Why Some Girls Go to School and Others Don’t

Linda Helgesson
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A study about girls’ education on an upper primary primary level in northern Mozambique

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Abstract

Girls are in minority in primary schools in Mozambique, a pattern that can be seen in most Sub-Saharan countries. The aim of this qualitative study is to examine why there are few girls in the Mozambican schools. The area chosen for the field study is the small town Montepuez in the Cabo Delgado province, northern Mozambique and the school level is upper primary school, i.e. grade 6 and 7. In the study, factors involved with whether or not girls go to school have been looked into and to some extent, a comparison between girls’- and boys’ schooling situation has been made. An attempt to identify patterns in both urban and rural areas regarding the education of girls has also been made.

The theoretical framework consists of the constraints used in Time-geography: capability, coupling and authority constraints, but a few complementary theories have also been used: The life course theory, the importance of social networks and the value of cultural capital.

The social situation differs between rural and urban areas and so does the schooling situation. Montepuez is a small town with both rural and urban characters and therefore a comparison between rural and urban schooling situations was partly made possible. The predominant activity is agriculture and most people are peasants, but still Montepuez is the district town with administrative posts, markets and shops. It has in this study been shown that a critical point in the school career for both girls and boys comes after grade five when they in order to continue school, have to move to town. This project is however less adventurous when it comes to boys’ education, but valid for both girls and boys is that a social network with relatives in town and the possession of cultural capital is an advantage.

In rural Montepuez, school is not as important as other forms of education, such as the initiation rite, and there is no affinity to the school environment. The girls play important roles in the household and in the cultivation, both in town and on the countryside and it can therefore be difficult to find time for school activities. A major drop out cause pointed out by the respondents and informants was that in order to be properly dressed in school, it was common that girls found older boyfriend in order to pay for the clothes. This often resulted in pregnancy and the girls had to leave school anyway. The initiation rite is an important rite of passage in the girl’s lives and after this transition, school is no longer considered to be important for her.

Many teachers take bribes in order to let the pupils pass the exam and the teachers here use their powerful position. The bribes consist of money, food or labour force and sexual favours. To give and take bribes seems to have become part of the social norm in school and the bribes increase with the size of the town.
The matter of girls’ schooling is full of nuances and has to be understood within a general social context where the factors interact, as one ‘cause’ can or will lead to another.

Keywords: education, Mozambique, girls, time-geography, life course, social network, cultural capital, urban area
From October until December 1998, I had the opportunity to carry out a field study in Mozambique. This was realised through a Minor Field Study scholarship, financed by Sida.

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Linda Helgesson
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DeoLinda comes from a village close to Mirate, about 40 kilometres from the district capital Montepuez in northern Mozambique. Her mother is a peasant and cultivates cassava, maize, beans and rice, while her late father worked as a teacher. DeoLinda has got three brothers and three sisters and all but two go to school. One has not reached the school age yet and one of her sisters is married and works at the machamba (a piece of land for cultivation). DeoLinda’s uncle used to work as a soldier in Niassa during the civil war, but he is now back in Montepuez and it is he who wants DeoLinda to study. Money is scarce in his family and he has difficulties to pay for her education. However, he is supported by a catholic nun who runs a boarding facility in Montepuez and DeoLinda stays here. “Gosto d’estudar e queria continuar até décima” (“I like studying and I would like to continue until grade ten”), DeoLinda says However, she does not know if she will continue any further than this year. Many of her friends have already left school, some because they no longer wanted to go to school, some due to pregnancy and others for the reason that they failed their exam. In the future, DeoLinda doesn’t want to go back to Mirate. “Queria ficar aqui, na uma cidade!” “I want to stay here, in a town!”

1.1 Problem

DeoLinda is a Mozambiquean girl who goes to school, but one could say that her situation is far from common in her country. It is estimated that about 35 percent of the school aged girls and 45 percent of the boys, are enrolled in primary school in Mozambique and only six and ten percent, respectively, begin secondary school (Unicef 1998a). The statistics show that few children go to school and that girls are less represented than boys. The pattern that many children in Mozambique do not go to school can also be found in many other developing countries and so is the pattern that girls are in minority, about 1/3 of the pupils. The number of children in school in developing countries is increasing and in Sub-Saharan Africa the pupils in primary school has quadrupled since the 1960s and the percentage of girls enrolled in school has also risen. Still, 50 percent of the children never begin school and the gender gap remains wide. How can this gender gap be explained? DeoLinda has given us three reasons why her friends discontinued.

In order to increase the number of pupils in school, one has to find out why many girls, and to a lesser extent boys, do not go to school. However, all countries and regions are different in regards to politics, economy, culture, geography and infrastructure, as the circumstances between countries and regions vary. Therefore, as many regions as pos-
sible should be looked upon. If similar patterns and comparable explanations can be found regarding girls' schooling, this could in turn be valuable information when it comes to the planning of school activities such as how and where education should be performed.

1.2 Aim

The main aim in this study is to examine why there are few girls in the Mozambiquean schools. Both factors involved with whether or not girls go to school will be looked into and to some extent, an attempt to make comparison between boys'- and girls' schooling situation will also be made. The area chosen is Montepuez, a small town in the Cabo Delgado province in northern Mozambique and the educational level in focus is upper primary education, i.e. grade 6 and 7.

1.3 Questions at issue

The following questions are of relevance in this study:

- Why do not many girls go to school in the Montepuez district?
- Why do some girls actually go to school?
- Why do many girls discontinue school?
- Can girls' schooling situation be compared to that of the boys'?
- How can rural and urban areas be compared regarding patterns in girls' schooling?

1.4 Previous research

Girl's schooling is discussed in a few studies about education in Mozambique. Palme (1993) has carried out a study about drop-out rate from the schools in Mozambique in three different areas, both rural and urban and he found various explanations of discontinue. School was only one out of several agencies and not the most important one. To perform tasks in the household, to work with cultivation and to guard the family herd of goats was, apart from contribution of labour also important parts of the family education. Further on, schooling implied a significant cost for many families and to send the children to town in order to complete grade 7 or to continue to secondary school was not possible as this would mean a loss of labour force. It would also involve finding a place for the children to live in town and to send money and food for their subsistence. Another factor behind drop-out was that children were considered over aged, either by the family or by the school, due to e.g. years of school repetition. Palme also discusses the relation between school and the local community in rural and urban contexts. When it came to girls' drop-out rate in particular, he found that in rural areas, it was no longer accepted to send the daughter to school after the initiation rite (a traditional type of education where girls and boys are prepared for the adult life). She was now con-
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considered an adult and supposed to get married and it was only natural that she would soon get pregnant. In the suburbs, the situation was different. Here pregnancy was a major drop-out cause in a negative sense and the girls had often got pregnant without the parents’ knowledge. A connection between female teachers and female pupils’ rate of discontinuette could be seen and there was also here a division between rural and urban areas. In towns, the female teachers were in a greater number compared to that of the countryside and in towns, girls were not failed as frequent as in rural areas and they also got higher marks. Palme stresses that the causes of drop-out and repetition cannot be treated in isolation. They have to be understood within a general social context where the factors interact.

In another study by Palme (1998), the need of a greater awareness of cultural aspects of teaching and learning is expressed. He brings up important aspects such as regionally different cultural systems and he demands a bridge between modern and traditional knowledge systems as well as a curriculum of relevance for the community life. In relation to girls’ education, Palme shows that education can be a contradictory project in rural areas in northern Mozambique, as the girls are here a guarantee for the inflow of new suitors and their labour force. If the girls would be sent to town in order to continue their studies, this labour force would no longer be guaranteed. In addition, town life, with a substantially different social environment, can be difficult for rural girls to confront.

Åkesson (1992) has studied schoolbooks in relation to families’ purchase power in Mozambique and one of the results was that families, whose only income was from cultivation, often could not afford to buy schoolbooks for their school aged children. In general, the parents who could afford to buy schoolbooks often had a cash income from a salary and a combination between paid labour and agriculture seemed to be the best source of income for the survival of the family. When a family had to give priority to one or a few of their children, the most common choice was the boys.

In Mozambique, I came across two studies where girls’ education in the Cabo Delgado province was in focus. One was a study about the impact of the traditional education on the formal education (Fungu Lane, Ding’ano & Mpalume 1997). Here it was expressed that boys who have gone through the initiation rite were more motivated to study than their fellow pupils, while for the initiated girls, the situation was the opposite. The number of girls in all grades was lower than the number of boys and the number decreased gradually. The drop-out causes for girls which they came up with in this study were: Lack of parent’s motivation, illiteracy in the family, lack of economic resources and the initiation. In the other study (Nekemwene, Mpalume, Focas & Haglund 1996), performed by DPE in Cabo Delgado, obstacles causing a girl minority in formal education was examined. They found that girls did more household work than boys, and therefore lacked time to study. The parents’ motivation was often low and money scarce and therefore they did not send their daughters to school. In urban areas, the motivation both among the parents and girls was higher than in ru-
ral areas, due to ‘social and economic development’ (figure 6, page 57). However, this was not further discussed.

One theory that can be applied when looking into how individuals are constrained from performing certain activities, is Time-Geography. My theoretical point of departure has been to use the constraints in time-geography as a framework when trying to explain why few girls go to school. This may be another step forward in the research about education, where a developing country is in focus.

1.5 Delimitations and scope

Two months is the time limit for the scholarship “Minor Field Study” financed by Sida. The stay in Mozambique taught me a lot about the country, but of course, it only allowed me to experience a small part. The time included both interviews in Montepuez, material collecting in Montepuez and in Pemba (the province capital of Cabo Delgado), a visit to the Nampula province and a stay in Maputo where, for my study, important institutions and organisations such as Unicef, MINED, INDE are based. The whole process was therefore time pressured.

I wanted to get a glimpse of both rural and urban areas and the alternative which came up to best suit this aim, was to perform the study in Montepuez, a small town but at the same time both mentally and geographically close to the countryside. The geographical focus in this study is above all the Montepuez district. I also visited other areas in the Cabo Delgado province and I will therefore refer to some of them.

The central issue in this study is why there are few girls in the Mozambiquean schools. Matters of great importance for the development of a beneficial education system, such as for whom, and how the education should be performed, will not be discussed. The quality of the schools, the teaching or the school books, will not be looked into, unless they are constraining factors concerning girls schooling.

1.6 Method and material

In order to try to identify the reasons why some girls go to school and others do not, I decided to focus on girls already in school. The reason why I chose to concentrate on girls already in school was because I assumed that it would demand more of me as a researcher to interview girls who had never even begun school and girls out of school, both in terms of experience, time and resources. I also imagined that one way of approaching the fact that many girls do not go to school and why many girls never begin school, was to look at why some girls actually go to school, a matter which in turn is also very interesting. I had the same method in mind when I decided to also look at boys’ schooling situation and to interview boys. A gender comparison between girls and boys in school would in fact say something about girls’ education and I also thought that it would be interesting to hear from the boys about their opinions about whether or not girls should go to school.
The school level chosen was mainly upper primary school (EP2). In general, there are few pupils on this level in the Mozambican education system, although education is formally compulsory until grade 7. The main purpose to research this school level is because it is said to be a critical phase in the schooling career as the pupils in order to move on to EP2 often have to change schools and move to town.

A Minor Field Study was carried out in the Cabo Delgado province in the northern part of Mozambique, from October to December 1998. The method is qualitative and the data consists of 27 semi-structured interviews, two group interviews and information from three key-informants. The respondents were 14 girls in EP2, 8 boys in EP2, 3 girls in Ensino Secundário (Secondary school), 2 female teachers, 2 nurses and 3 women responsible for an initiation rite to which I was invited. The key-informants were 1 male teacher, 1 nun running a boarding house for girls from the countryside and 1 chefe de bairro (the chief of a neighbourhood). In addition, information came from people working for the Africa groups of Sweden, UNICEF-employees, INDE-employees, a woman working with gender issues in education in the Cabo Delgado province, the co-ordinator at the MINEED (Ministry of Education) Gender unit, a teacher in Nampula and my assistant. My intention was to do far less than 30 interviews, but new, interesting interview opportunities came up along the way and I took them on.

A translator from Makua (the widely spoken language in the area) or Portuguese (the official language in Mozambique) could not be arranged, but Jacinta, a woman from Montepuez became my assistant and supported me during most of the interviews. As I was going to interview mainly girls from the Montepuez district, it was important for me to be assisted by a woman, preferably from the area. The interviews were mainly performed in Portuguese, but on some occasions, the informants preferred to speak Makua as it sometimes felt more comfortable and easy to speak their native language. When my language skills were not sufficient, Jacinta could make the questions and answers clearer and sometimes translate into Makua. Due to my Portuguese language shortcomings, I am aware of that I probably missed out on important information and my way of drawing up the questions would also have been more satisfactory if my language skills had been better. Jacinta could also explain cultural phenomena of which I had no previous knowledge. A disadvantage with using a translator, I experienced, was that she sometimes did not bother to translate everything and, es-

1. The Primary school system is divided into two parts; Ensino Primário do 1° Grau (EP1), consisting of grade 1–5 and Ensino Primário do 2° grau (EP2), grade 6–7.
2. The secondary school is also divided in two parts: “Ensino Secundário Geral do 1° Ciclo” (8th-10th grade) and “Ensino Secundário Geral do 2° Ciclo” (11th-12th grade).
3. The Africa groups of Sweden is a Swedish NGO which works with development in Mozambique, South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Angola.
4. INDE stands for “Instituto Nacional do Desenvolvimento da Educação” which means The National Institute for the Development of Education (my translation). The institute co-operate with Stockholm Institute of Education in Sweden and has done a lot of research about education in Mozambique.
especially during the later interviews, she tended to become too active and nearly took over my role.

So why did I choose to use a qualitative method? By using interviews, more personal information can be reached, information which would have been left out in a quantitative method. I tried to get a variety of respondent pupils by selecting girls and boys from different areas and with different family backgrounds. However, the aim was not to represent a whole population and to draw any general conclusions, which would have been the case in a quantitative method.

In order to choose a school where I could perform the interviews, I contacted the District Directorate of Education (DDE). It turned out that there were two schools in Montepuez, teaching on the upper primary level (EP2). One was the primary school with class 1–7 and the other is the secondary school with class 6–10. I was proposed to do the interviews in the primary school and as I did not know anything about the schools, I accepted. Besides, I thought that it would be a good idea not to split the interviews into two schools, as that would decrease my chances to get to know the pupils. I was presented to the headmaster of the school and I suggested that a good introduction for me would be to attend some lessons and he agreed. The interviews were made mainly at this primary school and at a boarding facility, run by catholic nuns, where girls from the countryside stay.

During the interviews I realised that it may have been better to do the interviews at the other school. The proportion of girls was smaller here and a greater number came from the countryside. On the other hand, there was probably a greater variety at the school where I actually did the interviews.

The next step in the process was how many pupils I should interview and how I should select them. I wanted to interview mainly girls, but to some extent also boys as I wanted to compare girls’ and boys’ schooling situation and to hear the boys’ opinion about girls’ schooling. I was particularly interested in pupils coming from rural areas and I wanted to talk to both pupils in grade 6 and 7. I started off in a boarding school run by catholic nuns, where 27 girls from rural areas stayed. Six of the girls here were in either grade 6 or 7 at the primary school and one was in grade 8 at the secondary school. I was allowed to interview these seven, and I thought this would be a good start as the house was a quiet place and we could avoid disturbance.

To choose the respondents at the school was a more difficult matter. I attended lessons for a few days and I realised that the classes were very large. There were about 70 pupils in each class and it would be difficult to just pick some at random. Therefore, I made a small inquiry with short questions about age, sex, living circumstances and some questions about the parents’ occupation and education. This was distributed to all pupils in one grade 6 class and in one grade 7 class. I was aware that the pupils were probably not used to fill in questionnaires, but the teacher explained the questions and thanks to this inquiry, I could at least avoid that the headmaster would select the pupils. Otherwise, there would have been a risk that he had chosen only ‘good representatives’ of the school to keep up the reputation. In addition, it was easier to choose
pupils from both rural and urban areas with a variety of backgrounds, ages and family occupations.

Another issue to deal with was to choose a location for the interviews. My house was out of the question as this would have been a very unfamiliar place for them. Outside, on the school yard or some other place in town, would also have been unsuitable, as we would have run the risk of being surrounded by other people who were curious and may have wanted to take part in the interviews. I thought the best place would be a room at the school that the headmaster offered me to use. It was a room where they kept books and records and although this room was probably also unfamiliar to most pupils, at least it was situated in the school area and a bit of privacy could be obtained. I was also offered to use the headmaster’s room, but as his room was definitely a place of authority, I preferred the previous alternative. In addition, we would have run the risk of being interrupted by the headmaster.

The other respondents were chosen later, through contacts with Jacinta, my assistant, and through Eva from the Africa Groups. These interviews tended to be more relaxed than the previous ones, as for example Jacinta knew some of the informants personally. An interview situation always mirrors a social relationship and the outcome of the interview may have been more or less reliable, depending on for example the environment, my attitude, the questions posed, the status differences between us and to which extent the respondents felt they could trust me. Some interviews felt better than others, which can probably be explained by some of these factors. Jacinta and I became good friends, which helped me to understand a bit more of the Montepuez culture. She may also have contributed to a better social relationship between me and the respondents.

The reliability of the respondents as a source can be discussed. None of them had been interviewed before and many of the pupils were shy and embarrassed. This was my first research experience and in addition, complete privacy could not be guaranteed. When we were discussing more sensitive matters such as teachers’ alcohol habits or bribe payments, many were just giggling or did not want to say anything. Sometimes after an interview, Jacinta could tell me: “I could feel that “she or he didn’t speak the truth in this or that matter”. For me as a novice in the Montepuezan culture, and with limited language skills, this was not always easy to understand. The interview guide was also modified as the interviews went along. Some questions turned out to be inadequate formulated, other questions were difficult for the informants to answer and new questions also came up from time to time.

The statistics used in this study, and to some extent the secondary literature, was assembled at INDE, MINED, Unicef, DPE in Cabo Delgado and DDE in Montepuez. Some of the material collected in Mozambique would not have been possible to find in Sweden. The school statistics in Mozambique is quite impressive. Every school in Mozambique is obliged to collect data divided by gender about how many pupils they have in each grade, how many repeaters there are and how many who fail the exams. The statistics is divided by gender and they are open to
the public. But, as with all kinds of statistics, one has to be aware that they may not always present the true picture.

The greatest disadvantage in the analysis of statistical figures is that they do not relate to the total population of a district. It is therefore impossible to know how many children in, for example, Montepuez who do not go to school. This could only be shown by a comparison between the enrolment figures and the population figures. A new census has recently been made in Mozambique, but this has not yet been divided into districts. In addition, the census figures do soon get obsolete, as there are large population movements in the area. Due to the now steady peace, people finally dare to move back to their area. Another shortcoming with the statistics is that when the figures of a district are presented, they only show the average number of girls and boys in school, an average that does not say much about the real situation. Both urban and rural schools are included in the average, although the situation may be opposed in separate schools and in different areas. Each district has a centre, and here the situation may contrast a village ten kilometres away and this village may be very different from a village 50 kilometres away. The only way to get a more truthful picture is to select a couple of schools and then compare them with each other.

1.7 Outline of the study

After the introduction chapter, the theories of relevance for this study are presented, where the focus is on the constraints used in Time-geography. Then follows a historical background of Mozambique and an insight in the educational situation. Next chapter constitutes a presentation of the empirical work, based on interviews with mainly girls studying on an upper primary level in northern Mozambique. In the final chapter, the paper is analysed and discussed. A list of abbreviations and glossary can be found on page 63.
2 Theoretical Framework

The introduction of a school in a Mexican village in the 1940s has by Carlstein (1975) been studied by using a time-geographical analysis. The new school caused time conflicts in many families as the children already spent a large part of their time on other tasks. Girls' time was needed in the household and to take care of younger sisters and brothers while the boys were needed in the cultivation and among the cattle. These time conflicts could partly explain why few children regularly could go to school (Åquist 1992). A more recent study where time-geography was used in the context of children's schooling in developing countries was performed by Aragão-Lagergren (1997). The focus was here on child labour in the informal sector in Managua, Nicaragua. The time-geographical conflict was present, as many of the children did not have time to go to school due to the long distance from home or from work. Aragão-Lagergren therefore means that in the planning of school locations, children's main working places (big car parking spaces etc.) should be taken into account.

Time-geography was the main theoretical framework at the starting point of this study. The study therefore reflects this theory, which can be both positive and negative. Positive, because it gave me a certain frame, which I could move within. Negative, because the theory, as well as it guided me, also limited me and narrowed the scope so that it excluded important factors and alternative explanations when looking into the phenomenon. During the interviews and the analysis of them, I realised that the time-geographical theory of constraints was sometimes insufficient and that it therefore would be beneficial to complement time-geography with alternative theories. The theories that I found would suit this accomplishing aim are also presented in this chapter.

2.1 Time-geography

Time-geography was developed by the Swedish geographer Hägerstrand in the 1970s and this was a new way of looking at human geography. As the name implies, the theory emphasises not only space, which was the traditional approach in human geography, but also time. The focus is on events or processes that take place, take time and demand space. Time and space constitutes the unit time-space, which is a resource explained by the fact that different activities in society demand physical space. The questions 'When?' and 'For how long?' are here of importance. Geographers often use the map as an instrument of reproduction, but in time-geography, the map is not sufficiently enough. The map reproduces pictures that are more or less stationary.
and describes the space almost perfect. However, time does not exist in a map and time-geography can here fill a gap as it describes a situation where both time and space are present. This can be shown in a diagram, with space on the x-axis and time on the y-axis. The time-space volume within reach is shown as a prism in the diagram. The individual appear inside the walls of the prism and depending on where the stops are located and for how long they last, the walls of the prism may change from day to day (Hägerstrand 1970, Åquist 1992). The time-geographical diagram and the time-spatial volume is illustrated in figure 1.

![Time-space diagram](image)

**Figure 1**

The time-space diagram, with space on the x-axis and time on the y-axis. The prism is the time-space volume within reach for e.g. an individual. (Source: Hägerstrand 1970).

### 2.1.1 Individual paths, projects, bundles and stations

Central in time-geography are *individual paths*. In time-space, each individual forms a path that describes concrete positions and movements. Depending on the scale of the space-time, it can be everything from a day path to a life path (Åquist 1992). One can e.g. follow an individual’s movements in space-time a typical day from when the person wakes up in the morning, until she or he goes to bed at night. One can also track a person’s life, from childhood until death, or a specific stage in life, such as the path of a university student during the student time or the time from retirement until death. In relation to girls’ education in Mozambique, one alternative could be to follow a Mozambican girl’s path during a day, a week, a year or the path of the school career. However, this will not be made here.

The concepts of *projects*, *bundles* and *stations* are all important in time-geography. A *project* is an individual’s/individuals’ activities and consists of a number of elements, often performed in a certain order. A project can be individual but it can also demand co-operation between individuals where they have access to the same tools and materials. More than one individual forms a *bundle*, i.e. a grouping of several paths may be referred to as a *bundle* (Åquist 1992). Projects and bundles are often linked to *stations* in time-space and one example of a station can be a school in a developing country.
Giddens (1985) states that too little attention is paid to what is actually happening at these stations and he also wishes that their significance for the region would be more noticed, instead of just looked upon as a stop in the individual paths. Of interest here is that instead of certifying that there are schools (stations) scattered around Mozambique to which pupils come and go, of importance is also who is coming to these schools, why they are there and why they decide to leave school. The school system in e.g. Mozambique can serve as an example of the relation between project, bundle and station. It is a collective project performed by a bundle (pupils and teachers) at a station (the school). The significance is that it demands time and space in time-space, i.e. a school in which the pupils and teachers spend a number of hours. Co-operation between more than one individual's activities is also needed in order to perform the project, i.e. a teacher and pupils are needed to perform a lesson.

2.1.2 Constraints in time and space

The following chapter is influenced mainly by Hägerstrand (1970), Friberg (1990) and Åquist (1992).

Central in time-geography is also the theory of constraints and as said this constitute the main theoretical framework in this study. Even though many constraints are formulated as general and abstract rules of behaviour they can be given a “physical” shape in terms of location in space, areal extension, and duration in time. The constraints can be divided into three groups: Capability constraints, coupling constraints and authority constraints.

*Capability constraints* limit individuals’ activities because of his or her biological construction and the capacity of the tools and resources available. Each individual also has to sleep a number of hours with a certain regularity, which above all demands time and an individual can therefore not study or work 24 hours a day. If the economic resources available are scarce, this can constrain the individual and of relevance in this study is the financing of the education. The tools at disposal such as a bike or a bus can help an individual to overcome distance constraints. Concerning education in a developing country, the possibility to travel to school by bus or by bike, could be an advantage if the child lives far away from school. The distance also determines the individual’s power to move or to communicate. An individual’s scope is limited, while the surroundings are unlimited, and the means of accessible transports decide the radius of each individual. Ellegård (1990) points out that because this may be regarded as self-evident, it is therefore often forgotten in attempts to explain time-geography.

*Coupling constraints* is defined through the demand of co-ordination. In order to make production, consumption or social intercourse possible, individuals, tools and materials have to be connected in order to collaborate. Individuals and equipment are essential parts of bundles, projects and stations and they have to be at the same place at a certain time in order to co-operate. During this time both place, individuals and tools are occupied and therefore, they can not take part in another activity. An individual bound to her or his home base, can parti-
cipate only in bundles which have both ends inside her/his daily prism (see figure 1). The bundles also have to be so located in space that the individual has time to move from the end of one bundle to the beginning of the following. To analyse the co-operation and competition between existing and new forms of organisation for human activity in a limited time-space is central in the time-geographical research (Holm, Mäkilä & Öberg 1989). This time conflict is relevant for this study, as a pupil can not be at home, performing e.g. domestic tasks, at the same time as she or he is at school. In order to be part of these two bundles at the same day, the home and school have to be located so that the pupil has time to move between them.

Authority constraints are associated with time-space aspects of authority and they are about the control and the access of the space. The world is filled with ‘control areas’ or ‘domains’ that are spatial and included in a hierarchy of domains, controlled by individuals, groups of people or organisations. The purpose of the domains is to protect resources and a domain can be of varying size, everything from a small domain such as a favourite bench to large domains such as a country or nation. The rules to enter a domain can be more or less rigid and can range from a dress code to a passport. Concerning the access to formal education in a country, the key to school domain can be to pay the matriculation fee or to wear a school uniform. Many of these territories are more or less permanent such as a borderline or a school, while others are temporary, for example a reserved seat on a bus or the occupation of a telephone booth. Authority constraints can be a question of culture, traditions and religion. A Christian usually does not enter the domains of a Mosque, at least not for religious aims. A historical example from Sweden is that Swedish women did not have the right to vote until 1921 and this became the year when women for the first time got the legal access to the political domain. A traditional domain can be illustrated by the fact that women traditionally have less access to the labour market than men, and men may have difficulties to get access to the domains of the household.

The three forms of constraints interact in many ways, both direct and indirect. In practice, it can therefore be difficult to determine whether the matter is a capability, coupling or an authority constraint. However, this may only be a problem in theory as when it comes to practice, it may be of minor relevance in which category we put a certain constraint. One example that shows that it can be difficult to distinguish the constraints from each other is that a wealthy person may often have access to a larger number of domains (authorities) than a person with scarce resources (capabilities). A wealthy person can probably choose to have a car at her or his disposal (capability), which means that movements in space can be done faster (coupling). A well-off family can choose whether to live close or far away from school, (capability) which saves time (coupling). Also in a country where education is free (capability), pupils may be unable to come to school because it is situated too far away or because the means of transport are non-existent (coupling). Members of society may also have access to different domains because of age, sex or income (authority or capability).
One problem with the application of constraints in an analysis is that there is no distinct border between what we can, want, and should do and there is a risk that the observed behaviour is presumed to be the desired behaviour. We may take for granted that a person wants to perform certain tasks and the only reason the person abstain from doing it is because she or he is surrounded with a number of constraints. An analysis of what an individual wants, should do and can do, may bring us closer to the individual and the environmental determining factors of formal education.

The paradox of human action is a discussion about whether or not it is possible to talk about the human being as a person free of action at the same time as the actions are formed by her history and the surrounding environment. Is it the human being, the structure, or a combination of both that decides the individual’s action? I.e. an actor oriented, a structural, or a combined approach? This is discussed in Holm, Mäkilä & Öberg (1989) and here, a combined approach is put forward. To deny the significance of the structure makes the individual a prisoner in the structure. In table 1, a division in three types of action basis can be seen: the forced, the normative, and the will basis of action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forced basis of action</th>
<th>Normative basis of action</th>
<th>Will basis of action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aggressiveness, the guarding of one’s special preserves, and other instincts that control our actions.</td>
<td>Cultural and social norms influence our actions.</td>
<td>The will of the human being which commands her strategy of action, is stronger than instincts and norms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1

Forced, normative and will basis of action for human behaviour. (Source: Holm, Mäkilä & Öberg 1989).

Both individual and contextual circumstances indicate what a person can and cannot do. When the possibilities have been limited to one, single option, or when the constraints turn out to be so wide that only one choice is possible, the ‘can’ has changed character to a ‘must’. One must for example quit the job when the factory closes down and one must at some point die.

What a person wants to do is an individual quality, although dependent on the preconditions. What a person wants also varies individually and over time, due to fantasy and information. What an individual should do is decided by the surrounding opinions. The extent of similarity between want and should, depends on to what extent the person has accepted the surrounding opinions. What an individual can do is a consequence of the qualities of both the individual and the surrounding environment. Those in power try to influence the attitudes and the gap between want and should shrinks. When a child little by little takes over the adults’ values about what one should and should not do, the process is called socialisation (Holm, Mäkilä & Öberg 1989).
2.2 Life courses

One theory that I thought would complement time-geography was the theory of *life courses*, developed from the *life-cycle model*. In short, the idea of the life-cycle model was that individuals and families go through different stages. In the 1940s, seven stages in the typical American family were identified. It started with marriage, followed by birth of first child, birth of last child, marriage of first child, marriage of last child, death of one spouse and death of remaining spouse (Murphy 1987).

The family life cycle concept was criticised for being stereotypical through a given number of stages in a predetermined order. The normative approach in the model was also questioned and critics stated that norms are always defined socially. In addition the life cycle model was criticised as time and space specific. Researchers had found difficulties to apply the family life cycle approach to historical and contemporary Western populations, they found that it was even more problematic to implement it in other societies with different family structures. One could not transfer the model from, for example, The United States to India, as people in India marry much earlier, have a larger amount of children and die earlier. The life cycle model was then developed to suit a more diversified picture, based on personal biographies and histories and this was the point of departure of the *life course theory*. Here, different geographical, social, historical and political space is taken into account and instead of studying the household or the family, the individual’s life course is central. The stages in the life cycle theory have also been abandoned and one now says that the life course has *transitions* (Murphy 1987, Migration and the life-course 1998). The transitions can be ‘rites of passage’, where the transition is ritually expressed. Often, new styles of clothing, hairstyle, or body marks, highlight the transition (Hagestad 1991). The individual in such a transition is removed from the old category and made inactive for a while, cut off from regular contact. Then he or she is ritually reincorporated in a new category where another set of relations is established (Keesing 1976). But the life course theory stresses that the individual decides its own course to a greater extent than in the deterministic life cycle theory. Earlier transitions in life can be significant for later turning points in life and the life courses are also influenced by, and influence the family relations. However, the life courses are also formed by the structure of society and one can therefore say that also the life course models are stereotypical. They are socially constructed, i.e. they are part of the culture in which the individual exists (Murphy 1987).

Different life styles and occupations are of importance for which course the life take. A categorisation can be made to discern a number of alternative transitions and life courses. Marriage is such a transition that exists in many cultures and here e.g. migration is often involved. In Western countries, a marriage often means that both the man and the woman migrate and they usually move to a common apartment or house. However, the situation can be very different in other parts of the world. In patrilocal societies the woman often moves to the man's fam-
ily and in regions where a matrilocal structure is dominant, the man moves to the woman's family. In Mozambique, there is a division between the north and the south parts of the country and generally, the structure in the south is patrilineal and patrilocal, while the north is matrilineal and matrilocal. In northern Mozambique, the married woman in a traditional peasant society should remain in the area of her family of origin as it is seen as a guarantee for stability and future reproduction. This is because the children are to be brought up close to the extended family to which they belonged. This is normally the family on the mother's side. When the marriage transition occurs, the husband moves to the wife's area of origin. Another transition in the life course is to get pregnant and have children. Moving to town for education can be another transition in the life course. However, in traditional families in Mozambique, this latter transition often does not exist for girls as the education of girls is regarded as counterproductive and what we find here is a conflict concerning girl's education (Palme 1998). This will be further discussed in chapter three.

The life course is apprehended as a sequence of status passages: *rites of passage* that are differentiated according to social and economic circumstances. The passing from one age grade to another in many traditional societies marks a complex set of changes in individuals' social identities. Not only do they enter a new phase of life with new characteristics, but they also face different access to valued resources and new social rights and obligations. In the northern parts of Mozambique, one example of such a *rite of passage* is the initiation rite, which both girls and boys go through in order to become adults, i.e. women and men (This is discussed in chapter 4: the field work). Transitions between age categories do not need to correspond to stages of physical maturation, although some *rites of passage* do, such as the onset of menstruation for girls that takes place at a precise time (Keesing 1976).

The transition between these stages in life also marks a new life course, which may change again when a new transition occurs. Carryer (1997) made a field study in rural areas in Mozambique and from these studies, she has divided the life of a rural person into different stages:

1. *Birth until wean from breast-feeding* (up to about two years of age):
   The child spends most of the day on the mother's back in a 'capulana' (a piece of cloth).

2. *Childhood* (from about two to seven years of age): A sudden separation from breast-feeding and the nourishment now offered is often insufficient. The child passes the day walking and playing with other children in the village, without the presence of adults. The little girls, and to some extent the boys, begin very early to get used to the necessary activities in the everyday life.

3. *First apprenticeship* (from about 7 to 12 years of age): This is the first obvious separation of duties and activities between the sexes. The father teaches the son to make baskets or to hunt and the girl stays with an aunt to help in the household and to learn the female duties. The boy has already at this stage a lot more spare time than the girl and the spare time gap between the sexes will further increase.
4. **Initiation until the marriage**: The initiation is a period of apprenticeship that takes place sometime during the puberty. For girls, the initiation rite takes place after the first menstruation, but for boys, there is no fixed time. The young girl and boy are here prepared for their future role as wife or husband and they are also taught how they should behave towards the other sex. This is the total integration towards their duties in the household and in the farming.

5. **Adult age**: This is the period of production and reproduction and the duties depend on the sex. In general, there is a desire to have many children.

6. **Old age**: The old people continue to work with agriculture as long as they manage and when they no longer have the strength, they often take care of the young children in the household. It is their own children who have the responsibility for them and both old men and women are highly respected.

Moving to town for education is, as said above, a transition in the life course. One has to remember that school education at least at a higher level is connected to the urban life and in order to take part in further education, an urbanisation process is therefore involved. Bjerén (1985) has studied urbanisation processes in Ethiopia. The focus is on how people come to a particular town, how it is economically possible for persons moving to the town and to remain in it and how the migration patterns can be understood in terms of the historical and contemporary context of the town. She shows that it is not just ‘any person’ who moves to town for ‘any reason’ and at ‘any given time’. Certain preconditions exist and in focus here is ethnicity, gender and occupation. Bjerén argues for example that ethnicity is the most important factor in determining an individual’s migration career in the Ethiopian context, as there is an ethnic differentiation of occupations, of which some are more mobile than others. To understand the mechanisms behind the movement to African towns is important in this study, as it will be shown that it is not just ‘any person’ who moves to town in Mozambique in order to go to school. Differences in life courses such as family background, family occupation, age and gender are of importance.

### 2.3 Social networks and the cultural capital

#### 2.3.1 Social networks

If further education means that the pupil have to change schools and move to town, this may, as already implied, also mean a temporary migration and an urbanisation process. When studying migration patterns, one important factor why and where people migrate, is the potential migrants’ social network and as we shall see in this study, the social network is of importance for the informants’ scholastic possibilities. To perform studies about social networks is to systematically look into social relations between people. The basis is most frequent individuals or families and the network study is the mapping of the family’s or individual’s circle of relatives, friends and neighbours and also
the relation between them. A network analysis aims at examining the chain of social relations between people (Arnstberg 1975). Social networks can be illustrated in terms of systems with nodes, links and flows. The social network is marked with nodes and there are flows between these nodes through links. New nodes are created, old nodes are still present and the links are continuously changed. The flow of information and the circle of relatives and friends have effects on the appearance of the system. The nodes in a social network are always physical people at certain places who interact through the links (Stjernström 1998).

The importance of social networks has also been studied in the urbanisation in developing countries. Malmberg (1988) found that personal contacts between the metropolis Lima in Peru and the migrant's area of origin were intensive. The image of the city was spread through personal contacts and contacts with relatives generated additional migration. Social contacts with city dwellers, provides information to the potential migrant and the social network gives an economic and a social security the first period in the city. To keep the social ties both to the area of origin and to the area of destination, is a strategy used to both have the possibility to stay and to move back again (Malmberg 1988; Stjernström 1998).

2.3.2 The cultural capital

The French sociologist Bourdieu also acknowledges the importance of social network and he refers to this as social capital. However, what shall be discussed here is his idea of cultural capital. Bourdieu wanted to explain the unequal scholastic achievement of children originating from the different social classes in France. The economists' view of educational investment as directly convertible into money, such as the costs of schooling and the cash equivalent of time devoted to study, was according to Bourdieu insufficient. This because the hidden and socially most determinant educational investment is missed, namely, the domestic transmission of cultural capital. Cultural capital exists in three different forms:

1. The Embodied State. Cultural capital that is linked to the mind and body in the form of what is called culture. A person who owns cultural capital is cultivated. This form of cultural capital has to be invested personally, an investment which costs time as it cannot be transmitted or inherited instantaneously (unlike money, property rights or titles). Nor can it be accumulated beyond the capacity of the individual. The embodied capital is linked to a habitus, i.e. the habits, values, believes and abilities which the individual has at his or her disposal. Moreover, it declines and dies with its bearer (with his or her biological capacity, memory, etc.). Both cultural and economic capital is important forms of capital when it comes to children's education. The cultural capital embodied in the whole family decides the process of the child's accumulation of cultural capital and all families do not have the economic and cultural means for prolonging their children's education more than necessary.
2. *The Objectified State.* This is cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, paintings etc.) that is defined only in the relationship with cultural capital in its embodied form. Cultural goods can be obtained both materially: with economic capital, and symbolically: with cultural capital. As an example, a book can be bought for money, but in order to be able to read the book, the user has to possess a certain amount of cultural capital in his or her embodied state.

3. *The Institutionalised State.* This form of cultural capital is defined in terms of academic qualifications. While a person who owns cultural capital in the embodied state is autodidact and therefore may be called into question at any time, a person with institutionalised cultural capital has some kind of certificate of cultural competence, such as an academic title. This gives him or her a legally guaranteed value with respect to culture (Bourdieu 1986).

The cultural capital is a form of symbolic capital and symbolic capital exists in all societies. Honour was historically an early form of symbolic capital. Writing skills and later the emergence of the educational system, was the foundation of the cultural capital and the accumulation of education was accumulation of cultural capital (Broady 1985).

The possession of cultural capital can open doors and it can also function as an instrument of power. One can here draw parallels to the discussion about authority constraints in time-geography, where one needs keys of entrances to different territories. As the cultural capital of the family is important for the child’s gaining of cultural capital, one can say that pupils with the ‘right’ cultural background also have the ‘right’ attitudes and knowledge in order to feel comfortable in the school environment. That one generation of a class ensures that its privilege is passed on to the next generation, is Bourdieu’s conception of reproduction. In France he has seen that the children of middle and upper class families have gained the cultural capital necessary in order to obtain a high level of education, while the children of working class parents have not. The middle and upper class families can therefore reproduce their class position from one generation to another in an apparently fair and legal way and in this sense, the cultural capital is reproducing itself (Wallace & Wolf 1995). The family background of the pupils interviewed this study is, as we shall see, of importance for their school career.
3 Mozambique – an Introduction

3.1 From colonisation to peace

Mozambique is nearly twice as large as Sweden, both in area and in population. It is situated on the Eastern African coast and borders Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Swaziland. This can be seen in the map in figure 2. The climate is varied, from tropical in the north to subtropical in the south and the country is periodically hit by drought. The rain period is from October until March and the rest of the year is dry (Utrikespolitiska institutet 1995).

Figure 2

Province map of Mozambique (Source: Cartographia Vallalat 1994, in Espling 1999)
The official language, as well as the language used in schools is Portuguese, although few have Portuguese as a mother tongue. There are as many as 13 major, as well as some minor, linguistic groups within the country and there are about ten ethnic groups, the Macua-lomwe in the north and the tsonga people in the south, being the largest. The religious situation is also heterogeneous. Traditional African religions, based on the cult of the spirits of ancestors, are important, but Islam has had a great influence on the coastal regions and an inheritance from the colonial time is Christianity. About a third of the Mozambiqueans are Muslims, two million are Catholics and these religions are now influenced by the traditional religions (Utrikespolitiska institutet 1995; Espling 1999).

In the 16th century, Mozambique was colonised by the Portuguese and they exploited mainly gold, ivory and slaves. In the Southern part of Mozambique (Maputo, Gaza and Inhambane), a massive labour force migration to neighbouring countries, started in the 19th century. The majority was men and most of them went to South Africa to work in the mines and the women now had to manage both the household and the whole agricultural process on their own. Women sometimes even had to find ways to earn money in order to pay the tax they were forced to by the state of Portugal. The Mozambiqueans who did not participate in the forced labour, were obliged to grow cotton for export, which further limited the time for the household production. All this contributed to the fact that the food production was weakened and the alimentary situation degraded, a pattern which is still visible today (Carryer 1997).

The protests against the colonial power grew stronger in the 1960s and a war against the colonial power started. The liberation of the country was reached in 1975 and the Frelimo was the only party allowed. The ideology was based on Marxism and the vision was to modernise Mozambique in ten years. Education for the peasants and health improvement became important issues on Frelimo's political agenda. But the strenuous strive to modernise the country also implied a change in the traditional way of living. In a socialistic spirit, local power was taken from traditional chiefs and was given to young Frelimo officers and 1.5 million people were forced to move from their homes to giant villages where they would work and live in communes. It was thought that education, health care and political influence would be more effective this way and it would also contribute to the elimination of ‘social problems’ such as witchcraft and traditional religions (Utrikespolitiska institutet 1995; Carryer 1997).

Frelimo thought, that in order to win the struggle against the colonial power, also the women had to be involved in the process and in the 1970s, omm (Mozambican Woman’s Organisation) was founded. It operated side by side with Frelimo and also after independence, omm continued to aim for an emancipation of women. Women were meant to be treated the same way as men in the co-operatives and the communal villages and they would also get access to education, health care and political power (Hanlon 1990; Alberts & Hirvonen 1992). According to Pehrsson’s gender analysis (1993), women’s role in the new Frelimo soci-
ety was to be mothers and mentors for future generations, but women were not supposed to bring up their specific problems as women. A class struggle was welcomed, but not a gender struggle.

The compulsory transfer of people was a seed to dissatisfaction among the rural population and this was used by Renamo (The National Movement for Resistance) in the so called destabilisation. The Renamo guerrilla was supported by the white minorities in Rhodesia and South Africa and they wanted to obstruct the black autonomy and their strive for socialism. A civil war between the Frelimo and the Renamo broke out in the early 1980s, a war mainly fought out in rural areas. This civil war continued until 1992 (Utrikespolitiska institutet 1995).

Mozambique’s foreign debts rose dramatically in the beginning of the 1990’s and the Mozambican government decided to turn to the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and the World Bank. The prescription from them was a Structural adjustment program (sap) to reorganise the finances. Schools were privatised and matriculation fees were introduced even in the state owned schools. As the public sector was slimmed, many people lost their jobs and increased prices did not improve the situation (Graham-Brown 1991). An example of the difficult situation is that the terms of trade for peasants have deteriorated during the 1990s. In 1995, a peasant in the Montepuez district had to pay 50 kilos of maize for a pair of second hand trousers, while the price five years before was only 27 kilos. A writing book for school children cost 1.5 kilos of maize in 1989, but in 1995, the price was five kilos. The root of this relationship is the liberalisation of the market and due to this, there is no longer an administrative control (Abrahamsson & Nilsson 1995).

3.2 The social organisation

There are, in general terms, two predominant systems of social organisation in Mozambique, the matrilineal system and the patrilineal system. The river Zambezi is often mentioned as the rough boarder between these two areas. Traditionally the matrilineal system was linked to the cultivation of land, while the predominant activity in the patrilineal system was herding cattle and activities derived from cattle herding (Espling 1999).

In the patrilineal/patriloclal system, the man pays ‘lobolo’ (bride price) to the woman’s family when they get married. Once this is paid, he is in power of her labour and that of the children she produces. In a society where farming is almost entirely done with hand tools and where there are no landless labourers to hire, a wife represents a major capital investment. Greater production is gained by investing more capital to buy more wives. At a divorce, lobolo is paid back, the woman moves back to her family and the children stay in the father’s family. In the matrilineal/matriloclal system, the husband moves to the wife’s area. The man often works a year for the parents-in-law and if he is working and behaving well he can be accepted for marriage. When a divorce occurs, the man moves while the woman and the children stay (Alberts & Hirvonen 1992, Pehrsson 1993). According to Hanlon (1990), the mat-
rilocal tradition provides the woman more freedom, but she always remains under the authority of a man, usually her father or her mother's brother.

In the Makua matrilineal society, which is the setting of this study, the family economy is traditionally based upon the labour force provided by the young men who marry into the family. The girls are therefore considered the richness of the family. The senior mother is the central figure in the family network, even if the real chief of the extended family would be her brothers or maternal uncles. When a daughter gets married, her mother can benefit from the labour of her son-in-law, which will guarantee the well-being of their family network. It is important for the woman to give birth to daughters at an early stage of her social career. This is because she later on in life can rightfully “adopt” some of her granddaughters and she can now benefit also from their husbands’ labour force. Becoming a respected and influential senior woman is the fulfilment of the social career of a woman and this ideal comes into conflict with the idea of formal education. Examples from a rural, matrilineal community in the Nampula province, show that the education of a son or daughter is an honour for the family if it means a social mobility upwards. But the educational project can also turn out to be very difficult to complete. To send a daughter to school in town could be a dangerous strategy as the moral safety provided by the extended family can not be guaranteed in town. The family also finds the town an unfamiliar society, with which they do not feel at ease. Formal education also means the initiation to modern ‘secrets’ which can represent a moral degeneration of the traditional values. A problem is that girls can not marry a less educated man and according to the matrilineal tradition, the married woman should stay in the area of origin (Palme 1998).

In urban areas, the traditional systems have become transformed through the social process of urbanisation as such, but also through the influence of various institutions in society. Civil practices are combined with religious practices and through the large influx of rural refugees to the cities and peri-urban areas during the civil war, there are probably many people in towns who live according to their traditional norms. It would be impossible to speak of a particular system of social organisation in urban areas, but rather a mixture of different forms (Espling 1999).

3.3 School education

At the time of independence, there were only a few educated people in Mozambique. However, Frelimo invested in education and from 1975 to 1980, the illiteracy rate went down from 93 percent to 72 percent among people over 15 years of age. But there were great varieties between gender and regions. Women were generally less educated than men were and the literacy rate was substantially higher in urban areas than in rural areas (Pehrsson 1993). During the destabilisation, the educational system crashed. Renamo destroyed schools and the continuity
in the education was disturbed. A substantial migration from the war areas, moved children far away from their schools and in case of an attack, the parents did not dare to send the children to school (Graham-Brown 1991).

Callewaert (1998) points out that one has to separate upbringing, training and teaching from what is going on in the institution called school (usually referred to as formal education5). Most of the education takes place outside school and people are therefore not dependent on this institution. There is according to Callewaert a hidden curriculum in school that aims for the same social system and civilisation, irrespective of age, sex, social class, culture, language, religion, region and nationality. The official curriculum is to teach the instruments needed in order to take part in the official life. Governments in developing countries follow the school invention in the transitional stage towards modernisation. But this project can be contradictory, as the essential preconditions do not really exist. The setting is often a multi-cultural and multi-linguistic premodern society and they have their own political, social and cultural institutions. The institutionalised upbringing and its educational process does not go so well with the school idea (Callewaert 1998).

Although formal education is compulsory, far from all school-aged children, actually go to school. Both schoolrooms and material are lacking, the teacher are often not motivated due to low salaries and many pupils either drop out or repeat classes because of the deficient lessons. The fact that pupils repeat many classes is expensive for Mozambique. The age variation in the classes becomes wide and resources are wasted (Palme 1993). Over 20% of the pupils in EPI in the Cabo Delgado province are repeaters and the percentage is over 30% in EP2 (Mined 1998).

Statistics from Mined 1998 show that girls are in minority in most provinces, both in EPI and EP2 and the percentage girls is lower in the northern provinces, including Cabo Delgado (the area of this study), while girls are actually in a majority in EP2 in Maputo City. Looking at the total percentage girls in the country, one can see that the difference between EPI and EP2 is rather small (table).

Each year, pupils drop out of school and in Cabo Delgado only 2% of the girls who are enrolled in school in grade 1, actually complete grade 7 (the last year in the compulsory formal education) and it is some of them who are respondents in this study. Few boys also continue until grade 7. The country average for girls is 6% and the share is highest in the capital Maputo.

The percentage completing EPI, i.e. grade 5, are higher for both girls and boys and also here, the figures are higher in the southern provinces figure 3. In Cabo Delgado, the total number of pupils in EPI is 134556

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5. Education can be categorised in different ways, but generally, there are three modes of education: informal, formal and non-formal. The informal education is the lifelong process where every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insight from daily experiences. Formal education is what we usually refer to as education and is the institutionalised education system within a country, spanning from primary school to the university. The non-formal education is any organised educational activity, carried out outside the framework of the formal system (Forsslund 1995:40–41).
and the total number in the whole country is 1876154. In ep2, the total number in Cabo Delgado and the whole country is 7659 and 168777 respectively (Mined 1998). However, these absolute figures may be of minor importance, as the education statistics do not show how many children that do not go to school. As said in the introduction chapter, Unicef (1998a) estimates that about 35% of the school aged girls and 45% of the boys are enrolled in primary school in Mozambique. This is the average for the whole country though, and regional differences may therefore be vast. To get an idea about the absolute number of school aged girls and boys in the country as a whole, statistics show that the age group 6–12 years old is 3.8 million and the age group 13–18 is 2.4 million (Unicef 1998b):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>EP 1 (%)</th>
<th>EP 2 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maputo City</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maputo Prov.</td>
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<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inhambane</td>
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<td>44</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Tete</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Niassa</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

Percentage of girls in ep1 (grade 1–5) and in ep2 (grade 6–7). (Source: Mined 1998)

Figure 3

Percentage of pupils who begin grade 1 and completes grade 5 and percentage of pupils who begin grade 1 and complete grade 7. (Source: Mined 1998, processed by Unicef 1998b.)
4 The Empirical Work

4.1 How I ended up in Montepuez

I arrived in Maputo, the capital of Mozambique, in September 1998. While driving through Maputo, I was struck by the heat, the chaotic traffic, the sheds, the trash, the run down houses, the street vendors and the beggars. I could not imagine that Maputo was once considered to be one of the most beautiful cities in the world, that the architecture actually is very exciting, that the trees are covered with flowers all year round and that most people are very friendly and helpful. That I did not realise until the return to Maputo after spending six weeks in the Cabo Delgado province, with heaps of experience in my pockets and a bit more knowledge about Mozambique as a country.

In Maputo, I had about a week of preparation for the trip to Cabo Delgado, where I was going to do the study. I went to the mine to gather statistics about education and I visited INDE, where they wrote me a letter of recommendation to be shown where I was going to do the interviews. This certificate was later going to be proved to be very useful in my contact with authorities.

A week later, I was on my way to Pemba, the province capital in Cabo Delgado in northern Mozambique. 2.5 hours in the air may give an indication about the distance between the south and north of the country. As the plane went down, I looked out of the window and saw a beautiful landscape coloured in red that was contrasted with an endless beach with white sand and palms. I stayed in a house where the staff from the Africa Groups lives and I was helped by them to be introduced to the head of DPE to whom I showed my letter of recommendation from INDE. It was important not to exclude anybody in the hierarchy and it really helped to have a certificate. It would have been most inappropriate of me to just choose a school, without contacting anybody on a higher level in the education hierarchy.

As I knew beforehand that girls attend school to a much lower extent in rural areas, compared to urban areas, I wanted to get away from Pemba city, a rather big town with a population of 41,000 people (UNHCR/UNDP 1997a). As I had no access to a car, no previous experience of Mozambique and only a limited amount of time, I was dependent on the Africa Groups workers. I was offered to go to Montepuez, a small town that is situated interior, about 200 kilometres from Pemba, where the Africa Groups also have development workers. Eva, one of the Swedish Montepuez workers, had an errand in Pemba and when she went back home to Montepuez, I joined her and her two years old daughter. We took the ‘chiapa’ (the local bus) early in the morning and I realised that we were not the only ones going to Montepuez that day. The chiapa was absolutely packed with passengers, but we were luckily
squeezed into the bus and we even got a seat! The road was bumpy and full of holes and the journey took about six hours. Approaching Montepuez, high mountains piled up in front of us and the bus stopped by a market place that turned out to be the centre of the town. I was invited to stay in Eva’s house and this was my home for the following four weeks.

4.1.1 Montepuez – a town close to the countryside
The town Montepuez is the centre of the Montepuez district and despite its large population of 46000 inhabitants (UNHCR/UNDP 1997b), it feels small and rather rural, a bit like a cowboy town with sand whirling around everywhere. One only has to walk a few kilometres away to be in the countryside. The fact that the population of the larger town Pemba is actually lower than in the town of Montepuez, may be confusing and requires an explanation. One should probably refer to grade of urbanisation instead of size and the grade of urbanisation is definitely higher in Pemba, with a larger town centre, larger markets etc. The population density of the districts provides further information. While the population density in the Pemba district is 32 per km, the density is only 8 per km in the Montepuez district and

Figure 4
Cabo Delgado province (Source: Cartographia Vallalat 1994, in Espling 1999)
while the Pemba district only consists of two administrative posts, the Montepuez district has five (UNHCR/UNDP 1997a and b).

The inner town of Montepuez consists of houses built in cement and is therefore called “Bairro de Cement” (The Cement Neighbourhood). The houses here look like the houses we are used to see in Westernised countries and the few shops are situated in this area, as well as the administrative buildings, the bank, the church, the school etc. The shops are mainly run by wealthy Indians who generally live in the cement houses. In the bairros around the town centre, the houses are built with bamboo and clay, there is no electricity and the households share the well. The houses stand close to each other and have thatched roofs. This makes them inflammable and the fire is easily spread, especially during the dry period. One day when I was walking through a bairro close to the market, I saw five houses, totally burned down. The fire had started when one of the neighbours was burning litter and the control of the fire was lost. Eva from the Africa Groups told me that one of the house owners was badly affected. Neither did he manage to get his belongings out of the house nor did he have any relatives in Montepuez who could help him out during the time of reconstruction.

Agriculture is the predominant activity in Montepuez. Most families have a ‘machamba’ (a piece of land) where they grow maize, cassava, sorghum, beans, rice and peanuts. But the machamba is normally situated far away from home and this involves long walking distances. Some households though, have a house both in town and a small hut by the field. The soil is often of poor quality and to increase soil fertility, traditional techniques are used like soil preparation through burning the land. In November when I was in Montepuez, the rain period was about to start, the peasants were preparing their land for seeding and the smell from burning could often be scent. The main harvest time is generally in July and many households run short of food by December. Even though a lot of effort is put into the cultivation, the result is often a small harvest. Farming is a heavy burden on women, as they are both responsible for the cultivation and the household. The men are at the machamba mainly during the sowing period. Lomaco, a cotton factory, is the main industry in Montepuez. It promotes cotton production among small farmers in Montepuez and cotton therefore seems to take a growing share of the farmers’ cultivation (UNHCR/UNDP 1997b).

The number of people in Montepuez has increased a lot during the war, especially after 1984 when the war intensified in Cabo Delgado and many people moved into town for security reasons. Today many of these people have returned, but especially young men have stayed in the town. They can here make a living through petty trade and people are also moving in to town from the rural areas to look for the possibilities to earn money. There are strong links between the households in the family network and also between friends. In town, the markets are important sources of income. There are two controlled markets and a growing number of small informal markets in the bairros. According to the key informant in Espling’s study (1999), there is an increase in the crime rate, mainly due to the war as there are now a great number of unemployed men and demobilised soldiers. Today the situation is bet-
ter than during the war. Today people are able to cultivate their fields more intensively, but they still have to struggle to make ends meet (Espling 1999).

4.1.2 A presentation of the school – the main interview base
The ‘Escola Primária Sede Montepuez’ is situated in the centre of the town and it looks like an ordinary cement building, painted in white and blue. The schoolyard is every 40 minutes (the time of a lesson) crowded with children from the age of 7 up to 19, with a few exceptions of older students. The school day is divided in three: from 6 to 9 o’clock in the morning, from 9 until 12 o’clock or from 1 until 4 o’clock in the afternoon. The classrooms are small with only a few benches and I noticed that these benches were occupied mainly by male pupils. The classes are big, up to 70 students are not unusual. During the lessons which I attended (History, Maths, Geography and Portuguese), the teacher dictated or wrote facts on the blackboard and the students then wrote them down. This was controlled by letting one of the pupils read the text out loud or by letting the whole class read the text in a chorus. Nobody was wearing a school uniform, but one teacher said that it might be compulsory from next year. There was no electricity, and evening classes are therefore not possible. It was said that maybe next year, electricity would be provided.

4.1.3 School statistics
Statistics from the Cabo Delgado province show that in less urban areas, the percentage of girls also go down. In a comparison between the EP2-levels in three towns of different size: Pemba (the province capital), Montepuez and Namuno (a small district capital which I also visited) we can see that in Pemba, the largest of these three towns, the percentage girls is the highest (figure 5). Now, one has to remember that we are still talking about towns and the share of girls is here relatively large. In rural areas on the other hand, the number of girls in each class is often easily counted. I visited a village in the Namuno district, Nkumpe and here, only two out of 29 pupils in grade 5 were girls.

![Figure 5](image)

**Figure 5** Percentage girls on EP2-level in three towns of different size, or grade of urbanisation. In Cabo Delgado. Pemba has got the largest percentage and Namuno the smallest. (Source: MINED 1998).
The total number of pupils in EP2 in the Montepuez district is 1095, divided into two schools. This can be compared with the total number of students in EP1, which is 17271, divided into 74 schools. The district is large but there are only two schools in the whole district with EP2-level and they are both situated in the Montepuez centre. A critical point therefore comes when grade 5 is finished. At Escola Primária Sede Montepuez, the number of pupils in EP2 is 358 and 42% of them are female (DEE Montepuez 1998).

4.2 The interviews, observations and conversations

Although quite a few respondents and informants have contributed to this study, I have chosen to draw attention to especially four girls who you will get to know a bit better, namely Eva, Flávia, Atija and Benilda.

Eva is a 15 year old Maconde girl who studies at grade 6. Her family lives about 30 kilometres from Montepuez and she stays at Lar René Stefan, the boarding facility run by catholic nuns. She is determined when she speaks and she looks older than many other girls at the ‘Lar’ (a boarding facility). Flávia, on the other hand, is quiet and shy, but after a while she gets more outspoken. She is 17 years old and studies at grade 8, i.e. the first year at secondary school. In order to continue school, her father walked with her all the way from Mueda to Montepuez, a journey that took three days. Atija is a cheerful girl in grade 7 and she is also 17 years old. She lives with her sister in Montepuez while the rest of the family lives in the Pemba area. Benilda is married and lives with her husband in a bairro in the Montepuez town area. She is one of the older respondents, 20 years old and she studies at secondary school in grade 10.

4.2.1 Family background

Eva originally comes from the Mueda area, but now her family lives in a village close to Mapupulo. Her parents no longer live together and Eva’s brothers, sisters and nieces live with her peasant mother. Eva’s mother has two machambas, where she cultivates maize and peanuts for the family consumption. Eva’s father is also a peasant and his new family also grows products for the family consumption. Eva has six sisters and one brother, most of them are younger than she is. However, it was difficult to discern whether these really were her sisters and brothers, cousins or other relatives, as Eva (along with the other respondents) often used the same term when referring to them. ‘Irmã’ (sister) or ‘primo’ (cousin) could therefore have the same meaning. Two of them are studying, one in grade 2 and one in grade 5. One sister had to leave school in grade 6 because her father could not afford to let her continue. Both Eva’s parents went to school for a few years, her mother until grade two and her father until grade four. As her mother does not have a new husband, she is ‘chefe de família’ (chief of the family). She decided that Eva should continue to study as she wanted her daughters to become “boas meninas” (“good girls”). However, in Mapupulo there was no EP2-school and she was lucky to be offered to stay at the Lar.
Her family knew the place as Eva’s sister used to stay there for a while. Once when Eva brought food to her, Sister Luisa, director of the Lar, asked her if she wanted to continue school. Apart from Eva, there were two other girls from Mapupulo who went to stay at the Lar, but after a while, they both became pregnant and left school. When Eva goes back to Mapupulu during the school holidays, she helps her mother at the machamba. She also fetches water, cooks and takes care of her sisters and brothers. When it is dry season, it can be very far to the well. First she goes to the closest situated well and when it is dry, she goes to the next and so on.

Flávia comes from a village in the Mueda area and her parents are both peasants. Her mother works at the machamba. Her father is ill and he can not work so much anymore. They cultivate maize and peanuts, both for the family consumption and for sale at the market. Flávia tells me that both her mother and father studied for four or five years and her two sisters and four brothers all study or used to study. Two are in grade 4, one in grade 5 and one in grade 6. One of her sisters studied until grade 7. Now she is married and works in Maputo. Flávia’s sister and father were the ones who want her to study and it is her sister who pays for her schooling. Flávia describes at length about how she ended up at Lar René Stefan. “Last year, my father asked a woman about my education. She phoned my sister in Maputo who phoned somebody in Pemba, who contacted another person in Nampula who knew Sister Luisa. Then she asked me if I wanted to stay at the Lar”. Her father came with her to Montepuez, but as they could not afford to take the chiapa (the local bus) to Montepuez, they walked. “We walked from morning until it was dark. It took three days” It would have been possible for Flávia to study at least grade six and seven somewhere closer to her home village. However, her father thought that it would be better for her to study far away, so that she could concentrate on the studies and not being able to come home and help out at the machamba. Flávia only goes home during the summer holidays and she says that when she is at home “Eu faz nada” (“I don’t do anything”). When I ask what “nothing” is, she says “I work at the machamba, fetch water, collect firewood, visit relatives and I clean.” For me, Flávia’s definition of “nothing” was quite new.

Atija lives with her sister and her sister’s husband in a bairro close to town in Montepuez, while the rest of her family lives in the Pemba area. Her father is dead and her mother is a peasant with three machambas where she grows rice, sorghum and cassava for family consumption. Atija’s mother went to school, but she dropped out in grade 2 or 3 and Atija also know that her father also studied for a few years. Her sisters and brothers also study, but they go to school in Pemba, one is in grade 5, one in grade 6, and one in grade 8. Her sister studied for two years before she married a policeman and got herself four machambas, where she cultivates rice, peanuts, sorghum and maize for family consumption. Atija works at her sister’s machamba at the weekends and during the school holidays and especially last year Atija spent a lot of time at the machamba as her sister was pregnant. It is her sister who pays for Atija’s education with her husband’s money. When I ask her who wants
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she answers: “Todos! Todos querem que estudo!” (“Everybody! Everybody wants that I study!”).

Benilda is the youngest out of six sisters and three brothers. They are from Meza, about 80 kilometres from Montepuez, where their late mother was a peasant. Benilda’s father is working as a teacher in Meza he is also active in the Catholic Church. Benilda used to stay at the boarding facility by the secondary school in Montepuez, but she is now married and lives in a house with her husband, not too far away from the centre of Montepuez. Her husband is a soldier and he is the one who pays for Benilda’s education. All her sisters and brothers are well educated. The oldest sister went to ‘Escola Comercial’ (Business school), but she failed her last year, dropped out and moved to Maputo. One sister dropped out in grade 9 and is now a housewife in Meza. Another sister is in Nampula (another province) where she used to study, but she had to quit school when she fell pregnant with one of the teachers. One sister studied until grade 10:2 (grade 12 at secondary school), but she is now unemployed in Pemba and one sister went to grade 10 in Montepuez and is now working in an office. One of her brothers works at the university in Nampula, one is working for an NGO in Quelimane and the youngest brother is studying to become a vet in Maputo.

Apart from the boys and girls who I spoke to, I, as already mentioned, also made a few interviews with teachers and nurses. I was interested to hear a bit about their background and how come they continued studying. Mrs Clemente is a young teacher who teaches geography at EP2 since about a year. Her father was an administrator, so the family moved around the district a lot. Her mother is a peasant in Mueda and she sells products only the few times when there is a surplus in the crop. Mrs Clemente says that although her father was an administrator and held a high position in society, her family was poor. Her sisters and two brothers also went to school, of whom one of the brothers finished after grade 9 and is now working. The other brother still studies to become a teacher. Her sister studied until grade 5 and she is now married. Mrs Clemente is married to a man who studies geography at the university in Maputo, which is something that she also wishes to do some day. They have two girls, seven and four years old, who go to school in bairro Napai in Montepuez. Her sister’s daughter also stays with them as her sister who lives in the countryside has no financial means to send her to school. Mrs Clemente therefore pays for her shoes, clothes and writing books.

The two nurses I interviewed are both working at the health post in the bairro Namueto, a village situated about one hours’ walk from the centre of Montepuez. Suramiz is a young nurse from Pemba while Anna from Montepuez has been in the profession for many years. They tell me that only a small minority of the health students are women, at least this was the case in Pemba where they studied. Suramiz’ father is an administrator while her mother is a housewife. Her father financed her studies, but she says that it was her mother who encouraged her the most. Anna’s mother was a peasant and her father was a teacher. It was her father who wanted her to study. Most of Anna’s six children study. Her sons go to secondary school and one daughter is about to complete
grade 5. However, one of her daughter dropped out of school recently and although Anna tried to encourage her to continue, she started to work at an office. Anna began working in Namueto last year and earlier she used to work at the hospital in the centre of Montepuez. Her husband, who works at the Cotton factory Lomaco in the town centre moved with her to Namueto. She says that it is unusual that the man moves with the woman for the sake of a job. Normally it would be the other way around and most women do not work anyway. But for Anna it would have been very difficult to live far away from Namueto as she is often on duty. Now, her husband does the hours’ walk to Lomaco everyday.

4.2.2 A place to stay

All respondents stayed in Montepuez in one way or another. Some of them had their whole family in Montepuez, while others had the possibility to stay with relatives such as uncles, aunts, cousins, a brother or sister. Yet others stayed at one of the two boarding facilities in town. Among the respondents who stayed with relatives in town, it often turned out to be this uncle, aunt, brother or cousin, who wanted them to study and who also financed their education. Another frequent scenario was that the father wanted his girl or boy to continue school but did not have the financial means to pay for it. He could then send her or him to relatives in town. Some of the girls stayed at Lar René Stefan, but in order to be offered a place here, the girl had to come from a Catholic family, be a promising pupil and have parents who could at least pay the girl’s board and lodging with a sack of maize.

27 girls from rural areas live at the boarding facility “Lar René Stefan”. Luisa is an Italian nun and she is the director of the Lar. She is, apart from being a nun, also a teacher and she came to Mozambique in 1971. Sister Luisa tells me about how the activities at the Lar began. She and other missionaries had visited villages to ask the ancient man and the Catholic church leader if they could do something to increase the girls’ schooling. “The boys more or less study and the problem is greater for girls” she explained. Last year they started courses in reading, writing and sowing with girls, mothers and girls who already had children, but they found it difficult to motivate the girls with children to study, so they went to the chiefs in the communities again. Now they had decided to choose only girls who were not married. “One problem is that the girls who pass the first, second and third year, go through the initiation rite and then they drop out. They get other interests and motives and studies do not interest them any longer. The ideal would be to start with seven year old girls.”

Language issues came up during the interviews, both with the pupil respondents and the teachers. Portuguese is the language in which all school education in the country is taught. Pazume, one of the boys in EP2, said that he moved to his sister in Montepuez because he wanted to learn Portuguese. “Em Muidumbe, as pessoas só falam Maconde, mas aqui, tem que falar Portuguese!” (In Muidumbe, people only speak Maconde, but here, you have to speak Portuguese!). Sister Luisa affirms that “Girls from the countryside don’t speak Portuguese, including the older
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girls. They may be able to read and write, but they do not understand the meaning of the words’. She explains that this is because they have never used the language outside school before. Therefore, the girls at the Lar are given Portuguese lessons. “We have succeeded with our Portuguese tuition and now, at the end of the year, almost everybody here understands Portuguese. Here they can practice the language and this is “muı̈to impor-tante” (“very important!”)” She thinks that it is beneficial that they in some schools, apart from Portuguese, also have started to teach in Makua. She declares that Makua is a language with grammar like other languages, and as Makua is the main language spoken in the area, it should also be used in the schools. However, bilingual education is to be preferred, i.e. both Makua and Portuguese, she adds.

There has been another boarding facility in Montepuez since 1973 and this is mainly open for the students at the secondary school, but it also houses pupils in EP2. There are 303 pupils who stay in the dormitories and of these, about 15% are girls. The director of the Lar says that next year, the secondary school will start teaching 10:1 and 10:2 (grade 11 and 12) and as the number of students then will increase, the EP2-pupils will have to move to a boarding facility in Namuno (another district) or somewhere else. To stay at the boarding facility is not free of charge.

Ricardino stays at the Lar and he tells me that the first time you attend a grade, the fee is 45000 meticais (4 US$) per year which includes bed, blanket and food three times a day. If you repeat a class, the fee rises to 75000 meticais and he knows that there are students who have difficulties to afford to pay the fee. The food served is mainly beans and ‘chima’ (a thick maize porridge) and some of the informants claim that the vegetables and rice, cultivated on the Lar machamba where the pupils are obliged to work in the weekends, is either sold or consumed by the staff. Mrs Almeida who works with gender issues at DPE in Pemba says that one general problem with Lars is that there are often only men working here. Girls who stay at a Lar do not want to talk to men about their personal problems and there are also parents who are afraid of sending their girls to a Lar as they are afraid that they will get pregnant.

4.2.3 The initiation rite

When the menstruation starts, it is a sign that the girl is about to become an adult and she is now ready for the initiation rite. This is a ceremony that almost every girl goes through and it is a kind of educational festivity. I had the chance to take part in a ceremony in Namueto (the village mentioned before which is about an hour’ walk from the centre of Montepuez). The ceremony lasted from Friday afternoon until Sunday night and this was an occasion exclusively for women to which all the initiated women in the village were invited. Normally, a few girls are initiated at the same time, but at this occasion, there was only one girl. I asked about her age, but nobody knew and to find out, they sent somebody to the chief of the neighbourhood. He was apparently the only one who knew and he said that she was probably about 14 years old. Four authorised, older women were responsible for the initiation rite and the guests paid them by bringing salt, maize, rice or vegetables. I was told beforehand that I was supposed to bring money
in very small denominations. I only had the chance to take part during the Saturday and as it was all in Makua, Jacinta tried to translate as much as she could into Portuguese. Through songs, dance and theatre, the four supervisors taught the girl practical things involved with the menstruation period, as well as how to perform a sexual dance. Supported by 40–50 other women from the village, the responsible ladies illustrated that a woman is not allowed to have sexual intercourse during the menstrual period, as that can be dangerous for the man. Other things usually taught during the initiation rite are e.g. how to act as a grown up woman, to show respect for elderly, how to behave towards the future husband, as well as men in general. Instructions about practical things such as child-care, the household and the *machamba* are normally also given during the initiation rite.

The girl who was going to be initiated sat almost naked with her head down and her hands in a receiving position. She was supposed to cry, be quiet and only listen to what the women had to say. The girl looked unhappy but I think that was part of the ceremonial act. When I asked Jacinta about this afterwards, she expressed that she felt uncomfortable with the situation. “This is how Macuas are supposed to behave”, she said and told me that her father, had neither let her nor her sisters to go through the initiation rite. Instead, her mother had told her and shown her what she needed to know.

The four authorised women seemed to be pleased to have me there and they said that they thought it was a good idea to take part in the ceremony, as this is an important occasion both for the girl and for the village. Every girl in this village will go through the initiation rite and the women stressed that this is really an important piece of education. I asked them if girls can continue to go to school after the initiation rite and they answered that it is good if they continue school. They did not seem to really mean that but they probably thought that this was the answer that I wanted to hear.

Also the chief of the neighbourhood in Namueto, Mr Amade, states that the initiation rite is important. The girls learn that they are adults and how to behave towards the men “now when the men start looking at you”. “If a girl doesn’t learn how to behave as a woman, it is dangerous!” and he argues that this information is not provided at school. I asked him if he believes that a girl can continue school after the initiation rite. He answered that “aqui em Cabo Delgado, o tradição é que os rapazes estudam mais” (“Here in Cabo Delgado, the tradition is that boys who study more”). “When a girl who studies grows up, she enters the initiation rite and when she gets out of it, she doesn’t want to study anymore, and I don’t know why”. Then I ask him if a girl should continue to go to school after the initiation. “A girl who wants to study and who has got head for it, can continue. Because the initiation rite functions as a kind of exam which indicates that you are now mature and an adult. You can get married without problem and you can have children etc. Most girls choose to get married and have children, but there are also those who continue to study. They study and then they get married. It’s up to every girl to take that decision and after the initiation rite it’s the girl who is responsible for her life. It depends on the mentality of every person, but few girls have the mentality to
continue to study”. In another passage during the interview he said that “The responsibility lays with the parents and one cannot blame the initiation rites. But after the initiation rite, the parents start talking to their daughters and they tell them: “You are grown up now and I can’t afford nor the matriculation fee nor the school clothes. You’d better get married!” “Both parents influence the daughter and so does the daughters uncle”. When I ask Mr Amade if he thinks that it is important that girls study he says “Yes, otherwise, they can’t become nurses, administrators or the president of the country, or other tasks of great responsibility”. I asked him if he thinks that more girls will study in the future and he predicts that “In the future, it will be better. Because in school they learn that they are important persons and they will start to think about their situation” “vai abrir a cabeça” (“it will open their mind”).

Most of the girl respondents had gone through the initiation rite and they said that they enjoyed it. Among the few who had not yet gone through the rite, most of them were looking forward to the occasion. Belarmina, a girl at the Lar, went through the initiation rite a couple of years ago, but she did not really like it. However, she explained that the rite is something you must go through. “É a tradição nossa” (“It’s our tradition”). Sister Luisa pointed out that it is a problem with girls schooling after the initiation rites. “The girls get other things in their head” and do not want to continue. She therefore tries to convince the parents to postpone the initiation rite. “At the initiation rite they are taught a lot of things, but unfortunately not that it’s good to continue studying and that knowledge is beautiful. Only that they are supposed to be beautiful for a man and for her mother.”

Boys also go through an initiation rite. After the circumcising, there is a ceremony with education about how to become a man, but what exactly goes on during the initiation rite is a secret. Marcelino is Maconde and he went through the initiation rite traditionally. For Macondes, the ceremonial period is longer than for Macuas and according to Marcelino, they therefore often choose the school holiday in December, in order to be ready when the school starts in January. Marcelino’s ceremony took two months and during that period, he was not allowed to see his parents, he was not allowed to play and so on.

None of the two nurses had gone through the initiation rite. Anna, one of the nurses, did not go through the initiation rite because her parents wanted her to continue to study. She says that her children will not go through the initiation rite either and she will do as her mother did and tell her children what they need to know. Her boys will be circumcised at the hospital, but there will not be a ceremony.

When I asked the girl respondents if they think that girls can or should continue to study after the initiation rite, most of them said that there is no problem to continue school, at least not where they live. Flávia for example, who went through the initiation rite a few years ago, said “Em Mueda, não há problemas” (“In Mueda, there is no problem”). I was a bit surprised that this answer was repeated, time after time by the girls, as many of the informants stressed that the initiation rite is in conflict with girls’ formal education. One explanation can be that they only answered for themselves and as there had not been any problems
for them, they had never had to reflect over the fact that many girls drop-out of school short after the initiation rite. When I asked them about why girls leave school, they gave more concrete explanations such as pregnancy, lack of money or simply lack of interest.

4.2.4 Pregnancy and other drop-out causes

Most of the girls interviewed had friends who had got pregnant and left school. Eva’s mother forbade her to spend time with the girls who became pregnant, as she was afraid that it would happen to her. Flávia says that girls also leave school because they do not have enough money or because they neither like school nor want to have a profession. Atija gives three main reasons to why girls drop out of school: “Some get pregnant, some don’t like school and some get married”. She also explains why boys leave school: “Some have to help at the machamba, some make girls pregnant and some get married and stay on the countryside”. Atija tells me about a friend who fell pregnant in grade 6 and had to leave school. However, she has not given up school and Atija says that she will continue when the child has grown up. My colleague Jacinta says that the pill could prevent girls from getting pregnant, but they are difficult to get hold of and sometimes months can pass with no sight of any. “They are for whites and they are expensive!” she expresses. A doctor who works for the Spanish organisation “Medicos Mundi” told me that they for the moment had two 15 year old girls at the clinic who were both going to give birth to their second child. She also said that 12–13 year olds with too narrow hips, usually die during the deliverance.

The teacher Mrs Clemente tries to explain why girls drop out of school and says that the reasons are mainly socio-economic. She illustrates with an example: “If for example Amelia goes to school in flip-flops and her friend Joana has got real shoes, Amelia asks her father: Why can’t I have nice shoes? The parents answer: We can’t afford it. Then Amelia goes to the older guy Alex and she becomes his lover to get a pair of shoes. The result: Pregnancy! and she has to leave school.” Mrs Clemente continues: “On the countryside, most girls want to go to school, but when they have gone through the initiation rite, the parents say: you are an adult now and you’d better get married and get yourself a machamba! This is why many 13–14 year old drop out of school.” This explanation is also given by Pedro, a polite and articulated boy in grade 6. “First of all, the parents lack resources. The girl then finds a man who can pay for nice shoes and clothes so that they can go to school, but then they become pregnant. Many girls study until grade 5, but when they know how to read and write, they think it is enough”. One of the girls tells me about 15–16 year old girls who dropped out of school to become prostitutes. “Now they dance”, she says. To be dressed in nice clothes and to look decent in school seems to be important for the girl respondents. They all have their hair done in different styles of plaits, the clothes are spotless and they look fashionable. The desire for new shoes or clothes and which results in pregnancy is a discussion brought up plenty of times by the respondents. Boys’ school clothing seems to be a less expensive affair. “They can wear the same trousers for a long time, but girls want to change clothes”, Mrs Alme-
ida at DPE in Pemba points out. To wear a school uniform is not compulsory but one of the teachers said that from next year, it might be obligatory.

The boys are aware of the fact that there are fewer girls than boys who study but to explain why is more difficult. "Meninas não querem estudar, meninas querem só se casar" ("Girls don't want to study, girls just want to get married"), Pazume says. One explanation given to why boys drop out of school is that they end up in gangs where they do nothing but steal and take drugs. When I ask if it is not because their families can not afford it, Pazume answers: "Dinheiro costuma apanhar" ("One can usually find money"). A few of the boys had a job outside school. One of them was for example selling cigarettes at the market, but none of the boys said that it was difficult to find time to go to school and to do the homework because of this. I also asked the girls whether or not they had a job such as selling things at the market, but nobody was performing this type of activity.

Mr Amade, chief of the neighbourhood Namueto, say that the school is "como um centro de prostituição" ("like a prostitution centre"). Many girls who are 11 years old and go to school, come home pregnant. Therefore, there is a group of men in this village who has prohibited the girls to go school. Mr Amade expresses that as many girls get pregnant at school, it is difficult for the older men in the village to understand that education is good for women and they prefer that they get married. When girls are getting married, many men forbid their wives to go to school. They want them to stay at home and a man threatens his wife by saying that he will find another woman if she does not do as she is told.

4.2.5 "Town is town and the countryside is countryside"

The bairro Namueto is rural, although it is only about an hour walk away from Montepuez. Anna, one of the nurses working in Namueto, says that a majority of the children here do not go to school and she explains that the problem is partly the parents, as they do not want their children to study and would not be able to afford it anyway. She also expresses that it is common that children on the countryside do not want to study and if they do want to go to school they cannot as their parents need them to help at the machamba. Anna states that the schooling situation for girls is better in towns than on the countryside. "On the countryside, the girl has gone through the initiation rite early and after this, neither the mother, nor the father wants her to continue school. Now she shall get married and get a machamba. But in town, the mother has seen that there are advantages with schooling, such as being able to write letters, and mothers in towns are encouraging their daughters more". Anna says that there is a big difference in school attendance now compared to during the war. "Now they can go to school without fear". She thinks that in the future, more children from the countryside will go to school and she says that neighbours influence each other. "When they have neighbours who studies in grade 3, 5 and 6, both children and parents start to question why they do not go to school". Benilda also refers to the neighbours’ scholastic influence. She tells me that her neighbours in Meza have been encouraged by seeing that her family is doing well.
Mrs Clemente, one of the teachers in Montepuez, has relatives living on the countryside. Some of them study, but the majority does not “porque falta condições” (“because of lack of preconditions”). Just as there are differences between rural and urban areas, she also points out that there are differences between present time and in previous days. “Before, only children from the cement bairro went to school. Now they are also from other bairros.” She says that in the town, the parents insist more that the children continue to study. “Few accomplish grade 8 and this is a problem because they don’t have a chance to improve their lives.” Mrs Clemente says that drop-out among boys is not as common as among girls. A boy, whose parents want and have the resources to let him study, also make it without problems. “Para meninas, há outras problemas, gravidez, casamento…” (“For girls, there are other problems, pregnancy, marriage…”). If the family can only give one child the opportunity to continue school, the choice is generally a boy, as they know that the girl in any case soon will leave school.

The director of the school in Montepuez, Mr Quegias, used to work as a teacher in Muita, a rural village in the Montepuez district that had a school with grade 1 to 4. Here, it was common to find more girls than boys in the first class, while they were reduced drastically already in grade 2 and in grade 4, there were hardly any girls left, maybe one or two. He explains this as a social issue divided in two: 1) The girls start menstruating when they are about 12 years old and after the initiation rite, they are supposed to find a man and get married, in order to ease the burden on the parents. 2) The common and general opinion on the countryside is that women are not capable of studying and should only serve the men. I asked Mr Quegias if lack of resources was one of the reasons why girls do not study. He answered: “Sure there is a lack of resources, but the main reason is the tradition that girls should not study.” Concerning the fact that boys also leave school early he says: “The problem for boys is not the initiation rite. It was once so that boys should study to get a job, but now, with such a high unemployment, many fathers no longer see a meaning with education.” One way of keeping the boys from ending up in bad gangs, is to force them to work at the machamba, which also prevent them from going to school. Mr Quegias adds that many 14 year olds already have their own machambas and they are of the opinion that that schooling does not generate money, while working at the machamba does.

Mr Quegias also tries to explain the differences between town and countryside. “In the countryside, the people are not so broad-minded and they only know their own village. In towns, it is true that most of the people are peasants, but they know that it is necessary for the future of the children and the future of the country, that the children go to school. Therefore, you do not have to search for children in towns, which is something the teachers have to do in the countryside. For example at this school, at the beginning of the year, parents come all the time to my office and ask if they can enrol their children.” Many parents in towns have neighbours whose children go to school and Mr Quegias thinks that the neighbours are influencing each other. “If the neighbour’s child goes to school, why should not my child go to school? This is why we in this school have 2125 pupils. We have few class
rooms and with 70 pupils in class, it's anti-pedagogical, but what should we do?"

I had little chance to spend time on the ‘real’ countryside and when Sister Luisa asked me if I had been on the countryside I regretted to inform her "No, not yet and I don’t know if I will get the chance either”. “But this is very important and the problems here are obvious!” she stressed “In reality, girls do not study, even though the authority talks about that everybody has to go to school and so on. Generally, the thought about studying is not in their culture. The idea to study does not exist and is has been a struggle to get the girls here. The thought exists neither by the parents nor by the children and therefore, it is a struggle.” Sister Luisa continues by saying that the radio and the newspapers speak their language, but reality often proves something else. “Town is town and the countryside is countryside! Montepuez and its bairros is a town and are influenced by the life led in towns, but on the countryside, the situation is different. Here it would theoretically be easier to study, as most villages have a school and the children can go to school dressed in a capulana and barefoot. In reality the children do not go at all or only sporadically, although many are enrolled”.

A short visit to true rural areas could be realised as I was invited to join an Africa Group team to the Namuno district, a small, neighbouring district to the Montepuez district. Here, I got the chance to talk to the education representative, visit the rural schools and to talk to the teachers. I was informed by the education director in Namuno, Mr Tépulo, that here, only 30% of the pupils continue to grade 5 and the reasons he mentioned was the scarcity of teachers, classrooms and the lack of school traditions. He pointed out that a more recent school related problem is that people tend to move further away from the villages in order to cultivate new lands and in these new created villages, there are no schools. In Namuno, the number of girls in school decreases for each grade and Mr Tépulo gave an example: “In grade one, an average share of girls is 45%, but already the second year, they are reduced to 38%”. He explained the gender gap by relating to the traditional education at home, where boys and girls are taught different tasks and that there are few female teachers and female administrators in the district. However, these problems are recognised by the mined, he says, and they have launched a project about girls’ education in the whole country.6

One of the villages we visited was Nkumpe, situated about 35 kilometres from the centre of Namuno. The drive took hours, due to extremely poor roads. Nkumpe is an administrative post, which is mainly indicated by a health post that serves the villages nearby. I visited the school and it had four small classrooms that were very dark in order to keep the sun away and the children sat on benches made of bamboo. In

6. This project is called “Projecto Apoio Escolar - Promoção da Educação da Rapa-riga” and is a collaboration between e.g. mined, Unicef and Sida. In Cabo Delgado for example, the DPE tries to promote girls’ education through information to families, seminars for female and male teachers and by promoting an increase in the number of female teachers etc. At mined, a co-ordinator of gender issues in education has been appointed.
grade 5, I counted 27 boys and two girls and I was told that none of these were going to continue to EP2 in Namuno. It was obvious that school was not on the agenda for girls over 12–13 years old. A typical girl has her first child by the age of 13 or 14, but also before the marriage and pregnancy, school does not seem to be a priority.

4.2.6 School repetition and “The larger the town, the more valuable are the bribes”

Eva is most unusual among the informants, as she has not repeated a single class. Most of the girls and boys have repeated several classes and sometimes the same grade several times. This partly explains why most of the EP2 pupils are older than 12–13 years, which would be the average age as children in Mozambique normally begin school at the age of seven or eight.

When I asked the respondents about bribes and having to provide sexual favours in order to pass the exam, a majority did not want to talk about it. Eva indicated that she knows that pupils pay the teachers to pass the exam, but that she has never had to do it. Atija express that if you fail the exam, you repeat but continue to study anyway “if you have head for it” but she knows well that pupils pay the teachers in order to pass the exam. “We who haven’t got any money, remain in the same class”. She also tells me about a maths teacher at the school who had nearly every girl as lovers. None of them became pregnant, “but that also happens”. Some of the teachers also ask the pupils to work at their machambas or to bring hens or money and if they do not, they may fail the exam.

One of the girls I spoke to in secondary school said that she passed four subjects and failed five last year when she was about to complete grade 10. Those five subjects, she is repeating this year. The reason why she failed, she says, was that she did not have enough money to bribe the teachers. She speaks of bribes as something normal and says that everybody who can afford to bribe the teachers does. Normally, a pupil who wants to succeed his or her exam, pays about 150,000 meticais (12 US$) at the end of the year to each teacher at secondary level. Many girls also have sex with their teachers in order to pass the exam and she tells me of her own experience. A teacher demanded to have a sexual relation with her last year and when she refused, the teacher failed her in his subject and she is now repeating it. She also claims that this teacher has influenced the other teachers to give her bad grades because he was denied a sexual relation with her. Two girls in her class are, according to her, always having bad results at the tests, but somehow, they pass the exam at the end of the year. “They don’t understand anything, but they have sex with the teacher”. This year, she would really need money to bribe the teachers, but as she cannot afford it, she says that she will probably fail.

Some teachers at the secondary school ‘only’ ask for rice, flour or 70,000 meticais (about 5.5 US$), but especially the teachers who teach the most important subjects take big bribes. The female teachers are also corrupt and one of the girls refers to a female teacher who is even worse than the others. The reason is because she is from Maputo and is used to teach at the university, where the bribes are bigger. She was also
used to a better standard in Maputo and now she wants the same here. The girl affirms that the same system is used at EP2-level, but that the bribes get more expensive as the level of education raises. My colleague Jacinta agrees and tells me that her son, who is only in grade 2 at the primary school, already brings pieces of paper home from the teacher, which say that he can not afford to buy food and asks for money, a chicken or rice. She explains that although the schoolbooks are free, you need money for matriculation fee, writing books, pens, clothes and bribes. All these expenses add up and soon it becomes very expensive to send each child to school.

Maria, one of the girls at secondary school has her family in Pemba. When I ask her why she studies in Montepuez instead of Pemba she answers: “It’s too expensive”. She explains that the bribes are larger in Pemba than in Montepuez. Many students from big towns such as Pemba and Nampula, choose to study in Montepuez, because the pay off is less. The larger the town, the more valuable are the bribes. “In Pemba they can ask for a television and in Maputo, maybe even a car!”

The alcohol consumption is high among the teachers, and last year three teachers (two men and one woman) in Montepuez died of alcohol poisoning or by other alcohol related injuries. When I was in the Namuno district, I tried to ask about teachers and alcohol habits in rural areas, but the administrators quickly said that alcohol is a problem only in the towns. That many teachers drink a lot of alcohol is also a problem for the pupils and Maria describes the relation alcohol – bribes as a vicious circle. A teacher who has drunk too much, have a hard time to explain the subject and then the pupils have difficulties to perceive what the teacher teach. If the comprehension is bad, the pupil has to give bribes in order to pass the exam. But Benilda understands why the teachers ask for bribes and says that it is because the salaries are always late. “How would they otherwise manage several months”, she says rhetorically. The teachers’ salaries are always one to two months late, says one of the EP2-teachers and the salaries are low: 800 000 meticais a month (64$). Maria says that the majority of the teachers are often drunk when they teach. When I ask her about the female teachers’ alcohol habits, she declares: “there are only two and they don’t drink”.

4.2.7 The future and the difficulties in finding a job

“Get married! If you study, you still won’t find a job”. This is what people on the countryside tell their daughters, says Mrs Clemente, one of the female teachers at EP2. Due to the high unemployment rate in Mozambique, many pupils or parents find it pointless to continue to study. But the situation is getting better, she says. “During the war, it was impossible to go from Montepuez to Pemba, but now it’s just to get on the chiapa and go!” She also states that it is also possible to cultivate more now and the quality of the machambas has improved. This means that they can sell more of the crop and more money can be used to the children’s schooling, including girls.

It was difficult to get an answer to what the girls want to do when they have finished school. Most of them said: “I don’t know” and giggled embarrassed. However, after a while they dared to tell me and then a
majority said that they want to become a nurse and live in Montepuez. Few wanted to move back to their rural area of origin and said that they preferred to live in a town. When I asked if they did not want to become peasants like their parents, they just laughed and said “No!” To become a peasant, did not seem to appeal to any of them, although some of the girls said that they, after school, would probably move back to their area of origin. One of the girls said with a low voice that she wanted to become a journalist and maybe live abroad. “Maybe Sweden?” she said and asked me a bit about my country.

Eva would like to continue to secondary school and then become a nun and a teacher in Maputo. Flávia wants to study in Nampula to become a nurse and her sister has promised her that she will keep on paying for her education. Atija is straightforward about her future profession. She wants to study until the grade 10 and then three more years to become a policeman, like her sister’s husband. Benilda would like to study two years ‘magisterio’ at a center in Quelimane (Zambezi province). It is a teacher’s education that also equals grade 10:2 (secondary school, grade 12) certificate. If she begins there, she will live at a boarding facility, while her husband stays in Montepuez. Most of all however, Benilda would like to become a doctor.

All the girls want to have at least four children and when it comes to their future schooling, they say that both the boys and girls will study, at least to EP2. Atija wants to have at least five children, and she wants both the boys and the girls to study. When I ask her if she has got a boyfriend, she answers that she has not and explains that at least in the Pemba area, where she comes from, a girl is not allowed to have a boyfriend until a fiancé asks the family if he may marry her.

Amongst the boys, the future scenario is more varied than among the girls. While a majority of the girls would like to become nurses, the boys want to become everything from a banker and a teacher in Montepuez, to the minister of justice in Maputo. When I asked Bissuazi about marriage and children, he says that he does not have a girlfriend yet, but he would like to get married and have about three children, but only one girl. The girl will go to school, but only until grade 5 or 6 and then she will get married, while the boys can study as long as they like to. In general, the boys seem to give priority to future sons, although they also want the girls to study. To talk about girlfriends/boyfriends seems to be a sensitive matter for both boys and girls. Adelio is one of the few who actually dares to say that he has got a girlfriend. To have a girlfriend or a future wife seem to be a different matter and when my colleague Jacinta asks him: “É para casar ou para brincar?” (“Is it for marriage or to just fool around?”) he answers giggling: “É para brincar.”
5 A Matter of Constraints, or the Cultural Norm? – Analysis

In this study, the theory of constraints in time-geography has been used as a framework. One could also use this theory to classify the results of this study. However, I think that the result would be clearer if we, apart from capability, coupling and authority constraints, also would refer to more concrete categories such as physical, economic and time constraints. One could also talk about normative systems that are cultural and socially defined. However, even though these categories may appear to be more explicit, it is still complicated to classify the constringing factors to one group of constraint or the other as they, as we shall see, interact.

Linked in with both capability and coupling constraints are physical constraints and this may be the most obvious category of constraints. In most villages, there is an EP1 school and the majority of the Mozambican families have a school within reach. But the transition to EP2 involves significant changes for a pupil of rural origin, as these schools are often located to town centres (coupling constraints). Rural areas in the Montepuez district and in the Namuno district (which are the districts that I can refer to) often have a far from sufficient physical infrastructure when it comes to roads and means of transports. To commute to a school far away is therefore out of the question, both due to lack of travelling possibilities and the cost involved with travel expenses (capability constraints). If a family lives in a rural area, far away from an EP2 school, and wants to send their girls and boys to town in order to complete grade 6 and 7, the main alternative is to let them stay with relatives in towns. Another alternative would be to let them stay in a boarding facility. The latter alternative will however, as the informants and the respondents have informed us, involve a considerable amount of resources in terms of food and/or money (capability constraints).

Moving from the area of origin to stay in town in order to complete the primary school and possibly secondary school, means that a family looses important labour force. With the school situated far away from the village, it would be simply impossible to be at school and close to home at the same time. This is the same kind of physical constraint that Aragão-Lagergren (1997) points out when arguing that working children in Managua do not have time for both school and work if the school is located far away from the children’s home (coupling constraint).

A new phenomenon that in a way has to do with physical constraints was introduced to me in the Namuno district when I had a conversation with the director of education. In order to cultivate new land, families move from their village to new areas and in these newly created
there are no schools. One could also refer to this as a move further away from the school tradition, i.e. further away from the domain of the school (authority).

Regarding economic constraints (capability constraints), the informants were pointing out costs such as paying the matriculation fee and the Lar fee. Even though the schoolbooks are free, the pupils’ family still has to pay for writing books and pencils, a substantial cost that is often too great. This was also discussed in for example the research by Åkesson (1992) and Palme (1993). School repetition also increases the expenses, as the families then have to repeat the payment for writing books, pencils, clothes and matriculation fees. The director of the school in Montepuez pointed out that there are many pupils in each class and this was probably also partly due to school repetition. Regarding the scarce resources that the schools have at their disposal, much of the means could presumably have been used more efficiently if not as many as 1/3 of the pupils were repeaters.

Another cost for families is the one of clothes and this cost is greater when it comes to girls’ school clothing. While the boys can wear the same clothes for a long time, the girls want to change often, as Mrs Almeida at DPE in Pemba said. As it is important for the girls to be dressed properly in school, one can talk about a vicious circle where the girl finds an older boyfriend in order to finance her school clothes. The result is often pregnancy and she has to leave school. Now this economic constraint has become a social matter, as the girl became pregnant due to an initially economic reason.

To bribe the teacher is an economic constraint defined by a social norm, i.e. it has become the social norm that the pupils bribe the teachers in order to pass the exam. The teachers here use their authority as they have the power to fail a pupil and the pupil’s education is therefore constrained by an authority. Teachers’ salaries are low and often a couple of months delayed and this can be part of the reason why teachers ask the pupils for money or food. Pupils pay the teachers money in order to pass the exam, “We who don’t have any money, remain in the same class”, as one of the girls put it. The respondents also voiced that teachers ask the pupils to work at their machambas or even for sexual favours. That teachers take bribes causes a rise in the school repetition, as many pupils can not afford to pay for their exam and therefore have to repeat several years. One can also imagine that the drop-out rate rises as the pupils or their families may find school a waste of time when they have to repeat year after year. However, that this was the case was not directly stated by any of the respondents. Another illustration where an economic constraint has become defined by social norms is that the bribes seem to grow both with grade and the size of town. Pupils choose to study in Montepuez because the bribes are smaller here than in bigger towns.

One outcome of sexual bribes is that girls end up pregnant and then have to leave school. The chefê de bairro in Namueto referred to the school as a “prostitution centre” as many girls came back from the school pregnant. It has been regarded as a social norm that girls get pregnant in school. The pregnancy was often caused by a boy at the school or by the
teacher and therefore, a group of men in this village had prohibited the girls from going to school. The same reasons are expressed when families do not want to send their girls to stay at a Lar: They are afraid that they will get pregnant. As Mrs Almeida at DPE stated, one dilemma with Lars is that there are often only men working here.

One problem that the respondents refer to as mainly a male problem is that the alcohol consumption is too high among the male teachers. A drunken teacher has as Benilda said, difficulties to teach, and the pupils may under these circumstances not grasp the messages put across. One could imagine that there is a risk that the bribes increase in relation with alcohol as the teachers in some way have to finance their alcoholic beverages and that the sexual exploitation of female pupils increase as drunk teachers loose their judgement. Teachers’ alcohol habits were not even mentioned as a problem in relation to girls’ formal education in the study performed by employees at DPE in Pemba (Nekemwene 1996), although I got the impression that this was a severe problem.

Girls drop out of school also because their families need them at home where they are required to work the machambas and take care of the households. Flávia gave us a new definition of “nothing” when she talked about what she does when she goes back to her area of origin for the main school holiday. “I work at the machamba, fetch water, collect firewood, visit relatives and I clean.” This illustrates that the girls play a crucial role at home and to send a girl to school means economic sacrifices as well as loss of labour. Although the boys interviewed helped out in the household to some extent, it was clear that the girls performed more tasks and one can note a clear gender division amongst the respondents. Some of the boys sold things at the market and could therefore have financed their school project, i.e. economic constraints may have been overcome. This kind of activity was nothing that the girl respondents were occupied with, maybe because they spend most of the time outside school in the household or at the machamba. A time conflict is identified, caused both by economic and coupling constraints. One can not be at two places at the same time and every individual only has 24 hours a day at her/his disposal. I got the impression that this time constraint existed for many of the girl respondents, but also to some extent for the working boys.

It was also said, by for example Mr Amade, chefe de bairro in Namueto, that a girl’s family members would not let her spend too much time outside the household as they want to protect her from pregnancy, which can be said to be a cultural or socially defined norm. A social issue that was highlighted and which can be related to both girls’ and boys’ schooling is the high unemployment rate. Education used to lead to a job, but, many families no longer see a meaning with further education as there is a great risk that it will result in nothing but unemployment.

The initiation rite is a rite of passage that most of the girl respondents had gone through. None of them said that there is a conflict between the initiation rite and to continue studying, but nearly all the adult informants and respondents stressed that there is a clash between the initiation rite and the school education. This is the transitional phase to-
Towards adulthood and after this process, formal education is no longer on the agenda as the girl now is supposed to behave like an adult, get married and take care of a family. There is therefore a life course conflict between the rite of passage and the transition that is supposed to take place when the girl finishes primary school. I.e. she has not yet completed primary school when she goes through the initiation rite. The initiation rite is a cultural defined norm in Mozambique. But the opposition between the initiation rite and the continuing of school is unnecessarily great due to school repetition. The children normally begin school when they are about seven years old and therefore, they theoretically could have reached grade seven by the age of 13. This is often not the case as both girls and boys have normally repeated three or four classes and are therefore three or four years older than they ‘should’ be. This means that the initiation rite takes place when they have not yet reached the grade that they would have done without the school repetition. The difference between girls’ and boys’ situation in this matter is that a collision between boys’ initiation rite and the continuing of school never occurs.

The language issue was brought up as another cultural aspect. Makua and Maconde are the main languages spoken in the Montepuez district, but the language used in school is Portuguese. One of the respondents said that he had actually moved to Montepuez to learn Portuguese and it was state that many of the girls at the Lar spoke poor Portuguese when they arrived in town, as they had never practised the language. In this matter, we can also see diversities between urban and rural areas. In the town Montepuez, Portuguese was commonly used and I heard it spoken everywhere, although alternated with Makua and Maconde. But in the bairros situated further out from the centre, Portuguese was hardly spoken at all. In context with the role the school, one could ask if the school is considered of relevance in a rural area when not even the same language is used? There exists an artificial relationship between the role of the school and the surrounding environment and according to some of the informants, this gap could be bridged if the local language was used in school.

Another cultural matter is that of religion. It was the Catholic Church that introduced the school in Mozambique during the colonial period and Catholic missionaries still promote education in many ways. One example is Lar René Stefan, run by Catholic nuns in a Catholic environment. This leads us to a discussion about authority constraints and access to different territories. One condition to stay at the Lar is that you come from a catholic family, i.e. only Catholics have access to the domain of this Lar.

One easily falls into a trap when talking about individuals as constrained from doing certain things. We assume that there are obstacles to overcome and as soon as they are set aside, the family is relieved and eager to send their girls and boys to school, i.e. to get access to this desirable domain. However, this is certainly not always the case. Some of the girl respondents expressed that many of their girl-friends had dropped out of school simply because they did not want to study anymore and the interviews also indicated that some pupils find it enough when they
know how to read and write. As mentioned in the beginning, Palme (1993) found that school is only one form of education and far from the most important one. We have for example in this study experienced that the initiation rite is one essential part of the education of girls and boys, as they without this will lack knowledge about the new phase in the life course, the adult life.

The reasoning above leads us to the discussion about the, according to my opinion, main limitation with the use of the time-geographical constraints. As pointed out in the theory chapter, one problem with using time-geography is that it does not make a clear difference between what an individual wants, should and can do. There is therefore a risk that it is taken for granted that an individual wants to go to school because he or she has the possibilities to do it. A conversation about what an individual wants, should do and can do, may be fruitful and bring us closer to the individual and the environmental determining factors of formal education. Is it the human being, the structure, or a combination of both that decides the individual’s action?

What a person wants to do is an individual quality, although often determined by the norms of society. What one should do is a surrounding quality and what one can do is a consequence of qualities of both the individual and the surrounding environment. However, as we have seen from the field work, it was usually not the pupil’s decision whether to go to school or not, but the family’s, although some respondents also pointed out that some of their friends left school simply because they wanted to. One can distinguish between at least seven categories when it comes to a discussion about can, want and should do in relation to girls’s education:

1. Families that want and can send their girls to school (want and can).
2. Families that want to send their children to school, but are unable to due to lack of resources such as money, food and labour force (cannot).
3. Families that find school education a waste of resources and therefore, do not send them to school (want not).
4. Families that find school education a waste of resources, but feel obliged to send them to school because the surrounding environment implies this (should).
5. Traditional families that live in an environment where school is not part of the life plan (should not).
6. Families, whose members do not want the children to go to school because it is regarded as an unsafe place for girls with the risk of pregnancy etc. (want not).
7. Female pupils who simply do not want to go to school (want not).

Here the individual decision may be separated from the view of the household.

Here we can also discern differences between rural and urban areas. In an urban environment, there is a cultural affinity between formal education and the life lead, as was also pointed out in relation to the language issue above. The rural situation can be illustrated by a rhetorical question: Why one should make the life more difficult by loosing im-
important labour force to school, when the future scenario for a family is to continue to cultivate the *machamba*, far away from everything which an urban life represents? As Callewaert (1998) pointed out, the school is a Western invention and the school project can be contradictory, as the essential preconditions do not really exist in rural areas, where the majority of the population lives.

To stay with relatives in town is, as mentioned above, one alternative for the pupils who are going to continue their education on an EP2-level and this implies that the social network of the girl’s or boy’s family stretches from the countryside and in to town. In Mozambique, nuclear families that consists of parents and children are seldom referred to and uncles, nephews, aunts, sister in laws, cousins are also included in the family. Sometimes a part of this extended family lives in town. Often during the interviews it was complicated to discern whether the respondents were talking about e.g. sisters and brothers, cousins or friends as they were often referred to by the same terms. Informants from rural areas often stayed with a brother, sister, uncle or cousin and interesting enough, they were also generally the ones who wanted her or him to study and was also the financier.

By using network theoretical terms, the links of interest here are the ones leading to the nodes (relatives) situated in urban areas. Social contacts may not only provide financial means and a place for the pupil to stay, but also, and maybe above all, information about the life lead by town-dwellers, school, white-collar jobs and other ‘modern’ everyday occurrences. This social network gives an affinity to another tradition, a link to the urban life. Without this link, the urban life would otherwise be shrouded in mystery.

Lar René Stefan is also a node in a social network. The primary link that can make flows possible towards this node is the sharing of the same religious values, i.e. only girls whose families are Catholics have access to this network, or territory as discussed above. The social network is a crucial component in order to realise a migration to town with the purpose of the continuation of school.

Yet another important factor when it comes to children’s scholastic achievement is the pupil’s supply of cultural capital. Many of the respondents had parents who were peasants, but often, one of them, most frequently the father, had a white-collar job which was the case with for example Benilda, whose father was a teacher. It was also common that close relatives had administrative jobs. Flávia’s sister for example, who financed Flávia’s education, worked as a clerk in Maputo and Atija’s sister’s husband was a policeman, a profession that also Atija strived for. The embodied form of cultural capital is dependent on the cultural capital gained in the family. A child who grows up in an environment with cultural capital has a greater chance to gain cultural capital. Children brought up in an environment where family members are administrators or teachers, learn the attitude, the skills and the language that make formal education a successful experience.

A pattern once started seems to continue from one generation to another. The informant nurses were educated women and I do not know if it was a coincidence that they had not gone through this tradition. In-
teresting here is that they had not let their girls go through the initia-
tion either and the case may have been that this pattern had been repro-
duced.

Regarding traditions, I did not experience much of the traditional
social organisation in northern Mozambique which Palme (1998) re-
ferred to. The matrilineal society in northern Mozambique represents
according to him a family network where the senior mother is the cen-
tral figure and where the formal education of girls can be a most con-
tradictory project. As expressed earlier, I had little chance to spend time
in ‘real’ rural areas and as stressed by the informants, it is a great differ-
ence between rural and urban Mozambique. In rural areas, the old tra-
ditions still play an active part and in urban areas, the traditions are of-
ten replaced with ‘modern’, Westernised ideas. The life courses also take
different forms in rural and urban areas, which the respondents’ ideas
about the future can illustrate. Both the girls and boys want to continue
to study on a secondary level and in the future, they would like to have
a profession and live in a town. When I asked them if they wanted to
move back to their area of origin, the answer was generally a denial. My
impression was that a move back to the home village was nothing the
girls and boys aimed for, although some of them said that they would
probably go back to their villages after they had finished school. One
can therefore anticipate that a majority of the respondent girls and boys
is prepared to leave the rural culture behind and thereby also the tradi-
tions.

From this field study, performed in the Montepuez district, we can
draw the conclusion that the matter of girls’ formal education is multi-
plex and full of nuances. The respondents and informants have shared
valuable information that has contributed to the fulfilment of the aim
of this study. The causes of drop out and repetition have to be under-
stood within a general social context where the factors interact. The
theory of constraints in relation to girls’ formal education must be
treated the same way, as one cannot isolate one constraint from another.
This ambience also has to be taken into account when we refer to dif-
ferent categories of constraints. These categories are part of a structure
of factors, which act together and this is illustrated in figure 6 below.
The figure is divided into two parts on a time scale, with the positive in-
fluences regarding girls and formal education above the time scale and
the negative influences below. The household is central and whether the
girl can, want or should go to school, depends on the economic means
(to pay for e.g. clothes, school material and school fees), the social net-
work available (e.g. relatives in town or the Catholic Lar, where some of
the girls stayed). The cultural capital in the family is also important, as
well as facilitating cultural norms, such as an urban situated household
and a Portuguese speaking family. Facilitating social norms can be that
there are both male and female teachers and that the neighbours’ chil-
dren also go to school. Negative factors that influence whether the girl
cannot, want not, or should not go to school, are the constraints shown
in the figure. Examples of economic constraints are cost of labour force,
school clothes, fees and school material. Time constraints are, e.g. tasks
that has to be performed in the household and having to work at the
machamba. Social norms can also be constraining factors, such as bribes, to be nicely dressed, pregnancy and drunken teachers. So can cultural norms e.g. the initiation rite, to speak only the local language, or to regard school education as something unnecessary, dangerous or useless. While most components stretch over, and influence the whole school period, a few factors also occur at a certain time, such as the initiation rite. One can here also see that the physical constraints become obvious when the girl is going to continue school on the EP2-level and that the social network with relatives in town or religious connections then becomes crucial.

Now this study has reached an end, but the subject is certainly not exhausted. It would be interesting to spend more time in rural areas in order to look at different aspects on girls’ formal education, as well as education in relation to an urbanisation pattern. Here, the importance of a social network could also be looked further into. A more elaborative comparison between girls’ and boys’ schooling could also be made, as well as a deeper look on the different stages in the school career, from primary school and if possible also up to university level. It could also be useful to interview the girls’ families to hear their opinion about girls’ and boys’ schooling, and also to talk to them about the meaning of different kinds of education, as it has been shown that school is only one type of education. When interviewing the families it would be interesting to find out about how their scholastic career started as it has been shown that such a career often does exist for some of the family members.

**Figure 6** Interacting social structure in relation with girls and formal education on an upper primary level in northern Mozambique. (Source: The figure is derived from the present field study).
Why Some Girls Go to School and Others Don't
References


Why Some Girls Go to School and Others Don't
Abbreviations and Glossary

**ARPAC** Arquivo do Património Cultural – The Archive of Cultural Inheritance

**Bairro** Quarter of a town, neighbourhood

**Chiapa** Local bus

**EP1** Ensino Primário do 1° Grau – Grade 1–5

**EP2** Ensino Primário do 2° Grau – Grade 6–7

**Frelimo** Ruling party, originally Frente de Libertação de Moçambique, Front for the Liberation of Mozambique

**IMF** International Monetary Fund

**INDE** Instituto Nacional do Desenvolvimento da Educação – National Institute for Education Development

**DDE** Direcção Distrital da Educação – District Directorate of Education

**DPE** Direcção Provincial da Educação – Provincial Directorate of Education

**Lar** Boarding facility for students

**Lobolo** Bride price

**Machamba** A piece of land for cultivation

**MINED** Ministério da Educação – The Education Ministry

**NGO** Non-governmental organisation

**OMM** Organisação da Mulher Moçambicana – Mozambican Woman’s Organisation

**Posto** Administrative area

**Renamo** Resistencia Nacional de Moçambique – The national movement of resistance

**SAP** Structural Adjustment Programme

**Sida** Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

**UN** United Nations

**UNDP** UN Development Programme

**UNHCR** UN High Commissioner for Refugees

**Unicef** UN Children’s Fund
Why Some Girls Go to School and Others Don’t
1 School Girls

Family and household
- Age
- Area of origin
- Makua or Maconde? Other?
- Family members
- Parents’ occupation
- If peasants: What crops? For consumption and/or for sale?
- Present accommodation
- Daily tasks in the household?
- Family members’ school history
- About children in your home village, are they/are not in school? Why?

Financing the studies
- Promoter of your school education
- Who wants you/do not want you to study?
- Financier
- What has to be bought in order to go to school?
- Financing difficulties? What is expensive?
- Work besides school?

School repetition and quitting school
- Repeated classes
- Friends who quit school? Why?
- Exam failure: Can one pay the teacher?
- Teachers asking for sex in order to let students pass the year
- Gone through the initiation rite?
- Possible for girls to continue studying after the initiation rite?

The future
- Enjoy school?
- Continue to study?
- Future plans
- Live in a town or on the countryside?
- Do you have a boyfriend?
- Children
- Will the boys study? The girls? For how long?
II School Boys

✚ The same guide as above, apart from a few questions:
✚ Should girls study?
✚ Girls’ and boys’ tasks in the household?
✚ Why do boys quit school? For different reasons than girls?

III Teachers and Nurses

THE INFORMANT’S BACKGROUND
✚ Family
✚ Area of origin
✚ Family members
✚ Parents’ occupation
✚ Parent’s education
✚ How come you continued studying?
✚ Financier of your school education
✚ Do your children study? Will they continue?

REASONS WHY GIRLS ARE NOT IN SCHOOL
✚ A problem that girls quit their studies early? Why?
✚ A problem that boys quit school early?
✚ Main obstacles why girls do not continue school? Boys?
✚ Pupils have to pay the teachers to pass their exam? Sexual abuse?
✚ Many children in your neighbourhood who do not study? Reasons why?
✚ Are female teachers/nurses models for other girls?

THE INITIATION RITE
✚ Gone through the initiation rite?
✚ Have your girls/will they go through the initiation rite?
✚ A conflict: initiation rite – school?

TOWN – COUNTRYSIDE
✚ The school situations in towns compared to the countryside
✚ The girls’ and boys’ situation
✚ Traditions
✚ Differences in general

IV Neighbourhood Chief (Chefe De Bairro)

FAMILY AND VILLAGE
✚ Family presentation
✚ Family school history
✚ Village presentation

THE SCHOOL ROLE IN THIS BAIRRO
✚ Should girls study? For how long?
× Why do girls quit school? Boys?
× The families’ opinions about school
× The school in the future

Traditions
× The role of the initiation rites
× Should girls continue going to school after the initiation rite?
× Girls’ role in the household/bairro, women’s role?
× Boys’ role in the household/bairro, men’s role?