowing such a situation. As an illustration, a Women Group Leader from CHIC said: *"Girls disrespect teachers, they dress up badly, and we are often called to address issues such as these"*. A parent from CHIC, in a focal group discussion, said: *"they [girls] are the problem because they do not listen to what their parents and teachers say. Girls often get pregnant in tender age and they end up dropping out of school"*.

Amazingly, the education policy also reinforces this blaming of girls for pregnancy as it accepts the removal of the pregnant girl from school and her transfer to night shift. However, in certain locals, there is no availability of night schools, and where there is one, girls are compelled to stay at home for safety reasons. Although school councils readmit girls to school, seldom it happens. But the District Education Officer in Manhiça encourages readmission of girls to school.

Attitudes within schools and communities clearly influence implementation of policies. Attitudes towards gender and violence encompass those about sexual abuse perpetrated by teachers and the violence among girls and boys at school. As to sexual abuse, approximately half of pupils and teachers agree that the teachers who have/had sexual intercourse with pupils should be dismissed and forbidden to ever teach again. 53% of the pupil, followed by 52.3% of female teachers and 40.4% of male teachers agree with this statement. Pupils in their majority disagree that the girls be blamed for the sexual harassment they are subject to by the teachers, older man, and other boys.

Female pupils and female teachers showed higher level of agreement (75.2% and 79.5% respectively) when compared to the male positions: 60.7% of pupils and 68.1% of teachers.

The data on acts of violence between boyfriends and girlfriends showed that the majority of both pupils and teachers disagree that boys and girls sometimes need to beat their boy/girlfriend for bad behaviour, as a gesture of loving him/her. Nevertheless, in beating their girlfriends, boys showed lower level of agreement (69.4%) when compared to the others, whose position is above 80%, while teachers, mostly females, showed higher levels of disagreement than pupils. These results suggest mixture and complexity of attitudes to gender and violence. In general, it is visible the effect of gender and age in the responses: girls tend to reflect more pro-girls rights attitudes than boys, and the teachers hold more positive views than children. Probably the teachers are aware of stipulations in law and in their teacher's Codes of Conduct about acceptable behaviour and respond accordingly.

### **Gender and Education**

Four main aspects were dealt with regarding gender and education namely (i) gender patterns of enrolment, completion and achievement, (ii) problems that boys and girls face in schools, (iii) children perceptions on their attainment and (iv) school management and teacher profile.

In relation to enrolment, completion and achievement, overall the data collected corresponds with the national picture of girls having similar access and outcomes at school as boys. Girls' enrolment is slightly below boys, and girls' enrolment drops more than boys' in many schools as they progress through primary education. Approximately one in ten girls and boys repeated and 7% of girls drop out in 2008 – slightly less than boys, whilst less than

the government mandate of 85-90% progression rate was realized in the study schools. There is approximate gender parity in attainment, with girls slightly outperforming boys at Grade 7 (74% passing compared to 72% of boys). Although the overall data suggests gender parity there was a large amount of variation between schools, especially in enrolment, repetition and attainment, with girls having a much bigger disadvantage in some schools. Despite this seemingly positive situation for girls there are many barriers to education that girls face. Girls drop out primarily because of pregnancy and family expectations of fulfilling household chores and working in the fields or looking after animals. Many boys drop out to fulfill expectations around bringing income into the family, through agricultural work or working in the local sugar cane industry or in South Africa.

Regarding problems that children face in schools, corporal punishment was seen by both girls (out of school) and boys (at school) as a reasons why they do not attend. School chores were also highlighted as a problem by children - part of everyday life but sometimes also used as punishments. These tended to fall along traditional gendered lines, with girls given more cleaning tasks. School sanitation facilities are insufficient (between 103 and 666 pupils per toilet). It is not clear whether there are national standards in Mozambique but Kenya government guidelines indicate that more than 50 students per toilet is deemed insufficient and over 100 is hazardous. The distance between school and home and associated security concerns, and indiscipline at school were also mentioned by many.

Children perceptions on their attainment tend to run along gendered lines, at least for two subject areas: girls better at reading and writing and boys at more technological or scientific subjects. Two reasons were pointed for this difference: the perception

that the boys are smarter and make good drawings, and the fact that the girls read well and have a good handwriting. Mathematics is the only subject with a roughly even split in opinion.

In terms of school management the school boards reported taking action to encourage higher enrolment, attendance and attainment of girls. It is common for school management to consider parents as the main barriers between girls and their education (as well as girls themselves) and some schools have reported taking action. This includes following up with families of non attending girls and discussing the importance of education, how to give them more time to study and the need to control their behavior (presumably in relation to sexual activity). Concerning teacher profile there are slightly more male than female teachers in the school, and the gender gap is higher in rural areas. However, female teachers are slightly better qualified than males. Pupil teacher ratios are also high at 51, and are higher in the more remote schools.

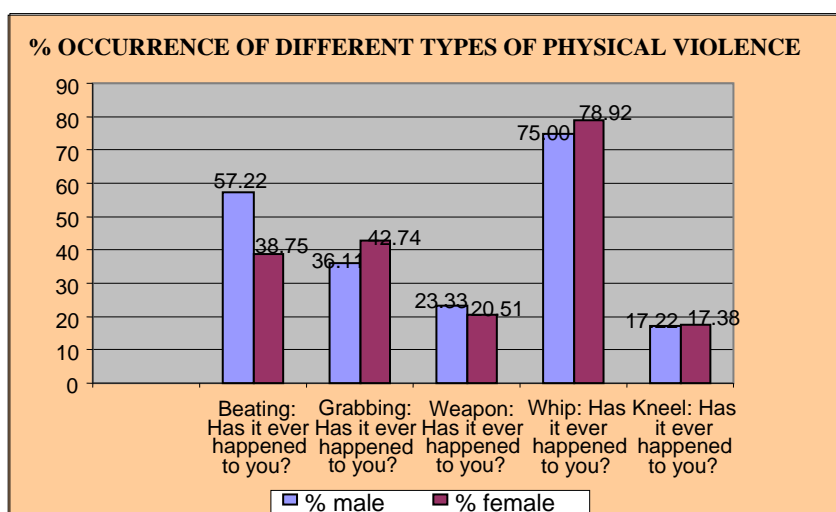
### Gendered Patterns of Violence

Despite the existing legislation and policy frameworks in education, wide inequalities

and gender disparities persist in Manhiça, with girls experiencing multiple forms of violence that increase with age. Types of violence like whipping, insults and threats, unwanted touching on private parts and forced sex are more common on 14-17 years old than for 8-10 year olds. The study showed that pupils are experiencing physical, sexual and psychological violence both at home and in schools.

### PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

According to the data, the violence which happens most frequently among girls and boys is whipping (use a stick, a ruler, stones, knives, etc), experienced by 78.92% of girls and 75.00% of boys. Beating (fighting, punching, kicking, or slapping including attack with an object) is the second most frequent type of physical violence among girls and boys with a percentage of 38.75% for girls and 57.22% for boys. Grabbing (pinching, twisting ear lobes, or pulling hair) comes third with a percentage of 42.74% reported by girls against 36.11% reported by boys. Overall, girls appear to be more vulnerable to whipping and grabbing, whereas boys are more vulnerable to beating. The conclusion is that pupils endure various forms of physical violence as shown in the Figure 1.



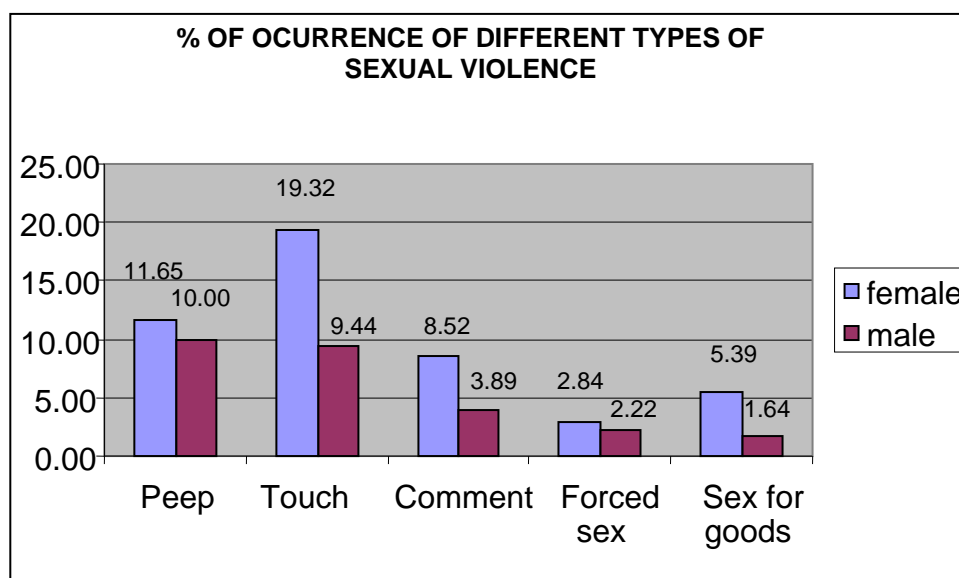
**Figure 1: Proportion of girls and boys who experienced physical violence by type**



## SEXUAL VIOLENCE

According to the data it can be seen that touching is the most reported type of sexual violence amongst pupils of both sexes followed by peeping. Forced sex is the least committed type of violence reported. Overall, girls appear to be more vulnerable to all forms of sexual violence, namely peeping, touching, sexual comment, forced sex and sex for goods as shown in the figure 2 below. Data indicate that sexual violence in its various forms occurs a little throughout all the schools

and communities in Manhica. On the question about, whether girls and boys already experienced sexual violence; it was shown that the violence which happens most frequently among girls and boys is touching expressed by 19.3% for girls and 9.4% for boys, and peeping expressed by 11.6% for girls and 10.0% for boys respectively. Remarkably, these figures highlight that girls appear to be highly vulnerable to touching than boys, and the variation between girls and boys in regard to peeping is smaller (Fig. 2).



**Figure 2: Proportion of girls and boys who experienced sexual violence by type**

## PSYCHOLOGICAL VIOLENCE

According to the pupils' responses the most frequently reported psychological violence was insults (39.44% for boys and 31.53% for girls) and followed by threats (15% for boys and 12.78% for girls) and lastly the letters of intimidation, which affected girls more often than boys. This is not surprising because insults normally happen in a moment of dissatisfaction from one person to another and culturally this type of violence is not identified as such. As for the letters of intimidation they are

unusual in the context of the research site and rarely are regarded as acts of violence.

An analysis of these types of violence suggests that perceptions about physical punishments vary according to the position each group occupies in school and in the community. Although corporal punishment has been banned in schools, in the accounts of girls and boys, forms of punishment, including whipping and being forced to kneel, are routine practices in schools, with male teachers the main perpetrators. This however is disputed in the accounts of teachers, head teachers and school

management committees, who frequently claimed that violence does not happen in school, or if it does, then it is between pupils and associated with their unruly, undisciplined behavior. The majority of teachers claimed that these forms of corporal punishment are unacceptable. It seems likely that teachers are aware that these practices are no longer officially sanctioned, but with class sizes often over 50 and poorly resourced classrooms, they may lack the capacity to manage pupil behavior in non-violent ways. Although they are aware that there is a Teacher Code of Practice, the findings suggest that teachers lack the knowledge about what this means, and so they may resort to tried and tested means of discipline. Parents too support these means of disciplining their children. Children's views on corporal punishment seem to be mixed, with it being seen more acceptable to whip boys than girls in school. Many children believe that the teachers have the right to whip them so they may learn.

While schools are the key site for these forms of violence, physical violence also takes place at home, in the community and on the journey to and from school, with acts committed by family members, other children and sometimes other members of the community. Psychological violence, including insults and threats, is also commonplace in homes and villages. Many community stakeholders see physical punishments as part of their role as custodians of tradition and good customs and at the same time protectors of the children.

While physical violence is more often perpetrated in schools, sexual violence happens more often in the home or village. One in five girls experienced unwanted touching of breasts/buttocks; 1 in 20 girls have been forced to have sex, usually by male family members or boyfriends. A similar proportion of girls have exchanged sex for goods, most often involving men in

the community. We suspect that these figures understate the extent of sexual violence, since there seemed to be reluctance by children to talk about such violence, or sometimes to recognize these practices as a violation. Where head teachers talked about these forms of violence, they claimed that such incidents were perpetrated by people from outside school.

Girls' roles in these practices are viewed with ambivalence. By one side, community stakeholders condemned the acts of sexual violence perpetrated by adult men against girls, resulting in early pregnancies and also expressed concern about the vulnerability of girls to HIV/AIDS transmission through sex with men who work in South African mines. But by other side they often blamed the girls by viewing them as causing this type of violence, as they do not listen or follow the elder advice. In a context of socio-economic hardship, girls are sometimes expected to accept money or material goods from older men and to chores for teachers as an inviting to sexual acts that follow. Some adults declared that the situation has improved with increasing school enrolment leading to a reduction in pregnancies in girls of school age.

In the survey data, boys also reported experiencing sexual violence, though less frequently than girls as this finding are difficult to interpret, as they were not spoken about in the qualitative interviews or by adults.

### **Contesting Violence**

The data show that, in general, girls hardly contest violence, due to lack of efficient mechanisms and of laws and procedures, among other reasons. Girls and boys rarely report violence and when they do so they talk with family members (mothers and aunts). Sometimes they talk with their confidants (neighbors and friends). When the perpetrators are relatives, particularly

the parents, they report the case to other relatives. However, very seldom is further action taken.

Differently of adults, who mentioned official channels for addressing violence at school, community and district level, children in general were not aware of these systems of support and redress. Adults frequently lacked knowledge of laws and procedures. Although at the Police station legal mechanisms are made available to assist victims of violence, the Police is rarely involved in seeking solutions to cases of violence against girls. Frequently families resolve the cases locally since the offenders pay a fine or agree to marry the girls in cases of pregnancy. Only when there is no agreement between the families of both the offender and the offended the case is reported to district authorities.

Teachers do not deal successfully with violence since they also react with violence whipping and beating girls. Human organizations (Actionaid included) have also provided support. Health systems of girls' support practically do not exist and there is no therapeutic support to tackle emotional consequences of victims.

Amongst the pupils who responded to the question on what they did following an experience of violence, a large number said that they did nothing. A minority of both girls and boys, however, reported to an adult family member, usually a female. A small number of children fought back, told them to stop or threatened to report. Very few children told their teachers. The table bellow is illustrative of girl's lack of action to report cases of violence they are subject to (Table 1).

**Table 1 - Actions taken by girls in each case of physical violence**

Action taken by pupils – girls	Beating		Grabbing		Weapon		Whipping		Kneeling	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Did nothing	105	77.2	130	86.7	64	88.9	261	94.2	57	93.4
Fought back/told them to stop/threatened to report	9	6.6	12	8.0	4	5.6	17	6.1	5	8.2
Told adult family member (f)	30	22.1	30	20.0	19	26.4	67	24.2	16	26.2
Told adult family member (m)	1	0.7	2	1.3	2	2.8	5	1.8	1	1.6
Told a friend/fellow pupil	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.4	1	1.6
Told teacher, head, SMC member (f)	2	1.5	1	0.7	1	1.4	1	0.7	0	0.0
Told teacher, head, SMC member (m)	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0
Other action	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

As to the question on what happened following their actions, only a very small number of girls and boys responded. In most cases they said either that nothing happened or that they did not know, or remember. The qualitative interviews made it clear that pupils rarely report cases of violence for two main reasons. The first one is: they conceive the violence mainly perpetrated by teachers against them as something normal in the context of teaching and learning, or believe that this

is a warning required from the teachers, or even that it is an obligation. The following excerpts are elucidative: *"No, because it is normal"* (14 year old boy); *"No, because I never find the need, the teacher beats me so that I can pay attention and learn"* (10 year old girl); and *"I would not tell anyone because the teacher has the right to beat me"* (13 year old girl).

The second reason has to do with the feeling of fear that takes possession of the

pupils when it comes to reporting such cases, since there is the possibility of being accused of inciting the violence they are victims of. In their words, *“No, because of fear”* (11 year old girl); *“No, because they are going to say that I am the one who have caused it”* (10 year old girl) and *“If he was to beat me again I would not tell anyone”* (15 year old boy).

In Manhiça, there were some activities for community and school empowerment to tackle violence. Local associations, for example, AMUDEIA, in partnership with some NGOs such as Action Aid Mozambique developed capacity building activities. Thus, some of the leaders of the group of women as well as community leaders, school directors and teachers were trained and qualified in the field of physical, psychological and sexual violence - ex. psycho-social skills for dealing with children who have been victims of violence. Consequently, in some schools, were founded Gender Units (e.g. schools 3FEV, TIM, MIL) and girls' clubs (e.g. in RIB, PAL and CHIB). One in ten girls is member of a girls' club, and participates equally in class and as prefect. These clubs join in leisure time, some girls and boys to, among other issues, discuss issues that affect them as cases of violence, and seek solutions together.

The treatment of cases of reported violence varies according to the actors involved and the nature or type. The most common action is verbal reprimand of both pupils and teachers. The penalties for the perpetrators of violence against children vary by the type of violence occurred. In the case of sexual violence are heavier than those applied to other types of violence, including physical and psychological violence.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In relation to legislation and policy framework at school level, the study

results showed that part of the schools claimed to have written procedures on reporting abuse, despite none of the school showed physical evidences of any specific policy addressing violence against girls in schools.

Concerning gender and education, girls have similar access and outcomes at school as boys. However, girls' enrolment is slightly below boys, and as they progress through primary education girls drops more than boys in many project schools. Many barriers are imposed to girls' education, specifically, pregnancy and family expectations of fulfilling household chores and working in the fields or looking after animals.

In terms of violence, corporal punishment was seen by both girls (out of school) and boys (at school) as a reasons why they do not attend school. Girls experience multiple forms of violence, and the amount of violence experienced increase with age. The kind of physical violence that happens most frequently among girls and boys is whipping. Overall, girls appear to be more vulnerable to all forms of sexual violence, namely peeping, touching, sexual comment, forced sex and sex for goods.

These forms of physical, sexual and psychological violence, take place mainly at school, home, in the community and on the journey to and from school, with acts committed by family members, other children and sometimes other members of the community. While physical violence is more often perpetrated in schools, sexual violence happens more often in the home or village.

The study showed also that, in general, girls hardly contest violence, due to lack of efficient mechanisms, laws and procedures dealing with this matter. Despite the adults claiming on official channels for addressing violence at school, community and district level, children were not aware of these systems of support and redress.



Some recommendations are:

- Advocate to the Government for more effective implementation of laws and regulations, which protect the girl against violence.
- Support SMCs, teachers and children in the development of internal school policies addressing issues on violence in school, including the establishment or enhancement of Girls Clubs and Gender Units.
- Work with the Ministry of Education, teacher training institutions and schools in designing and implementing a syllabus which addresses matters of interpersonal relationships, including human rights, inequalities, sexuality, sexual and reproductive health, and conflict resolution.

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