

# The Contribution of Inclusive Education in the Construction of Citizenship in Mozambique

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**Abstract:** This research has as its theme the Contribution of Inclusive Education in the construction Citizenship in Mozambique. The main objective consists in understanding how the inclusive education contributes in the formation and development of citizenship in Mozambique. In the Republic of Mozambique, Education is a fundamental social right embodied in the Constitution. Despite these policies being present in the country's official education documents, the effectiveness of the implementation process and its impact on promoting citizenship are still being questioned.

For support and theoretical analysis, we selected Freire (2014); Dallari (1998); Brandão (1986); Mendes (2010); and the publications of MEC-MOÇAMBIQUE (2006). The choice of these publications was due to the degree of their representativeness in the context of what constitutes the content of this research, which consists of the centrality of education as the force for change, and an instrument to overcome the barriers of exclusion and building the citizenship that makes a person an active participant in social life. A qualitative approach was used through a bibliographic and documentary survey mapping public policies for inclusive education in Mozambique, and contextual analysis on their impact on the Educational System. The sources of analysis in that study were the Strategic Plans of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Mozambique, National and International reports on education and inclusion, Resolutions and Laws or regulations related to the study. From the findings it can be said that inclusive education is a social right and its promotion is the responsibility of the State, it must be accompanied by actions that directly impact the life of the citizen, in a gradual, continuous, systematic way offering students with disabilities a quality education process that expands inter-social relationships, ensures a teaching practice with principles of equity to overcome any and all difficulties that stand in the way of building a democratic school capable of producing a collective awareness of the value of citizenship.

**Keywords:** Education. Citizenship. Inclusive Education.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This research has as its theme the Contribution of Inclusive Education in the construction Citizenship in Mozambique. The main objective consists in understanding how the inclusive education contributes in the formation and development of citizenship in Mozambique. In the Republic of Mozambique, Education is a fundamental social right embodied in the Constitution. Despite these policies being present in the country's official education documents, the effectiveness of the implementation process and its impact on promoting citizenship are still being questioned. Our primary objective is to understand how the inclusive education contributes for the formation and development of citizenship in Mozambique. In the context of inclusive education, in the Republic of Mozambique, Education is a fundamental social right embodied in the Constitution. Despite these policies being present in the country's official education documents, the effectiveness of the implementation process and its impact on promoting citizenship are still being questioned. In this sense, it is important to emphasize that in an inclusive society, every person, beside their differences, has intrinsic values which make him to be full citizen of a society, actively participating in the process of building their own social destiny. Education and law constitute the foundations of social sustainability capable of creating a more humane society. These two topics are the focus of social debate in contemporary society due to their impact on building a more consistent and visionary citizenship within their social context. The reason why we chose this approach, it is because we saw this issue relevant and aim to awaken social awareness in order to contribute in building up a society which can be more inclusive, where every person enjoys the same rights and opportunities, regardless physical, intellectual or ethnic differences. Therefore, educational action is the fundamental basis which provides individuals the abilities to exercise citizenship and to know how to make choice in life. We hope that the present work will contribute in understanding the values of education and its contribution on the exercise of citizenship in Mozambique.

### ➤ *Education and Citizenship*

The definitions of education presented by different authors, although may seem different, generally have many points in common, particularly when they place the individual as the subject at the center of activity and characterize education as a process that empowers, transforms, and influences people to interact with the environment. Brandão (1986) argues that education is defined as all knowledge acquired through experience in society, whatever that may be. For this author, there is no one model for education, no single way. Education occurs from the moment one observes, understands, imitates, and learns; and this process does not occur only within a classroom, where there is a teacher trained to educate. Learning is present in people, in all classes, in various ways.

Zacharias (2007) emphasizes that to educate is to build, to free people from determinism, beginning to recognize the role of history and the issue of cultural identity, both in its individual dimension and in the proposed pedagogical

practice. In this context, education plays a role in making people aware of the reality they live in a specific society.

Through education, a person learns to see life and things with human and civic eyes. In the education process, the individual is able to discover himself and to be aware that he is part of any social decision through his active participation. Through citizenship the individual becomes part of a collective based on what he is and he can be.

According to the Constitution of Mozambican (CRM, 2004), education is a social right, and the Republic of Mozambique promotes an educational strategy aimed at national unity, the eradication of illiteracy, the mastery of science and technology, as well as the moral and civic formation of citizens. In this sense, the aim of education is to facilitate citizenship. Therefore, we understand education as the source of formation of the citizens, also carries with it the responsibility of positioning citizens as historical-political subjects capable of consciously effecting significant changes in the entire social reality. In this sense, educational action should not only provide individuals with exposure to diverse models of civic thought and behavior but also encourage them to make informed choices in life, which shape and express their desires, needs, concerns, and aspirations. In other words, we can say that these interactions plus the lived reality shape and express the human personality. Education plays a role in making people aware of lived reality.

According to Dallari (1998), citizenship presupposes recognition of rights by the state and commitment to expanding the participation of different groups in politics, society and economy. To be a citizen is to be vigilant about ones own behavior. To exercise citizenship is to be aware of one's rights and obligations and to fight for them in order to be put into practice. In all this process, education is seen as a mean that prepares citizens for the exercise of citizenship. By supporting Dallari's view, we are called to recognize the citizenship as a value, because it makes us grow as a person and on the other hand, we become full committed people for the future of our own society through our active participation in making social decisions.

### ➤ *Citizenship as a Social Right in Mozambique*

In Mozambique, the phenomenon of citizenship has been frequently discussed recently. In this country the democracy was introduced in 1994. The issue of citizenship is in a process of continuous evolution, which leads to the inference that the understanding of citizens' rights and duties still falls short of what is desired. Furthermore, many citizens are unaware, or know little, of the true exercise of citizenship, a large portion of the population is excluded and lacks access to material and intellectual assets that enable the full exercise of their citizenship status. By emphasizing citizenship education as a social right, we aim to create a connection between the two processes that enrich citizens in the construction of a just and democratic society.

According to Tomazi (2010), the modern concept of citizenship is based in three important rights which is civil, political and social rights. Civil rights are those that confirm

the individuality of the person and his integration into society in which this individual lives. It is through civil rights that religious and intellectual rights are guaranteed. Besides this, we have political rights that guarantee the citizenship's political participation in the society or in the community in which we are part of it. Finally, we have social rights. These are the rights that comprise and guarantee the integration of a person as individual, such as the right to basic education, healthcare, housing program, public transport, the social security system, leisure programs and access to judicial system. When all these rights are not enjoyed by the citizen, due to some form of social exclusion, it means that there is a weakening of citizenship in the guarantee of human rights.

In Mozambique, many citizens are unaware of these rights. There is a situation where the majority of the population is excluded and lacks access to both material and intellectual resources and services that would enable the full exercise of their status as citizens.

Exercising citizenship means being aware of one's rights and obligations and fighting for their implementation constitutional right. This means that, fully enjoying the constitutional provisions. Which can be possible by preparing citizens to exercise right country's education.

Mendes (2010) argues that exercising citizenship requires acquiring responsibility and commitment, which was given freely and for the benefit of the collective, as Greek democracy enabled each person to live their best life, but these aspirations should be harmonized with the common good. Understanding Mendes view, in order to acquire responsibility and commitment, we have to prepare our people by giving them opportunity to be educated for citizenship so that they may be able to be aware of their rights and how to contribute with ideas and experience. To educate individuals for citizenship helps to create link between the two processes that enrich the citizen in the construction of a just and democratic society.

According to Carvalho (2002), citizenship is the exercise of civil, political, and social rights and duties established in the constitution. The rights and duties of a citizen must always go hand in hand, since by fulfilling our obligations, and allowing others to exercise their rights as well.

#### ➤ *Inclusive Education as a Guarantee of Equal Rights*

Inclusive education is a field marked by needs that must be examined from various perspectives, as its innovative proposal implies a radical restructuring of social dynamics, specifically within schools, building upon this foundation a broader vision of respect for diversity and personal differences. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of persons with disabilities adopted in 2006, defines social inclusion as a guiding principle which shifts the perspective from viewing people with disabilities as objects of charity to recognizing them as rights-holders with the right to participate fully and equally in society. This instrument recognizes the value of self-determination, social participation, equal opportunities and accessibility.

On the basis of these international policies, in 1998, Mozambique, through the Ministry of Education, implemented the inclusive Schools project to combat exclusion and promote schooling for all children. On the other hand, the Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique (CRM, 2004), recognizes that education is a right and duty of every citizen, and that the state has the responsibility to promote the extension of education to continuing professional training and equal access for all citizens to the enjoyment of this right. Furthermore, the state uses other legal instruments to promote inclusion policies in the education system at various levels by using such as Strategic Education Plan; National Action Plan for Disabilities (PNAD), which is a strategic document that establishes priority actions for the area of disabilities; Social Action Policy which establishes the general guidelines of the Government's policy and strategy on the country's Social Action issues, which include issues related to disabilities and children in general. Beyond these policies, investing in education for all, is the first and important step in insuring human rights. For Mozambique as signatory of international policies has obligation to promote and implement these policies by including them into national policies. On the other hand, Mozambican state has the responsibility to ensure that these rights are fully experienced as a value that unifies, builds and develops the citizenship for every individual. In order to consolidate the framework of implementing inclusive policy, the state created a specific department within the Ministry of education. This department was called Department of special education which is responsible for planning, coordinating and directing activities in the field of inclusive education at different levels of education, both in regular inclusive education and in special education with a view to address educational diversity, taking into account the important pillars such as access, quality and institutional capacity.

#### ➤ *The contribute of Inclusive Education in Building Citizenship in Mozambique*

Considering the global reality regarding this approach, Mozambique is a country where the approach of inclusion or inclusive education is a topic of current debate, given the impact they have on a country's social and political life. Mozambique, like other signatory countries of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights UDHR (1948), recognizes that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. In light of this document, these countries have a duty to defend and promote fundamental human rights. On the other hand, they recognize the right to education as essential, although its effective implementation still poses a challenge. For this right to be effectively realized, it is necessary to recognize and enhance the abilities of those with special disabilities. Implementing the inclusion process in the educational system requires hard work to build the social relationships of all children in school as one of the most important foundations of educational practice.

#### ➤ *Social Function of Schools as a Guarantor of the Construction of Citizenship*

Schools emerge as a fundamental institution for the individual and their constitution, as well as for the evolution of society and humanity (Davies & Cols., 1997; Rego, 2003).

As a microsystem of society, they not only reflect current transformations but also must deal with the diverse demands of a globalized world. The school's role is to provide psychological resources for human intellectual, social, and cultural development (Hedegard, 2002; Rego, 2003). This can be possible, by developing systematic activities, the articulation of culturally organized knowledge, it enables the appropriation of accumulated experience and the ways of thinking, acting, and interacting in the world that arise from these experiences.

Marques (2001) emphasizes that primarily, the school has to stimulate students' potential, taking into account sociocultural differences in favor of their knowledge. From the same perspective, he identifies three common objectives that should be pursued by modern schools: (a) stimulating and fostering physical, emotional, moral, cognitive, and personality development; (b) developing civic awareness and the capacity for social intervention; (c) promoting continuous learning, providing students with diverse learning experiences and the conditions for entering the job market. This necessarily involves promoting activities linked to the emotional, motor, social, and cognitive domains, integrated into the individual's life trajectory.

In Mozambique, inclusive education is a reality; however, the great challenge lies in continuing to effectively implement coordinated inclusive strategies and actions to improve life and social coexistence.

According to Rosa (2004), society must be open to all and inclusive, encouraging the participation of each individual, valuing human experiences, recognizing the potential of all citizens, and offering equal opportunities for each person to be free and self-determined.

## II. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this work sought to illuminate the horizons for building a society in which every individual is an active subject capable of developing its social environment through its participation in whatever it is called to do. Through education, we are able to build a more human world with foundations based on ethical principles and values that make us wiser and more virtuous. Education is the foundation for building inclusive citizenship, as it reveals to individuals the values that lead them to live in society as agents of their own destiny. Therefore, true citizenship can only be established through a fierce daily struggle for rights and the guarantee of those that already exist. As its contribution in the construction of citizenship, inclusive education contributes in building the sense of social responsibility, respect for diversity and for development of fundamental civic skill. On the other hand, it prepares students and individuals as all to be active, participants in a diverse society by promoting collaboration and building shared understanding of human rights and civic duties.

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