Non-Formal Vocational Education and Training in Mozambique

Contexts, policies, pedagogies and contradictions

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Dedication

To my daughters: Lorena, Ornita and Daisy, and to all the youths and adults who believe in change and development through education.
# Table of Contents

Table of Contents | i  
Abstract | iii  
Abstract in Swedish | iv  
Extended summary in Portuguese (Resumo extenso em Português) | v  
Abbreviations | xiv  
List of articles of this thesis | xv  
1. Introduction | 1  
1.1 Aims of the research | 3  
1.2 Research questions | 3  
2. Context of the study | 5  
2.1 General context | 5  
2.2 Socio-economic context | 6  
2.3 Educational context | 8  
2.3.1 Vocational education policy context | 10  
2.3.2 Non-Formal Education context | 12  
2.3.3 Research context | 13  
3. Theoretical Framework | 16  
3.1 Adult education for change and development | 16  
3.1.1. Adult education from a lifelong learning perspective | 16  
3.1.2. The pedagogy of adult education | 17  
3.1.3 Education for life skills and empowerment | 19  
3.1.4 Gender in adult education | 21  
3.2 Cultural Historical Activity Theory | 23  
3.2.1 The structure of human activity | 23  
3.2.2 Inner contradictions as a source of change and development | 26  
4. Methodology | 27  
4.1 Research design | 27  
4.2. The location of the main field work | 30  
4.3 Data collection methods | 31  
4.4 Data analysis | 32  
4.5 The validation process | 33  
4.6 Ethical considerations | 34  
5. Results | 35  
5.1 The historical development of vocational literacy in Mozambique | 35  
5.2 The challenges of Adult Education policy implementation in Mozambique | 36  
5.3 Gender dimensions in NFVET | 37  
5.4 The educators’ understandings of NFVET | 38  
5.5 Ways to improve NFVET programmes | 39  
6. Discussion | 41  
6.1 History, policies and contradictions | 41
6.2 The participants’ and educators’ perspectives 43
6.3 Possible strategies for the improvement of NFVET 45

7. Conclusions 47
Acknowledgements 50
References 52
Abstract

Education and training in Mozambique are considered to be a ‘right’ and a ‘duty’ for all its citizens. Non-Formal Vocational Education and Training (NFVET) has been promoted to increase educational opportunities for more citizens, particularly the most vulnerable groups - the out of school and unemployed.

The aim of this study is to gain a deeper insight into NFVET in Mozambique, explore its context and historical development, and to identify factors that could contribute to the improvement of this area of education. It is a qualitative, exploratory study carried out in Mozambique. Semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, non-participant observations, analysis of both printed and electronic documents and life story narratives of research participants were used as methods of data collection. The theories and concepts of adult education and Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) constituted the theoretical framework of the study.

The findings of the study reveal that NFVET is highly relevant in the context of change and development in Mozambique. This area of education plays an increasingly relevant role in helping people to continually improve their skills and contributes to their empowerment and social inclusion. However, contextual factors such as lack of resources, teachers’ poor professional competencies and weak linkages between the training programmes and the labour market constitute the main barriers for the attainment of the objectives of these programmes.

The study concludes that framework and activities of NFVET need to be improved. This improvement includes strengthening existing policies, the need for the professionalisation of educators by enhancing their competencies and the improvement of their working conditions. Further, the development and provision of new curriculum and material taking into account the learners’ needs, the local context and the demands of the labour market are needed. The establishment of functional partnerships between NFVET providers and systematic participative evaluation of the training programmes are also suggested to ensure the quality and sustainability of the programmes.
Abstract in Swedish

I Moçambique ses utbildning både som en rättighet och en skyldighet för alla medborgare. Regeringen har infört obligatorisk grundskola för alla barn med målsättningen att utrotta analfabetism. Olika initiativ och policies har implementerats för att nå målet, men ändå excluderas många barn, ungdomar och vuxna, i synnerhet i landsbygdsområden. Enbart formell utbildning kan inte svara mot den ökade efterfrågan av utbildning i Moçambique. Därför har icke-formell utbildning (non-formal education; NFE) lyfts fram som ett sätt att öka möjligheterna för utbildning för fler medborgare, speciellt i de mest utsatta grupperna (de som inte går i skolan eller är arbetslösa).

Syftet med den här studien är att få djupare insikt i icke-formell yrkesutbildning (NFVET) i Moçambique; att utforska dess kontext och historiska utveckling, samt att identifiera faktorer som skulle kunna bidra till att förbättra denna typ av utbildning. Studien är kvalitativ och explorativ och utförd i Moçambique. För datainsamlingen användes semistrukturerade intervjuer, fokusgruppintervjuer, icke-deltagande observationer, analys av tryckta och elektroniska dokument samt försökspersoners livsberättelser. Studien grundas i de teoretiska och begreppsliga ramverken av vuxenutbildning och kulturhistorisk verksamhetsteori (CHAT). Ramverken har bidragit till analys och förståelse av NFVET, dess historiska utveckling samt dess motsägelser och utmaningar.

Resultaten visar att NFVET utgör ett mycket viktigt bidrag till utbildningen i Moçambique i en tid av ekonomisk och social utveckling. Den snabba ekonomiska och sociala utvecklingen gör så att det uppkommer ett brett spektrum av utbildningsmöjligheter, och NFVET är ett av dessa. Utbildningsområdet spelar en allt viktigare roll i att hjälpa människor att ständigt förbättra sina färdigheter och bidra till deras delaktighet och sociala integration. Men kontextuella faktorer såsom brist på resurser, bristande lärarkompetens och svaga kopplingar mellan utbildningsprogram och arbetsmarknad utgör de huvudsakliga hindren för att uppnå målen för dessa program.

Slutsatsen är att många NFVET-aktiviteter måste förbättras. Förändringar bör omfatta förstärkning av nuvarande policies, professionalisering av lärare genom kompetensutveckling och förbättring av lärares arbetsvillkor. Vidare behövs det förbättring av de befintliga styrdokumenten och läromedel med hänsyn till de deltagarnas behov, kontexten och den efterfrågan som finns på arbetsmarknaden. Slutligen föreslås inrättande av funktionella partnerskap mellan NFVET-leverantörer och systematisk uppföljning av programmen för att säkerställa dess kvalitet och hållbarhet.
Introdução
A educação em Moçambique é considerada como um ‘direito’ e ‘dever’ de cada cidadão. Nesta perspectiva, diferentes políticas e iniciativas têm sido implementadas. Contudo, muitas crianças, jovens e adultos continuam excluídos deste direito, principalmente nas zonas rurais. A Educação formal por si só, no contexto de Moçambique não é suficiente para responder à crescente demanda. Assim, a Educação Não Formal (ENF) tem um papel importante no aumento de oportunidades de educação e formação para muitos cidadãos, em particular, os grupos mais vulneráveis, sobretudo jovens fora da escola e sem emprego.

A motivação para este estudo deriva da experiência da autora deste trabalho como estudante e como docente e investigadora na área de Educação de Jovens e Adultos em Moçambique. O problema de escassez de oportunidades de educação formal, desemprego e crescente necessidade de formação, num contexto de rápidas mudanças sociais e económicas que se registam no país, são aspectos que também influenciaram na escolha deste tema.

De acordo com Santos, Roffarelo e Filipe (2016), o desemprego em Moçambique atinge 22 por cento. Factores como: elevadas taxas de analfabetismo, em particular nas zonas rurais e entre a população feminina, fraca formação académica e profissional entre outros, têm sido apontados como sendo parte dos grandes desafios que Moçambique enfrenta. A ENF, em particular a Educação Não-Formal Vocacional (ENFV), tem sido considerada uma das formas de expansão de oportunidades de aprendizagem para muitos jovens e adultos. Contudo, alguns destes programas ainda enfrentam limitações e não podem responder com sucesso às necessidades dos formandos nem à demanda do mercado de trabalho.

Contexto
Depois da independência, em 1975, Moçambique herdou um país pobre, dependente e exigüa mão-de-obra qualificada. Uma das principais causas desta situação é que a cultura colonialista vedava o direito à educação a muitos moçambicanos. Com a independência, e saída da maioria dos portugueses do país, muitos sectores ressentiram-se da falta de técnicos qualificados particularmente na área da Educação.

Para a melhoria do acesso à educação no país, diferentes medidas foram adoptadas, a mais notável consistiu na expansão da rede escolar e na implementação de campanhas massivas de alfabetização. Contudo, em 1977,
a guerra civil começou tendo afectado muitas acções e perspectivas de mudança e desenvolvimento, principalmente na área social e económica.

Em 1987, o governo introduziu o ‘Programa de Ajustamento Estrutural’ através do Fundo Monetário Internacional (FMI) seguido de mudanças constitucionais em 1990 (Lundin, 2004). A implementação das políticas do FMI no país foi mais uma fase difícil para a vida de muitas pessoas, uma vez que as medidas adoptadas incluíam profundos cortes nos sectores sociais públicos (Eduardo, 2012). Em 1992 com o acordo geral de paz um novo ambiente político, económico e social emergiu.


Os elevados índices de pobreza, desemprego e fracas oportunidades de educação e formação contribuem para a vulnerabilidade de muitas famílias. A necessidade de aprendizagem de jovens e adultos requer não só a provisão de mais programas educacionais mas também a provisão de iniciativas relevantes e uma perspectiva de aprendizagem contínua para que as pessoas possam aprender, responderem positivamente às mudanças e continuamente aprenderem e melhorarem as suas vidas.

Diferentes iniciativas para a melhoria da formação vocacional e profissional no país estão em curso, um dos mais complexos e com tendência a ser abrangente é o Programa Integrado da Reforma da Educação Técnico-Profissional (PIREP), cuja implementação iniciou em 2006 com o seu término previsto para 2020. Este programa inclui, de certo modo, a melhoria de alguns programas de ENFV através do Fundo para o Desenvolvimento de Competências (FUNDEC), que é acedido por concurso público.

**Enquadramento Teórico**
Este estudo foi iluminado pelas teorias e conceitos de Educação de Adultos tendo se baseado em autores como Paulo Freire, Malcolm Knowles e Peter Jarvis. O estudo é também baseado na Teoria Histórico-Cultural de Actividade (Cultural Historical Activity theory). A Teoria Histórico-Cultural de Actividade tem a sua origem no trabalho de Lev Vygotsky e é datada dos
anos 1920 e princípios de 1930 (Verenikina, 2001). Hoje em dia, esta teoria tornou-se multidisciplinar e é usada em muitas áreas de estudo. A Teoria Historico-Cultural de Actividade visa compreender os indivíduos e as instituições que eles compõem, considerando a actividade como interacção entre o sujeito e o contexto, através de artefactos ( sinais e instrumentos) resultando em mudanças recíprocas entre o sujeito e o contexto (Kaptelinin & Nardi, 2006).

As teorias e conceitos de Educação de Adultos contribuíram na compreensão dos processos de ensino e aprendizagem bem como do papel e importância da educação de jovens e adultos num contexto de mudanças. A Teoria Histórico-Cultural de Actividade facilitou a compreensão do desenvolvimento histórico da educação vocacional em Moçambique e a identificação e interpretação das contradições que se registam na sua implementação. Esta teoria enfatiza melhorias nas competências das pessoas como sujeitos dos sistemas de actividades em que elas actuam, visando mudanças e desenvolvimento.

A provisão da educação para as pessoas de todas as idades é essencial uma vez que contribui para que elas possam responder as rápidas mudanças (Jarvis, 2010) participando de forma activa na vida social e económica da sociedade. A aprendizagem contribui para o aumento da produtividade e melhoria de vida das pessoas e da sociedade como um todo (UNESCO, 2012).

O papel preponderante da Educação de Jovens e Adultos tem sido cada vez mais reconhecido especialmente nos contextos dos países em desenvolvimento. Isto constitui um desafio para os professores/formadores que têm que adoptar métodos apropriados, que possam conduzir as pessoas a serem participativas, independentes e criativas. Freire (2005) por exemplo, considera que professores e educadores precisam de agir como facilitadores ajudando as pessoas a aprenderem num processo em que os aprendentes são vistos como sujeitos da aprendizagem e não como simples receptáculos de conteúdos de aprendizagem.

Freire defende que a Educação deve resolver a ‘contradição professor-aluno’ para que ambos possam ser simultâneamente professores e alunos. Neste processo, os alunos não mais serão tratados como recipientes de um conjunto de informações previamente elaborados pelo professor ‘aquele que sabe tudo’. Os alunos poderão colaborar com o seu facilitador na construção do conhecimento que poderão aplicar no seu dia a dia, reforçando o seu poder como seres sociais. Na prática, Freire defende a aprendizagem centrada no aprendente que é também um dos princípios básicos da Educação de Adultos – andragogia, que segundo Knowles (1980, 1990) é a ciência e arte de facilitar a prendizagem de pessoas adultas.
Metodologia
O estudo é qualitativo de carácter exploratório e é inspirado pelas ideias de pesquisa acção através do envolvimento activo dos respondentes e sua colaboração na construção do conhecimento. Para a recolha de dados usou-se entrevistas semi-estruturadas, sessões de grupos focais, narrativas de histórias de vida, observações não-participantes nas salas de aulas dos centros de formação profissional seleccionados e análise de documentos electrónicos e impressos.

Este estudo inclui a pesquisa de dois centros de formação vocacional localizados na zona periférica de Maputo envolvendo formadores, formandos e ex-formandos. O estudo resultou em cinco artigos, já publicados, o que significa que todos os artigos desta tese beneficiaram de uma revisão de pares, além de que os seus resultados preliminares iam sendo discutidos com pessoas da área de educação e de emprego e formação profissional em workshops e conferências.

Resultados
Os resultados deste estudo revelam que a educação vocacional tem uma longa história no país. Ela tem sido incluída não só nos currículos do ensino técnico profissional, mas também nos programas do ensino básico. A educação vocacional em Moçambique é desenvolvida por diferentes organizações, na Educação Formal, e na Educação Não-Formal. Assim, a ENF tem se revelado como uma área crucial no contexto de Moçambique onde é vista como uma das formas de ampliar as oportunidades de educação e formação para diferentes grupos sociais, em particular para os jovens e adultos fora da escola e sem emprego. Os respondentes de ambos os sexos consideram a ENF, em particular a ENFV um meio de desenvolverem conhecimentos e habilidades que possam permitir a sua entrada para o mercado de trabalho e melhorarem as suas condições de vida. Contudo, alguns respondentes do sexo feminino também consideram a ENF em geral, como forma de quebrarem a monotonia das actividades domésticas nos seus lares e interagirem com outras pessoas.

Os resultados deste estudo também mostram que o contexto actual do país caracterizado por rápidas mudanças sociais e económicas influenciadas pelos megaproyectos e pela recente descoberta de recursos naturais em algumas províncias do país, contribui para uma crescente necessidade de aprendizagem de jovens e adultos e maior valorização da ENFV.

Contudo, muitos programas e ENFV ainda enfrentam muitos desafios, esses desafios incluem problemas ligados à qualificação dos formadores em termos de conhecimentos técnicos e pedagógicos, bem como à provisão de oportunidades para a sua capacitação contínua; à qualidade de equipamentos e matérias de ensino-aprendizagem; à coordenação e cooperação entre os provedores de formação; à relevância dos programas e
alinhamento entre as necessidades dos aprendentes e as exigências do mercado de trabalho.

Em suma, regista-se um fosso entre as políticas de educação, que realçam a expansão do acesso às oportunidades de educação no país, a melhoria de qualidade de ensino e as práticas de ENFV no terreno. Deste modo, o estudo revela também que estes programas precisam de ser melhorados.

Acções relevantes tendentes à melhoria da educação vocacional e profissional, no país estão sendo implementadas, porém, muito há ainda por ser feito. Entre as acções necessárias menciona-se o fortalecimento das estratégias de implementação das políticas existentes, a necessidade de profissionalização dos formadores/educadores através do melhoramento das suas competências, melhoramento das condições de trabalho nos centros de formação incluindo a renovação e provisão dos materiais de ensino-aprendizagem bem como a actualização dos currículos, adequando-os à nova realidade. A ligação e estabelecimento de parcerias funcionais entre os provedores da ENFV e o mercado laboral bem como o controlo e monitoria das actividades de formação, são também aspectos apontados como parte das medidas que podem aumentar as chances de sucesso dos programas de ENFV.

Discussão
Os resultados deste estudo mostram que os programas de ENFV são susceptíveis de contribuir no desenvolvimento de conhecimentos e habilidades dos jovens e adultos e elevarem as suas oportunidades de participar activamente na vida económica e social nas suas comunidades e na sociedade de um modo geral. Estes programas não só podem contribuir para a inclusão social dos grupos vulneráveis mas também são um meio de proporcionar à todos os grupos sociais, uma aprendizagem contínua, necessária no contexto de rápidas mudanças sociais, económicas tecnológicas e políticas, que se operam no país.

As vantagens da abordagem de ENF incluem não só a sua característica de flexibilidade, mas também o facto de serem programas de curta duração. Esta característica beneficia as pessoas adultas porque elas tendem a participar em programas de aprendizagem com o objectivo de resolverem problemas actuais do seu dia-a-dia. De acordo com Knowles (1980) os adultos têm a tendência de participarem em programas de aprendizagem quando eles percebem a sua aplicação imediata na sua vida.

O uso da Teoria Historico-Cultural de Actividade contribuiu para a compreensão do desenvolvimento histórico da educação vocacional no contexto de Moçambique, bem como na interpretação das contradições que caracterizam a sua implementação. Nos últimos anos a educação vocacional tanto no contexto do ensino básico formal público como no contexto da ENF
enfrenta sérios desafios e a sua implementação no ensino básico nas escolas públicas tende a fracassar.

A tendência á marginalização da educação vocacional, como trabalho manual no país, pode ter uma interpretação histórica. Antes da independência trabalhos manuais, em especial os que exigem força física eram considerados tarefas para os moçambicanos, em geral, aqueles que não tivessem conseguido boas qualificações em termos de escolarização. Alguns anos depois da independência trabalhos manuais, incluindo agricultura, eram usados como um meio de punição das pessoas que eram consideradas indisciplinadas. Estes aspectos podem estar a contribuir para a fraca atenção atribuída à educação vocacional e pouco interesse pelo trabalho manual. A imagem negativa em relação ao trabalho manual reflecte-se também na escolha de profissões, por parte dos jovens.

Entretanto, no contexto de desemprego, pobreza em contrastes com as mudanças económicas e sociais no país, a ENFV está sendo promovida nas políticas educacionais. Muitas organizações governamentais, não-governamentais, sector privado e confissões religiosas estão envolvidas na implementação deste tipo de educação. Diferentes medidas têm sido implementadas com o objectivo de se melhorar a educação vocacional e o Ensino Técnico Profissional em Moçambique. Um dos maiores programas em curso é PIREP que de certo modo, inclui a ENFV.

No entanto, o estudo mostra que ainda registam-se contradições entre as políticas de Educação que promovem a ENF no contexto de expansão de oportunidades de educação e formação e as práticas no terreno, principalmente no que diz respeito á qualidade de alguns programas. Estes aspectos contribuem para uma ENFV teórica, pouco adaptada ás necessidades dos participantes e muito menos ao mercado de trabalho. Contudo, segundo a Teoria Histórico-Cultural de Actividade, contradições são uma fonte de reflexão para a melhoria dos sistemas de actividades e são também consideradas uma força para a mudança e desenvolvimento. O presente estudo contribui na identificação de factores que podem concorrer para a melhoria da ENFV, no contexto de Moçambique.

No concernente às percepções dos aprendentes e dos formadores o estudo mostra que eles acreditam que as competências que os participantes adquirem nos cursos de ENFV podem ajudar a melhorar as suas vidas. Em geral, eles consideram a necessidade de melhorar as suas condições sócio-económicas como sendo a razão que os leva a participarem nestes cursos. Esta atitude pode ser considerada como uma atitude proactiva dado que através da aprendizagem as pessoas podem melhorar as suas condições de vida, influenciam mudanças nas suas comunidades e na sociedade em geral.

A abordagem de género usada neste estudo, permitiu compreender que nas famílias moçambicanas e sociedade em geral, a dominação dos homens
prevalece. Algumas mulheres participam nos programas de formação como forma de poderem se ausentar das suas casas, porque elas não são permitidas a participarem em outras actividades que não sejam as ligadas à vida doméstica e familiar. Isto resulta das práticas de dominação exercidas pelos homens, como resultado da cultura de discriminação baseada nas diferenças de género e na injusta divisão de trabalho entre homens e mulheres, principalmente nas famílias mais desfavorecidas.

A maioria dos participantes dos programas de ENFV são jovens e adultos fora da escola e sem emprego eles esperam mudanças na sua vida com base nos conhecimentos e habilidades que contam desenvolver nestes programas. A educação de adultos (ENF) é geralmente caracterizada como um tipo de educação que é flexível com o objectivo de responder às necessidades de aprendizagem de um determinado grupo alvo.

Com as rápidas mudanças que se operam nas sociedades e com a crescente necessidade de aprendizagem ao longo da vida, em muitos países, tal como em Moçambique, a ENF em geral, também beneficia pessoas de diferentes níveis de escolaridade, incluindo o nível superior. Estas pessoas têm participado em vários tipos de programas de ENF para a satisfação das suas diferentes necessidades de aprendizagem e melhorarem as suas competências.

Não obstante o crescente reconhecimento do papel da ENF em Moçambique e esforços para a sua melhoria, muitos desafios permanecem, em particular, no sector público e em algumas organizações comunitárias, esses desafios afectam o alcance dos objectivos dos programas e a imagem e “status” dos formadores que se consideram marginalizados. Assim, os formadores sugerem a profissionalização da ENF através do melhoramento das suas competências e suas condições de trabalho, a renovação e provisão de currículos, materiais de ensino-aprendizagem. Estas sugestões passam necessariamente pelo fortalecimento das políticas existentes, e real investimento financeiro na área de Educação de Adultos, no país.

No tocante aos factores necessários para o melhoramento dos programas de ENFV, Tukundane e Blaak (2010) e Yassunaga (2014) enfatizam o uso de um programa flexível. A flexibilidade de um programa permite a inserção de ajustamentos ao longo da sua implementação de modo a responder às necessidades e características dos formandos e, neste caso, também às exigências, cada vez crescentes, do mercado de trabalho.

Eu estou de acordo com Nampota (2010) que sugere o controlo e monitoria das actividades de formação para a garantia da sua qualidade. A monitoria permite a identificação atempada de falhas e sua correção. Aconselhamento e orientação profissional também são apresentados como formas de elevar as possibilidades de os graduados poderem aplicar os conhecimentos adquiridos, no seu dia-a-dia (Blaak, Openjuru & Zeelen, 2013). Grande parte dos participantes dos cursos de ENFV em Moçambique
é constituída por pessoas em risco de exclusão, com experiências negativas da aprendizagem formal, aconselhamento e orientação profissional são susceptíveis de contribuir para elevar a sua auto-estima e auto-confiança.

**Conclusão**

Este estudo tinha como objectivo obter uma compreensão mais profunda sobre a ENFV em Moçambique e explorar estratégias que possam contribuir para o melhoramento desta área. O estudo conclui que o actual contexto social e económico em Moçambique requer um maior investimento na educação vocacional em particular na ENFV, incluindo o desenvolvimento das competências dos formadores.

A ENFV em Moçambique tem se mostrado como sendo não apenas uma forma de aumentar o acesso à educação aos grupos vulneráveis mas também como forma de provisão de oportunidades de educação e formação a todas as pessoas. Isto demanda o desenvolvimento de programas de ENFV relevantes que possam responder às necessidades de aprendizagem dos participantes, bem como das suas comunidades e da sociedade em geral.

O uso da perspectiva histórica permitiu compreender que o valor da educação básica vocacional tem vindo a ser reconhecido ao longo dos diferentes períodos históricos em Moçambique, mas a sua implementação tem sido caracterizada por muitos desafios, principalmente depois da independência.

A ENFV em Moçambique é desenvolvida por diferentes actores entre eles: organizações governamentais, organizações não-governamentais, organizações religiosas e sector privado, contudo, de acordo com os resultados deste estudo, a qualidade em alguns programas desses provedores ainda é de questionar. O estudo revela existência de contradições principalmente localizadas entre as políticas de educação que promovem a expansão do acesso à educação e melhoria de qualidade e as práticas de ENFV no terreno. Essas contradições precisam ser resolvidas para o melhoramento desta área de educação.

De acordo com os resultados deste estudo, as medidas para a melhoria da ENFV incluem o fortalecimento das políticas e estratégias da sua implementação, o desenvolvimento de estratégias que possam permitir um apoio técnico e profissional aos formadores bem como a profissionalização da sua área de trabalho. A profissionalização da ENFV, inclui o desenvolvimento das competências dos formadores e o melhoramento das suas condições de trabalho. O estudo também aponta para a actualização dos currículos e materiais de ensino adequando-os às necessidades dos formandos ao contexto e às exigências no mercado laboral.

Parcerias funcionais entre os provedores de ENFV, são também sugeridas, bem como uma avaliação participativa e sistemática dos programas para se assegurar a sua qualidade e sustentabilidade.
**Palavras chave:** Educação de Adultos, Educação Não-Formal, Educação e Formação Vocacional, empoderamento, habilidades para a vida, profissionalização, teoria histórico-cultural de actividade.
Abbreviations

AIDS Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
CAPM Centro de Alfabetização e Promoção da Mulher
CFPUGC Centro de Formação Profissional da União Geral das Cooperativas
CHAT Cultural Historical Activity Theory
EFA Education For All
EP Ensino Primário
ESG Ensino Secundário Geral
FUNDEC Fundo para o Desenvolvimento de Competências
GDP Gross Domestic Product
HDI Human Development Indicators
HIV Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IMF International Monetary Fund
INE Instituto Nacional de Estatística
INEFP Instituto Nacional de Emprego e Formação Profissional
IPC Internationale Projekt Consult
MDGs Millennium Development Goals
MINEDH Ministério de Educação e Desenvolvimento Humano
MOZAL Mozambique Aluminium
NFE Non-Formal Education
NFVET Non-Formal Vocational Education and Training
NGOs Non-Governmental Organisations
PARP Plano de Acção para a Redução da Pobreza
PARPA Plano de Acção para a Redução da Pobreza Absoluta
PIB Produto Interno Bruto
PIREP Programa Integrado de Reforma da Educação Profissional
SDGs Sustainable Development Goals
TVE Technical and Vocational Education
TVET Technical Vocational Education and Training
UEM Universidade Eduardo Mondlane
UGC União Geral das Cooperativas
UNDP United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USAID United States Agency for International Development
VET Vocational Education and Training
WHO World Health Organisation
List of articles of this thesis


The role of the author of this thesis concerning the published articles:
Regarding the first article- article I, the author of this thesis contributed with the design of the data collection instruments, the collection and analysis of data and translation of the relevant excerpts from Portuguese to English, in addition to writing the article as co-author. With regard to the articles (II, III, IV and V), the author designed the study and the data collection instruments, collected and analysed data, translated the relevant parts of the data from Portuguese to English and wrote the articles as the main author.
1. Introduction

My life and my educational experience before and after the independence of Mozambique in 1975, as well as my professional work as a teacher have influenced the selection of Non-Formal Vocational Education and Training (NFVET) as the topic of this PhD study. My personal background, which I briefly present below, also served as a basis for the acquisition of a deeper understanding of this area of education in the context of Mozambique.

My professional experience in education – both formal and non-formal - began after finishing the teacher training program in 1984 when I started working as a teacher in a secondary school in Maputo. I enjoyed interacting with my students. They became part of my life. When some of them dropped out of school I used to visit their families and we tried to find solutions together. The common problems experienced by the families were poverty, early marriage, drugs, etc. Sometimes the school also excluded the learners because of their age; they were considered “too old” to be in school. Some of them were transferred to evening classes but many dropped out again. They looked for employment, but it was difficult to find a job not only because formal employment is scarce in the country but also due to their lack of schooling and skills. The parents of these adolescents and youths used to come to me asking about the possibility of reintegrating their sons and daughters in school but very often no solution was found. These young people became practically excluded, not only from school but also from becoming active citizens in society.

Some years later I studied at the Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM) in Maputo, taking the Master course in Adult Education and I wrote my dissertation on Non-Formal Education (NFE), analysing three programmes of NFE implemented in Maputo city. During the field work I became aware of the potential of NFE and the hope people placed in it. I realised that NFE can be one of the ways to help people (in particular the out of school and unemployed) to improve their knowledge and skills. Thus they are better prepared to deal with the challenges of their daily lives as well as to cope with increasing changes in the country. A young participant in one of NFE programmes told me that he likes to learn because he wants to become ‘alguém’ (someone). In this way he expressed his wish to become a useful citizen. To become 'someone' is not only a matter of the acquisition of writing, reading or practical skills, as is the case in some NFE programmes, but it is also profoundly linked to positive attitudes and values, freedom and the power that individuals need to develop. Learning to become 'someone’ is to become empowered, to develop yourself continually and to grow into a participative and useful citizen. Young people’s aspirations now go above
and beyond just reaching a minimum level of economic subsistence. Thus, I started to realise that NFE in Mozambique needs rethinking from a broader perspective in order to meet the expectations of the participants and of society.

NFE in Mozambique is generally perceived as a way to increase education and training opportunities, since formal education is still limited compared to the increasing demand. NFE programmes are expected to contribute to the improvement of people’s competencies and increase their chances of coping with the challenges of everyday life. International studies have confirmed the correlation between poor education and lack of skills and poverty. For instance, Preece and Singh (2003) highlight that education (formal or non-formal) can enhance people’s capacity to earn a living and increase their access to the labour market. In order to expand opportunities for education and training in Mozambique different programmes in NFE are carried out by different governmental and non-governmental Organizations (NGOs). The field is considered to be of growing importance.

As Rogers (2005) observes, NFE is becoming part of the educational agenda not only in the developing countries, but also among more economically advanced nations. While in developing countries the discourse of NFE in general focuses on social inclusion issues, in more economically advanced countries NFE is viewed as one of the approaches of lifelong learning, taking into consideration that people need to learn throughout their life span continually improving their capacities. Lifelong learning is a broad concept that provides people with new opportunities to improve their competencies and to participate fully in economic, social and political life in society. The pressure from the labour market for people to update their knowledge and skills and the advantages of flexible NFE delivery can be considered as the main reasons why many governments look at NFE, “especially in the light of growing populations and the escalating costs of education combined with more limited funding” (Rogers, 2005, p. 3). This is also the case in Mozambique.

The motivation for this PhD study derives from my experiences as a teacher and a researcher in NFE. The study is influenced by the fact that the Mozambican context is characterized by a lack of formal education, unemployment and poverty, which are in stark contrast with the increasing demand for knowledge and skills, arising from rapid socio-economic and political changes in the country. This context also accentuates the need for flexible education and training, particularly for out of school youth and the unemployed. These social groups are to a certain extent excluded from active participation in the economic and social life of their communities and society. Thus, the relevance of this study is linked to the necessity to understand NFE, particularly NFVET and its task to help people to cope
positively with the current changes in society and the need to improve their lives.

The object of this study is NFVET as a way to provide knowledge, skills, attitudes and values for youth and adults, in particular for those who are out of school and unemployed. This study also considers gender issues in education, bearing in mind that adult education can contribute to the reduction of inequalities between women and men. The study focuses on the analysis of NFVET in Mozambique and on developing knowledge that can contribute to its improvement. The aims and the research questions of this study are described below.

1.1 Aims of the research
The aim of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of NFVET in Mozambique, its context and historical development and to explore strategies that can contribute to the improvement of this type of educational programme. In order to reach this aim, the following specific objectives and research questions are formulated:

**Specific aims**

- To analyse the historical development of NFVET in Mozambique.

- To examine the predominant policies that guided NFVET, as a part of adult education in the period 2000-2015.

- To identify the motives and expectations that influence youth and adults to participate in the selected NFVET programmes, taking into account gender differences.

- To explore educators’ perceptions, experiences and reflections in the selected NFVET programmes.

- To explore how NFVET programmes can be improved to ensure the development of relevant knowledge and skills by the participants.

1.2 Research questions
To achieve the aims indicated above the following research questions were formulated:

- What are the historical and contextual factors that have shaped the development of VET in Mozambique?
• What are the main policies that guided the implementation of NFVET in the context of adult education in the period 2000-2015, in Mozambique?

• What motives and expectations can be identified among male and female participants of NFVET programmes in Mozambique?

• How do the educators experience and understand NFVET?

• How can NFVET programmes be improved to enhance people’s chances to get work and to participate actively in their own process of learning and development?

A broad spectrum of adult education theories was used in this thesis as a theoretical framework to place NFVET in Mozambique in the broader international discourse. Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) constituted another important part of the theoretical framework. Both adult education theories and CHAT are considered as theoretical tools to understand the necessary changes and developments in the field of NFVET.

This understanding played an important role in the interpretation of data concerning ways to improve NFVET programmes in the context of Mozambique.
2. Context of the study

The geographical location of Mozambique, its general background including the socio-economic context, the educational context, and an overview of NFVET in Mozambique and the characteristics of the organisations included in this study are presented below.

2.1 General context
Mozambique is situated on the east coast of Africa, bordering South Africa, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Zambia, Malawi and Tanzania. Its area is 799 380 km², distributed over 11 provinces. The last population census of the National Institute of Statistic (INE, 2007) in 2007 stated that Mozambique had 20 530 714 inhabitants. However, an estimation from the Bertelsmann Stiftung report (BTI, 2016) at the end of 2015 is that the number of inhabitants in Mozambique was around 27 million of which around 51.2 percent are women and 48.8 percent are men. Mozambique has 18 national languages and many more dialects, which build a mosaic of different languages and cultures. Portuguese is its official language. Mozambique is the only Portuguese speaking country in East Africa. The figure 1 represents the geographical situation of Mozambique.

Figure 1. Map of Mozambique
2.2 Socio-economic context
Mozambique gained independence from Portugal in 1975. Portuguese colonisers left the country with a weak economy, a dependence on foreign countries as well as a lack of skilled labour. According to Internationale Projekt Consult (IPC, 2014, p.1) in many areas “the departure of the Portuguese at the end of colonial rule left a void with respect to technical know-how”. After independence there was a period of modernisation with a socialist orientation, towards economic and social development based on collectivist values, which was “to be achieved in a period of ten years” (Lundin, 2004, p. 4). Many actions and changes were undertaken. The efforts to create a new economic, social and political environment influenced profoundly the way of living of many citizens both in urban and rural areas. In 1977 civil war started and caused devastating consequences for the whole country. This resulted in a complete destruction of the infrastructures, a great number of deaths particularly in rural areas and an increased migration of people to the cities. According to Mbele (2005) the economy collapsed and more than 1 million people died.

In 1987 the government embarked on a macro-economic reform called Structural Adjustment with a focus on a market-oriented economy that was followed by constitutional changes in 1990 (Lundin, 2004). In this period, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies were introduced and “severe cuts in public spending in social sectors” were implemented (Eduardo, 2012, p. 3). These measures affected the social, political and economic domains and had a great negative impact on ordinary people as many protective social measures financed by the state were reduced. The privatisation of properties was also initiated and individualism increased in society. From 1992, with the general agreement of peace and the adoption of a free market-oriented economy, many political and social changes were implemented in the country particularly in education and employment.

Recently, with the emergence of mega business projects and the discovery of natural resources in some provinces of the country, a notable economic growth has been registered in Mozambique. This refers, for instance, to coal exploitation in the province of Tete with major investments from Brazil and India and the Aluminium smelter (MOZAL), which contributes greatly to the country’s export capacity (IPC, 2014). According to BTI (2016), the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate in 2013 was 7 percent and 8.4 percent in 2014. However many challenges remain. Some of them are related to fragile institutions, poor infrastructure, emerging political instability and the weak provision of basic social services including food insecurity and a high prevalence of HIV (Francisco & Sales, 2013). This situation is aggravated by growing social and economic inequalities.

Due to the commitment of Mozambique to different international initiatives, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) from 2000
which were included in the National Plan for the Reduction of Poverty (PARP), some improvements can be observed (Francisco & Sales, 2013). For instance, on the MDGs agenda, Mozambique reached 96 percent of the MDG target for primary school enrolment in 2014 (Santos, Roffarelo & Filipe, 2016). Despite these improvements, Mozambique is still one of the poorest countries in Africa. According to the latest Human Development Index (2015), Mozambique is positioned as 181 out of 188 countries (UNDP, 2016). There are also disparities within different social groups. Many people living in suburban and rural areas lack an adequate standard of living. According to Santos et al (2016, p. 4) “it is estimated that more that 50 percent of the population still lives on less than one American Dollar a day.”

In parallel with the economic development in Mozambique the cost of living is also rapidly increasing. This contributes to an increased vulnerability and poverty amongst many families. For example, according to Santos et al. (2016), unemployment was 22 percent in 2015. In this regard, BTI (2016, p. 16) reported that “only 26 percent of women participate in the (formal) labour market, compared with 75.8 percent of men. In general women find their place of work in subsistence agriculture and in the informal sector. According to the National Institute of Statistics (INE, 2010) in 2008/9 around 75.1 percent of women worked in the agriculture sector and 11.6 percent worked in the petty trading.

In general, the scarcity of formal jobs contributes to the expansion of the informal sector in the country. The informal sector also represents the major activity of many low skilled people who migrate from rural areas to the urban areas looking for employment and better living conditions. Thus, the informal sector represents a substantial part of work and income generating activities in Mozambique. It is linked to self-employment and micro-enterprises having a small number of workers. Informal activity is “not registered and does not comply with legal obligations concerning safety, taxes, labour laws” (Bigsten, Kimuyu & Lundvall, 2004, p. 704).

Factors such as high illiteracy rates, particularly in rural areas and among women, the low productivity of the agricultural sector and lack of skills among youth and adults (INEFP, 2006) are raised as some of the reasons for the prevalence of poverty in Mozambique. The latest Poverty Reduction Action Plan (PARP) for 2011-2014 points out that “in terms of labour supply, the level of vocational and academic training remains low” in the country and “around 80 percent of the workforce has not completed the first level of primary school” (PARP, 2011, p. 12). In many cases the people selected to work in certain professional areas are trained within the companies. For instance, “at MOZAL, the second largest aluminium producer in Africa which employs approximately 1500 people, of whom 94 percent are Mozambicans, personnel are mainly trained on the job” (IPC, 2014, p. 6).
The problem of lack of skills among youth and adults requires not only the provision of opportunities for education and training but also assurance of its relevance and quality. This is particularly important in the context of Mozambique where almost 400,000 eighteen-year-olds enter the labour market each year (BTI, 2016) but many of them lack the necessary knowledge and skills for employment. Santos et al. (2016, p. 11) noted that the major characteristic of job seekers is that of a “low skilled population”. The problem of lack of skills has an impact on people’s chances to take advantage of the fact that, currently, many jobs are being created by foreign investments in the country.

2.3 Educational context
Before independence the level of illiteracy in Mozambique was about 93 percent (Lind, 1985). Many Mozambicans were condemned to stay illiterate. After independence, education was recognised as a right of all citizens and “an instrument for the affirmation and integration of individuals in social, economic and political life” (Ministry of Education, 2012, p. 9). With this principle in mind, primary education was expanded and national literacy campaigns were carried out from 1978 onwards. As a result, illiteracy rates dropped to 72 percent in 1982 and to around 53 percent in 2004 (Luís, 2012). During this period many educational opportunities were created, particularly for poor citizens. Many people could join different educational programmes or had the opportunity to continue their studies on different courses and levels, some also receiving a scholarship to continue their studies abroad.

After the end of the civil war (1992) the education sector experienced substantial progress, in particular regarding increased access to all levels of schooling. However, due to limited resources and poor infrastructure the expansion of education is still slow. Access to and participation in education is a multifaceted problem in Mozambique. In some regions children, in particular girls are hindered from going to school due to cultural barriers and excessive domestic work duties in their households. Currently, the total illiteracy rate in Mozambique is around 50.4 percent of which 64.2 percent are women, compared with 34.6 percent for men. In rural areas the illiteracy rate among women is around 65.5 percent compared with 46.1 for men (Ministry of Education, 2012). The scourge of AIDS also affects many families in Mozambique. When parents get sick they cannot support their children and as a result they drop out of school.

The government has given priority to primary education (the first seven years of schooling) and also promotes the development of a complete educational system including the expansion of secondary, technical vocational, and higher education (Ministry of Education, 2012). Many institutions in Mozambique are involved in this effort, including not only the
Ministry of Education, but also other governmental institutions, non-governmental organisations, religious organisations and the private sector. The figure 2 represents the structure of the national educational system.

Figure 2. The structure of the Mozambican national educational system
The system of education in Mozambique faces many constraints; some of which are related to access and completion. To improve access to education and raise completion rates in primary education, the government implemented a set of measures including the abolition of school registration fees and the provision of free text books, in 2004-2005. These measures have resulted in an increased gross enrolment rate. For instance, in 1994 the gross enrolment rate in primary education was 62 percent, but in 2012 it was around 100 percent. During the same period the gross enrolment rate in secondary education increased from 7 percent to 26 percent (Sparreboom & Staneva, 2015). In spite of the increased access rates, there are still challenges related to completion rates. Many pupils in particular in rural areas do not complete the seven years of compulsory education (EP2), and the number of graduates tends to decrease in subsequent levels, as can be seen in table 1. These figures are relatively similar to the annual school results of other years.

Table 1. Annual results from public schools – grades 5, 7, 10 and 12 and the percentage of failures and drop outs, in 2015 in Mozambique. Adapted from MINEDH (2015, p. 39 and 51).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last grade of each level of general education</th>
<th>Total of pupils at the end of school year</th>
<th>Number of graduates</th>
<th>Failures (%)</th>
<th>Drop outs (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5 (EP1)</td>
<td>552,021</td>
<td>389,857</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7 (EP2)</td>
<td>345,972</td>
<td>230,121</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10 (ESG1)</td>
<td>146,603</td>
<td>62,170</td>
<td>57.6%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12 (ESG2)</td>
<td>57,177</td>
<td>29,328</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table 1 shows that the number of graduates decreases rapidly from one educational level to another. Hundreds of thousands of children drop out from compulsory school every year. Non-Formal Vocational Education and Training in Mozambique becomes an alternative route for many young people who cannot progress through formal education. This happens not only because of failures and dropouts, but also because age limits are stipulated for pupils to attend each grade. After a certain age they can no longer enrol in public schools. Therefore, NFVET provides new educational opportunities for them.

2.3.1 Vocational education policy context
Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) in Mozambique has been recognised as one of the ways to improve people's living conditions and the country's economy. This can be understood from the perspective of the rapidly growing demand for technical and professional skills stimulated by the new economic and social environment of the country. With regard to this, Mozambique embarked on a process of the improvement of TVE through a comprehensive programme of reform, also including NFVET in this process. According to Romiszowsky (2015, p. 8) the policy objective of
the reform of TVE in Mozambique is to “transform the current supply-driven system into a modern demand-driven TVE to respond to the needs of the labour market”. This reform involved different actors, amongst them international donors, different governmental and non-governmental organisations and the private sector, with the aim of rethinking and improving TVE in a collaborative and inclusive way.

The reform policy concerning TVE in Mozambique is called the Integrated Reform Programme of Professional Education- Programa Integrado de Reforma da Educação Técnico Professional (PIREP). It started in 2006 and is planned to finish in 2020. The main emphases of PIREP according to Pinto (2010) are the following aspects: institutional development; the development of a competencies based system; the improvement of quality through teacher training; the provision of adequate teaching material, equipment and infrastructures; the establishment of orientation services for students; the reinforcement of the capacity of the management of the institutions of technical and professional education, as well as the creation of a fund for the development of capacities.

According to IPC (2014, p. 16) “the principal concern of PIREP is to build up the quantity and quality of vocational training available in Mozambique, thereby creating a solid national vocational education system”. Nonetheless, TVE in Mozambique still needs many efforts and resources to reach the desired standards in both quality and quantity. For instance, in terms of quantity there are 13 medium level TVE institutions in the country and many of them are in the capital of the country- Maputo city (4) and near to the capital- Maputo province (3) (IPC, 2014). The issue of lack of TVE institutions does not only exist in relation to formal TVE, but it appears in all types and levels of education in Mozambique, including NFVET. INEF, which is the main provider of NFVET has only 12 training centres in the entire country. This situation contributes to inequality between different regions in the country in terms of access to education and training.

Recently, Act 6/2016 (Boletim da República, 2016), concerning the improvement of TVE in Mozambique was approved. Article 5 of this Act is related to the specific objectives of professional training in Mozambique (both formal and non-formal). It focuses on measures for the development of competencies of different actors including teachers as a way to improve this area of education in the country. These objectives include: 1) To improve human resources through the introduction of teaching methods and curriculum responding to the needs of the labour market, 2) To promote participation of teachers in learning activities in the work place, 3) To stimulate the participation of teachers in activities of professional training, 4) To improve the chances of employability of the participants and the graduates of vocational and professional education, 5) To increase the level of investment in vocational and professional education and 6) To ensure the
quality and relevance of TVE in the labour market. These political objectives are obviously crucial for the development of TVE in Mozambique but effective policy implementation strategies are needed to make the desired impact on practice.

2.3.2 Non-Formal Education context

The Action Plan for Poverty Reduction for 2006-2010 (PARPA, 2006) paid special attention to Non-Formal Education (NFE) as an approach for the development of literacy and vocational skills (PARPA, 2006). Different NFE programmes in the country are implemented by governmental, non-governmental and religious organisations, and private sector. The different types of NFE initiatives and providers in Mozambique are presented in Figure 3.

NFE is a broad field of work embracing different types of educational activities carried out outside the formal education system. These activities are developed by the different organisations in different modalities that can be categorised as:

- **Literacy and vocational training** - administrated and provided by the Ministry of Education and Human Development, through the Direcção Nacional de Alfabetização e Educação de Adultos (National Directorate of Literacy and Adult Education), NGOs and religious organisations. Currently, the National Directorate of Literacy and Adult Education focuses on the administration of the provision of adult literacy programmes in the country.
• **Semi-professional training** - including the development of professional skills in a broader vocational perspective for part time occupations. The main providers of semi-professional training are the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture and some NGOs. Contents include first aid care, maternal and child health care, and agriculture and environment protection.

• **Vocational or professional training** - provided by the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, through INEFP, the private sector and some NGOs. They provide different types of short-term training focusing on skills for work.

In the area of vocational and professional training INEFP manages a network of twelve Professional Training and Employment Centres in the country. These centres offer a variety of short-term vocational education and training courses. INEFP is also responsible for the design of the curricula, teaching and learning materials. It is the major institution responsible for NFVET in Mozambique and is also the foremost provider.

### 2.3.3 Research context

NFVET and similar programmes with different names have attracted the attention of practitioners, policy makers and educational researchers around the world for several decades (UNESCO, 2015, p. 124). Because the present study was conducted in Mozambique, it is important to place it in the context of research conducted in developing countries. Research from less economically advanced countries shows that NFVET programmes have great potential in placing graduates in work, providing development of vocational skills and contributing to social inclusion and poverty reduction. For example, Aitchison (2012) examined this area of education in five African countries: Angola, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland. The findings of his study showed increasing interest for NFVET in Africa. A variety of skills training courses for youth and adults could be found. NFVET have contributed to the reduction of unemployment in local communities not only through the development of people’s competencies for the formal and informal labour market but also by employing them to work and carry out different duties in the NFVET centres.

Researchers praise the development of NFVET in African countries as a way to enhance people’s educational opportunities. Datzberger (2016) who conducted a case study on NFVET in Uganda noted, “NFE programmes can make a clear contribution in providing access to education for a population who may otherwise not have such an opportunity” (Datzberger 2016, p.2). The increasing access to education for disadvantaged social groups has the
potential to have an impact on not only the participants themselves but also society as a whole, as it creates opportunities for improving people's living conditions, reducing poverty and enhancing socio-economic and political participation and the promotion of gender equality.

However, many studies also focus on the necessity to improve the quality of the programmes. The issue of lack of sustainability is one of the challenges for NFVET. Datzberger (2016) showed that many programmes do not benefit from public funding and depend on the support of NGOs. Interruption of the programmes due to lack of funding appears to be a common phenomenon. Mbele (2005) noted that many NFVET programmes in Mozambique meet great constraints in the field. These constraints include: poor infrastructure and equipment, lack of relevance of the programmes, outdated curricula, poor teachers qualifications and lack of alignment between the skills provided and the requirements of the labour market.

Nampota (2010) who studied NFVET in the context of Malawi reflects on the need for curriculum development that takes into account the needs of the learners, thus increasing the relevance of the programme. Nampota suggests shared ownership of the programme by the community and the educational sector. Communities possess rich cultural resources which should be taken into account in the design and implementation of the programme. Such partnerships can also contribute to the sustainability of the programme. In order to improve the effectiveness of the NFVET programmes in Africa, Gboku and Lekoko (2007) also suggest a bottom-up approach to their development. This model assumes the involvement of the stakeholders in the design of their own programme “that is sensitive and responsive to the needs, problems and priorities of local communities” (Gboku & Lekoko, 2007, p. 26).

Factors contributing to effective NFVET were also identified by Tukundane and Blaak (2010). They include the need for flexible and attractive programmes, as many learners lack positive experiences from their previous formal education. Thus, NFVET programmes need to be different and innovative. Attractive programmes “will instil in them a sense of self-worth and confidence” (Tukundane & Blaak, 2010, p. 222). These authors also pay attention to guidance and counselling which are particularly important in the context of developing countries as many of the programme participants are socially marginalised, being out of school and unemployed. Guidance and counselling can provide important information about their training and the skills required for their daily life and to the labour market. Learners need to improve their self-esteem and to adopt the necessary attitudes as future professionals.

In the context of Mozambique, the study that I have conducted together with a Swedish researcher Agneta Lind suggests the involvement of local companies in the needs assessment for the training programmes. These
companies possess information concerning the competencies necessary for the labour market. The training courses would be diversified according to the context and the needs of the learners, based on collaborative needs assessment (Lind & Manuel, 2008). Another study in which I have actively participated (Van der Linden & Manuel, 2011), analysed NFVET programmes in Mozambique. These were implemented with the objective of helping participants in literacy classes to gain skills for the improvement of their lives. We found that at the end of the programmes the participants were waiting for materials or financial help in order to implementing the knowledge and skills acquired during the programme in their own projects. Despite the programme objectives of self-employment and empowerment “the whole exercise seemed to encourage an attitude of dependency” (Van der Linden & Manuel, 2011). The study demonstrates a contradiction between the training programmes’ expected enhancement of creativity and proactivity and the reality of perpetuating dependency.

Another important aspect of the research context is related to the global situation as reflected in the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2016). Goal 4 of the SDG states that countries should “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” (United Nations, 2016, p. 5) and focuses on the acquisition of foundational skills and more equitable access to TVE throughout life. This goal is based on international statistical studies showing that in 2013 there were 59 million children of primary school age who were out of school and 757 million adults (aged 15 and over) who were unable to read and write, of whom two-thirds were women (United Nations, 2016).

Goal 5 aims to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” (United Nations, 2016, p. 5). An illustrative example of discrimination given in the document is that “based on time-use surveys conducted between 2000 and 2014 in 59 countries, women said they spend 19 percent of their time each day on unpaid labour versus 8 percent for men” (United Nations, 2016, p. 5). Women do not receive due recognition for their unpaid work. Obviously, the extent to which the goals formulated will be achieved depends on the political, economic and cultural contexts of different countries.

This thesis focuses on the disadvantaged groups of society and considers NFVET as an approach to achieve economic and social inclusion. It is based on previous research and advances it further by systematically investigating NFVET in Mozambique in its multiple dimensions, including historical development, policies, practices and contradictions.
3. Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by adult education theories in which a gender dimension was included and by Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), which provided the researcher with the appropriate tools to analyse NFVET in the changing and developing context of Mozambique.

3.1 Adult education for change and development

Education and training are crucial tools for individual and social development. Relevant education can help people to cope with the challenges of their daily life and to participate fully in economic and social development. According to Jarvis (2010), the most important role of education is to support people “to respond to the rapid social change” (Jarvis, 2010, p.16). Rapid change is a global phenomenon that affects all individuals and all societies. In the context of developing countries, as is the case with Mozambique, education remains a social and political challenge.

Many people are still excluded from educational opportunities. However, educational policies focus on the provision of education for all, emphasising marginalized groups such as out of school youth, unemployed adults and women. In these adult education policies, following the NFE approach is considered to be the key educational strategy.

Adult education has been recognized by many scholars as a key tool to improve people’s opportunities to develop various dimensions of their social life. According to the Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2012), enhancing people’s education and skills “would not only expand their opportunities, but could also increase their productivity, with gains for their families as well as the wider society” (p. 29). Adult education contributes not only to individual growth but also to social development through the increased participation of men and women in the wider spheres of society.

The increased attention paid to the situation of different social groups has stimulated the inclusion of youth (particularly out of school youth) in adult education programmes and “the field of adult education in several regions and countries was re-named youth and adult education” (Torres, 2001, p. 7).

Currently, the label ‘youth and adult education’ has become popular and is used in various policy documents and educational programmes in Mozambique and in many other countries.

3.1.1. Adult education from a lifelong learning perspective

Learning oriented towards change and development can be related to the concept of lifelong learning, which justifies the need for learning at every stage of life (Zuber-Skerrit & Teare, 2013, p. 10). According to Jarvis (2014,
it must be acknowledged that lifelong learning takes place in “other sites for learning than educational institutions”. He refers to non-formal and informal learning. The concept of lifelong learning can be understood in at least two different ways. On the one hand, it can be viewed as a way to respond to the needs of the modern capitalist society, which sees individuals as consumers and considers education as a commodity. On the other hand, lifelong learning can be seen as “an essential ingredient for the growth and development of the human person” (Jarvis, 2007, p. 125).

From the perspective of lifelong learning educators are seen as facilitators helping the learners to develop their potential. Learners are seen as active subjects and not as passive receptacles of elaborated knowledge (Freire, 2005). Freire advocates learning in which both educator and learner actively interact during the learning process. He emphasizes that “education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students” (Freire, 2005, p. 72). Freire stresses the need for a problem-posing method of education in which both learners and educators can teach and learn in a collaborative process of knowledge construction. This calls for a participative, learner-centred approach to learning.

3.1.2. The pedagogy of adult education

The issue of learner-centred education is widely developed in adult education. Knowles (1973, 1980) promotes the concept of andragogy defining it as the “art and science of helping adults to learn” (Knowles, 1980, p. 43). Nowadays andragogy is a well-accepted term defining the pedagogy of adult education around the world. According to Merriam and Caffarella (1999) andragogy is based on humanistic learning theory which places the human being at the centre of attention. Andragogy comprises not only methodological issues but also ethical issues, which are fundamental to ensure confidence in adult learners. According to Jarvis, Holford and Griffin (2003, p. 6) andragogy promotes “a student-centred approach to adult education”. It is about treating the adult learners as responsible persons.

Knowles (1990) outlined six principles of adult learning which are related to individuals as adult persons and as learners. These principles are: (1) Adult learners are self-directed, (2) they have considerable experience and knowledge acquired in different contexts of their lives, (3) they are goal oriented (readiness to learn), (4) they are relevance oriented, (5) they are problem-oriented and (6) their motivation to learn is internal. Obviously, in terms of self directedness, some adult learners may need initial assistance to achieve this characteristic (Cercome, 2008), particularly the less schooled or when the task or the learning content is new for them.

Adult learners, in general, are autonomous, independent, self-reliant and self-directed (Knowles, 1980). These characteristics need to be taken into
account in the design of adult education programmes and training activities. For instance, adult learners need to be included in decision making about their process of learning. This step can be realized by giving them a voice in the process of the identification of their learning needs. They can be asked to identify relevant content that they need for their lives and work. The involvement of learners can be respected in the planning process as “human beings tend to feel committed to a decision to the extent that they have participated in making it” (Knowles, 1980 p. 48).

Commitment can also increase the sense of ownership of the programmes and the chance of success. In the process of implementation of the planned educational activities, the educator needs to ensure mutual responsibility between him/herself and the learners. Adult education programme participants possess rich experience which might be privileged during the learning process. Thus, according to Knowles (1990) educators need to acknowledge the experience that their learners bring into the learning process and use them as a resource for learning. Past experience is the basis for the acquisition of new knowledge and skills.

Adult learners are goal oriented, they are likely to participate in learning programmes when they see possibilities to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired in their own lives. Merriam and Caffarella (1999, p. 272) noted that “the readiness of adults to learn is closely related to the developmental tasks of his or her social roles”. Adults “become ready to learn something when they experience a need to learn it in order to cope more satisfyingly with real life tasks or problems” (Knowles, 1980, p. 43). In this sense, adult learners are more relevance oriented as “they learn to be able to solve current problems or apply whatever knowledge and skills they gain today...” (Knowles, 1980, p. 43). That is why they need to understand the benefit of a certain content or learning programme before they participate in it. Jarvis et al (2003, p. 257) explains that “if an activity has clear and immediate relevance to the participants’ own particular needs and interests, it will attract and hold them, and bring about the desired changes”.

The relevance of the learning activity can contribute to the motivation of adults to learn. The motivation of adults to learn is described as more internal than external; it is linked to factors such as job satisfaction, self-esteem, quality of life etc. (Knowles, 1990; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). However, external motivation in adult learners is also observed, especially when they link their motivation to factors such as higher categories in the work place and increased salaries (Knowles, 1990).

Jarvis et al. (2003) describe different principles to take into account when designing learning programmes for adult learners. For instance, opportunities to practice the skills described in the learning objectives is emphasised. “If the objective is to develop critical thinking, the participant must have the opportunity to practice such skills in the learning situation”
(Jarvis et al., 2003, p. 260). This is valid for all types of skills including vocational skills. Adult learning programmes need to be linked to the needs of the learners so that they can realize their goals. This can be advantageously realised in educational programmes using a non-formal approach.

Combs & Ahmed (1974 p.35) define NFE as “any organised systematic educational activity carried out outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular subgroups of the population”. Tuijnman (1996) explains that the essence of NFE is the systematic transmission of knowledge, attitudes and skills in a more diverse and flexible way, in terms of space, time and material. The concept of Non-Formal Education in the practice of developing countries mainly refers to out-of-school training activities that aim to offer skills, develop knowledge, attitudes and values related to occupational activities in the formal or informal labour market.

The pedagogical characteristic of flexibility in NFE creates space to take into account not only the learners’ needs, but also their backgrounds and the context in which the activities take place. Flexibility and the relevance of the learning programmes are linked because the possibility to flexibly adapt learning to the needs of the participants makes them more motivated to learn.

3.1.3 Education for life skills and empowerment

Non-Formal Education takes on many different forms and types. In particular the development of NFVET is becoming an increasingly important political issue in developing countries (McGrath, 2012, Allais, 2012). This growing interest in NFVET is motivated by a need to prepare people for work and life. It is seen as a way to help individuals “to work in dignity, supporting themselves and their families as well as being respected as effective members of the community” (Fien & Hughes, 2007, p. 16).

NFVET is also considered to be an appropriate approach to provide life skills and to empower youth and adults to continually learn and improve their lives. In this study NFVET is seen not as merely practical skills development serving the labour market, but as a way to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that can allow individuals to participate actively and consciously as responsible citizens in the wider economic and societal life. This perspective includes a focus on life skills, which requires quality education and training.

Life skills can be seen as functional abilities that can contribute to the fulfilment of the intended life objectives. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), life skills “are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life” (WHO, 2001, p. 8). “Learning a variety of skills
will prepare individuals for a more successful life at home, in their communities and in the work place”. UNESCO (2005, p. 5). Life skills refer not only to practical skills but also to communication skills, negotiation skills, critical thinking skills, problem solving and decision-making skills (Singh, 2003). In the learning process these skills need to be adapted to the local cultural and geographic context of the learners to ensure its functionality in their lives (UNESCO, 2005). Life skills are related to the empowerment of people, because developed life skills empower people to continually learn, work, participate in their communities and to improve their lives. The concept of empowerment through education is linked to Freire’s (1970) theory of liberating the oppressed people in the world through education.

Empowerment can be interpreted as the process of “gaining power and control over the decisions and resources that determine the quality of one’s life” or in a broader perspective taking into account the “structural inequalities that affect entire social groups rather than focus only on the individual” (Nwanosike, 2012, p. 216). Empowerment can be directed to individual development or to collective changes. In this sense, empowerment implies the development of relevant knowledge, skills and abilities to improve people’s lives as well as the enhancement of individuals’ and groups’ capacities and freedom to make choices and transform these choices into desired actions and outcomes (Nwanosike, 2012). In this study the concept of empowerment is linked to the development of relevant skills through education and training that can help individuals to cope more effectively with change and support them to participate actively in the wider social life.

The perspective of empowerment is useful in this study both for learners and educators. In the context of Mozambique NFVET educators also need empowerment, for example in the form of professional development. A lack of professional competencies can be considered as an absence of power (Manuel, Van der Linden, & Popov, 2016). Thus, the perspective of the empowerment of educators can be linked to the professionalisation of adult education. “Professionalisation focuses primarily on the development of people and the specific group of people working in the field of action” (Egetenmeyer & Käpplinger, 2011, p. 22). It is also linked to professionalism meaning the possession of competencies and attitudes related to a profession which allow professionals to take informed decisions and act correctly in different situations.

Following Egetenmeyer and Käpplinger (2011), it is possible to suggest some key competencies for NFVET professionals: 1) personal competencies of being fully autonomous lifelong learners, 2) interpersonal competencies of being responsible for the development of learning and dealing with diversity in terms of people, culture and contexts; 3) content expertise in theoretical
and practical knowledge of the area in question; 4) Didactical competencies in teaching methods. These can be considered basic competencies for any educational professional. However, the professionalisation of NFVET is a great challenge in developing countries where this area is still poorly legislated and funded. In Mozambique, for example, NFVET educators have been mainly employed on a project basis and have poor chances of gaining permanent employment, with the exception of INEFP staff.

3.1.4 Gender in adult education

The field of adult education is sensitive to gender issues. Gender equality in social life and education has been promoted by different international treaties and declarations, such as for example the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (USAID, 2014). It is considered as a human right and one of the ways to empower women to achieve social justice in societies. The concept of gender “is a social and cultural term subjected to different interpretations and conditioned by the cultural milieu” (Dermanov, Kasanovic & Vukicevic, 2016, p. 132).

Kvande (2002) suggests that gender can be seen as something that people do, rather than something they are. Elin Kvande explains that according to the ‘doing’ perspective, gender is seen as an ongoing accomplishment, rather than something that is settled, static and causally prior to interactive practices.

Connell (1997) argues that “human practice always possesses social structure in the sense that practice necessarily calls into play social rules or resources” (p. 93). There is a global gender structure which is based on several substructures of which two are particularly important for this study.

These are division of labour and power relations. The division of labour characterises “the organisation of housework and childcare, the division between unpaid and paid work, the segregation of labour markets and creation of men’s jobs and women's jobs, discrimination in training and promotion…” (Connell, 1997, p. 96). In general, women tend to have greater responsibility for domestic and unpaid work, while men are more linked with institutional and paid work. This practice promotes segregation and social and economic differences between men and women. Power relations are linked to authority, violence and injustice in social and interpersonal relations. They are revealed by how some people and groups interact with and control others. For example, the economic, social and cultural domination of men in Mozambican society leads to the systematic disempowerment of women in most spheres of social life.

A global gender structure reflects a specific gender order- a historically constructed pattern of power relations between men and women, which can look different depending on the context. The gender order is constantly changing and defines different notions of masculinity and femininity. As
Connell (1997, p. 844) remarks, “the dominance of men and the subordination of women constitute a historical process.” Power structures create gender differences and social inequalities. The notions of what masculinity and femininity are keeps men and women associated with specific occupations as well as daily activities (Maksimovic, Ostrouch-Kaminska, Popovic & Bulajic, 2016).

Analysing adult education in Africa, Nafuko, Amutabi and Otunga (2005) consider gender as a qualitative and interdependent factor characterising the behaviour of women and men in society. They state that men and women in African societies have a set of responsibilities and expected attitudes and behaviour assigned by the socio-cultural environment in which they live. These socio-cultural practices tend to give more power to men compared to women. Male qualities are associated with masculinity, leadership, decision making, superiority and the control of economic resources, while women are expected by the society to assume attitudes of subordination (Nafuko et al., 2005). The main place of action for women is in the household. They are engaged in domestic work including subsistence agriculture. This is particularly articulated in rural areas.

The perception of hegemonic masculinity is linked to men’s power and is socially ascribed to them and to the practices that permit men’s dominance over women. This sometimes takes place with “consent and participation by the subaltern groups” (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 841), as they tend to consider these practices as normal behaviour in their environments. This means that gender relations need to be understood within a certain context, as they are shaped by the context and culture. Tvedten (2012) stresses that gender relations have different expressions in different socio-cultural settings. Even within the same country they can vary from one region to another.

Education which normalises differences between women and men, reinforcing a culture of the discrimination of women or other types of segregation cannot overcome inequality in society. This type of education “represents the cultural perspectives of the powerful” and perpetuates marginalisation and exclusion (Gboku & Lekoko 2007, p. 26).

Gender differences are created in human social practices (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) by history and culture and as the society changes, gender issues and gender differences also change. Education has a relevant role to play in these changes as “gender equality in education is a process of changing the relationships of inequality” (Unterhalter, 2012). In this study NFVET is seen as one of the ways to contribute to gender equality through the improvement of peoples’ competencies and the empowerment of women. Education provides knowledge and skills that can help people to strive for their own development and the ability to change the status of discrimination and injustice.
It is commonly accepted that education is one of the ways to combat gender inequalities in society. As Connell (1997) suggests “the inequalities can be eliminated by breaking down the stereotypes [...] giving girls better training” (p. 34) because “the dominance of men and the subordination of women constitute a historical process, not a self-reproducing system” (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 843). Adult education is likely to enhance women’s awareness, self-esteem and competencies to be able “to make use of increased opportunities and thereby improve their lives” (Tvedten, 2012, p. 3). Education focusing on disadvantaged groups can play a crucial role in reducing gender inequalities in society.

3.2 Cultural Historical Activity Theory
As mentioned earlier, the second important theoretical perspective that framed this study was Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT). Originally, it was called activity theory. This theory has its roots in the work of Lev Vygotsky in the 1920s and at the beginning of 1930s (Verenikina, 2001). Currently activity theory with broad emphasis on cultural and historical aspects is becoming an international and multidisciplinary theory (Engeström, 2005). CHAT offered an appropriate framework for the analysis of the historical developments and contradictions in NFVET. According to Stuart (2014), this theory makes it possible to consider the history and culture of the context as it defines people as agents of change within a collective activity system. In this study CHAT is also used to explore the contradictions that emerged in the process of implementation of NFVET in Mozambique. Contradictions are considered in CHAT as sources of change and development

3.2.1 The structure of human activity
The concept of activity expresses the person’s active relation to the world. The initial and fundamental form of human activity is a practical activity that people conduct in everyday life. Vygotsky (1978) describes activity as composed of a subject (active agent), object (goal of activity) and mediating artefacts (tools), which can be represented in a simple model (Figure 4).

![Figure 4. Mediated relation between subject and object of activity](Image)
The concepts of the subject and object of activity are fundamental in CHAT. According to Engeström (1990), the subject is a person or a group (collective subject) engaged in an activity whose agency is chosen as the focus of the analysis. To describe the concept of an object of activity, Engeström (1990, p. 181) refers to the definition of an object used in the Webster’s Dictionary as “anything presented to the mind or senses” as well as “an end or aim.” So, the object is both something given and something anticipated, projected, transformed and achieved.

Vygotsky’s idea of mediation constitutes one of the basic principles of CHAT. The fundamental claim is that human activity can be understood only when the technical tools and psychological tools or signs that mediate the activity are taken into consideration. Mediating tools are viewed in CHAT as fundamentally shaping and defining the activity. This means that mediating cultural artefacts, such as working tools, instruments, machines, signs, languages and myths need to be analysed in order to understand any human activity. In Vygotsky’s work the inclusion of cultural artefacts into human activities was innovatory and the individual could no longer be understood without his or her cultural means and the agency to use and produce artefacts. Engeström (1990, p. 264) suggests that artefacts “insert mankind’s historically accumulated and objectified experience into individual actions”.

Further, Vygotsky (1978) highlights the importance of considering the context of activity as its active component. He explains that the social context affects human activity on two levels. Firstly, socio-cultural history provides tools and practices for human activity. Secondly, the immediate social interactional context structures the activity. This idea of the active role of social context for any human activity has been developed further by different researchers. Cole (1988) argues, for example, that there are no universal, context-free tools. This is obvious in the case of teaching methods and curriculum documents that can work effectively in the context where they were developed but become useless when transferred to other contexts. This has been proven in different curriculum reforms carried out in African countries that tried to implement pedagogical innovations from Europe without adjusting them to the local contexts.

CHAT is a continuously developing theory. Kaptelinin (2005) explains that Leont’ev, a disciple of Vygotsky, developed the first generation of CHAT that can be schematically presented by figure 3 and is valid mainly for individual activities. Half a century later Engeström (1987) extended the vision of Leont’ev, introducing the collective activity system that is considered the second generation of CHAT (Kaptelinin 2005). In the activity system, Engeström (1987, 1990) included three more elements that reflect the social characteristics of activities. The proposed collective activity system is composed of subject, object, mediating artefacts, rules, community and division of labour. The object of activity is the goal that results in outcomes.
The rules are the explicit and implicit regulations, norms, and conventions that constrain the actions and interactions within the activity system (Hasu & Engeström, 2000, p. 63). The term ‘community’ refers to a group of people who interact to achieve the same object. Division of labour is considered the division of tasks and power within a given activity system (Foot, 2001). Figure 5 represents the collective activity system, according to Engeström (2014).

![Activity System Model](image)

**Figure 5.** The activity system model, reproduced from Engeström (2014)

In this study the subject of activity can be interpreted as a ‘collective subject’, represented by the NFVET practitioners in the context of adult education. The object of activity is the development of vocational knowledge and skills. The expected outcome is employment or self-employment and increased participation in social and economic life in society. The mediating artefacts are tools for teaching/learning and for practical work such as curricular materials and equipment. The rules are the norms and regulations that create interaction and coordination within the activity system. The community is the different stakeholders and finally the division of labour is the different tasks shared by the activity system members aiming to attain the same object.

Activities never take place in isolation. They are interwoven with other activities that deal with the same or connected objects or produce the instruments used in the activity in question. Therefore, third generation of CHAT is currently developing and expanding the above structure to include “multiple interconnected activity systems with their partially shared and often fragmented objects” (Engeström, 2009, p. 308). In this study conceptual framework of the second generation of CHAT is used.
3.2.2 Inner contradictions as a source of change and development

An activity is not a stable and harmonious system. External influences may change some elements of activities causing imbalances between them. CHAT uses the term contradiction to indicate a misfit within elements, between them, between different activities, or between different developmental phases of a single activity. The theory considers “contradictions as moving forces of change and development...” (Hasu & Engeström, 2000). Activities are virtually always in the process of working through contradictions (Kuutti, 1996, p. 34). To understand the development of an activity it is necessary to study the contradictions existing within the activity system, for example, between the tools currently used and the object created, or the norms that are part of praxis and the division of labour. Contradictions in CHAT contribute to dialectical changes in both subject and object. They can also influence changes in the mediating artefacts.

In general CHAT seeks “to understand individual human beings and the social entities they compose, in their context” (Kaptelinin & Nardi, 2006, p. 31). In this study, the framework of CHAT was used to study NFVET as a collective activity system embedded in a cultural historical context, which determines the way in which the activities are carried out and the ways they are influenced by the context. This study also explores contradictions in the NFVET activity system and reflects on how these contradictions could contribute to the development of this system. Studies of change and the development of human activities are important for CHAT and are also the focus of adult education theories which are about learning, change and development. Complimentary use of these theories allowed me to gain deeper insight into the practices and challenges of NFVET as an important part of adult education in Mozambique.
4. Methodology

This study aims to advance knowledge about the complex reality of NFVET in Mozambique, its historical development and the contextual frames that shape it. The study seeks to understand how social experiences of NFVET are created and interpreted by learners and educators. This demands a qualitative methodological approach as qualitative research is based on the interpretation of the phenomena under study, focusing on the reality and the meaning that people assign to it. According to Ritchie and Lewis (2008, p.7), “qualitative research emphasises and values human interpretative aspects of knowing about the social world and the significance of the investigator’s own interpretation and understanding of the phenomena being studied.”

Qualitative research emphasises subjectivity, the multiplicity of reality and the need for contact between the researcher and the researched, leading to interaction not only with the respondents but also with their context. This study has a qualitative and exploratory character where the NFVET practitioners are actively involved, contributing to a participatory and collaborative approach to knowledge production.

4.1 Research design

The research design adopted in the conceptualisation of this study was inspired by an action research approach. The use of action research thinking indorsed active collaboration, exchange of experiences and discussions during the research process, which is also at the heart of adult education philosophy. This contributed to a great extent to the reflection and awareness of NFVET programme participants and educators involved in the study concerning their work and possible ways of improving the programmes.

Costello (2007) advises to begin the exploration of potential developmental issues pertaining to the field with the observation and critical reflection of professional practices. According to Costello (2007) “reflection may lead to identification of a particular problem or issue that requires research” (p.10). Thus, this study started with extensive field visits to the main providers of adult education and vocational training in Mozambique. The objective of these visits was to explore the field of adult education and vocational education activities. The visits made it possible to select five organisations for the initial study of NFVET practices.

The organisations included in this phase of research were purposively selected. According to Denscombe (2003, p.15) “purposive sampling is applied to those situations in which the researcher already knows something about the specific people or events and deliberately selects particular ones....” The main criteria used for the selection of these organisations were
the fact that they provide work-related education using a non-formal approach for youth and adults and that they are have been involved in these activities for more than five years.

The five training centres included in the first phase of the study were:

- **Centro de Formação Professional Profamília** (Centre of Professional Training Profamília);
- **Associação Comunitária para o Desenvolvimento do Bairro de Chamanculo C** (Community Association for the development of the bairro of Chamanculo C);
- **Centro de Formação Professional da União Geral das Cooperativas** (Centre of Professional Training of the General Union of Cooperatives);
- **Associação de camponêses Eduardo Mondlane** (Association of farmers Eduardo Mondlane);
- **Centro de Alfabetização e Promoção da Mulher** (Centre of Literacy and Empowerment of Women).

Between 2009 and 2011 field visits, informal conversation with programme coordinators, semi-structured interviews and non-participant observations were made in these organisations. The objectives were to gain an understanding of what is implemented in the field of NFVET in those organisations, how the activities were carried out and which organisations could be selected for deeper study.

The findings of the initial phase of the study were analysed and discussed at a workshop in February 2012 at the Department of Adult Education, Eduardo Mondlane University. This workshop was attended by the programme participants and ex-participants, programme coordinators from the training centres and by international and local experts in adult education. The main objective of the workshop was to reflect on the preliminary findings in a participatory and inclusive way and to collect data on how to improve the selected NFVET programmes, taking into account the learners’ needs and the demands of the labour market. The results of the workshop were also the object of reflection in the feedback group created after the workshop, with regard to the action research perspective.

The critical reflections raised during the workshop and through the subsequent work of the feedback group composed of six selected workshop participants, led to the identification of different problems. These problems are related to the five research questions of this thesis. The attempt to answer these research questions resulted in five articles, whose titles and corpus of data are presented in table 2.
Table 2. Research questions, title of the articles and corpus of data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research questions</th>
<th>Title of article</th>
<th>Corpus of data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. What are the historical and contextual factors that have shaped the development of NFVET in Mozambique?</td>
<td>Vocational literacy in Mozambique: Historical development, current challenges and contradictions</td>
<td>Document analysis: both printed and electronic. Six semi-structured interviews with teachers and other education stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. What are the main policies that guided the implementation of NFVET in the context of adult education in the period 2000-2015 in Mozambique?</td>
<td>The challenges of adult education policy implementation in Mozambique</td>
<td>Document analysis: both printed and electronic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. What motives and expectations can be identified among male and female participants of NFVET programmes in Mozambique?</td>
<td>Exploring gender differences in participants’ motivations and expectations in NFVET programmes in Mozambique</td>
<td>Fourteen semi-structured interviews with participants. Six life stories by former participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. How do the educators experience and understand NFVET?</td>
<td>Educators in NFVET in Mozambique: A plea for recognition and professionalisation</td>
<td>Eight semi-structured interviews with educators. Ten non-participant classroom observations in two training centres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. How can NFVET programmes be improved to enhance peoples’ chances to get work and to participate actively in their own process of learning and development?</td>
<td>Towards programme improvement in NFVET in Mozambique</td>
<td>Six semi-structured interviews with educators. Two focus group interview sessions with fifteen former participants. Four non-participant classroom observations in two training centres. Feedback from the first workshop.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The outcomes of the discussions during the workshop and of the feedback group provided pointers to the selection of the two organisations for deeper study. The selection criteria were purposive, based on the availability of training activities during the year and their willingness to collaborate in this study. The need for a gender balance among the respondents was also
considered, which resulted in the selection of programmes with contrasting gender patterns.

4.2. The location of the main field work
The main part of the fieldwork in this study was carried out in two organisations located in the neighbourhoods of Maputo city. These neighbourhoods are called bairros and the main economic activity in these bairros is small business carried out in the informal sector. The two training centres included in this study are: Centro de Formação Profissional da UGC (CFPUGC- Centre of Professional Training of the General Union of Cooperatives) and Centro de Alfabetização e Promoção da Mulher (CAPM-Centre of Literacy and the Empowerment of Women).

The Centre of Professional Training of the General Union of Cooperatives (CFPUGC) was created in the 1990s by members of the association of peasants, named União Geral das Cooperativas (UGC- General Union of Cooperatives). CFPUGC offers short-term courses in the fields of electricity, car repairs, refrigeration and small business management. It is located in the bairro 25 de Junho. The objective of CFPUGC was to provide professional training for the members of the General Union of Cooperatives and their families.

This training centre receives some technical support from INEFP. For instance, INEFP validates the training programmes and provides certification for the graduates. CFPUGC also has partnerships with NGOs, which contribute to the sustainability of the training centre activities by paying fees for some selected participants; those considered the most poor. The training activities in CFPUGC are carried out by around eight instructors (educators) who are paid according to the number of teaching hours. The majority of instructors work part-time and have their main employment in formal education. Currently, this training not only benefits the members of UGC and their families but also youth and adults from the wider community.

The other organisation, Centro de Alfabetização e Promoção da Mulher (CAPM, Centre of Literacy and the Empowerment of Women) was founded by a Christian congregation in 1994. Its main objective is the community development of the bairro of Mahotas. This institution provides different activities aiming to help women and girls to improve their living conditions, as stated in its plan of activities (CAPM, 2008). The organisation provides literacy skills not only for adults but also for children who for different social and economic reasons are not enrolled in formal education. Apart from literacy training, CAPM also provides sewing skills and for youth and adults who possess grade ten or more they offer computer training.

The target group of the centre is women from poor families. This organisation collaborates with other institutions in matters concerning HIV, aiming to provide information about the prevention of HIV and the right
channels for treatment of associated diseases. The training activities in CAPM are carried out by four educators who teach literacy classes, one whom is also the teacher of sewing skills. There is also a teacher for the subject of computer training. In the area of literacy this training centre benefits from the support of the Ministry of Education, which provides teaching and learning materials, small workshops for the teachers’ pedagogical training and subsidies for the literacy teachers. The equipment and materials for the vocational courses are provided by the religious organisation and collaborating NGOs.

4.3 Data collection methods

In this study document analysis, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, life stories and non-participant classroom observations were used. Interviews, focus group discussions and life stories were tape recorded and observations were documented using photographs and written field notes. The observations contributed to an understanding of the context in which the learning activities took place, as they “draw[s] on the direct evidence of the eye to witness events first hand” (Denscombe, 2003, p.192). The semi-structured interviews however, gave respondents the opportunity to explain more extensively the issues tackled in this study. Denscombe (2003, p. 189) argues that an advantage of the interview is that it is “particularly good at producing data which deal with topics in depth and in detail”.

Focus group discussion is the “unique method of qualitative research that involves a pre-determined group of people in discussing a specific set of issues” (Hennink, 2007, p. 4). In this study it allowed active collaboration and interaction, not only between the researcher and the participants but also between participants themselves. The collaborative perspective used by focus group discussion is also in line with the perspective of action research methodology, which requires the active involvement of the research participants. Life stories, which are “generally, narratives understood as stories that include a temporal ordering of events and an effort to make something out of those events to render or to signify the experiences of persons-in-flux in a personality and culturally coherent, plausible manner” (Sandelowski, 1991, p.162) were used to collect the perceptions of former participants in NFVET. They helped the participants to express their own understandings, ideas and perspectives (Denscombe, 2010) about NFVET.

Document analysis was used particularly regarding the historical development of NFE in Mozambique. Printed and electronic documents were organised in two categories: 1) Policy documents 2) research and evaluation studies. Some documents, such as the reports of programme evaluation of training programmes and strategic plans were acquired by negotiation with stakeholders from the area of education and training.
Before their use the documents were examined to ensure their ‘authenticity’ and ‘credibility’. This examination included the identification of the author or authors and the purpose of the documents.

According to Golafshani (2003, p. 601) “to ensure reliability in qualitative research examination of trustworthiness is crucial”. In this study trustworthiness was ensured by triangulation through the use of different methods (observation, interview, and focus group sessions) and through the involvement of different categories of respondents (educators and learners). According to Shenton (2004) the use of triangulation contributes to compensate the limitation of each of the methods used and the use of different categories of respondents helps to compare the individual’s perceptions and experiences with the perceptions and experiences of others.

This study from its initiation assumed a collaborative, participatory and democratic perspective, listening to different voices in a participatory and active way and respecting the opinions of all research participants. The data collection process was conducted in such a way as to maintain permanent contact with the field. This strategy provided opportunities to continually update information while the research was carried out.

4.4 Data analysis

Inductive data analysis was employed in this study. The process consisted of repeated reading to become familiarized with the data, followed by initial notation of codes. Sometimes it was necessary to return to the field to be sure about the meaning of the respondents’ words, as was the case with the need to understand the educators’ working contracts and methods of payment. The codes identified were interpreted, compared with the research questions and by means of this process the themes were generated. These themes were also interpreted, compared with the codes aiming to group similar themes and many times it was necessary to adjust and reduce the number of initial themes. As Brawn and Clarke (2006, p. 86) noted “analysis involves a constant moving back and forward between the entire data set…”

Data from the interviews, focus group sessions, life story narratives and reports were collected in Portuguese. Transcription and analysis were also carried out in Portuguese and relevant parts were later translated to English. This can be one of the limitations of this study, as translation can omit some of the ideas and perceptions of the respondents.

Two colleagues from the Adult Education Department at UEM collaborated in the transcription of the interviews. During the process of data analysis the themes identified were shared and discussed with them, as researchers in Adult Education, and their feedback helped to refine the themes. Sharing the findings during the process of data analysis contributed to raising the trustworthiness of the study by comparing individual perceptions with the perceptions of others. These methodological strategies
contributed to ensuring the trustworthiness and to the reduction of the effect of possible investigator bias.

4.5 The validation process
In this study several different dimensions of validity were considered. Firstly, data collection instruments were pre-tested by discussing the content of the instruments with colleagues from the Adult Education Department and by the involvement of groups of educators, with the aim of improving comprehensibility. Secondly, the active involvement of the research participants made it possible to establish a reciprocal relation between the researcher and the research participants during the research process. According to Tromp (2008) reciprocity ensures ‘internal validity’ in the process of knowledge production. The extensive and ongoing field work that was conducted from the beginning of the study until the end not only helped the process of data analysis and the interpretation of findings, but also helped to continually update information. According to Creswell and Miller (2000, p. 125) “researchers determine how long to remain in the field, whether the data are saturated to establish good themes or categories...”

The views of participants were crucial in this research. The implementation of two workshops with the involvement of all categories of research participants created an opportunity for them to express to what extent the interpretations of the study represented their understanding of reality. This is one of the ways to ensure validity in qualitative research. Qualitative researchers “seek to actively involve participants in assessing whether the interpretations accurately represent them” (Creswell & Miller 2000, p.125). The results of this study were shared with practitioners and researchers of adult education in different educational meetings and international conferences:

- Mozambique (Maputo): Two workshops at Eduardo Mondlane University, in 7th February 2012 and 6th February 2014.
- United Kingdom (Sheffield): at ‘Data and Educational Research’ summer school, University of Sheffield, 22nd -26th June, 2015.
- Serbia (Belgrade): conference on ‘Contemporary Issues and Perspectives on Gender Research in Adult Education’. University of Belgrade, 8th -10th October, 2015.

The presentation and discussion of the findings in these events provided an important contribution to critical reflection and further analysis of the results.

4.6 Ethical considerations
In this thesis ethical issues were reflected upon during the whole research process. To initiate the fieldwork the researcher visited the organisations with the aim of informing them about the research, its objectives and asking them if they were willing to collaborate. Later, a formal request from the Eduardo Mondlane University was sent. Before field work was carried out all educators and participants involved were informed about the objectives of the study and asked for their consent to participate as respondents. All of them were interested and agreed to participate. Time schedules for interviews and observations were always negotiated with the collaboration of the programme coordinators. The preliminary findings were discussed with the learners and educators, as well as the different experts in adult education and vocational training, representing the education and employment sectors.
5. Results

The following section presents the results of the study reported in the five published articles that constitute the core of this thesis. The results are aligned with the five specific aims of the thesis and corresponding research questions.

5.1 The historical development of vocational literacy in Mozambique

The first article (Popov & Manuel, 2016) analyses the historical development of vocational literacy in basic education and NFVE in Mozambique, as well as current challenges and contradictions. The study introduces the concept of vocational literacy “as the activity oriented towards the development of job-related and income-generating knowledge and skills including essential elements of functional literacy and numeracy” (Popov & Manuel, 2016). The results revealed that the provision of vocational literacy is rapidly expanding in Mozambique. This expansion is caused on the one hand by political pressure to increase educational opportunities for citizens and, on the other hand, by the economic drive of private providers of non-formal education.

Vocational studies in Mozambique are developing within a complex and rapidly changing context. The analysis shows that there are clear tensions between the cultural values of a modern individualistic society and traditional cultural values. The role and status of traditional culture has changed greatly in Mozambican society. Before independence the colonial administration marginalised local culture. After independence the national government adopted an orientation towards modernization and a state-driven cultural unification. Thus, the use of local languages in educational institutions was discouraged since Portuguese was considered to be the language of national unity. This situation is still fresh in the memory of those who attended schools during these times. Nowadays, it is possible to witness a strengthening of traditional cultural influences in society in general. The use of local languages is encouraged in primary education and adult literacy courses and vocational literacy courses in Mozambican languages are also promoted by some NGOs.

An analysis of the historical development of vocational literacy in Mozambique however shows the perpetuation of some problems. The curriculum reforms introducing vocationally oriented subjects with different names in basic education such as Actividades Laborais (labour activities) or Ofícios (practical activities) did not have an effect on their content and status and these subjects remain rather marginalised. Most schools do not have either qualified teachers or didactic material for vocational activities.
Different tensions and contradictions were also identified. For instance, agriculture in the context of Mozambique has always been one of the most important economic sectors. However, its teaching is de facto marginalised in both formal and non-formal education. Another typical contradiction concerns the learners’ desires and opportunities. For young people becoming literate in modern technology is more attractive than learning agriculture. However, the lack of necessary resources in schools makes computer studies and other kinds of modern technology literacy unrealistic for the majority of pupils in formal education. Furthermore, non-formal computer courses are too expensive for most young people.

In spite of all above mentioned factors, vocational literacy in formal and non-formal education remains a plausible way for ordinary people to improve their lives.

The challenges of vocational education can be further understood through the study of the policies that guide this area of education and the practices in the field. This issue constituted the object of article II that is summarized in the next section.

5.2 The challenges of Adult Education policy implementation in Mozambique

The results of the second article (Manuel & Popov, 2016 b) reveal that Mozambique has adopted different international policies developed within the framework of Education For All (EFA) aiming to provide learning opportunities for the majority of people in the country, in particular for marginalized groups. Many initiatives are being implemented, particularly in the field of NFE.

The purpose of the research presented in this article was to examine how far policies concerning adult education, especially with respect to Non-Formal Vocational Education and Training (NFVET) were implemented. Emphasis was placed on the contradictions that emerged between the policies developed and the process of their implementation, as an understanding of contradictions can contribute to the implementation of necessary improvements in adult education and training. The study was of qualitative nature, based on document analysis with a focus on the policies that have guided the implementation of adult education and training in Mozambique during the period 2000-2015.

The study found that the Strategy of Literacy, Adult Education and Non-Formal Education for 2001-2005 (Ministério da Educação, 2001) was the first strategic document in this sector after the independence of the country that encouraged the systematic promotion of NFVET programmes. The strategic plan emphasised the need to connect non-formal vocational studies with adult literacy activities. Tracing the development of policy documents emphasised the expansion of education and the improvement of its quality.
Formal education in Mozambique has limited resources to provide the necessary education for all citizens. In this context, NFE is being implemented by different governmental institutions, as well as National and international NGOs to alleviate the situation. However, many of these organizations implemented their projects using a top-down approach and without ownership of the programmes by the local stakeholders. In general, the study revealed that many programmes did not ensure sustainability and the provision of relevant knowledge and skills for the graduates. Many local initiatives depend on foreign partners in terms of know-how and funding, leading to the disempowerment of the national practitioners and low sustainability. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that many programmes cease their activities when contracts with external partners come to an end.

The study suggests a need to strengthen policy implementation strategies taking into account the particularities of the local context and the needs of the specific target groups.

5.3 Gender dimensions in NFVET
The third article (Manuel & Popov, 2016 a) explores the motivations and expectations that drive the participation of men and women in NFVET from a gender perspective.

The emancipation of women is strongly emphasized in official political discourse in Mozambique, however great gender inequalities in education and socio economic life still remain. Situations of domestic violence within households were reported in the life story narratives of many women respondents.

The findings of this study reveal that both women and men attend NFVET courses motivated by a common desire to improve their living conditions. They seek to acquire vocational skills to be able to enter the labour market or to become self-employed. Their motivation often comes from their close social context, as they are inspired by their relatives working in certain areas. Participants who have learnt skills in informal settings with their relatives or friends pointed out the need for a document certifying their competence to be able to compete on the labour market. This is more typical for male respondents. There are also other gender specific motives; some women consider participation in NFVET programmes as a way to extend their social network and to get a break from their routine domestic activities. Self-employment was more often expressed as a motive for study by female participants.

In terms of expectations women highlight the need to help their families, often putting aside their personal interests. The male respondents expressed a more individualistic perspective. Typically, men consider their own needs
as being the needs of the family. They perceive that to improve the life of their families it is necessary to develop themselves first.

Gender analysis makes clear that in spite of the emphasis on gender equality in educational policies in Mozambique, women are still underrepresented in vocational education. The main reasons for that can be found in the power relations and cultural traditions within their families and local communities, linked to the discrimination of women and a gender-based division of labour.

To a certain extent article III and article IV are complementary, since both of them aim to explore the different actors’ understandings of NFVET. Article IV describes the educators’ understandings of this area and is summarized in the next section.

5.4 The educators’ understandings of NFVET
The fourth article (Manuel, Van der Linden & Popov, 2016) aimed to explore the educators’ perceptions, experiences and reflections concerning NFVET.

The findings of this article reveal that educators understand that NFVET is useful for the participants. They see their work as a ‘noble profession’. Educators consider NFVET as a way to social inclusion that helps many out of school youth and unemployed youth and adults to acquire important social and vocational skills. NFVET programmes help people who for different reasons did not succeed in formal education. Educators are aware that they have to respond adequately to the increasing demand for skilled people in the context of rapid socio-economic changes in the country.

However, educators also perceive that some contextual factors constitute barriers for the success of their work and for their development as educators. For example, by the poor learning environment characterized by a lack of and outdated teaching materials and equipment for practical lessons. They face classes in which participants have different levels of schooling which make it challenging to organise educational work in inclusive ways. Educators recognise that their pedagogical and technical competencies need to be improved. They understand that their limitations in terms of professional competencies bring about a transmissive model of teaching that not only affects the learning process in a negative way but also their image as facilitators of the learning process.

In all of the interviews issues were raised concerning unsatisfactory work conditions including poor economic incentives, where they perceive that their income does not correspond to their efforts. The educators also suggested the professionalisation of their field through the improvement of their competencies and the improvement of their working conditions, which would improve recognition of the value of their work and their profession.
5.5 Ways to improve NFVET programmes

The fifth article (Manuel, Popov & Buque, 2015) explores the ways in which NFVET programmes can be improved in order to increase people's chances, not only of finding work but also of being able to participate actively in their own process of learning and development.

The findings discussed in the article showed that educators and former participants believe that NFVET courses contribute to the enhancement of job opportunities in both formal and informal sectors. In this context the concept ‘biscato’ was raised. It is a Portuguese word that describes occasional work in which people develop certain activities when they are requested and in this way they earn some money.

The informal sector was pointed out as the most probable arena for the graduates to work in, as it is a growing sector in the country. Participants see NFVET as beneficial as it allows them to get a certificate in a short time, in relation to formal education. Educators also considered some of NFVET courses to be particularly relevant as there are no equivalent courses in formal technical education, at the same time that there is a shortage of professionals in the field. As an example they mentioned the refrigeration course which provides skills to repair cooling machines, which is important in the hot Mozambican climate.

However, classroom observation revealed different pedagogical problems, for example, that most of the lessons were educator-centred. The educators assumed the role of knowledge transmitters – of the expert that dictates. The predominant role of the learners was as receivers of knowledge – they were just writing down what the educators said without posing questions or demonstrating a critical attitude. In addition, many lessons that were meant to be practical were delivered in a theoretical manner. In general, demonstrations and practical equipment was insufficient and many times inadequate. The learners' manuals were also of poor quality, where many figures were not clearly perceptible.

In answer to the question of how to improve NFVET, the respondents suggested: focusing on the quality improvement of educational tools (curriculum, teaching and learning materials, and equipment), the development of the educators' competencies and the revision of entry level prerequisites to NFVET programmes, particularly for the courses in car-mechanics and refrigeration. The respondents also suggested strengthening partnerships between the providers of NFVET and the formal and informal labour market.

Some educators also suggested the need for participatory methods of teaching to increase involvement, critical reflection and self-confidence in the learners. The sustainability of the program was another issue of concern. Suggestions were made concerning: the establishment of functional partnership between the providers of NFVET and actors in the labour
market and the provision of additional skills (such as communication and small business management) to complement vocational skills. In order to assure the sustainability of NFVET programmes respondents also suggested the involvement of local enterprises in the implementation of NFVET, as part of their social responsibility.
6. Discussion

This section presents the discussion based on the results of this study. The points of discussion are related to the main findings, guided by the objectives of the study and its research questions. They are presented in three themes.

The first theme is related to the first and the second research question, the second theme is related to the third and the fourth research question and the last theme is related to the fifth research question.

- History, policies and contradictions
- The participants’ and educators’ perspectives
- Possible strategies for the improvement of NFVET

6.1 History, policies and contradictions

In this section, I will discuss the historical development of vocational literacy in Mozambique and its challenges before and after independence of the country. The challenges and contradictions that characterized the implementation of NFVET policies in Mozambique in the period 2000-2015 will also be discussed.

The concept of vocational literacy highlights training to develop basic vocational skills. This focuses on the idea of equipping people with skills they need for their life and income generating activities. The concept of vocational literacy is used to embrace not only NFVET but also practical vocationally-oriented activities in basic education, including crafts, gardening, sewing, cooking, etc. Most of the children in Mozambique still only finish the first two cycles of primary education (EP1). This particularly justifies the introduction of vocational literacy from the earlier grades in basic education and the importance of NFVET for those who drop-out from school.

Use of the CHAT framework encouraged the researcher to take a close look at the historical development of activities in the historically developing context. The social and economic changes in the country influence the ways in which vocational literacy is considered and carried out in schools. This is also sustained by Hoppers (1996) who stresses that interpretations of work oriented education (vocational literacy) in basic education are related to the philosophical traditions, and socio-economic and cultural contexts in which they take place. Hoppers (1996) identified the following three important purposes of vocational literacy:

i) Economic purposes – to improve employable skills for the labour market; to improve understanding of the world of work and to generate income.
ii) Socio-cultural purposes – to develop social skills (initiative, responsibility) and attitudes (self-reliance, creativity); to reduce the gap between school and community and between intellectual and manual work; to appreciate the cultural heritage and processes of change; to accept indigenous approaches to education.

iii) Political goals – to promote an awareness of national development; to promote a national ideology of labour, and to contribute to change in society.

Due to the commonly perceived crucial role of vocational literacy for all it has always been a part of the curriculum of basic education in Mozambique. However, the lack of qualified teachers, lack of teaching materials and low motivation of teachers to teach this subject has led to its failure in schools. In many cases this failure is due to a lack of initiative from the school management on how to deal with this curriculum area. By considering practical or manual work as part of people’s daily life it is possible to develop activities taken from the environment of the learners. In this way schools could give participants extra opportunities to gain new life experiences. The findings of the study led to the conclusions that the teachers themselves are not motivated to teach this subject. This could be linked to the negative image and low status of manual work.

Within the complex context of economic changes, unemployment, poverty, rapid technological development and the discovery of natural resources, vocational literacy and NFVET are being actively promoted in Mozambique and considered as ways to develop both individuals and the country. This is also influenced by the different international initiatives regarding education and development, including the Education for All programme and the Millennium Development Goals, to which Mozambique has been committed since the year 2000.

However, as has been shown by the results of this study, there are several contradictions between the objectives and the outcomes of the NFVET activities. The development of vocational knowledge and skills can lead to employment or self-employment but this is a complex path paved with obstacles. Contradictions within NFVET are multifaceted. They are connected to the internal structure of the NFVET activity system (see figure 4) and contextual influences. The accepted rules of the educational activity define how student-centred the classroom is. The available tools determine the implementation of practical activities and the division of labour defines power relationships within the activity system, dictating how hierarchical it is.

Any educational activity takes place in and is influenced by the context. In Mozambique the contextual factors of the poor country ‘oppress’ all agents of
NFVET. There is an obvious need for stronger policy implementation strategies, better financing and improved governance in education.

Using a historical perspective it was possible to state that the socio-economic context was unsupportive for the majority of poor people during the colonial, socialist and liberal phases of societal development in Mozambique. Poor families in the cities and rural areas have had little support to improve their wellbeing through education. The current dramatic increase in the socio-economic stratification of society makes a professional career through education almost equally as problematic as it was in colonial times for the poorer citizens.

6.2 The participants’ and educators’ perspectives

In this section, the two studies that aimed to develop an understanding of the participants’ and educators’ perceptions of NFVET are discussed. These studies demonstrated that both the educators and the participants perceive NFVET as being a likely contribution to the improvement of people’s living conditions and increased participation in the economic and social life of their communities.

Many youths and adults who were practically excluded from both education and training have received a new opportunity through NFVET. One of the main advantages of this type of training is not only its characteristic of flexibility, but also its short-term duration. This characteristic is appropriate for adults as they seek to solve current problems that impact their lives. One of the purposes of NFVET, according to Caffarella and Daffron (2013) is to assist people in responding to the problems and issues of their daily life.

NFVET can help individuals to develop competencies to deal with the accelerating social and economic changes which cause a growing social and economic inequality in Mozambique. The out of school and unemployed youth and adults are the main beneficiaries of many educational initiatives. In practice, NFVET contributes to the provision of different types of knowledge and skills, not only for the excluded groups but also for those who seek to improve their competencies and increase their chances or positions in the labour market. All these aspects reveal the important role that is attributed to NFVET programmes.

The analysis from a gender perspective showed that both female and male participants believe that NFVET can contribute to making positive changes in their lives. They see the need to improve their socio-economic condition as one of the major reasons that motivates them to participate in NFVET. This could be interpreted as a proactive way of thinking, as they perceive that learning can create positive changes in their lives. This thinking is in line with Jarvis (2007, p. 125) and his statement that “learning is an essential
ingredient to the growth and development of the human person”. This means that all people need to have an opportunity to learn and develop.

The study revealed that women do try to counteract the gender-based division of labour and male domination and control in the household. They find ways to enrich their living experiences, extend their social network and gain new opportunities to learn how to earn an extra income. For them NFVET is a chance to leave their domestic work routines and meet other people. This is particularly important with reference to the fact that more than half of all women in the country are illiterate (Santos, et al., 2015). The participation rate of women in the formal labour market is also low; in 2013 it was 26 percent for women compared to 75.8 percent for men (UNDP, 2014).

In this study both men and women showed that they have high expectations of NFVET and that they are motivated to study. They place their hopes on the skills that they expect to develop in these programmes.

Educators see great potential in NFVET but also report many challenges (Manuel, et al., 2016). These challenges relate to poor working conditions and a lack of support to upgrade their professional competencies. They perceive that rapid technological changes demand new competencies but they do not have the possibility to improve their technical and pedagogical skills. Consequently, they see themselves as marginalized and their image and status is affected. Educators suggest a need for the professionalisation of their work as a way of improving NFVET and increasing recognition of themselves as professionals. However, the issue of professionalisation may also generate a discussion about who will be considered to be an adult educator.

In the case of Mozambique there are different types of adult education: literacy skills development, vocational skills development, human resources development (in general taking place in work places), basic and general education (in evening classes) and professional and continuing education. The people working in these areas have different titles and status. They can be called educators, trainers, teachers and lecturers. Their work varies significantly depending on the sector in which they work and their institutional affiliation. This makes definition of the professional status of adult educators problematic (Jütte; Nicoll, & Olesen, 2011). However, the need to empower the adult educators remains, independent of their job titles.

Some contributions on how to improve NFVET were suggested by Manuel, et al., (2015). The next section discusses briefly these aspects of programme improvement.
6.3 Possible strategies for the improvement of NFVET

NFVET can help people to develop competencies for work in formal or informal sectors and increase chances for employment or self-employment, including doing occasional work (biscato). This corresponds to the main objectives of NFVET programmes according to the Mozambique’s Strategy of Employment and Professional Training, drawn up by the Instituto National de Emprego e Formação Professional (INEFP, 2006). In the context of Mozambique NFVET is seen predominantly as a way to increase people’s access to education but increasingly many people see NFVET as an alternative to formal education to satisfy their learning needs. This also places greater demands on the quality of NFVET.

The article by Manuel, et al., (2015) brought together some ideas that can contribute to the improvement of NFVET programmes. These ideas are: the strengthening of NFVET policies and support for educators and learner-centred educational activities. Increased funding for this area of education is needed to ensure the provision of teaching and learning materials, the improvement of the curricula and the development of the educators’ competencies. Collaboration with and the involvement of companies as partners in NFVET is crucial. They can contribute to commitment by the experienced workers to help learners during their internship in these companies.

In Mozambique, the majority of NFVET classes are educator-centred. This practice leads to ‘narrative’ education promoting passivity in the learners (Freire, 2005) which is counterproductive. Jarvis (2007) suggest that the role of the educator is to help the learners to include and learn from their significant experience. The educators’ competencies need to be revitalised. Many educators continue with further studies, but sometimes in an area which is different from the field in which they work. For example, instructors in the area of car-repairs sometimes continue their higher education studies in philosophy or to become Portuguese language teachers. After graduation they often leave the field of vocational education and become teachers in formal education, but continue in NFVET as part-time teachers. However there is no in-service training provided that can help them to continually improve their vocational education competencies.

Further, considering possible ways for the improvement of NFVET, different researchers point out that flexible and relevant curricula are crucial for the effectiveness of NFVET programmes (Tukundane & Blaak, 2010; Yassunaga, 2014). Flexible curricula allow for constant adjustments of the learning programme in response to the needs of the learners as well as the demand of the labour market. Flexible curricula also imply frequent evaluation of the training activities and the curricula itself. This idea is sustained by Nampota (2010) who suggests the control and monitoring of training activities as a way to ensure their quality and effectiveness.
Monitoring is one of the pre-requisites to produce quality work, however also implies higher costs, which many organizations cannot afford. By omitting monitoring, organizations run the risk of not noticing the failures they make and this can be the reason that goals are not being achieved.

Counselling and guidance are also pointed out as contributing factors to ensure the effectiveness of NFVET (Blaak et al., 2013). This can increase the self-confidence of participants who are often out of school youth and the unemployed. They are practically marginalized groups with negative experiences of formal education, thus, counselling and guidance can contribute to the improvement of their self-confidence and self-esteem. It is difficult not to agree with these suggestions. They would also be important for the Mozambican context.

Finally, it is important to make a comment concerning the methodology of the study presented in this thesis. The study was inspired by action research thinking particularly concerning the active involvement of NFVET agents in collaborative production and reflection of the results. However, proper actions for change were not a part of the study. My intention is to implement these actions in the future during my work at the Department of Adult Education at UEM in Mozambique. I plan to carry out interventions in the field involving my master students and to follow up and monitor the actions of NFVET programmes. The improvement of NFVET in Mozambique is my life-long professional commitment.
7. Conclusions

The aim of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of NFVET in Mozambique and to explore strategies that can contribute to its improvement. The theories used in the analysis, my professional experiences and the findings, lead to the conclusion that the current social and economic changes in Mozambique demand increased investment in the development of NFVET and the educators’ professional competencies. NFVET in Mozambique is not only a way to create access to education for vulnerable groups but it also provides opportunities for broad groups of citizens to acquire new competencies. This requires the development of relevant NFVET programmes that can effectively respond to the peoples’ needs as well as to the needs of their communities and society as a whole.

The examination of the historical development of vocational literacy in Mozambique showed that this has always been a politically prioritised area. It has been included in the curriculum of primary education with the aim of providing basic vocational and life skills. The use of CHAT made possible an understanding of NFVET activities in their context. This context includes not only the socio-cultural environment but also the historical context. Thus, it was seen that although the value of basic vocational education has been recognised throughout the different historical periods its implementation has faced a variety of problems and is not a success story even in today’s schools.

NFVET in Mozambique is a very complex educational area. It is provided by a wide range of actors amongst them governmental, non-governmental, religious organisations and the private sector. However, the relevance and quality of some programmes is questionable. The study highlighted the contradictions that exist between the policies that promote the expansion of educational opportunities, particularly through NFVET, the improvement of quality of education and the practices in the field. These contradictions need to be solved in order to improve the outcomes of NFVET. Important steps could be strengthening of policies that promote NFVET, as a field of adult education, design of strategies promoting technical and professional support for educators and the professionalisation of NFVET, focusing on the improvement of educators’ competencies and the improvement of their working conditions.

NFVET professionals should be aware of and be able to address gender inequality in vocational education. They need knowledge and skills in how to counteract current cultural practices and habits ascribing the behaviour of subordination and passivity to women while seeing men as the leaders and proprietors of economic resources. There is an obvious need to tackle these
cultural traditions as they perpetuate the discrimination and marginalization of women and poverty in society.

Power relationships in the field of NFVET also need to be addressed. Partnerships between providers can be one of the ways to empower educators through interaction with different players in the field. Interaction and the exchange of experiences are important factors for learning and the development of people. Systematic and participative evaluation of the training programmes is also essential. All these factors are likely to contribute for quality and sustainability of NFVET programmes.

Further, the development and provision of new curricula and learning material taking into account the learners’ needs, the local cultural, economic and social context, as well as the demands of the labour market, is also needed. This would contribute to an increase in learning amongst the participants and increased possibilities of achieving effective NFVET programmes.

Publications concerning NFVET in Mozambique are scarce, but those which could be accessed after systematic searching allow me to argue that this study is significantly deeper and broader than earlier studies. It investigates NFVET in its different dimensions including the analysis of historical development, policies and contradictions as well as educators’ and learners’ understandings of NFVET. My long presence in the training centres, interactions with the active practitioners of NFVET and the critical readings that I have carried out during the development of this thesis were crucial for data analysis and for my own empowerment as a researcher in the field of adult education.

However, some limitations of this study should also be pointed out. One of them is related to language, as the study was conducted in Portuguese while its main results were translated into English. In this process of translation some nuances of the research participants’ utterances could be missed. The second limitation is related to field work, it took place in a limited number of organisations and the study focuses only on disadvantaged groups: the out of school and the unemployed. However, through the extensive document analysis of NFVET in Mozambique more voices were included in the study.

The strengths of this study are linked to the analysis of challenges faced by NFVET in the context of Mozambique and to possible ways to overcome them in order to improve NFVET programmes. Suggestions for improvement concern two main levels of NFVET activity: policies and practices. Thus, the results can be useful for policy makers, educators, researchers and students in adult education programmes.

This study also contributed to my awareness of the need for relevant programmes that can respond to rapid changes in society. My hope is that the study of policies, pedagogies and contradictions in NFVET can contribute to the improvement of this educational area in Mozambique and
help many youths and adults to develop relevant vocational competencies and life-skills towards their empowerment.
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References


