

Dossier: “Times of education and celebration: stories and lessons on independence, civilization and nation in America, Europe, and Africa”<sup>1</sup>

***The construction of Mozambican colonial and postcolonial identity through schooling projects: from 1930 to 1990***<sup>2 3 4 5</sup>

***A construção da identidade moçambicana colonial e pós-colonial através de projetos de escolarização: desde 1930 até 1990***

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**Abstract**

The building of identity through primary schooling projects in colonial (1930-1974) and postcolonial (1975-1990) Mozambique is at the center of the debate of this text, which has as its problem the fact that admission, schooling, completion, and dropout in both periods have been below expectations, which poses the challenge of identifying the factors and mechanisms of this trend and reflections to understand this phenomenon. The goal is to understand schooling in the face of antagonistic educational projects. On the one hand, the colonial one through which colonial political and administrative machine intended to civilize, dominate, and exploit the natives. On the other, the post-independence Mozambican educational project through which intended to form the "new man." Our methodological strategy was the literature review and analysis of the legislation, statistics, and content of Tempo Magazine. Our findings show that political and economic factors, both in the colonial and postcolonial periods, undermined efforts to universalize education. Furthermore, both projects intended to educate Mozambicans according to their objectives and principles, with the libertarian mindset prevailing over that of domination and alienation.

**Keywords:** schooling, educational project, Mozambique

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## **Resumo**

*A construção da identidade através de projetos de escolarização primária em Moçambique colonial (de 1930 a 1974) e pós-colonial (de 1975 a 1990) está no centro de debate deste texto, que tem como problema o fato de as taxas de admissão, escolarização, conclusão e evasão escolar, em ambos os períodos, terem estado abaixo das expectativas, o que apresenta o desafio de identificar os fatores e os mecanismos desta tendência e de refletir para entender este fenômeno. O objetivo é compreender a escolarização, diante de projetos educativos antagônicos: por um lado, o colonial, através do qual a máquina política e administrativa colonial pretendia civilizar, dominar e explorar os nativos; por outro, o projeto educativo moçambicano pós-independência, por meio do qual se pretendia formar o "homem novo". Em termos metodológicos, a revisão bibliográfica, a análise da legislação, as estatísticas e os conteúdos da Revista Tempo constituíram a base de sustentação deste texto. Os principais achados evidenciam: primeiro, que fatores políticos e econômicos, tanto no período colonial, assim como no pós-colonial, comprometeram os esforços de universalização do ensino; segundo, que os dois projetos pretendiam formar os moçambicanos de acordo com os seus objetivos e princípios, tendo prevalecido a mentalidade libertária sobre a de dominação e alienação.*

**Palavras-chave:** escolarização, projeto educativo, Moçambique

## **Introduction**

One of the most significant challenges of governments is implementing fairer, more efficient, and more relevant educational policies. The increasing bet on quality education is grounded on the belief that the investment in human capital would lead to economic growth and other intangible benefits that this formation would provide individuals and society. The optimistic view of education as an equalizer of opportunities for individuals from different classes and social strata attracted some education theoreticians. They believed that school should undo social inequalities, transforming itself into a lever for progress and well-being – people would simply need the heart and talent to study.

In Mozambique, the socialist project to form the "new man" started right after the independence in 1975. The intention was to build a nation in which access to public education

would create equal opportunities for the social mobility of all. However, despite the investments in primary education, aiming to universalize this level, the rates of admission, schooling, graduation, and dropout show that this goal was not reached until 1990. We intend to contribute to this challenge by helping to understand the system's evolution from the colonial period to post-independence. In this context, this text aims to understand the behavior of primary school students and teachers in these two periods and identify possible factors associated with school flow from 1930 until 1990.

Aiming to answer the problem posed, we seek to answer the following questions: What was the behavior of primary school students and teachers between 1930 and 1990? Which factors were responsible for the tendencies in the number of primary school students and teachers between 1930 and 1990?

In 1930, legislation was approved. It established a discriminatory statute of natives' schooling, called "indigenous." We chose the period between 1975 and 1990 because it was a moment of post-independence euphoria, in which, through a socialist project, Mozambican authorities wanted to build a nation based on equality and equity of opportunities in all sectors, including education, through which all Mozambicans would reach the participation needed in the project of nation building.

In methodological terms, the text has a historical characteristic, using different data to answer the research questions. The intention is to triangulate data using different sources to approach the research problem from different perspectives. Historical research can help evaluate the mistakes and successes of the past to improve the present and project the future. In this sense, we used as research sources the educational bibliography, legislation, statistics, and texts from the magazine *Tempo*, collected in archives in Maputo, Mozambique. The legislation is a source for researchers and education policy-makers because it offers a vision of the ideas and values forged in the past and present, projected toward the future. In its turn, educational statistics provide elements subjected to historical analysis and can be used as a methodological instrument to classify, quantify, and decipher realities. The magazine *Tempo* follows Mozambican schooling and can be considered an analytical agency of the system's problems and a guiding element of Mozambican school's educational thought and organization.

## **Educate to civilize, dominate, and explore: colonial schooling initiatives in Mozambique.**

According to the chronology of more notable milestones in education, the first initiatives of building a public education system took place around seven centuries after the arrival of Islam in the territory now known as Mozambique, – precisely in 1613, when the first elementary school was created by the Jesuits in the Island of Mozambique – in the province of Nampula – in the North region. Focused on teaching catechism, reading, writing, and arithmetic to the "indigenous" population, the school was still working in 1773 (Governo de Moçambique, 1930). In 1766, the General-governor Baltasar Pereira do Lago, named by the Marquis of Pombal for the eastern coast of Africa, between 1765-1779, founded another public school in the Island of Mozambique, in the northern region of the colony. Contrary to the first, this school was for the children of the Portuguese who could not move to Goa or Lisbon to learn to read and write. Despite this first information, other documents point out that the first class of elementary education was established in the *Casa Conventual* (Convent House) of S. Domingos on the Island of Mozambique, in 1799, by order of General-governor Francisco Guedes de Carvalho e Meneses. The implementation of this school aimed to solve the lack of instruction among the administrative personnel, mainly the 'ordinary judges' also serving to 'occupy the youngsters', removing them from their inertia and idleness (Madeira, 2007, p.336). Around two decades later – in 1818 – other elementary schools were opened in Quelimane and the Island of Ibo, in Mozambique's center and northern regions, respectively.

As the primary source of information and formation of the new generations, the school model corresponds to a concept that emerged in the Middle Ages and the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was debated by history, pedagogy, and sociology specialists, such as Émile Durkheim. He understood “education” as a way through which society prepares the existence condition of its members – through generations – imprinting the adults’ values in the children, using resources that he calls physical, intellectual, and moral states demanded by the political society, depending on the child’s environment. That is, “education is the socialization of children” (Durkheim, 1972, p.10). Therefore, it should be submitted to the

influence of the State that, as an inspector or a judge, should protect and teach principles that implicitly and explicitly are common to all in school.

In the origin of the school model and its structure are different factors, from religious, social, political, or pedagogical nature. As the school model affirms itself, the cognitive dimension of people's formation tends to overlap, reinforcing learning as the main formative process. Justino Magalhães (1994), referring to a chronology of the school phenomenon used in western societies considered developed, typifies it in the following way: "an education without school; an education for school; an education outside school." In the last three centuries, we have seen an "expansion and universalization of school processes" (p.9). Thus, formation (education) got separated from information and learning (instruction), the physical spaces became more diverse, differentiated, and the agents more specialized, introducing changes in the pedagogical network

The schooling movement developed under the constant tension between the clericalization and nationalization of society, with some types of knowledge (of religious nature) excluding certain population strata (Magalhães, 1994). In the transition from the Middle Ages to the modern era, the school was a factor of social mobility and subordination of other educational models. The definition of childhood and the creation of teenagehood helped establish their own spaces and times and progressively develop a professional class with specific theoretical-practical codes and technologies with legal and professional recognition (Magalhães, 1994). Schools verticalized the processes of education and instruction with their institutionalization and obligatoriness.

School, in its current shape, emerged with the industrial society and the establishment of the national state, superseding the education held in the families and Church. It grew based on the belief in progress, benefitting from the education of men and the broadening of culture (Libâneo et al., 2012, p.237). The development of the school institutional device as a closed space is discussed by Varela and Alvarez-Uria (1991) in "*Maquinaria Escolar*." They stated that the universality and eternity of School are a little more than an illusion. In any case, they consider that the School has always existed everywhere, justifying not only its existence but its universality and eternity, making it as natural as life itself, thus making its questioning something unthinkable and unnatural (p.1). Varela and Alvarez-Uria (1991, p.1-33) characterize the school as responsible for defining the statute of childhood, forming a

specialist body, destroying other socialization forms, and institutionalizing obligatory school and social control. The school institution to which we refer is on an abstract, formal, and general level. It is important to contextualize and analyze it systematically, reflecting on its role as a "reproducer of class structure" and an enabler of "cultural capital" transmission. Additionally, we should historically frame it in the long historical process of forming Mozambican educational system.

The Portuguese colonial policy is grounded on the principles disseminated by international agreements<sup>6</sup> that regulated the association of rights and duties – the “right of exploitation” and the “duty of civilization”. Based on these rights and duties, Portuguese colonial teaching is considered an "assimilation" of the national (metropolitan) culture that, with this type of teaching, was grounded on differentiation. On the one hand, the "civilized" urban population comprises white Europeans, settlers, Asians, and assimilated Africans, among others. On the other hand, the "non-civilized" were the eminently black rural population. An European metropolitan model with a standard curriculum, with literary traces to some, against a more simplified, practical, rudimentary model to Africans.

The initiatives to adopt an education policy started to be raised until the mid-1930s with divergencies between opinion and practice, resulting in an educational policy that would end up leading to a centralizing direct governing; anticlerical at the internal level but pluri-confessional in the exterior; hesitant in the strategical plan of incorporating the African masses; and ambiguous in the status that they could take in the auxiliary personnel of Portuguese colonial administration (Madeira, 2007, p.151).

From a symbolical perspective, all "indigenous" living in the Portuguese territories, including the overseas, were considered Portuguese citizens by the Constitution after 1820-1822, an idea legally supported and defended by Portugal, mainly in international meetings. Internally, however, "equality" was not a consensus (Madeira, 2007, pp.189-194). Table 1 shows the evolution of school numbers in Mozambique, since 1930.

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<sup>6</sup>These include the Berlin Conference (1884-1885); the Brussels Conference (1891), and the Versailles Treaty (1919).

**Tabela 1**

**Access to Elementary Education (1930 – 1975)** (Statistic Annuals 1930 to 1974; data from I RGPH 1980 & Gómez [1999])

Years	General Pop.	Schoolable Pop.	Percentage	Schooled Pop.	Admission gross rate	Schooling net rate	General population growth	Schoolable population growth	Schooled population growth
1930*	3,849,977	731,496	19.0%	42,868	5.9%	1.1%			
1931				55,715					23.0%
1932				64,958					14.2%
1936				57,625					12.7%
1939				68,135					15.4%
1940*	5,085,630	966,270	19.0%	77,927	8.1%	1.5%			12.6%
1945				118,163					34.0%
1950*	5,738,911	1,090,393	19.0%	165,942	15.2%	2.9%			28.8%
1955				260,075					36.1%
1960*	6,603,653	1,254,694	19.0%	416,174	33.2%	6.3%			37.5%
1961	6,748,273	1,282,172	19.0%	420,081	32.8%	6.2%			0.9%
1962	6,896,060	1,310,251	19.0%	426,973	32.6%	6.2%			1.6%
1963	7,047,084	1,338,946	19.0%	419,751	31.3%	6.0%			1.7%
1964	7,201,415	1,368,269	19.0%	422,950	30.9%	5.9%	2.2%		0.8%
1965	7,359,126	1,398,234	19.0%	412,005	29.5%	5.6%			2.7%
1966	7,520,291	1,428,855	19.0%	433,229	30.3%	5.8%			4.9%
1967	7,684,985	1,460,147	19.0%	467,353	32.0%	6.1%			7.3%
1968	7,853,186	1,492,105	19.0%	537,538	36.0%	6.8%		2.1%	13.0%
1969	8,025,171	1,524,782	19.0%	578,296	37.9%	7.2%			7.0%
1970*	8,200,000	1,558,000	19.0%	566,929	36.4%	6.9%	2.1%		2.1%
1971	8,379,580	1,592,120	19.0%	543,761	34.2%	6.5%			4.3%
1972	8,563,093	1,626,988	19.0%	603,460	37.1%	7.0%			9.9%
1973	8,750,625	1,662,619	19.0%	577,997	34.8%	6.6%			4.4%
1974	8,942,264	1,699,030	19.0%	672,000	39.6%	7.5%			14.0%
1975	9,138,100	1,831,541	20.0%	692,044	37.8%				3.0%

According to Table 1, the gross admission and net schooling rates show a perceivable increase, contrary to the schoolable population compared to the general population, implying a deceleration in the natural growth of the population. However, the schooling efforts did not necessarily have the expected effects on the schooled group. A comparison of the schooling rates and the growth of the schooled population leads us to conclude that prior to the independence, a small part of the schoolable population was at school, corroborating the intention of placing barriers to the schooling of the natives, despite the considerable increase in the number of schools. This data confirms the intention of Portuguese colonial apparel to stop the emergence of nationalist awareness, as Lopes's (2004) states. In particular, the net schooling rate recorded previous to 1975 had doubled its percentage points immediately after this date, establishing a relative proportionality of the total size of the schooled population. Furthermore, the gross admission rates also doubled immediately after 1975. Contrary to this tendency, the total populational growth, and thus of the schoolable population, has a lower percentage than the schooled population, confirming the results of the increasing efforts to democratize and universalize access to public education after the independence.

The average rates of annual increase of the schoolable population from the 1960s to the 1980s are around 2.14%. In another analysis, the average annual increase rates of the schooled population show variations between 1930 and 1979 but generally with positive percentages. In the period between 1980 and 1982, the schooled population decreased. Extreme hardships marked this period due to the combined effects of the armed conflict, the economic crisis, and natural disasters, which might have originated this tendency.

## **A new educational project for the new nation**

With the proclamation of independence on June 25, 1975, the socialist-leaning government under the direction of *Frente de Libertação de Moçambique* (FRELIMO- Mozambique Liberation Front), the single representative of the Mozambicans, established the grounds to consolidate a State guided by a one-party political system. The government's first decision characterized its intention to build a social and political democracy. In this sense, FRELIMO should dismantle the inherited State apparel, believing that it would be impossible to use the

“existing one, guiding it towards new objects, from the experienced drawn during the first months of independence” (Gómez, 1999, p.208).

To do so, the FRELIMO government initiated reforms, substituting the private ownership of land to state one, creating agricultural cooperatives, extinguishing liberal professions, and nationalizing companies, banks, buildings, justice, health, education, and other services. The need for these reforms is in article 2 of the 1975 Constitution, in which Mozambique is defined as a State of popular democracy. All patriotic strata should participate in building a new society, free of men exploitation over men, in which the power belonged to the united urban and rural workers, guided by FRELIMO and implemented by the bodies of popular power (Assembleia Popular de Moçambique, 1975).

However, these changes were inefficient, a situation worsened by the massive departure of Portuguese workers who did not identify themselves with the new political system and the beginning of destabilization and external aggression from the minority regimes of Southern Rhodesia and *apartheid* – racist regime, from a white minority, supported by the National Party, which governed the Republic of South African from 1948 to 1994. Therefore, it was in this scenario that the *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (RENAMO- Mozambican National Resistance) was formed. It was one of the protagonists of the 16-year war from 1976 to 1992. It culminated in an agreement between the FRELIMO government and the RENAMO, known in Mozambique as the "General Peace Agreement," signed in Roma, Italy, on October 4, 1992.

The task of materializing the project of forming the "new man" (a citizen emancipated from colonial mental domination) was given to the "Dynamizing Groups" that, under democratic centralism, should disseminate the political line of FRELIMO. Using the experiences of the freed areas during the Colonial War (1964 – 1974), education was put into the service of "all" Mozambican people. One of the immediate gains was widening school access, showing an interest in "democratizing" teaching. In 1985, the liberalization of the main economic sectors started, first with a State reform, aiming to give it a neoliberal perspective. At this point, rulers' political discourse tended to soften. In 1984, due to the decisions taken in its IV Congress, FRELIMO declared the abandonment of Marxism-Leninism and gave more attention to the West than its traditional Eastern allies. At this moment,

Mozambique was faced with a maelstrom of political and social changes. In 1977, FRELIMO presented itself as a vanguard Marxism-Leninism party; in 1983, during a brutal civil war, the first efforts at Mozambican opening were introduced. Since 1989, the party has started to evolve toward a neoliberal democracy. (Sumich, 2008, p. 321)

After 1987 Mozambique began to implement a structural readjustment and macro economic stabilization to reduce poverty with the support of the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Mozambique was accepted in the 1980s as a member of the IMF and the WB. The deterioration of the exchange terms, the war between FRELIMO and RENAMO, and the natural calamities led to the approval in 1997 of the *Programa de Reabilitação Econômica* (PRE- Economic Rehabilitation Program), that in 1989 integrated a social component, thus being called *Programa de Reabilitação Econômica e Social* (PRES- Economic and Social Rehabilitation Program) that liberalized the market. Dictated by the market laws, this economic model decreased the reach of centralized planning and restricted the State's interference in personal subjects, allowing citizens to show their initiative and creative ability, and independent and autonomous attitude regarding political, economic, and social problems. However, the direct extrapolation of applicable mechanisms in the economic sectors for education is questionable when creating a new educational policy. As it is the right and duty of each citizen, education has a specific role in society and, as such, cannot be given to the private initiative or fully submitted to the market rules, free competition, and profit-seeking. Summing up, to the law of offer and demand. The State is responsible for guiding educational activity, and providing citizens with this service so that free competition does not lead to unbearable social situations.

In 1987, the *Programa de Reabilitação Econômica* (PRE- Program of Economic Rehabilitation) starts. It was also the admission year of the children born in 1980. As the introduction of new school years in the national system should be done "progressively... until 1994, when the Year 12 would be introduced", there would always be "a new Year to be introduced to the old system" (Tempográfica, 1987, pp.17-18). This process showed that the implementation of the educational policy still sought to resist the effects of Mozambican State restructuring, as the introduction of a new education model, approved in 1983, was irreversible, as an essential pillar to build a socialist republic. Hence, public school obligatoriness and gratuity principles should be guaranteed, considering its universalization toward eradicating illiteracy.

In Mozambique, despite the obligation of primary education established by the law, its materialization did not advance because there were no regulation conditions for its implementation. According to Oliveira (1873), compulsory education law should fulfill four essential requirements. The first is the establishment of school age and perimeter. The second is the attribution, to the executor, of all means to check if girls and boys are not learning. The third is the authorization to help parents that, due to poverty, cannot send their children to school, to whom clothes and school materials should be provided. Last, the establishment of punishments for the parents who did not provide schooling to their children. Creating these or similar conditions is necessary to implement compulsory schooling for all.

Due to the high illiteracy rate, in 1975, there were national literacy campaigns aiming to provide the basic abilities of reading, writing, and mathematics to integrate the Mozambican population into the project of building a new nation. The results of these campaigns, in quantitative terms, can be seen in Table 2 :

**Table 2**

*Results of the national literacy campaigns: 1978 – 1982 (Estatísticas Oficiais de Educação [1990])*

	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Campaign (1978/79)</i>	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Campaign (1980)</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Campaign (1981)</i>	<i>4<sup>th</sup> Campaign (1982)</i>
<i>Enrolled (beginning of the year)</i>	300,000	290,000	246,500	200,364
<i>Enrolled (end of the year)</i>	264,067	253,188	161,193	82,675
<i>Examined</i>	315,478	198,579	117,277	54,984
<i>Approval target</i>	100,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
<i>Approval</i>	139,369	119,394	61,095	37,430

Analyzing the approval targets compared to approval ones, we can see that the latter was always below the first, with numbers lower than a third or a fifth, in the third and fourth campaigns, respectively. These data also show that the historical phenomenon of school failure overshadowed the perspectives of literacy campaigns so that the approval targets established were much lower than the number of enrolled students, even if the number of literacy students reaching the end of the year was not always lower than the number of enrollments. Dropout rates were high in the third and fourth campaigns.

As a result of these campaigns, according to the 1980 General Population and Housing Census, the illiteracy rate decreased from around 93% in 1975 to about 74% in 1980. Indeed, from 1978, when the first national literacy campaign started, until 1983, around one million students enrolled, and about 360 thousand successfully concluded the program (Fonseca, 1983, p.156). In the following years, Mozambique continued to promote literacy, but little could be done because of war. Hence, it was possible to reduce the illiteracy rate by 12%, from around 74% in 1980 to 62%, in 1985, corresponding to an illiterate population of about 4,157,000 people (Bhola, 1988, pp.16-17).

Regarding the schooling of young women, the concern was to "combat girls' dropout in primary education and allowing them to join the several technical-vocational courses." The Ministry of Education should "promote the courses in which women had already shown their special aptitudes and favor their access" (Tempográfica, 1984, p.22).

**Table 3.**

**Number of Schools, students, and teachers in Primary Education <sup>7</sup>: 1975 – 1990** (*Estatísticas Oficiais de Educação [2003]*)

Year	Schools		Students		Teachers		Students/Teacher	
	PE1	PE2	PE1	PE2	PE1	PE2	PE1	PE2
1975	5,235	26	671,617	20,427	10,281	N.D.	65.3	N.D.
1976	5,853	88	1,276,500	32,304	15,000	N.D.	85.1	N.D.
1977	7,076	94	1,363,000	43,468	16,142	1,872	84.4	23.2
1978	7,104	88	1,426,282	62,660	16,308	1,853	87.5	33.8
1979	7,170	96	1,494,729	85,401	16,810	2,479	88.9	34.4
1980	5,730	99	1,387,192	79,899	17,030	2,087	81.5	38.3
1981	5,709	99	1,376,865	78,215	18,751	2,211	73.4	35.4
1982	5,722	111	1,333,050	80,746	20,584	2,361	64.8	34.2
1983	5,886	128	1,220,139	91,044	20,769	1,751	58.7	52.0
1984	4,990	137	1,303,650	103,970	21,903	2,290	59.5	45.4
1985	4,616	156	1,311,014	111,283	20,286	2,411	64.6	46.2
1986	4,430	161	1,305,582	113,948	20,756	2,446	62.9	46.6
1987	3,927	154	1,286,961	75,877	20,884	2,161	61.6	35.1
1988	3,647	163	1,199,669	78,380	21,410	2,452	56.0	32.0
1989	3,496	168	1,210,671	96,907	21,039	2,377	57.5	40.8
1990	3,441	169	1,260,218	116,718	23,107	N.D.	54.5	N.D.

<sup>7</sup>PE1: Primary Education I Level: Years 1 to 4 (Equivalent to 1.<sup>a</sup> à 4.<sup>a</sup> years in Brazil, similar to Elementary School in the U.S.A).

PE2: Primary Education II Level: Years 5 to 6 (Equivalent to 5.<sup>a</sup> à 6.<sup>a</sup> years in Brazil, similar to the first years of Middle School in the U.S.A.).

According to Table 3, the number of teachers in PE1 and PE2 increased between 1975 and 1990. Contrary to this tendency, the number of schools decreased, after its growth between 1975 and 1979, due to the destructive effects of war, reaching, in 1990, less than half of its established structure in 1983. The number of students had not significantly increased. The teacher-student ratio would continue to be high until 1989, though the number of teachers was increasingly higher in PE1 (57,5) and PE2 (40,8). These conditions diminish the classroom environment because, in general, teachers need help assisting a relatively high number of students. Furthermore, regardless of the drastic decrease in the number of schools in the 1980s, the number of students continued to grow, contributing to the sharpening the student-teacher ratio. We highlight that the number of PE2 students since 1975 was inferior to those in PE1, which meant that most students enrolled in PE1 did not finish their education, increasing the number of people who did not develop reading, writing, and mathematic abilities. These data also show that adding the number of those who did not finish primary education with those who did not even access school, universal primary schooling was much further to be reached. By these standards, no possibility of universal primary schooling was on the horizon in the short and middle run, mainly attending the average annual growth of the population and schoolable number of people.

Conforming Mário et al. (2002), regarding the improvement of teaching quality, the *Sistema Nacional de Educação* (SNE- National Education System) was submitted to a diagnostic evaluation in all its components, aiming to deeply rethink its aims, structure, and workings, and develop more effective learning-teaching strategies. Mário et al. (2002) give examples of the national seminars on Portuguese and Mathematics (1979-1980), whose recommendations indicated the need to recruit teachers to all educational levels and international specialists who could plan the SNE. Additionally, this review aimed to adapt the educational system to the demands of I *Plano Nacional de Desenvolvimento* (National Development Plan). With the end of the war in Zimbabwe in 1979 and the expectation of peace in the Southern region of Africa, the Mozambican government created the *Plano Prospetivo Indicativo* (PPI- Prospective Plan

Indication) that guided the economy restructuring and aimed to establish independence and economic balance among provinces.

After the SNE approval by the parliament in 1982, a public debate followed, stressing the right to education, eradicating illiteracy and poverty, and introducing compulsory and universal schooling for children over seven years old (Assembleia Popular de Moçambique, 1983). Thus, SNE established 6-year compulsory schooling, i.e., from Year 1 to Year 6. In practical terms, this meant that children finished compulsory education (from Year 1 to 6). If students did not repeat any Year, they would complete their compulsory schooling at 12 years old. Given its relevance and priority, teacher training and literacy were structured as subsystems, according to the country's needs defined in the *Plano Prospectivo Indicativo* (PPI- Prospective Plan Indication). A first analysis of the primary education was done 1983 e 1986, tendo-se chegado à conclusão de que muitos problemas tinham surgido entre 1979 and 1980, particularly related to the teaching of Portuguese. Indeed, the *Instituto Nacional do Desenvolvimento da Educação* (INDE- National Education Development Institute) concluded that "the methodology of Portuguese Language teaching as a second language did not promote children's learning, in every social environment where Portuguese was not used", which led to high retention rates, mainly in the initial Years. For example, "in 1986, the average retention rate in primary education was 40%" (MÁRIO et al., 2002, p.6). On table 4 we present the coverage indicators of the primary school system.

**Table 4**

**Coverage indicators of the public school in Primary Education in Mozambique: 1975 – 1990**<sup>8</sup> (*Estatísticas oficiais de educação [2003]*)

Year	Pop. From 6-12 years old	Students (EP1+EP2)	Gross rate schooling	Students from 6 to 12 years old	Net rate schooling	6-year-old population	6-year-old students in Year 1	Admission rate per specific age	Students Year 1	Admission gross rate
1975	1,831,541	692,044	37.8%	338,716	48.9%	295,636	131,853	44.6%	130,008	38.4%
1976	1,876,579	1,308,804	69.7%	347,046	26.5%	302,906	135,667	44.8%	135,908	39.2%
1977	1,922,724	1,406,468	73.1%	355,579	25.3%	310,355	132,312	42.6%	142,786	40.2%
1978	1,970,004	1,488,942	75.6%	364,323	24.5%	317,986	130,458	41.0%	155,654	42.7%
1979	2,018,447	1,580,130	78.3%	373,282	23.6%	325,806	127,551	39.1%	160,331	43.0%
1980	2,068,081	1,467,091	70.9%	382,461	26.1%	333,817	165,001	49.4%	158,980	41.6%
1981	2,118,935	1,455,080	68.7%	391,866	26.9%	342,026	145,006	42.4%	153,455	39.2%
1982	2,171,040	1,413,796	65.1%	401,502	28.4%	350,436	133,225	38.0%	146,552	36.5%
1983	2,224,427	1,311,183	58.9%	411,375	31.4%	359,054	130,889	36.5%	137,654	33.5%
1984	2,279,126	1,407,620	61.8%	421,491	29.9%	367,883	134,107	36.5%	134,556	31.9%
1985	2,335,170	1,422,297	60.9%	431,855	30.4%	376,929	137,405	36.5%	128,012	29.6%
1986	2,392,592	1,419,530	59.3%	442,475	31.2%	386,198	140,784	36.5%	133,465	30.2%
1987	2,451,426	1,362,838	55.6%	453,355	33.3%	395,695	144,246	36.5%	137,331	30.3%
1988	2,511,707	1,278,049	50.9%	464,503	36.3%	405,425	147,793	36.5%	129,005	27.8%
1989	2,573,470	1,307,578	50.8%	475,925	36.4%	415,394	151,427	36.5%	130,709	27.5%
1990	2,636,752	1,376,936	52.2%	487,628	35.4%	425,609	155,151	36.5%	145,567	29.9%

<sup>8</sup>Gross schooling rate: quotient between the total number of students in one cycle and the population of the age group corresponding to the cycle

Net schooling rate: quotient between the number of students of school age corresponding to a cycle and the population in the school age corresponding to this cycle.

Admission rate per specific age: quotient between the number of students in the specific age of Year 1 and the population at this same age.

Admission gross rate: quotient between the number of students of Year 1 and the population with the official age of admission.

PE1: Primary Education I Level: Years 1 to 4 (Equivalent to 1.<sup>a</sup> à 4.<sup>a</sup> years in Brazil, similar to Elementary School in the U.S.A).

PE2: Primary Education II Level: Years 5 to 6 (Equivalent to 5.<sup>a</sup> à 6.<sup>a</sup> years in Brazil, similar to the first years of Middle School in the U.S.A.).

According to table 4, the gross admission rates between 1975 and 1990 varied from around 20% to 43% of the population with the official admission age (Assembleia Popular de Moçambique, 1983). Furthermore, the schooling rate per specific age shows growths around 36% to 49%, at the same time, meaning that less than half of the children enrolled in the first year of schooling in the specific age (6 years old) (Assembleia Popular de Moçambique, 1992). The implication is that more than half of the children start primary education with more than six years old. In its turn, the gross admission rate, in the same period, varied from around 28% to 43%, with an increasing tendency. This means that the number of students enrolled in the first year of schooling is a third to half of the Mozambican population at six years old.

The gross schooling rate in this same period shows a variation of 38% to 78%, which means that from the total schoolable number (population between 6 to 12 years old), not all school-age children can access school at the right time, and others will not do it forever. On its turn, the net school rate varied from around 23% to 49% between 1975 and 1990, but with a sharp decrease from 1976 to 1981, meaning that, from the total of children attending Primary Education, more than a third and less than half, are in the official age to attend PE (from 6 to 12 years old). The logical implication of this tendency is that more than half of the children attend PE outside the officially established age. This means that public education could not fulfill the demand of following children's physical and mental development phases during school.

## **Factors that influenced the configuration of Primary Education: 1975 to 1990**

The introduction of PRE in 1987 implied changes in the workings of the state apparatus. Among the changes of particular impact on education, we highlight the significant cuts in public expenditure that, in a context in which large funds ended up being used for war, led to cuts in essential sectors. "If in 1980-1986, the education sector answered for 17 to 19% of the government's expenditures, these percentages were reduced to 9% in 1987" (Gómez, 1999, p.14).

Some measures to improve school performance began to be taken. In early 1985, the schools in the country's capital, Maputo, signed school performance commitments because

"the increase in the indexes of students' performance and the increment of educational level are the main objectives the schools were committed to reaching, under the guidance of each principal" (Tempográfica, 1985, p.4).

On March 1988, there were reports that more than twelve thousand children had no access to school in Maputo. At the same time, "there is a bureaucracy in the selling of school material or its late arrival in several schools in the country" (Tempográfica, 1988, p.9). The crisis deepened. With the lack of schools in the country, the Minister of Education adopted a regulation aiming to prioritize younger children because, in 1988, there were many cases of children between 14 and 17 years old who had passed to Years 5 and 6 but were not enrolled in schools because they were considered too old. Furthermore, some have failed twice the same Year. In these circumstances, regarding regulation, these children had to stay two years at home without school.

The number of schools in the country in 1989 sharply decreased, mainly in general and adult education subsystems. In the case of PE1, out of the 5,886 existing schools in 1983, only 3,500 continued by the end of 1988. Due to the 16-year war, the school system decreased in around 2,400 schools, almost all in rural areas (Tempográfica, 1989, p.22).

Regarding the territorial distribution of damage, the most affected provinces were Zambezia, Nampula, Inhambane, and Gaza. At the PE1 level, around half the schools were closed or destroyed. At the PE2 level, this number reached only 18% (a fifth of the total). We must note that the number of PE2 schools was much inferior to those of PE1. More details on the war's impact on the primary school system can be seen in Table 5.

**Table 5**

**War impact on Mozambique primary school system: 1983 – 1992** (*Estatísticas oficiais de Educação [1992]*)

Province	Primary Education 1 (PE1)					Primary Education 2 (PE2)				
	Schools			Affected Population		Schools			Affected Population	
	Existing in 1983	Closed and destroyed		Students	Teac.	Existing in 1983	Closed and destroyed		Stud.	Tea.
		Nº	%				Nº	%		
Niassa	508	361	71.1%	53,927	1,278	17	10	58.8%	1,517	79
Cabo Delgado	542	160	29.5%	94,375	1,944	12	0	0.0%	104	6
Nampula	1,116	553	49.6%	255,650	3,051	32	0	0.0%	0	0
Zambezia	1,130	997	88.2%	286,264	5,330	27	8	29.6%	3,451	70
Tete	479	454	94.8%	98,923	1,278	9	4	44.4%	2,342	56
Manica	225	109	48.4%	31,569	595	10	0	0.0%	0	0
Sofala	386	254	65.8%	68,429	925	14	8	57.1%	2,848	52
Inhambane	506	223	44.1%	179,237	2,681	12	0	0.0%	507	22
Gaza	546	183	33.5%	197,236	3,240	19	0	0.0%	0	0
Maputo Province	339	204	60.2%	47,288	828	9	2	22.2%	1,382	261
Maputo City	109	0	0.0%	101,324	1,311	15	0	0.0%	1,115	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,886</b>	<b>3,498</b>	<b>59.4%</b>	<b>1,414,222</b>	<b>22,461</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>18.0%</b>	<b>13,266</b>	<b>561</b>

The "1980s started badly and finished worse. Now there is a bit of everything in the market. The only thing lacking is money. Better to have something to just see than have nothing at all. The government should make a greater effort to solve the war. Nobody can stand this war," – said Issufo Omar, a citizen interviewed by the magazine *Tempo* in the turn of 1989 to 1990, in the Mafalala neighborhood, in Maputo. Issufo seemed aware of the political reforms in Eastern Europe and continued:

It is a very interesting historical phase and we, Mozambicans, have to learn from this phenomenon occurring in Europe. If they change, we will not keep the same position. By now, FRELIMO should open its politics more because, otherwise, it will be outdated. (Tempográfica, 1990c, p.24)

Issufo Omar defended the creation of more political parties in Mozambique so that the elections “actually made sense” (Tempográfica, 1990c, p.24). At this moment, the outline to review the Constitution of the Republic was under debate “due to its importance and topicality, as it is a document to be discussed by all Mozambican citizens” (Tempográfica, 1990a, p. 25).

At the beginning of the 1990 school year, the statistics showed that many children did not have access to school. Most of them were war victims, and their future was uncertain:

The exiguity of the school system is a direct reflection of war. Two thousand six hundred fifty-five schools were destroyed or closed in the country, representing 45% of the total. In the provinces of Tete and Zambezia, the effects of war reached close to 80% of school destruction. In contrast, in the provinces of Sofala, Niassa, and Maputo-province the number is around 50%. We calculated that around 500,000 children could not continue their studies. However, as the answer to this phenomenon was still to come, the number is progressively increasing. One million eight hundred thousand children from 7 to 11 years old risked not studying that year. (Tempográfica, 1990b, p.24)

A more global analysis found that around three million children of school age suffered, directly or indirectly, the effects of war. Thus, the number of teachers needed was 20 thousand, but it was only possible to train around nine thousand teachers then.

Considering a concerted answer to the problem, a multi-sectorial action was put into play. The Department of Special Education, the Ministry of Health, and the Mass Democratic Organizations were called to find alternatives to rehabilitate war-victim children. However, there was a problem: the programs created could only reach around one million two hundred children from 7 to 11 years old. Thus, what would be done to the one million eight hundred left?

The answer to this question might be raised in the Economic and Social Guidelines of the V Congress of FRELIMO, which preconized the "organized community intervention." This community involvement implied the construction of schools that would attend not only the users of its intended creation but also serve the region's community, not aiming for profit. (Tempográfica, 1990b, p.24)

At this moment, seven weeks after the V Congress of FRELIMO, legislation to regulate community activities, private schools, and explainers' actions was not yet approved in Mozambique. Regardless of that, the privatization of various activities was the motto.

In general, the year 1990 was extremely complicated. The classes started one month late. The results, in many cases, did not correspond to students' school performance: "there

were all types of frauds, mainly the selling of grades” (Tempográfica, 1991, p.7). At this moment, there was also the claim for better work conditions, salary increases, and integration in teachers' jobs. Teachers triggered the "strikes of right," impacting schools' work:

The school year of 1990 was already underway, but the three weeks delay, in the beginning, started to concern the school principals who had to make efforts to fulfill the educational schedules. Teachers had returned to the schools "for the children" but were unhappy and continued to wait for the government to find solutions for the problems that led them to the 15-day strike. (Tempográfica, 1990a, p.6)

The fraud and the demands for better work conditions and salary raises were new phenomena in the history of Mozambique. Apparently, two reasons justified this scenario. On the one hand, the degradation of work conditions due to the economic crises. On the other hand, the feeling of relative freedom to claim workers' rights, in particular, and for the population in general. This freedom resulted from the political opening after the State reform at the beginning of the political and economic shift.

We will discuss below the internal efficiency of Primary Education, in terms of graduation rate, due to the combination of political and economic factors. As we can see, the graduation rates, in PE1 and PE2, were low, representing the inadequate performance and enormous school waste and challenging the amount and quality of educational resources, problems that needed innovative policies.

Table 6

*Conclusion rates in Primary Education: 1975 – 1990 (Estatísticas Oficiais de Educação [2003])*

Year	Students		Graduates		Percentage		Difference	
	PE1	PE2	PE1	PE2	PE1	PE2	PE1	PE2
1975	671,617	20,427	19,660	3,600	2.9%	17.6%	97.1%	82.4%
1976	1,276,500	32,304	25,269	5,920	2.0%	18.3%	98.0%	81.7%
1977	1,363,000	43,468	39,536	100,191	2.9%	23.4%	97.1%	76.6%
1978	1,426,282	62,660	62,774	9,899	4.4%	15.8%	95.6%	84.2%
1979	1,494,729	85,401	74,029	12,270	5.0%	14.4%	95.0%	85.6%
1980	1,387,192	79,899	82,689	18,182	6.0%	22.8%	94.0%	77.2%
1981	1,376,865	78,215	83,393	16,111	6.1%	20.6%	93.9%	79.4%
1982	1,333,050	80,746	58,814	14,169	4.4%	17.5%	95.6%	82.5%
1983	1,220,139	91,044	65,225	14,329	5.3%	15.7%	94.7%	84.3%
1984	1,303,650	103,970	72,743	20,176	5.6%	19.4%	94.4%	80.6%
1985	1,311,014	111,283	75,204	14,949	5.7%	13.4%	94.3%	86.6%
1986	1,305,582	113,948	N.D.	17,115	N.D.	15.0%	N.D.	85.0%
1987	1,286,961	75,877	63,433	18,677	4.9%	24.6%	95.1%	75.4%
1988	1,199,669	78,380	71,845	12,952	6.0%	16.5%	94.0%	83.5%
1989	1,210,671	96,907	77,771	10,715	6.4%	11.1%	93.6%	88.9%
1990	1,260,218	116,718	79,622	16,871	6.3%	14.5%	93.7%	85.5%

Table 6 data show that in 1975, at the level of PE1, the percentage of graduates was 2.9%, while in EP2 was 17.6%, the difference of values, calculated based on 100%, reveals an enormous school waste, in the order of 97.1% and 82.4%, respectively. In global terms, these data mean that only around 10% of students enrolled in PE finished this level. This tendency continued until 1990.

A glimpse at the different rates between the percentage of graduates and the enrolled students in PE1 and PE2 can give the false impression that this difference represents, as a whole, a school waste. Not necessarily. Though it includes the number of those who did not finish the PE1 and PE2 within the predicted time, these large percentages also encompass the students who attended Primary Education in transition classes, as the cases of students from Years 2, 3, 4, and 6.

## Final remarks

In the historical process of establishing public education in Mozambique, the consolidation of the principles of obligatoriness and gratuity has impacted the widening of

school access. Nowadays, the elementary school must offer an educational level that offers basic abilities to all Mozambicans. In the colonial period, the consolidation of two different forms of capitalism occurred through commercial exchanges with the peoples from the Persian Gulf and the colonization and exploitation of resources in the territory of current Mozambique. To do so, a "regime of truth" needed to be created and validated, according to which the "indigenous" populations were inferior in intelligence and, consequently, in their ability to solve problems.

Hence, the discrimination of native populations in the access to education resulted in the general treatment policy of those people. By being discriminatory, education was aligned with general politics, as the educational system was at the service of colonial apparel. Therefore, a characteristic of the colonial system frequently pointed out by the literature is its discriminatory nature depending on students' origins, despite offering opportunities to learn some new subjects, needed to face several situations. Still, we can see a contradiction. If, on the one hand, primary education was obligatory in the last 25 years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, on the other, the schooling of "indigenous" populations was not a priority because it only contributed to the formation of a minimally qualified workforce to serve the capitalist interests of Portugal. An important contradiction is that though public education was obligatory, it was not free, contributing to the low access to school, despite recognizing that obligation does not necessarily imply gratuity. Nonetheless, it is undeniable that gratuity helps the implementation and consolidation of obligatoriness, as it creates the conditions to access basic school materials. The African languages were the primary means of communication before colonization. However, they were banned because they were considered inferior to the Portuguese. After the independence, language teaching was not incentivized in practice, though the Mozambican Constitution encouraged and valued them. Thus, a legal and institutional framework was lacking to translate the constitution into concrete actions to promote the research, use, and development of local languages.

Even though the parents must educate their children, the State has to promote and facilitate the fulfillment of parental duties. So, the State must open schools everywhere and expect all parents, who cannot educate their children privately, to enroll their children, as highlighted by Oliveira (1873, p.71). In Mozambique, the concrete educational conditions compromised the universalization project of access to primary school between 1975 and 1990. If, from 1975 to 1979, there was a school explosion characterized by an impressive increase in

the number of teachers and students, this tendency changed soon, mainly since 1983 with the resurgence of war, the economic crisis, and natural disasters, which have certainly negatively impacted the “victory over the underdevelopment” in the 1980s.

The war was an important political event that destroyed more than half of the schools established since 1983, mainly in the rural areas, where most of the population was. Another adverse factor was the massive exit of personnel<sup>9</sup> considered qualified, who did not identify themselves with the new regime right after the independence (in 1975). The transposition for a different context of the educational experience of freed areas, as shown by Gómez (1999), hindered the Mozambican government's capacity to estimate the real needs of the new nation, resulting in a definition of highly ambitious targets and the lack of human, material, contextual conditions at that moment. In terms of educational policies, the lack of regulation from the council of ministers of an obligatory and free school – as established by Law n.º 4/83, from March 23– omitted the responsibilities of the families and the State in fulfilling the social contract of offering a compulsory and free primary education to all.

In economic terms, the crisis, increased by war and the cyclic natural calamities, was also a determinant for the weak expansion and coverage of primary schools. Another critical factor was the economic collapse of the socialist block, which was supporting Mozambique since its national liberation fight. This forced the country to seek economic partnerships, thus, to carry on readjustments in its economic and social policies as a condition for financial aid, which would be the base for the standardization of several social services, including education. These readjustments included the decrease of the State budget and professionals in several areas, impacting the capacity to form and allocate the necessary number of teachers to fulfill the needs arising from the growth of the schoolable population and the rural exodus promoted by war.

On the one hand, the admission and schooling rates show that not all children could access school. On the other, they also show that many others were admitted beyond the officially established age. Connected to this phenomenon were other factors that directly influenced school access, such as the availability of school establishments and materials and

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<sup>9</sup> The personnel included workers, teachers, administrators, rulers, and others.

the families' socioeconomic condition. Summing up, access to primary school between 1975 and 1980 was often below the number of schoolable children.

Regarding internal efficiency, the graduation rates are also under half of what was expected, mainly in PE1, in which the difficulties of starting to read and write are striking. As Mário et al. (2002) pointed out, the evaluations done about primary education in the 1980s had shown that many of these problems emerged in the vertiginous growth of students, in part, due to the post-independence euphoria and the massive national literacy campaigns, considering the reversal of illiteracy rate of 93%, even though this growth was not followed by the due capacity established for the regular school work, which has undoubtedly diminished the quality of primary education.

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