



**The social construction of the *problématique* about
population and development in Mozambique
Reflections about Neo-Malthusianism and fertility
decline in Maputo City**

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Dedication

To Marta Hansine, my mother who taught the richness of learning

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List of Acronyms

CDR Crude Death Rate
DCs Developed Countries
DT Demographic Transition
DTTs Demographic Transition Theories
EMU Eduardo Mondlane University
GoM Government of Mozambique
HDI Human Development Index
ICPD International Conference on Population and Development
LDCs Less Developed Countries
P&D Population and Development
PoA Plan of Action
PP Population Policy
RNI Rate of Natural increase
SSA Sub-Saharan Africa
TFR Total Fertility Rate
UNFPA United Nations Population Fund

Abstract

The present paper investigates how the hegemonic, public and institutionalized perception about population and development is *socially constructed* in Mozambique. It uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate the processes of knowledge construction, dissemination and maintenance. The institutionalized and dominant public perception about the *problématique* of Population and Development in Mozambique seems to comprise mainly the following and interlinked questions: 1 Demographically Mozambique presents high Rate of Natural Increase and this trend will continue in the forthcoming decades; 2 The current Rate of Natural Increase makes the demographic structure of the Mozambican population younger; 3 Both, the rate and the demographic structure are socio-economically unsustainable, keeping the country underdeveloped; 4 If fertility transition continues delayed, Mozambique is doomed to underdevelopment. This research demonstrate the extent in which this hegemonic, public and institutionalized perceptions neglected that the dynamics of development can occur independently of the dynamics of fertility decline and therefore lower fertility may be the common future for people in poor and rich countries.

Key words: Population, Fertility, Development, Mozambique, Constructionism.

1. INTRODUCTION

A population problem exists when *my* preference for children diminishes *your* access to steak.
(Demeny 1986: 481)

Robert McNamara a former president of the World Bank (from 1968 to 1981¹) cited by Young (1984: 104) says that the greatest single obstacle to the economic and social progress of the majority of the people in the underdeveloped world is its rampant population growth. So, without limiting population growth the LDCs (Less Developed Countries) are doomed to underdevelopment. The SSA (Sub Saharan Africa) region where Mozambique is located is the poorest region worldwide and still presents high RNI (Rate of Natural Increase), consequently the relationship between population growth and socio economic development has been at the centre of the P&D (Population and Development) debate for the last decades in many countries in the region, including Mozambique (Muanamoha and Arnaldo 2011: 38).

In 2012 António Francisco a prominent Mozambican scholar in the field of demography who is also senior professor of economics, published an insightful article about population growth and socio economic development in Mozambique. The title of his article is “*Mozambique and demographic explosion*” *Are we many? Are we few?* He asserts that comparing the rhythm of the natural increase of population with work opportunities, economic and living conditions the most realistic and honest answer to the questions he raises is simple: we are *too many* and we are multiplying rapidly and if the current demographic scenario remains unchanged it will aggravate the already harsh socio economic and living conditions (Francisco 2012: 4).

More recently, analysing the relationship between economic growth and demographic transition in LDCs, Bloom at all say that

“in recent years, however, the debate (P&D) has under-emphasized a critical issue, the age structure of the population (that is, the way in which the population is distributed across different age groups), which can change dramatically as the population grows. [...] Nations with a high proportion of children are likely to devote a high proportion of resources to their care, which tends to depress the pace of economic growth” (Bloom at all 2001: 1)

Following this approach, in recent times, Mozambican demographers start to call attention that the high fertility rate in Mozambique is the chief determinant of the high RNI and also of the young age structure of population and these demographic dynamics and structure tends to affect negatively the socio economic development of the country (Arnaldo, 2013:37). This approach emphasizes that nowadays in LDCs the high RNI which implies young structure of population leads to an unsustainable growth of the social expenditure, in sectors such as education and health rather than expanding in savings which could be invested in productive sectors such as agriculture and industry (Ashford 2007: 1).

Furthermore, population growth in LDCs has been held responsible for environmental degradation (Cleaver and Schreiber, 1994; Myers, 2002; Araújo 1999). It is explained that continuous increasing of population in the LDCs leads to enormous pressure over the natural resources given that poor people depend on the use and extraction of those resources for survivor, so the lack of alternatives to survivor combined with lack of economic capacity to protect the environment drives environmental degradation and this aggravates the poverty. The argument is that, the high RNI in LDCS reinforces a vicious cycle that goes from “poverty - great pressure over the natural resources hence degradation of environment - poverty increase” (Araújo 1999: 34).

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_McNamara

However, Demeny (1986: 476) says that the *problématique* about P&D in LDCs is not about how many children the couples in poor countries are having and how it affects negatively socio economic development or the environment, but how each of *us* would like *others*, to behave with respect to demographic choices; yet from another perspective, Greenhalgh (2003: 196-7) says that development is a logic of State whose object is the population and whose aim is the *normalization* of society in the name of optimizing the health, welfare and usefulness of the population.

So, for instance when ones speaks that the LDCs are underdeveloped because they have “too many people” growing rapidly and “too few resources”, such as food, water, land, forest, jobs opportunities, transportation facilities, housing, schools and hospitals according to Sexton and Hildyard (2005) this argument is much more grounded in politics that serves to obscure the real causes of underdevelopment. These two authors argue that,

“current dominant population theory is above all a political strategy, a strategy that both obscure the relationships of power between different groups in societies whether these can be local, national, global that are ultimately responsible for poverty and at the same time ‘justifies’ those political relationships that allows certain groups in society to dominate others structurally be it men over women, property owners over commoners, ‘us’ over ‘them’”. (Sexton and Hildyard 2005)

According to Greenhalgh (2003: 199-200) one important question that seems to be neglected in the *problématique* about P&D is about which social groups retain hegemonic control over public perception about P&D in the LDCs and what is their social and political location? In other words who is *constructing* (producing, disseminating and maintaining) the dominant view on the *problématique* of P&D in LDCs? Emphasizing this aspect, Sexton and Hildyard (2005) ask these three and relevant questions: 1. Who is raising the population growth as problem for development and what is their political past? 2. Does focus on population growth and/or progressive age structure as constraint for socio economic development obscure other explanations for the particular social ill such as poverty or environmental degradation, and if so why? 3. What relationships of power are not being mentioned when the “too many” which can be the poor laboring, migrants, old people come under the spot in the dominant perception on P&D?

This study delves into this debate of how the institutionalized public understanding about P&D in Mozambique is socially constructed and how the power relation among different social institutions affects this process. It seeks to identify and locate those institutions where the knowledge about P&D is *socially* constructed, maintained and disseminated. The study also intends to describe how the socio-political context influences the social construction of this hegemonic knowledge and how in reverse it affects the socio-political context.

The next section of this chapter provides the background of the *problématique* about P&D using statistical data and literature to elucidate it contours in Mozambique. Then it is presented the research questions, the methodology and the methods used to answer the research questions. Following is a description of data processing and analysis and the shortcomings of the present study. Close to the end this chapter introduces and elaborates on the social constructionism as theoretical and conceptual framework. The chapter ends outlining the main body of paper in the chapters 2 and 3.

1.1 Background

This section seeks to provide background information about the socially constructed *problématique* of P&D in Mozambique. Using the examples of SSA region, Mozambique and Netherlands in terms of demographic and economic features it demonstrates that the socially constructed *problématique* about P&D also relies on the *interpretation* of the *observed* local demographic and socio economic features. Moreover, is convenient to compare underdeveloped places such as SSA region including Mozambique with Netherlands because the former places aspire to have similar demographic and socio economic features of the later.

Graph 1, shows the annual rate of population growth in SSA region, Mozambique and Netherlands from 1975 to 2012. It can be seen, that SSA region, presents a rate of population growth above 2.5 % per year which is too high in comparison to the Netherlands which is below 1% per year. For Mozambique, before the 1980s the rate was similar to SSA region, but from 1980 to 1987 the rate decreased due to the civil war (1977 to 1992). From later 1980s to 1994 the rate of population growth increased rapidly because of the end of the war in 1992². From 1995 onwards the rate of population growth in Mozambique is similar to the rest of the SSA region, considered too high compared to the Netherlands.

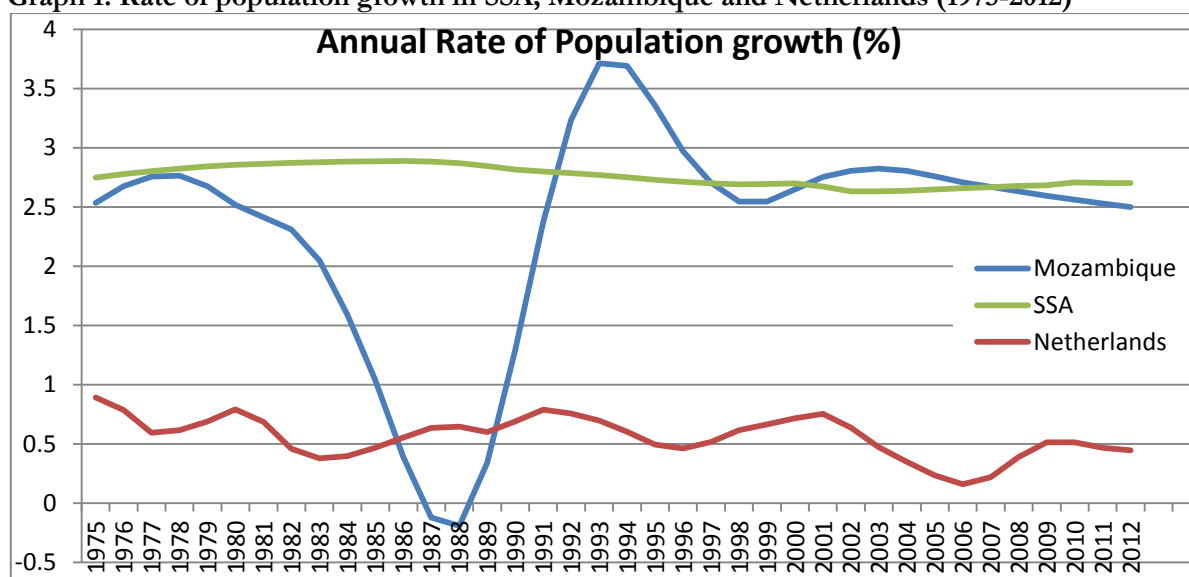
On the one hand, the P&D *problématique* for the LDCs is linked to high RNI; on the other hand, for the DCs is linked to low RNI. Graph 2, represents the composition of population by ages for Mozambique and Netherlands with respect to the ages of 0-14 years old and 65 and above. It can be seen that in Mozambique from 1975 to 2012 the two age groups remains almost unaltered. Nearly 50% of the population is between 0-14 years old while less than 5% of the total population was above 65 years old; however for the Netherlands it can be seen that the population below 14 years decreased almost two times from 1975 to 2012 and the proportion of old people increased steadily.

According to Bloom at all (2001: 1) if a large proportion of a nation's population consists of the elderly the effects can be similar to those composed by large number of very young population, because large share of resources is needed by a relatively less productive segment of the population, which likewise can inhibit economic growth"³. But if most of a nation's population falls within the working ages, the added productivity of this group can produce a "demographic dividend" of economic growth, assuming that policies to take advantage of this are in place. In fact, the combined effect of this large working-age population and health, family, labor, financial and human capital policies can produce virtuous cycles of wealth creation (idem). In conclusion, despite Mozambique and Netherlands present different demographic dynamics and structure of population both have in some extent population problems.

² Nearly a quarter of Mozambican population (estimated in 16 million from that period) was refugees in neighbor countries that had returned after the war.

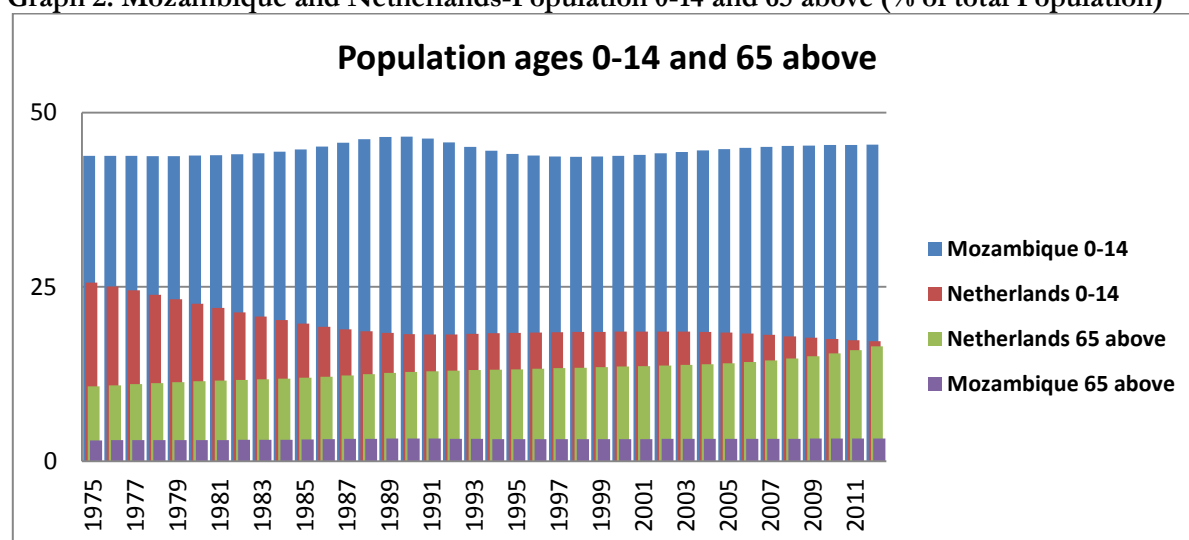
³ The current demographic scenario in Japan illustrates this situation were in 2012 the number of elderly people shoots up, that adult incontinence pants outsold baby nappies in Japan for the first time (see <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/20/young-people-japan-stopped-having-sex?>)

Graph 1: Rate of population growth in SSA, Mozambique and Netherlands (1975-2012)



Source: <http://databank.worldbank.org/data>

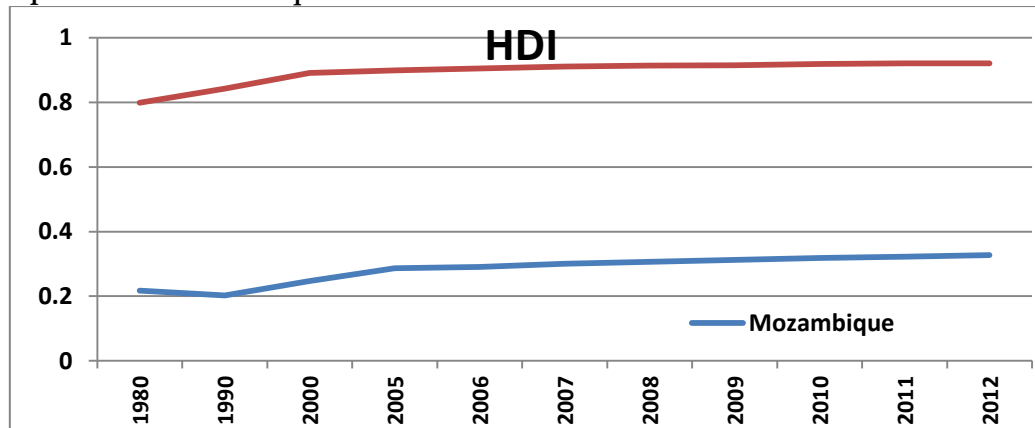
Graph 2: Mozambique and Netherlands-Population 0-14 and 65 above (% of total Population)



Source: <http://databank.worldbank.org/data>

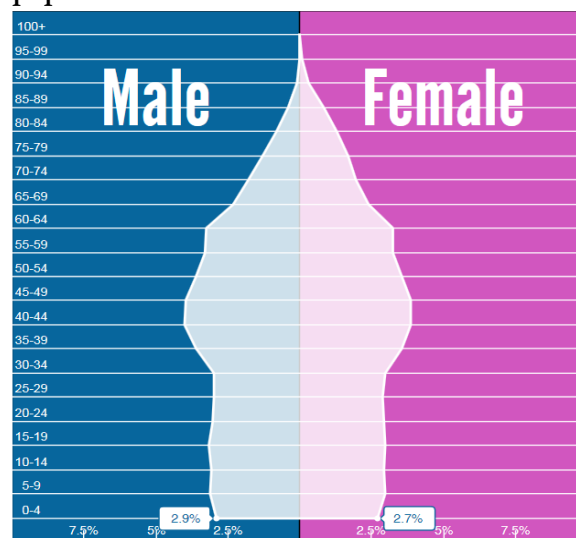
Graph 3 compares the HDI (Human Development Index) of Mozambique and Netherlands from 1980 to 2012. The difference between the two countries is enormous with the Netherlands very close to 1 (good) and Mozambique very close to zero (not good). Some social scientists and development practitioners argue that Netherlands is DC because demographically it is in the “modern regime” and Mozambique is LDC because is in the “old regime”, that is, still in the initial stages of processes of transformation known as “demographic transition” to follow the path. Because in DCs, DT was accompanied by socio-economic improvements it generated the idea that socio economic improvement depends on fertility decline (Dyson 2011),tTherefore for Francisco (2011) demographic transition is a necessary and inevitable process for socio economic development in Mozambique.

Graph 3: HDI Mozambique Vs Netherlands-1980-2012



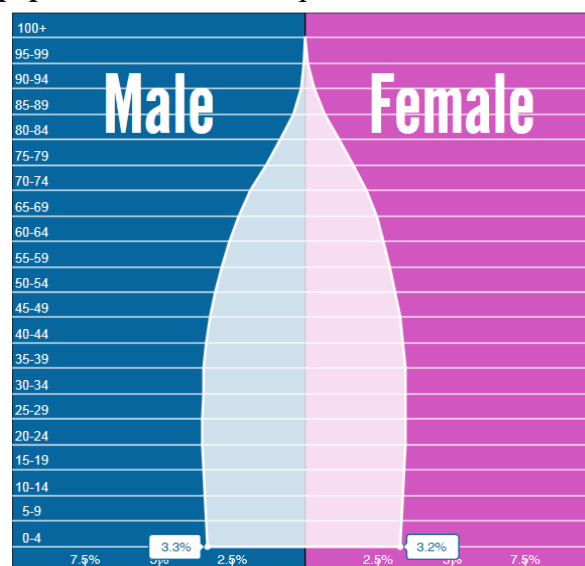
Source: <http://databank.worldbank.org/data>

Graph 4: Pyramid of population of Netherlands 2010



Source: <http://populationpyramid.net/Netherlands/2010/>

Graph 5: Pyramid of population of Mozambique 2100



Source: <http://populationpyramid.net/Mozambique/2100>

Graph 4 and Graph 5 represent the current structure of population in Netherlands (2010) and the projected population structure for Mozambique in 2100. It can be seen that the current Dutch structure is bit similar to the one project for Mozambique in 2100. It shapes mean that the population is composed by a large portion of adults. This type of structure is claimed, to be economically good since majority of population fall in the economically active population strata which can generate wealth instead of poverty. Does it mean that to achieve more or less similar level of socio economic prosperity of the Netherlands Mozambique has to wait until 2100? This hypothetical question implies that the Netherlands structure is the good one and it has to remain unchanged.

According to Susan Greenhalgh the taken-for-granted character of population growth and its alleged negative effect on socio economic development discouraged inquiry to the bio-political dynamics and sociopolitical effects of governmental projects of population growth control in LDCs as pro developmental strategies. She argues that what is missing is an inquiry on state apparatuses, development agencies, human scientists and research institutions as social institutions *producing* knowledge about P&D according to their political values and ideological interests (Greenhalgh, 2003: 187). This paper contributes in this debate investigating the processes (*how*) and also the places (*from where*) certain forms of knowledge (*interpretation of reality*) about P&D are produced, maintained and disseminated and the influence of this socially constructed knowledge in the development discourses and policy making processes.

1.2 Research questions

The main question that this research aims to investigate is: How is the hegemonic and institutionalized perception about the *problématique* of P&D socially constructed in Mozambique? The specific questions to answer this main one are the following:

1. Which institutions and socio-politic actors have substantial involvement in the social construction of the *problématique* about P&D in the Mozambican context?
2. What is the socio-political location of those who retain hegemonic control over the institutionalized and public perceptions about the relationship P&D in Mozambique?
3. To what extent do the hegemonic and institutionalized perceptions about P&D in Mozambique affect the development discourses and processes of policy making?
4. To what extent the dynamics of economic and political power relations among institutions affects the social construction of the *problématique* about P&D in Mozambique?

1.3 Methodology

This research is premised in the principle that the way in which the world is interpreted depends on from where it is looked at. To be more or less aware of the implications of assuming a given approach in a certain social, cultural, political and ideological context influences the research activity and the outcomes of the scientific activity. The researcher position is not of someone engaged in the production of an irrefutable proposition about the social construction of the *problématique* about P&D in Mozambique, rather he seeks to approach this topic systematically as a social scientist that recognizes that the world is multi-faceted and interpreted in many different ways. With background in Geography and presently working in Mozambique as junior researcher and assistant lecturer in subjects related to human Geography such as Demography and Geography of Population, the researcher is aware that the combination of

both qualitative and quantitative perspectives can improve social studies rather than the tendency of segregating qualitative and quantitative approaches.

According to O’Leary (2010: 127) those investigations that attempt to traverse this traditional division and employ quantitative and qualitative approaches in a single study are labeled mixed methodology. Given that this study employs both qualitative approach in form of interviews plus quantitative approach in form of small community survey to build up broader picture of the *problématique* under investigation and to add numbers into narratives and discourses this study classify as mixed methodology, more specifically as “qualitative perspective with acceptance of quantitative data” (O’Leary 2010: 129). Last but not least, to achieve an adequate level of credibility, the researcher provides sufficient methodological detail about the research process and points out the limitations identified in this study.

1.4 Research Methods and data collection

As “qualitative study with acceptance of quantitative data” i.e. mixed methodology, this study sought to apply qualitative and quantitative methods of research to examine how social actors and institutions in Mozambique context engage in social processes of knowledge construction. Using both quantitative and qualitative techniques to enrich the quality and quantity of data, the study aims to gain a deep understanding of the problem under investigation, but also to triangulate the data. A small community survey to 100 individuals was conducted in one of the neighborhoods of Maputo city in Mozambique combined with four semi-structured interviews with key informants also in Maputo, both complemented with a critical work with literature.

The relatively small number of sources of primary data provided enough empirical evidence to answer the research question. This is consistent with O’Leary (2010: 160), who claims that in qualitative models and mixed approaches of research the answer to a research question can be held by the “few” rather than the “many”, that is the answer can be held by experts and insiders or even within experiences of a particular individual (or small group of individuals). Moreover given the richness of the data gathered, the present research includes an exploratory analyze about fertility decline in Maputo as part of the *problématique* about P&D in LDCs to provide empirical evidence about this subject.

1.4.1 The survey

With regard to the survey, the population selected was composed by 100 individuals between 15 and 49 years old. Demographically, individuals within this range are considered to be in the reproductive age; they are also the working age population. Nevertheless, reproductive age both in females and males can start before 15 years old and continues after 49 years old. With respect to working age in many socio economic settings individuals younger than 15 years old and older than 49 years old, are active participants in the labor force. Despite this the researcher adopted the age interval 15-49 as demographic criteria to select the respondents. Furthermore Mozambique’s demographic data per administrative unit was the basis for stratification of the sample by age and sex.

Initially two palces were selected to conduct the survey: one urban and another rural. The urban was Maputo city the capital of Mozambique, located in the south region of the country. More specifically the place chosen was the neighborhood of Mahotas, which is part of the District of KaMavota. The rural area was the village of Machubo, located 75 km North of

Maputo city, in the District of Maniça, in Maputo Province⁴. Maputo city was selected because is the major and most important urban settlement in Mozambique. Moreover the socio-economic features (economic growth) and the demographic dynamics (fertility, mortality and migration) of this city are extraordinarily different from the rest of the country. Other factors to choose Maputo were the logistics and the institutional support. Constrained by financial resources the researcher counted on the support of Centre for Policy Analysis of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of EMU (Eduardo Mondlane University) in Maputo for credentials, workplace and research assistants whom were crucial to carry out the fieldwork.

The logistics conditions were the main reason for choosing Machubo village. This village is one of the closest rural areas from Maputo city, which is accessible with less difficulty in terms of safe transportation at lower costs. However, systematic delays in the bureaucratic procedures to start the survey did not permit to do the survey in Machubo, even with the crucial intervention of the EMU providing the credentials for the researcher and his team. It affected the original idea of dividing the sample in two equal sizes, that is, 50 individuals in urban areas and the remainder 50 in rural, but given that the survey was only done in Maputo city, the researcher decide to keep the sample size of 100 individuals, but only in Maputo city.

The sample size of 100 individuals was chosen purposely, but the proportions by sex (46 are males and 54 females), and ages (22 between 15-19, 40 between 20-29, 22 between 30-39 and 16 between 40-49) were not purposely done. Table 1 contains the population of KaMavota district organized by age group and by sex according to the Census of 2007. Table 2 presents the proportion of each age group and Table 3 is the final sample frame. Moreover, as can be seen the first age group is formed by the interval 15-19 years old, which is 5 years, and the remainder groups by intervals of 10 years. This division also was done intentionally to have a number of strata that could make the data collection and data analysis less problematic and although the age group 15-19 is theoretically included in reproductive and working age in practice few individuals in this age are either parents or labors.

Table 1: Population of KaMavota district (15-49 years) by sex

Age grupos	15-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	Sum
Total	34,316	60,166	37,239	25,656	157,377
Males	16,991	28,552	16,474	12,830	74,847
Females	17,325	31,614	20,765	12,826	82,530

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Mozambique (2009)

Table 2: Proportion of the population of KaMavota district (15-49 years) per sex

Age grupos	15 - 19	20-29	30-39	40-49	Sum
Total	21.8	38.2	23.7	16.3	100.0
Males	10.8	18.1	10.5	8.2	47.6
Females	11.0	20.1	13.2	8.1	52.4

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Mozambique (2009)

Table 3: Final sample frame

Age grupos	15-19	20-20	20-39	40-49	Sum
Total	22	40	22	16	100
Males	10	18	10	8	46
Females	12	22	12	8	54

Source: National Institute of Statistics of Mozambique (2009)

⁴ See the maps in the appendices 4 for localization of Machubo Village and appendix 5 for the localization of Mahotas neighborhood

The anonymous questionnaire⁵ for the survey comprises three domains: reproduction, fertility and socio economic development. In the first domain it explores with close ended questions perceptions about reproductive choices. The second domain measures the perceptions about fertility behavior in the context of Maputo city, more specifically about ideal number of children and the decisions with regard to the number of children that one can decide to have. The last part of the questionnaire is about perceptions about socio economic development in Maputo city. Together the three domains seek to explore how individuals perceive and interpret reproductive and fertility behavior and practices, and in to what extent these perceptions, interpretations and practices can be related to the level of socio economic development in the place where they live.

Since the survey was done only in the urban area of Maputo city, what constitutes an important limitation for comparisons between urban and rural areas it can also be an asset to investigate fertility decline as important aspects of the *problématique* of P&D in LDCs. Recent literature about fertility transition in LDCs supports that fertility decline is taking place in poor settings unaccompanied by socio-economic development, and urbanization might have been playing a key role in this process (Fischer, 2010; Dyson, 2011; Vollmer and Strulik, 2010). Therefore, this paper used the data gathered to provide empirical evidence about the relationship between fertility decline and urbanization in LDCs.

1.4.2 The interviews

Another method used to gather data was semi-structured interview to key informants. According to O'Leary (2010: 117) working with key informants means attempting to gather some insiders or expert knowledge that goes beyond the private experiences, beliefs and knowledge of the individual who is interviewed. The goal is to find out what this individual (the key informant) believes that "others" think, or how the "others" behave. Since this research tries to find out from where and how some perceptions and interpretations become established as "truth" and "reality" in a particular social context, the key informants could provide insightful discourses, narratives and perspectives about how institutions interact, socially, in the process of knowledge construction.

As was stated, the interviews were semi-structured, i.e. were done in flexible mode within the predefined structure of questions that covered four main topics: first, the history of the institution; second the demographic dynamics and socio economic development in Mozambique; third, the main problem of P&D in Mozambique, and; fourth, the PP (Population Policy) and P&D in Mozambique. Methodologically, to select the institutions and the key informants the researcher takes into account the institution where they work and their leadership position in those institutions combined with principles of snowball sampling. The principle of saturation of information was also used, that is, to finish the collection of data when no longer additional and significant information was provided by the respondents.

The first key informant to be interviewed was Dr. Elísio Nhantumbo, the Head of Department of Population Studies, in the National Directorate of Policy Analysis which is in the Ministry of Planning and Development. He was the first key informant due to the nature and importance of the institution where he works. The Department of Population Studies where Dr Nhantumbo works is the official institutions in the GoM with the responsibility to deal with P&D issues and it was created in 2005. During the interview Dr. Nhantumbo pointed out that without the UNFPA work in Mozambique the issues of P&D would remain largely marginalized, consequently to contact the UNFPA to delve these issues of P&D in Mozambique became

⁵ See the appendix 6

necessary. So, the second key informant was suggested by Dr. Nhamtumbo and was Dr. Baizamo Juaia who is senior official of programs of P&D in the UNFPA in Mozambique.

After the interview with Dr. Juaia, he indicated that EMU is receiving significant financial, institutional and technical support from UNFPA to produce knowledge on P&D in Mozambique about the implications (one can add negative) of rapid population growth and its effect on the economy. In the EMU the key informant identified was Dr. Ramos Muanamoha who is the Director of Centre for Policy Analysis from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the EMU in Maputo. He holds a PhD in demography, is senior professor of demography and related subjects and the Head of the program of Master in P&D in the same University. This Master program is at large financially supported by UNFPA. After the interview with Dr. Muanamoha the researcher started to observe that in the GoM, in the UNFPA and in the EMU there were remarkable similarities and a common shared narrative and perception with regard to the issue of P&D in Mozambique.

While the researcher was in Mozambique for fieldwork, an important academic event in matters of P&D took place: The Centre for Research in Population and Health, was launched and its coordinator is Dr. Carlos Arnaldo. Dr. Arnaldo holds a PhD in demography and is Senior professor in in Demography and related subjects in the EMU and is the Deputy Director of the Centre for African Studies also in EMU. Given that all the previous three key informants had presented remarkable similarities in their narratives plus a common shared perception, the researcher was interested in exploring if this new body of research about P&D has divergent or convergent narrative and perception about P&D in Mozambique and, the answer seems to be the last hypothesis.

1.4.3 Working with literature

Working with the literature was an essential method both as data collection technique and a way to shape the research process itself. It included the formulation of the research questions and the strategies to answer them. Given that the production of knowledge is heavily dependent on past knowledge, a wide range of bibliographical materials in various formats was consulted and used to support the research process, starting from developing the research question, providing data, constructing the theoretical ground and designing the methods of investigation (O'Leary 2010: 71). The types of literature consulted and used encompass books, journal articles, official publications and statistics.

1.5 Data processing and analysis

According to O'Leary the process of reflective qualitative analysis involves to organize the raw data; code and enter the data; search for meaning through thematic analysis; interpret the meaning and draw conclusions and all the while keeping the research questions, goals and purposes, methodological limitations and theory clear (O'Leary 2010: 257). It means that the process of qualitative analysis is more of thematic analyses rather than statistical and at the same time it is a process where the steps of data analyses influencing each other. The researcher applied systematically these procedures of qualitative analysis complemented with some principles of quantitative analysis, mainly descriptive statistics, given that he used mixed methodology.

Data of the 100 questionnaires were coded and entered into the SPSS software, version 13. The analysis consisted in exploring and interpreting the patterns in the data, through descriptive statistics, frequencies and cross-tabulations without using statistical measures of central tendency,

dispersion and distribution shape. The interviews were transcribed and organized into four main thematic areas: first, a brief outlook of the institution; second, the demographic dynamics and socio economic development in Mozambique; third, the problems of P&D in Mozambique and; fourth, the PP and P&D in Mozambique. The bibliographical data such as books and journal articles were organized and identified in categories such as statistics data, methodological materials, conceptual and theoretical materials.

1.6 Limitations

This paper about the social construction of *problématique* about P&D in Mozambique has shortcomings derived from many factors some under control of the researcher and others not. Furthermore, there are limitations that come from the research process itself such as to follow systematic procedures throughout the investigation process and others that came from being a researcher and human being that has limitations; following are described those shortcomings identified by the researcher during this study, however he recognizes that many more can be part of the list.

First, the place where the data was gathered was Maputo city specifically the neighborhood of Mahotas. In general three reasons lay behind this shortcoming: first, the short time available to carry out this research imposes a constraint on what, when, where and how the data collection could be done. Second, the lack of financial resources; even if the time available would allow to do the research throughout the country, the amount of money was not sufficient to cover the expenses, hence it was necessary to choose among limited possibilities which one could be done. Third, the bureaucratic procedures in Maputo delayed the authorization to do the survey in the rural area.

Originally the research was designed to collect data in one urban area (Mahotas neighborhood in Maputo City) and one rural area (Machubo Village in the District of Manhica⁶; In short, when the researcher defined where and when the data collection would be done, he also knew that the process of collecting data would depend heavily on the interaction with the local authorities/institutions. Despite the measures taken to overcome this, such as credentials from EMU and preliminary contacts with the local authorities to ask for permission to do the survey, it did not work well in Machubo.

Last another limitation is related to linguistic aspects and academic background of the researcher. First, the present paper is written in English which is not the researcher's native language. Second the data was collected in Portuguese and the researcher recognizes that several shortcomings had occurred during the translation from Portuguese into English and vice-versa. Thirdly, the researcher has background in geography and works as junior teacher and researcher in the Department of Geography and Centre for Policy Analysis of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the EMU using Portuguese language, so to carry out a research project in the field of social sciences in English at the Master level brought to him several intellectual challenges such as to write academically in English and as social scientist. Although, much effort was dedicated to overcome these aspects, the researcher is aware that some of these challenges constitute important limitations in the present study.

⁶ See the maps in the appendices 4 for localization of Machubo Village and appendix 5 for the localization of Mahotas neighborhood

1.7 Theoretical and conceptual Framework: The Social Constructionism

The theoretical framework of this paper is the theory of social constructionism. The social constructionism emerged in the 1960s and represents a shift to a more radical thought in the social sciences. At large it recognizes the fragmented nature of the world and of the scientific knowledge differently from that totalizing perspective of the scientific knowledge conventional in classical theories in social sciences. Social constructionism recognizes that what comes to be established as truth and valid knowledge in a given social context, does not come fundamentally from *rationality* and mental capacities of individuals (scientists) and institutional practices (such as researching), but comes from the processes of social interaction or social relations involving power relations and politics. Altogether, the social constructionism theory claims that the *knowledge* about *reality* is socially constructed in social interaction (Liebrucks 2001: 368). In a nutshell this theory defends that what determines that some interpretations about a given social phenomenon are taken as true and valid is the social interaction in given social context. As Liebrucks says:

“the point is not that theories, models and research papers are produced [created] by human beings, but how they are produced [created]. Specifically the social constructionists want to say something about the [social] processes that lead to the acceptance of certain descriptions as valid, [a reality] that is, as representations of the facts, as against mere fictions” (Liebrucks, 2001: 367)

In the social constructionism approach *reality* and *knowledge* are claimed to be socially constructed. What is the meaning of *reality* and the meaning of *knowledge* for social constructionists? Berger and Luckmann (1991: 1) in their classic book “*The social construction of reality*” define “reality” as quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognize as having a being independent of our own volition and “knowledge” as the certainty that phenomena are real and that they possess specific characteristics. Simply putting *reality* is partial view of a phenomenon, i.e., it is the perspective from a specific point of view about the object observed and *knowledge* is the perception that comes from assuming that perspective from that specific point of view in given context and time.

Liebrucks (2001: 365) considers that for Berger and Luckmann *reality* is the belief that we have *about* this world, that is, our conception about *reality* and not reality itself (because it is partial view) and the *knowledge* is the belief that the *reality* has specific characteristics, so *knowledge* is partial interpretation from a specific point of view about phenomenon. Interpretation in its turn is human and social process and it is influenced by the social context. Therefore the perspective and point of view of who is doing the interpretation, under what socio economic circumstances and the social position of the interpreter as well the politics, all the above factors influence in the process of constructing knowledge. Altogether, the social constructionism might contribute to understand that “all knowledge is situated and it is important to clarify the social locations shaping its production” (Greenhalgh 2003: 33).

Here social constructionism helps to understand from whom and from which point of view the relationship between population growth and socio economic development is problem in the Mozambique context. Moreover what is the implication of institutionalize this perception in society, specifically about development discourses and policy making. Last but not least the social constructionism also contributes to locate the position of the author of this paper by making him recognize his limited and partial perspective on such complex matter of sociology and politics of knowledge.

1.8 Organization of the paper

The main body of this paper is divided in two parts. The first part provides a macro perspective and the second a micro perspective about the socially constructed *problématique* about P&D. It moves from more general level of analysis into one concrete and specific case about the relationship between P&D. The macro perspective about the perceptions on P&D in LDCs examines the social construction of this hegemonic perception in Mozambique. It starts, by providing a brief historical outlook and then examines the current perspectives about the *problématique* of P&D in Mozambique demonstrating that the alarmist neo-Malthusian perspective and the DTTs are the institutionalized perspectives that dominate the public perception, however these perspectives have limited capacity to explain the factual and current relationships between the dynamics of population growth and socio economic.

The micro view analyzes the case of fertility decline in Maputo city. Based on statistical evidences and on small community survey done in Maputo city it elucidates how the institutionalized public perceptions fail to grasp that fertility decline is taking place among people in poor settings regardless improvements in the socio economic terms. The persistent appeals for fertility decline as necessary condition for socio economic development neglects this aspect. The paper concludes suggesting that the hegemonic and institutionalized public perception about the *problématique* of P&D in Mozambique obscure the real roots of underdevelopment, and this contributes to frame policies that have limited effect in improving the socio economic conditions of the people in LDCs.

2. SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE *PROBLÉMATIQUE* ABOUT P&D

The present chapter sheds light on the historical aspect of the P&D *problématique* in Mozambique. By exploring how the dominant perceptions about P&D changed throughout time the chapter seeks to show what Finkle and McIntosh (1994: 27) call the “actors and events that have shaped the trends”. Finkle and McIntosh emphasize that for the most of human history, the politics of population has rested on the assumption that larger population size and high rates of population growth are essential determinants of national power and economic strength, however recently by contrast governments nearly everywhere have come to see rapid population growth as an obstacle to social and economic development specifically in third world countries (Finkle and McIntosh 1994: 3).

The present state of the politics of population in Mozambique is dominated by perceptions and narratives from few but strong economic and political institutions both at global and local levels. The social interaction among these institutions shapes and determines the content of the perceptions and narratives about what is taken as *knowledge* and *reality* about P&D in the Mozambican context; however the Mozambican social context also plays a key role in the way these institutions interact and the P&D *problématique* is socially constructed, disseminated and maintained in Mozambique.

2.1 Historical outlooks

In this section are presented the perspectives about P&D that have been dominating the public perception in different historical times in Mozambique. First, is the colonial era views on P&D, from 16th century to 1975 when Mozambique becomes independent Nation; second, is the period from 1975 to 1994 when Mozambique was under a socialist regime, although from 1976/7 to 1992 the political and military instability affected negatively the socialist policies and at the same time in the mid of the 1980s, the Structural Adjustment Programs from the Bretton Woods Institutions. It is very important to mention that during the 80s, gradually Mozambique transited from the socialist era to the democratic era, under the civil war. Third, the section describes the democratic era which goes from 1994 (when the first multi-party elections took place) to 2012. It was during this period of time, specifically in 1999 that the PP was elaborated and approved. Currently the PP is in both implementation and reform processes.

2.1.1 Colonial era

Historically, in Mozambique the P&D issues could be linked to the Portuguese colonization. Wagner (2010: 239) says that since 1770 the Portuguese Empire systematically organized enumeration of the population living under Portuguese colonial domination aiming to obtain demographic data for economic planning; however the real interest was to control and to manage population. So, periodically the Colonial Portuguese Governors in Mozambique, for instance, would organize and conduct censuses and sent the data to Lisbon, the capital the Empire. These processes occurred until the emergence of Mozambique as independent Nation in 1975. Apparently, the data collected would be used for the purposes of economic and military planning.

According to Wagner (2010: 124), the main concern with regard to population in the colony of Mozambique was the under-population. She says that census after census the Portuguese authorities were preoccupied with the insufficient number of natives' inhabitants living in the

territory hence it had led to changes in the colonial policy for Mozambique. First, Portugal decides to rent large portions of the Mozambican territory to colonial Majestic companies. These companies at some point become economically and politically strong and even independent from Portuguese State. It leads into a fragment territorial administration and this character still visible in the pattern of regionalization today in Mozambique. Second, at that time among the Portuguese authorities there was the idea that the principal richness of the territory was its population, consequently larger number of Indians and Portuguese were sent to Mozambique.

In result of this migration to populate the colony, in the coastal region and along Zambezi River, which constitutes the larger hydrographic basin in Mozambique is still visible the presence of people from Indian and white origins. This confirms Finkle and McIntosh (1994: 3) thesis about in the past “too many” people in one country was considered important for national power and economic strength (army and taxes). The population, the Portuguese used to say, is the pillar for economic progress of the Empire (Wagner 2010: 124).

2.1.2 The socialist era

After the independency, in 1975, the Mozambican new born State adopted the socialist regime and according Greenhalgh (2003: 201) in the socialist regimes, the State is the principal organizer of the production of goods and commodities and often of the reproduction of people too as the Chinese example can illustrates. In Mozambique the socialist regime adopted and implemented a migratory policy⁷ for redistribution of the population as way to achieve a balanced distribution of the population within the country. The movement of individuals and families in the country was justified as necessary step of *modernization* and to improve the delivery of public services such as schools and hospitals. It culminated with the establishment of communal villages aiming to end the scatter settlements regarded as obstacle for development. These politically organized movements affected very negatively the familiar, traditional and local systems of economic production (Araújo, 1988).

When the civil war started in 1976/77 the migratory policy of spatial redistribution of population was partially affected because of the insecurity, however as the war continued this policy come to an end in the middle of the 1980s. In 1979 the UNFPA started officially its activity in Mozambique. According to Dr. Juaia from UNFPA, after the independence in 1975, “the new born socialist State implemented a wide range of social policies aiming to redistribute the national wealth over the population. On one hand it was good, but on the other hand it was a problem, because the state diverted economic resources that could be used in productive sectors to consumption sectors. And, given that the population was growing rapidly, the lack of resources became a large problem”. Moreover, in the words of Dr. Juaia “we (UNFPA) help the socialist regime in Mozambique to understand the negative impacts of high RNI on the socio economic development”. According to him, in order to bring evidences about it the UNFPA supported financially the processes of collecting demographic data such as the realization of the first Census of the Mozambique as independent country in 1980 (UNFPA 2010:12)⁸.

⁷ Francisco (2012: 5) affirms that this is one of the examples of the Governmental weakness to deal with the P&D issues in systematic and coherent way in order to promote socio economic development. He affirms that the migration issues in Mozambique are usually treated with prejudice, controversies and visible forms of discrimination. About this program of forced migration after the independence he mentioned that it also targeted persons considered unproductive, useless and unwanted in the urban areas which constitutes a violation of human rights.

⁸This is consistent with the information available at:

<http://web2.unfpa.org/public/about/oversight/evaluations/docDownload.unfpa?docId=54>

2.1.3 The democratic era

Dr. Nhantumbo from Ministry of Planning and Development mentioned that the UNFPA has been working in Mozambique for more than 34 years. He mentioned that “in the 1980s the country started to gain consciousness about the negative impacts of high RNI on socio economic” probably, influenced chiefly by UNFPA presence and actions. According to him “the UNFPA had already consciousness about these issues of P&D in LDCs”. For instance, Dr. Juaia, form UNFPA said that “in 1992 when the civil war ended, the UNFPA started to fund and to support projects about reproductive health and family planning programs focus on improving maternal and infant health”.

Dr. Arnaldo affirmed that “family planning was frequently associated with maternal and infant health in Mozambique”. Additionally, the same narrative is present in the PP of Mozambique approved in 1999. In the introduction of the PP is found that “since 1975 the Government had not formulated any specific PP like the present one, but the Government had sought to provide conditions to improve infant and maternal health by expanding family planning programs⁹ (Conselho de Ministros, 1999: 72-8); but to deny that family planning has direct impact on lowering fertility levels is at best unrealistic.

The turning point in the perceptions and narratives about P&D in Mozambique seems to be the year 1994 when the ICPD (International Conference on Population and Development) was held in Cairo. Dr. Nhantumbo from Ministry of Planning and Development mentioned that the ICPD had produced a clear and widely consensual framework that affected the way that institutions like the UNFPA, the GoM and others think and work in matters of P&D. For instance, for the GoM, the ICPD provided a political frame for new commitments, perceptions and practices about P&D in Mozambique; for the UNFPA, the PoA (Plan of Action) of the ICPD 94 galvanized its mandate and mission in many LDCs like Mozambique. The ICPD also opened space for the participation of other actors such as research institutions and civil society in matters of P&D¹⁰.

Undoubtedly, the main political effect of ICPD in Mozambique was the elaboration and approval of the PP in 1999, but the PP was also an outcome of different and overlapped socio-political processes and events inside and outside of the country. Inside the country the UNFPA was advocating for a PP and the PoA of ICPD recommended strongly that demographic issues including Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights should be integrated in the development discourses and practices. Additionally in the 1990s, Mozambique was becoming a democratic nation with free market economy (effect of Structural Adjustment Program).

The country was also recovering from the civil war and the levels of the poverty were very high. In order to deal with these multiple challenges the country implemented many political and economic reforms including the approval of the new constitution of the Republic in 1990. These reforms were done in a context of high external dependency. For example, according to Dr Arnaldo (Head of Center for Research in Population and Health) and Dr Nhantumbo from the Ministry, the design and approval of PP was done as a project funded by UNFPA, with limited appropriation from the GoM.¹¹

All in all, it can be perceived that the colonial Portuguese Empire in the 1770s, the socialist regime in the 1970s, during the transition in the 1980s and the democratic regime in the 1990s had different perceptions about P&D that were meant to influenced directly or indirectly

⁹ Translated by the author

¹⁰ The impact of PoA of ICPD on UNFPA and GoM is document in this site:

http://mozambique.unfpa.org/2008/07/28/6/unfpa_em_mocambique/

¹¹ See the appendix 1 for more insights about PP and the Problem of P&D in Mozambique

demographic indicators in the name of development; in other words, they produced institutions of population control. For the colonial Empire the obstacle for development was the reduced population; for the post-colonial socialist State the obstacle was the irregular distribution of population and for the democratic regime it is the high rates of population growth. Throughout time the various shapes that the State took and the interaction with other global and local institutions has shaped the institutionalized and hegemonic perceptions about P&D.

Table 4: Periodization of P&D issues according to the State regimes in Mozambique

Time	State Regime	Institutionalized Perceptions on Population	Policy making Implications
1770-1975	Colonial state	Under populated colony	Renting the country
1975-1979	Socialist State	Irregular spatial distribution of population	Redistribution of population (Internal migratory policy)
1979-1994	Transitional phase	Emergency programs (Maternal and infant health)	Family planning to improve Maternal and infant health
1994-1999	Democratic State	Integration of demographics into development planning (high RNI)	Conception of PP to harmonize P&D relations
1999-2012	Democratic State	Negative interdependency of P&D	Implementation and revision of PP (UNFPA/GoM)

Source: The author

2.2 The *problématique* of P&D in Mozambique: current perspectives

Now, will be analyzed the current institutionalized and dominant perspectives on P&D in Mozambique. Today, examining the presence and role of UNFPA in Mozambique is vital to understand the socially constructed *problématique* about P&D. Dr. Nhantumbo from Ministry of Planning and Development, which is the GoM body dealing with P&D, mentioned that “without the involvement of the UNFPA, issues of P&D would probably remain marginalized in Mozambique”. However, it is note worth that the ICPD 1994 had strongly influenced the UNFPA work in Mozambique, the GoM, the civil society and research institutions in Mozambique in regard to their approaches to P&D matters¹².

Bloom et al. (2001: 1) affirm that for decades, economists and social thinkers have debated the influence of population change on economic growth and three alternative positions define this debate: first population growth restrict development; second, it promotes development, and third it is independent of development and proponents of each explanation can find evidences to support their cases. However, according to Fischer (2010: 4), although there are many perspectives on the question of P&D, they can be summarized into 2 main strands: some are more alarmists, others more reassuring. The alarmist perspective tends to dominate the public perception with what are often called Malthusian views – after Thomas Malthus, who predicted, in the late 18th century that population growth would outstrip food production, resulting in famine, disease, war and other calamities that would ultimately keep population growth in check.

Although, Malthusianism was elaborated under specific socio-economic and historical conditions, for some social thinkers it still valid to explain today’s P&D relationship in the LDCs. Therefore in the same way that Malthus called for fertility control to check population growth, specifically among poor people, as the solution to avoid social catastrophes, the current institutionalized and dominant public perception about P&D defends that fertility decline is essential to improve the socio economic conditions in Mozambique. In addition the models of

¹² See the appendix 2 for more details about the history of UNFPA and its presence in Mozambique.

the classical DTTs are extensively used to support this view although the classical DT historically, took place in past European context.

On one hand, Egero (2013: 88) says since the 1950s, a “neo-Malthusian” orientation has supported the argument that a technical fix called family planning could initiate and speed fertility decline, i.e. fertility transition, under pre-industrial conditions and the message was carried out to poor countries around the world, ostensibly in support of poverty reduction. On the other hand, according to Ross (1998:104), the UNFPA is an institution that since its establishment in 1950s adheres to neo-Malthusian positions in its work. Moreover, since the 1950s fertility transition is the main *problématique* of the DTTs in LDCs. These remarks provide the basis to examine the sources and the processes behind the expansion of Neo-Malthusianism views in LDCs and the DTTs as the framework to understand and explain the relationship between P&D.

To conclude, the DC has been dominating the LDCs not only politically and economically, but also scientifically since they impose implicit or explicitly what should be the valid knowledge. In this, there are 2 main discursive domains on which the hegemonic institutionalized and public perceptions about P&D in Mozambique are articulated: the first one seems to be the Neo-Malthusianism perspective and the second is the recurrent use of DTTs to analyze and explain the dynamics of fertility decline. These conclusions are based on exhaustive, fair and limited interpretation of the scarce literature on this topic in Mozambique but also in systematic analysis and interpretation of the interviews done in Maputo; however it is influenced by the subjective position of the researcher as someone who considers that population growth in Mozambique context cannot be the single and main cause of underdevelopment as the neo-Malthusian logic proposes.

2.2.1 The Neo-Malthusianism

From later 1980s forward the institutionalized narratives about the *problématique* of P&D in Mozambique, mainly those in written form, often emphasize that Mozambican population is growing too fast and in some way the country is overpopulated in face of the scarcity of socio economic resources. These perceptions support that the RNI of Mozambican population is too high and it affects the demographic composition of population making it younger. Both high RNI and young demographic structure are taken as causes of socio economic underdevelopment, hence unless the country reduces fertility which, means to initiate and conclude the DT the country is doomed to underdevelopment.

For instance, the PP of Mozambique approved in 1999 expresses clearly this concern. In the Chapter 1 the PP articulates that the RNI and the age structure of Mozambican population are typical of a LDC and both aspects put under high pressure the sectors for economic development such as education, health, employment and housing, given that those demographic aspects contribute more in the consumption side and less in the productive side (Conselho de Ministros 1999: 72-11). The same argumentation can be found in the articles of Francisco (2011), Francisco (2012), Arnaldo and Muanamoha (2012), Arnaldo and Muanamoha (2013) and Arnaldo (2013)¹³.

Dr. Muanamoha the Director of Centre for Policy Analysis mentioned that the main activity of the Centre for Policy Analysis is to investigate about the impacts of the current demographic trends on the socio economic development in Mozambique and significantly the Centre relies on the UNFPA financial support. Both Dr. Juaia from UNFPA and Dr. Nhantumbo from the Ministry state that without the financial support of UNFPA it would have been slightly difficult

¹³ All these authors are extensively cited in this paper

for GoM to organize the 3 national censuses, the first in 1980, the second in 1997 and the third in 2007, since the independency in 1975. Ross (1998: 104) affirms that since its creation in 1967 UNFPA has taken a neo-Malthusian position in its approaches. If this is the case, it cannot be ignored that more than financial power this organization influence the values in the ideas of those who investigate about P&D in Mozambique.

In addition, this is consistent with the findings in the interviews. For instance, Dr. Nhantumbo from the Ministry mentioned that “the public provision of social services is constrained by the increasing population in rural but also in urban areas and the type of population that Mozambique possesses challenges to the maximum the capacity of the State to deliver public services”. Both Dr. Arnaldo and Dr. Muanamoha¹⁴, demographers, articulate that the RNI of the Mozambique population and the current demographic structure of Mozambican population imposes serious challenges for the provision of public goods and services such as education, health, housing and employment creation. In its turn Dr. Juaia affirmed that the “UNFPA is aware about the negative impact of the current demographic scenario of Mozambique in the socio economic development and the organization supports research institutions in Mozambique to produce evidence about it”.

These examples are supported by Greenhalgh (2003: 28) argumentation. She says that knowledge production is social activity of particular groups and the scientific ideas are heavily influenced by the values and interests of scientists, the social structures of research institutions and the historical circumstances in which knowledge is constructed. She emphasizes that knowledge is controlled, organized, produced and maintained through social practices in each particular historical context and place according to values and interests. Although knowledge is situated, scientists are generally more or less unaware of the influence of values and interests of institutions, social structures and practices, historical and geographical circumstances on their intellectual practices and products.

The Mozambican institutions of research as well the scientists in the field of P&D are aware of the structural dominance of DCs on LDCs in terms of knowledge production? How about the influences of the values and interests of global organizations such as UNFPA in the intellectual products of the Mozambican institutions of research? Most likely the Mozambican Institutions of research limit their activity in reproducing and maintaining certain description imposed structurally unto them via funding, for instance, or training.

According to Fischer (2010:4) the values and ideas of Neo-Malthusianism view dominate the public perception about P&D everywhere. Historically, the father of this hegemonic approach, Thomas Malthus (1766-1834)¹⁵, argued that given that there are limited amount of economic resources for human subsistence, the needs that can be satisfied are also limited, and if unchecked, the rate of population growth can be geometrical (1,2,4,8,16) and it will overcome the economic resources for subsistence that grow in arithmetical rate (1,2,3,4,5); hence, he concludes over increasing population would not be supported by limited amount of resources and, if population growth remains unchecked, the scarcity of resources for subsistence will ultimately impose its limit to population growth in form of social catastrophes such as famines, wars and social chaos¹⁶.

¹⁴ Both Ramos Muanamoha and Carlos Arnaldo published, together in 2013, an article entitled “Trends and Challenges of Population Growth in Mozambique”, (in Arnaldo and Cau (2003), “Dynamics of Population and Health in Mozambique”). In the article they state that in recent times Mozambican population has been growing rapidly and the demographic structure that comes along with this growth brings enormous challenges given the increase in the demand for basic services, such as education, health and employment.

¹⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Robert_Malthus

¹⁶ In his article “Mozambique and Demographic Explosion: Are we too many? Are we too few?” from 2012, Francisco started his article with a quote from Bartlett 2007 which says: “The great sin of human kind is our incapacity to understand the exponential function”. He uses the Malthusian principles of geometrical and arithmetical growth to explain the relationship between P&D and interestingly, in the article he cites Malthus

However, Fischer (2010: 6) says that this type of crude Malthusian arguments have been largely refuted by events and evidences around the world, but more indirect forms of neo-Malthusian thinking still dominates the P&D perceptions. For instance, the notion that poverty induces higher fertility among poor people because children provide old age security as well as extra labor and income is one very popular in the discourses about P&D in LDCs. So at the end the poor are doomed to poverty until they can either lower their birth rates or else be moved out of poverty by some other ways. (idem)

Other scholars such as Sexton and Hildyard (2005) affirm that Neo-Malthusianism obscures the real roots of poverty, landlessness, welfare inequality, environmental degradation, water scarcity, hunger; and at the same time it prevents changes that are more socially and economically just. Roos (1998: 1) remarks that the most important contribution of Malthus was not to population theory, but in shaping the academic and popular thinking about the origins of poverty and to defend the interest of capital in the face of the enormous human misery that capitalism causes. Concluding, Fischer (2010: 4) says that neo-Malthusian arguments tends to obscure the real roots of underdevelopment in the capitalist system, with the result that poor people are blamed for their condition rather than treated as the victims of such capitalist system. Nevertheless, Neo-Malthusianism still dominant and institutionalized perception in Mozambique.

2.3 The DTTs

The current demographic state of the majority of LDCs known as “old” demographic regime is described as different from the “modern” demographic regime that characterizes DCs. Indeed, historically, in the DCs the “old” regime was replaced by the “modern” through a process known as DT during the first half of the 20th century. However, later in the 1950s the explanations about this historical process were stylized into the DTTs. In a nutshell DT is about socio-demographic changes from high rates of mortality and births to low rates of mortality and births. In between occurs the demographic explosion given that mortality falls in first place and births in second causing significant augment in population. According to Dyson (2011:35) historically, in DCs these changes were accompanied by industrialization, urbanization and general improvement in the living conditions. This encouraged the belief that these socio economic processes are the causes of demographic changes such as fertility decline.

There are several studies about DT in LDCs. For example, in the SSA region, the poorest in world given that the rate of fertility still higher, demographers are examining the trends of demographic indicators such as mortality and fertility in relation to the socio-economic features, such as urbanization and industrialization to determine how far is the region with regard to DT. Some findings suggest that mortality have been declining steadily even if the effect of HIV/AIDS (Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) is taken into account, but fertility rates remains high (Arnaldo 2013: 37). Although in some countries such as Kenya and more recently Zimbabwe and Botswana there is some evidence that fertility has started to decline sustainably, the methods used to support this conclusion are being questioned (Thomas and Muvandi 1994: 185-6).

Despite these constrains, according to Dyson (2011: 38), in the SSA region the most important problem relies on the fact that decline in fertility have been taking place independently of the socio economic factors used to explain the classical fertility transition in DCs. If fertility has been declining without improvement in the quality of life in LDCs why are the classical DTTs the dominant theoretical framework to explain DT in LDCs? Quoting Szreter (1994),

only once as scholar who was misunderstood. Apparently while he avoids the use of words Malthus and Malthusianism he supports the Malthusianism logic.

Greenhalgh (2003: 28) answers that “a perverse persistence of DTTs, an outdated framework serves the needs of policy making better than those of scholarly inquiry”. Apparently both Neo-Malthusianism and DTTs have been *scientific justifications* to endorse political actions against vulnerable and marginalized human groups in the capitalist system.

2.3.1 Outlining the DT in Mozambique

Recent Mozambican literature about P&D such as Francisco (2011), Franscico (2012), Arnaldo and Muanhamoha (2012), Arnaldo and Muanhamoha (2013) and Arnaldo (2013) have been examining how the socio economic processes influence demographic processes and vice-versa. The theoretical and analytical frames most frequently founded in these studies are the models of DTTs or Theories of Fertility Transition. Mason (1997: 445) says that “although there are many theories of fertility transition, each containing important ideas, none provides a complete explanation for all known fertility declines; moreover, those theories of fertility transition that are specific enough to be tested in a meaningful manner have been contradicted by the evidence”.

According to Greenhalgh (1996: 27), since mid-20th century fertility transition becomes the central *problématique* of virtually all the DTTs and demographers persistently use these ahistorical, Eurocentric and apolitical presumptions of modernization theory to explain processes of fertility transition in LDCs. According to Greenhalgh (idem), demographers are concerned about how traditional fertility regimes become modern, i.e., which political and socio economic aspects govern the linear movement from considered backward fertility regime to another one, taken as modern.

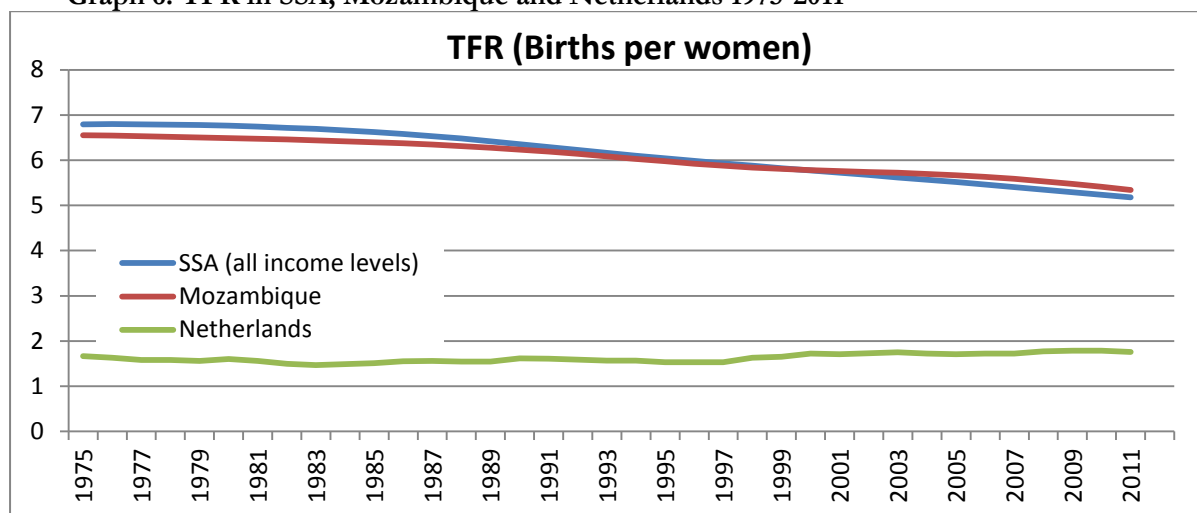
However, Mason (1997: 445) in her article affirms that there are 4 main errors in the DTTs: first error is the assumption that all fertility transitions have common cause such as industrialization and increasing on wages; second, demographers ignore mortality decline as a precondition of fertility decline; third, they assume that the regulation of fertility is fundamentally different in pre transitional and post transitional populations; fourth, the focus on a decadal time scale to measure the duration of fertility transition. This is consistent with the literature about fertility transition in Mozambique, frequently it aims the following aspects: first, to describe in what extent Mozambique is following the linear trend of the DCs from the pre transitional to post transitional; second, to justify the need for lower fertility to enhance socio economic conditions of the Mozambique population. (See Francisco 2011, “The incipient DT in Mozambique”).

Shapiro and Gebreselasse (2009) cited in Arnaldo (2013: 40) had observed that 22 African countries among 24 in the SSA region had started the DT although one third of them were experiencing fertility stalling, including Mozambique. Supporting this statement, according to Francisco (2012: 5) the DT in Mozambique is delayed and the disruption with the old demographic regime will be longer, however inevitable. Arnaldo (2013:38-9) for instance defends that the persistence of high fertility rates in the SSA region including Mozambique is explained mainly by socio-cultural and economic factors. These perspectives tend to emphasize that Mozambique is on the linear movement towards modern fertility, but very slowly.

Nevertheless, when demographers embrace DTTs to explain fertility transition in the LDCs a whole set of unstated assumptions is taken onboard. First, that history moves in a unilinear and predetermined fashion and the same history can only be collapsed into traditional and modern and the uniqueness of histories of individual societies are ahistorical; second, reproductive westernization is good for everyone, i.e. Europe and its offshoots are superior to the rest of the world and; third by replicating reproductive westernization it obscures the unequal created relationships of power between DCs and LDCs (Greenhalgh, 1996: 27).

To back up these ideas, Graph 5, shows the trends of TFR of Mozambique, SSA region and the Netherlands. In 36 years (from 1975 to 2011) a slight reduction from nearly 6.5 children per woman to 5.1 children per woman both in Mozambique and in SSA region is observable. This pattern is defined as “pre-transitional” fertility regime. In the case of Netherlands it can be seen that during the same amount of time the TFR is below 2, which is below replacement level and this pattern is considered the “post transitional” fertility regime. Social thinkers and demographers inside and outside of Mozambique support that in few decades the TFR of SSA region and Mozambique will fall and become very similar to the Dutch. Nevertheless, whereas some of them support that socio economic development of Mozambique will depend on fertility decline, others find empirical evidences showing that both are independent processes.

Graph 6: TFR in SSA, Mozambique and Netherlands 1975-2011



Source: <http://databank.worldbank.org/data>

3. FERTILITY TRANSITION: THE CASE OF MAPUTO CITY

This chapter clarifies that the classical DTTs, despite their limited capacity to explain the current demographic scenario of fertility decline in underdeveloped contexts are still institutionalized and dominant perspectives. The chapter illustrates it by presenting and examining the data collected in Maputo city about the perceptions on fertility transition, elucidating how the institutionalized dominant perception fails to grasp that in Maputo city fertility decline is taking place unrelated to socio economic improvement. In the end the chapter analyzes the dominant institutionalized perception in terms of its analytical power to explain fertility decline and the influence of this perception in policy making.

3.1 DTTs: Analytical frame for fertility transition in LDCs?

Kirk (1996: 361), says that although demography is science short on theory and rich in quantification, it has produced one of the best documented generalizations in the social sciences, the DTTs. Dyson (2011: 34), in he's turn says that DT (without the last "T" of "Theory") is an incredibly important phenomenon that is affecting all of humanity. These two propositions shows that for some scholars DT is a *theory*, and for others is a description and not a *theory* about the *observed* socio demographic changes that took place in the DCs and are taking place today in LDCs, therefore affecting all humanity.

DT has become important, because is a stylized fact about the historically changes occurred in rich countries with regard to fertility decline and socio economic development. The use of DT to explain and in predict the demographic dynamics in LDCs brings several shortcomings both at theoretical and empirical level. Tim Dyson, reflecting on fertility transition in LDCs, particularly in the SSA region notice:

"the fact that in European societies in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries industrialization and modern economic growth accompanied the demographic transition and urbanization has encouraged the idea that the former sorts of economic processes are the causes of the latter. However, such economic interpretations have faced difficulties in recent decades, because processes like fertility decline and urbanization have been occurring in settings where sustained economic growth and industrialization are largely absent. (Dyson 2011: 35)

Currently, according to statistics, slowly in Mozambique, and more rapidly in Maputo city, fertility rates are declining. Arnaldo (2013: 55) demonstrated that in the urban areas, in Mozambique, fertility rate is lower than the national rate and it has been declining steadily since late 1980s onwards. Although urbanization and urban growth are taking place without industrialization as well improvements in the quality of life, fertility is declining and this aspect did not occur in the DCs. Explaining this issue, Mason (1997: 449) defends the thesis that in some cases urbanization and industrialization can be important factors of fertility decline but not in other case. Consequently, fertility transition occurs under a variety of institutional, cultural, and environmental conditions. In this, she concludes:

"models of fertility transition need to be both ideational and interactive. They need to be ideational in that they must recognize that changing perceptions ultimately drive fertility change, and that perceptions may change more slowly or more quickly than the reality with which they are concerned. Models of fertility transition also need to be interactive in that they must recognize that the impact on fertility of a particular form of change depends on preexisting conditions in the population and on the nature of other changes simultaneously occurring in the population" (Mason, 1997: 450)

First, DTTs should recognize that changing perceptions drive fertility changes and at the same time, specific forms of change depend on preexisting conditions in the population. Using the data collected in Maputo city, this study explores the what extent in which Mason's paradigm can provide a more comprehensible frame to describe and analyze fertility changes in Maputo, given that "although the employed classical DTTs containing important ideas, none offers a broad elucidation for all known fertility declines and tend to be challenged by empirical evidences" (Mason, 1997: 450). The following sections present the perceptions about fertility in Maputo city. The contextualization is followed by description of the data about fertility perceptions collected by the researcher in Mahotas neighborhood in Maputo city. It is note worth, that both terminologies Mahotas and Maputo will be used to refer to the urban context where the data was collected.

3.2 Fertility decline in Maputo: contextualization

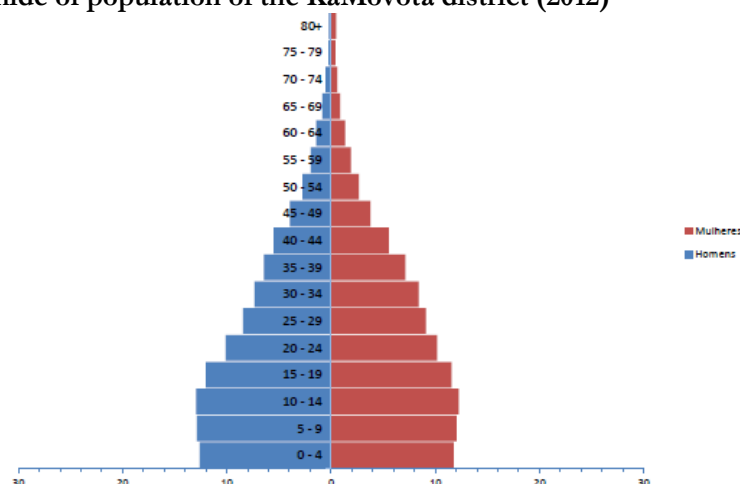
According to National Institute of Statistics of Mozambique-NIS (2012a: 5), between 1997 and 2007 the natural rate of population growth in the district of KaMavota where the Mahotas neighborhood is located was of 2.1%, against 2.7% of Mozambique and 1.4% of Maputo city. Current population in 2012 KaMavota is estimated in 329 509 inhabitants (NIS 2012b: 10). The data from NIS (2012a: 6), also shows that the structure of population in KaMavota district in 2007 was very young, 52.2% of population was under 19 years old and median age was 19.5 years old.

The total dependency ratio in 2007 was 70.7% meaning that per 10 adults in working age, there were 7 dependent people and the population economically active in the same year corresponded to 53.5% of the people in working age. The illiteracy in the district in 2007 was 10.6%. In 1997, the TFR was 4.2 children per woman and in 2007 was 3.5, while the CDR in 2007 was 11 per thousand with an IMR of 70.2% and life expectancy at birth of 51.1 years. These features are reflected in the KaMavota population structure (Graph 7), where can be seen that the basis is not very larger and the proportion of adult population is relatively higher.

According to census 2007, (NIS, 2012a: 19), the majority of the population (80.5%) in KaMavota district lives in the "basic house" which is house only with rooms without kitchen and bathroom; with regard to the main source of light, 60 % of the population had electricity and 30 % relied on candles. Only 36.1% of people used piped water in which 5.5% had it inside the house and the remainder 30.6% outside. The majority of people (54.4%) used non piped water from fountains. In terms of toilets usage, 38.7 % had improved latrines, 15 % non-improved latrines and 15.4 % improved traditional latrines, while 22.3% used conventional toilets. With regard to durable assets, 66.3% had radios, 59.5% TVs, 9.8% cars; and 24.2% none.¹⁷ The majority of these data refers to the last census in 2007 and they give general view on the demographic and economic context in which the survey was done

¹⁷ All these data were obtained from National Institute of Statistics (2012a).

Graph 7: Pyramide of population of the KaMovota district (2012)



Source: National Institute of Statistics of Mozambique (2012b: 11)

With regard to data from the survey, Graph 8, shows the distribution of the respondents by occupation and sex. The majority of respondents affirmed that they are workers: domestic worker, self-employed/trade and services providers. These categories comprise, mainly informal and insecure works/jobs; those who work in public and private sector are very few. In second place there is the category “student” (18 females against 12 males). The remarkable aspect is the difference between males and females with regard to activities in the domestic and public spheres. While 16 men mentioned that they have job/work as service provider or have their own business in the public space; 15 women mentioned that they are domestic workers. This indicates a division of labor according to gender.

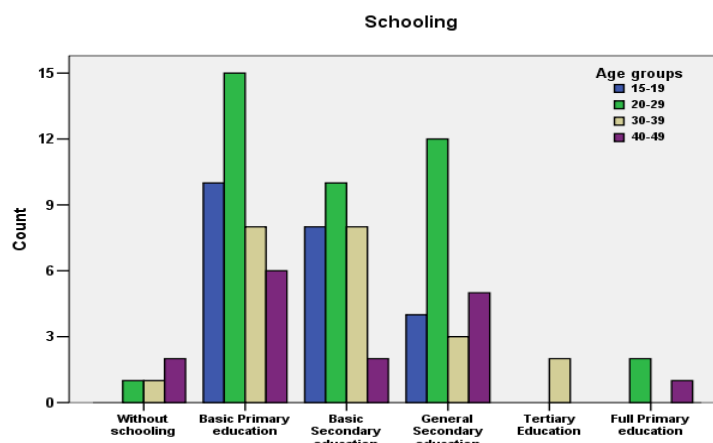
Graphs 9 and 10 present the schooling of the respondents. Basic primary education and Basic secondary education predominate in all age groups and sex groups. In general, the majority of the respondents have completed the basic primary education followed by those who have completed basic secondary education. The age group 20-29 presents higher levels of schooling particularly with regard to secondary education. This data is consistent with the statistical data available in the National Institute of Statistics (2012a) that estimated the level of illiteracy for KaMavota district in 10%, which is very low in comparison to the National level estimated in nearly 45% in 2007.

Graph 8: Occupation by sex



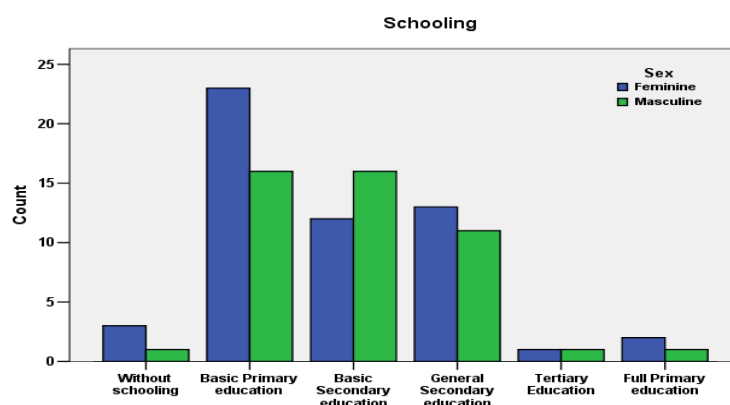
Source: The author's survey

Graph 9: Schooling by age groups



Source: The author's survey

Graph 10: Schooling by sex



Source: The author's survey

The answers about the quality of life of the respondents are summarized in Table 5. The most frequent answer was “more or less”, by 30 respondents; however almost similar number of people (29) mentioned that they rate their quality of life as “very bad”, and 10 people rate it as “bad”, this indicates that nearly 70% of the respondents rate their quality of life as more or less, bad or very bad and the remainder 30% rate it as “good” (12%) or “very good” (18%). With regard to the major concern in their families (Graph 11), 44 respondents (22 females and 22 males) indicated that to have job/work is the major concern today in their families. This supports the official statistical data which shows that this area is relatively poor.

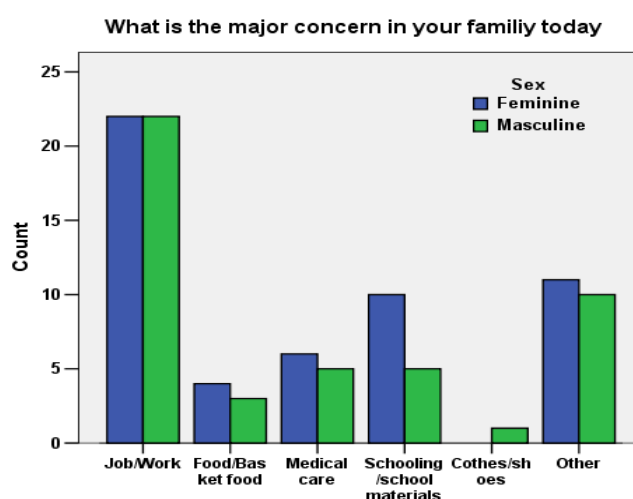
Other concerns such as food/basket food and clothes/shoes were not mentioned as the main concern. It is note worth that these items tend to be considered the main preoccupation of poor people and are where they spend much of their income. Interestingly schooling/school materials was considered by the many more females rather than males as one important concern in their families. Other concerns such as housing, security against criminality and accept Jesus as Savior were indicated too as main concern in some families and these fall under the category “other”.

Table 5: How do you rate your quality of life today

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very good	18	18,0	18,2	18,2
	Good	12	12,0	12,1	30,3
	More or less	30	30,0	30,3	60,6
	Bad	10	10,0	10,1	70,7
	Very bad	29	29,0	29,3	100,0
	Total	99	99,0	100,0	
Missing	NA	1	1,0		
Total		100	100,0		

Source: The author's survey

Graph 11: Families' main concerns today



Source: The author's survey

All in all, the context where the survey was done is relatively poor. For example the access to basic services such as water provision, sanitation and adequate housing are still low. Moreover, the dependency ratio is very high and quarter of the people does not have any durable asset. The respondents of the survey belong to this relatively poor setting, where majority of people are demographically young. These facts are consistent with the answers in the survey, where they declared that are not satisfied with the quality of life that they have today.

Furthermore, the main concern in their families today is to have job/work and probably this can be associated with two reasons: first many respondents have informal/insecure job and second they are studying. As significant number of females and males indicated they do not have formal or safe jobs and they rely on informal trade, providing services and self-employment, running their own business, or domestic work to survive and indeed relatively large part of Maputo's inhabitants rely on informal activities to survive. This is also consistent, with Dyson's (2010: 40), proposition about urban growth and urbanization in SSA to be taking place without industrialization which could provide employment, for instance.

Manuel Garrido Mendes de Araújo who has been investigating extensively the processes of urban growth and urbanization in Mozambique has shown that urban growth and urbanization

in Mozambique are happening too fast and unaccompanied with the necessary growth of infrastructures and urban services. He concludes that these processes are much more of demographic urban growth without socio economic improvement or even considerable degradation of the urban space and a proliferation of informal economic activities as strategy to survive (Araújo 2003: 165); however, under these structural conditions of poverty the TFR of Maputo is the lowest one in Mozambique and has been declining steadily since later 1980s.

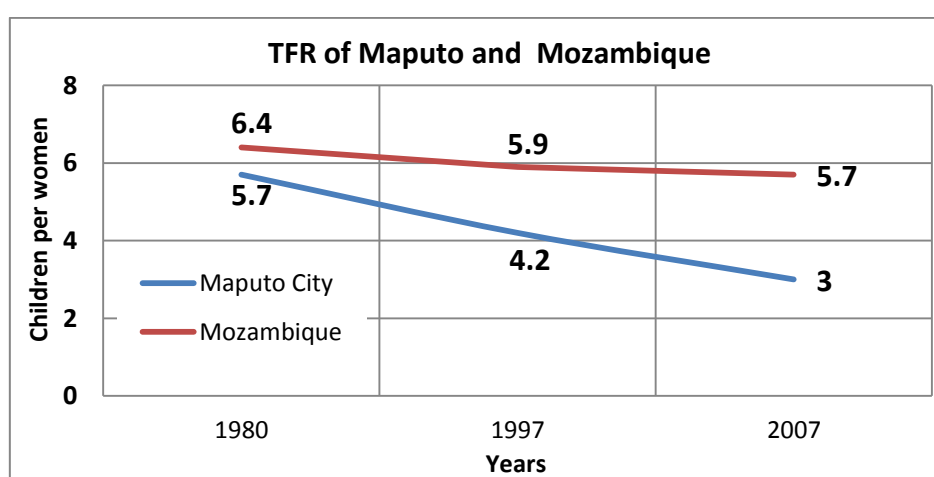
3.3 Empirical evidence and social perceptions

According to Arnaldo (2013: 44) TFR in Maputo city fell from 5.7 in 1980 to 3.0 in 2007 after reaching 4.2 children per women in the reproductive age, in 1997. This decline represents a reduction of 47.4% from 1980 to 2007 (Graph 12). The decline in TFR in Maputo city is the major variation in fertility rates throughout the country during this period of time. Also, as seen in Graph 12 while for Mozambique as a whole the TFR only declined from 6.4 in 1980 to 5.7 in 2007, in Maputo city it reduced nearly twice as much during the same period.

According to Arnaldo (idem) for urban areas in Mozambique during the period 1997-2007 the TFR reduced from 5.2 to 4.3 children per woman corresponding to a reduction in 17.3%. The same is observable in KaMavota District, where Mahotas neighborhood is located, its TFR decreased from 4.2 to 3.5 children per women, corresponding to reduction in 17%. However in rural areas during the same time TFR increased from 6.2 to 6.4 children per woman corresponding to an increase of 3.2%.

These statistical data suggest that urban growth and urbanization regardless the lack of industrialization and even the degradation of socio economic conditions might be influencing in fertility decline in Maputo. This supports Dyson's (2010: 41) argument that regardless the lack of economic improvement in LDCs the urbanization and urban growth affect fertility decline. However, Mason (1997: 450) affirms that urbanization and industrialization as structural changes can affect or not fertility decline, given that fertility decline also depends on other factors such as individual and social perceptions about fertility and the mechanisms in which these perceptions are spread out as well pre-conditions existing in the society to delay or accelerate fertility decline.

Graph 12: TFR in Maputo city and Mozambique (1980, 1997 and 2007)

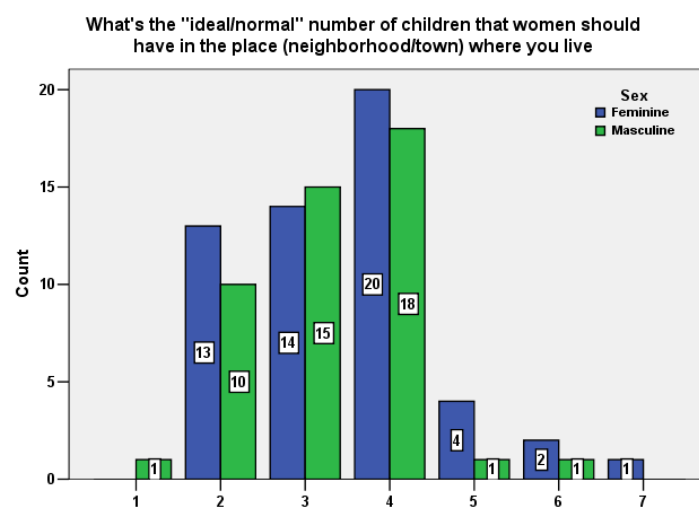


Source: Adapted from Arnaldo (2013: 44)

3.3.1 Perceptions about ideal/normal number of children

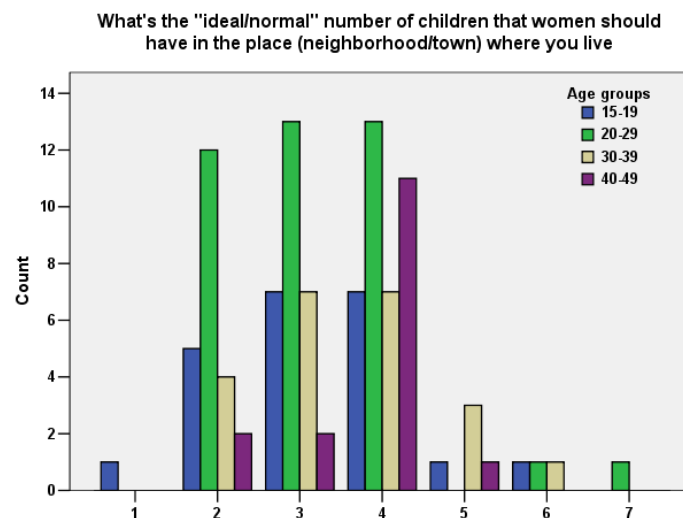
When asked about the “ideal/normal” number of children that women should have in Mahotas neighborhood/Maputo city, Graph 13 and Graph 14 show that the most indicated number of children taken as “normal/ideal” is 4, followed by 3 and very close followed by 2 corresponding to 38%, 29% and 23% of the respondents. In other words 67% of the people interviewed (regardless sex) consider that the ideal number of children is 3 or 4. If the remainder 23% is considered it means that 90% of the people consider that to have between 2 and 4 children is “ideal/normal” in Mahotas/Maputo. According to graphs 13 and 14 the sex and the age of the respondents do not exert significant influence in these perceptions.

Graph 13: Perceptions about the ideal/normal number of children



Source: The author's survey

Graph 14: The ideal/normal number of children by age groups

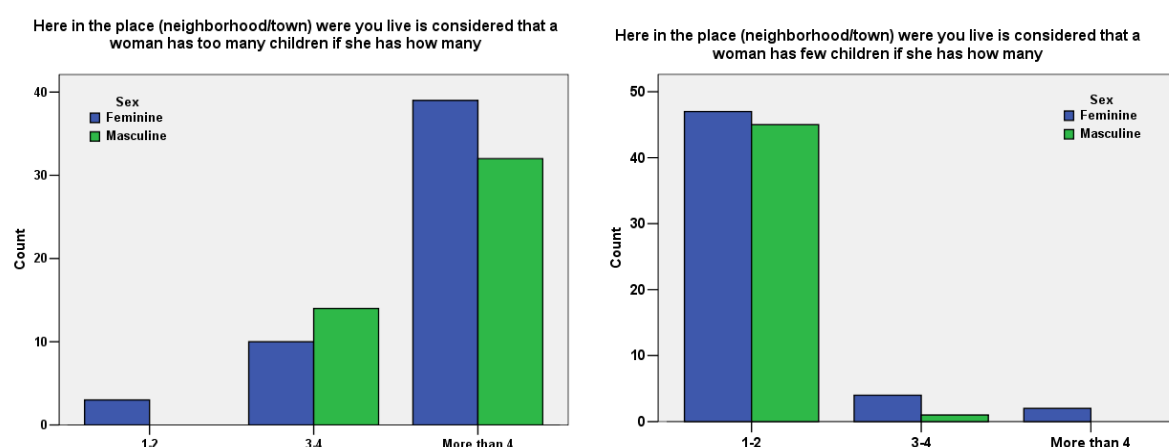


Source: The author's survey

3.3.2 Perceptions about “too many” and “too few” children

When asked what would be considered “too many” children or what would be considered “too few” children that one can have in Mahotas/Maputo, Graph 15 (composed by two charts; on the left there is the perception on the number considered “too many” children and on the right the number considered few children) shows that almost unanimously women and men indicated that to have more than 4 children is to have “too many” children (chart on the left). In the other chart it is indicated that to have between 1-2 children is to have “too few” children (chart on the right). However notice that 24% of the respondents considered that to have between 3-4 children is also to have “too many children” in the context of Mahotas/Maputo.

Graph 15: Perceptions about the number of children considered too many and few

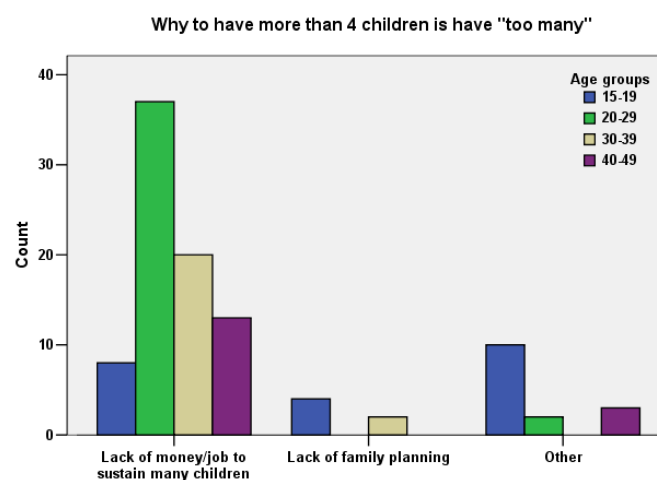


Source: The author's survey

When asked about why more than 4 children are considered “too many”, the most given answer was lack of money and/or job to sustain that number of children. Majority of people indicated that under the difficult economic conditions, such as unemployment, lack of income sources, very low wages and high cost of living in Maputo city, having more than 4 children is to have “too many” children. They said that it is difficult to provide food, schooling assistance, to cover health expenses and transportation. On one hand, it suggests that to have less than 4 children is “economic mechanism” that individuals and households are using in the Mahotas/Maputo city to face the harsh socio economic conditions. (Graph 16)

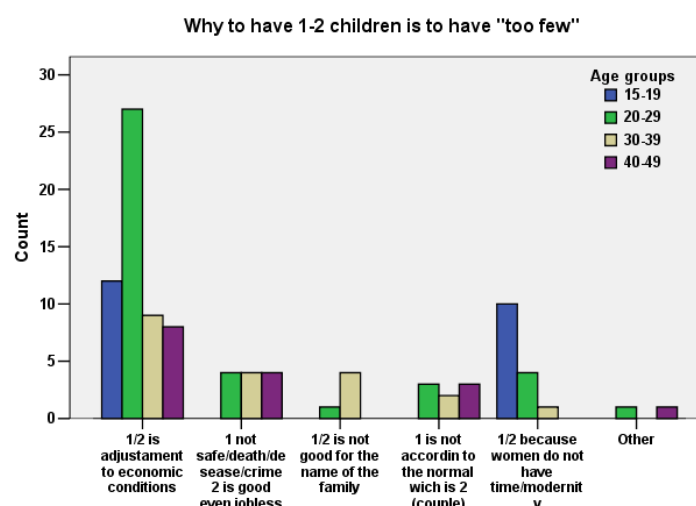
On the other hand, it is consistent with the answers when asked why 1-2 children is “too few”. The majority responded said that to have 1 or 2 is a very good way of adjustment to today's economically tough conditions of living, therefore having few children can be seen as socio economic mechanism to avoid absolute poverty in Maputo city (Graph 17). Moreover some respondents indicated that even jobless people can afford to have and take care of 1 or 2 children.

Graph 16: Reasons for not having too many children



Source: The author's survey

Graph 17: Reasons for not having few children



Source: The author's survey

Graph 16, also shows that another important reason mentioned about why to have 4 children is to have "too many" is the lack of family planning. Other reasons such as "it is not any more richness to have many children today" or "in the modern times one must know what the TVs and radio are saying that today modern family means having two children, normally a couple" or explanations such as "we just need two children to replace ourselves one girl to replace the mother and one boy to replace the father, and it is ok", it shows that to have few children is not only economically good but is also socially acceptable and necessary but also is becoming normalized in Maputo city and the normalized/ideal fertility behavior such as to have two children (boy and girl) seems to come from the mass media where institutions with economic and political power such as UNFPA, GoM or Research Institutions may have privilege access to disseminate their values and interests.

On the contrary, in Graph 17 can be seen that for some respondents to have 1-2 children is "too few" because "it is not safe". They say that if you have only one, the child may die and when you become old none would be there to look after you". Another reason mentioned was

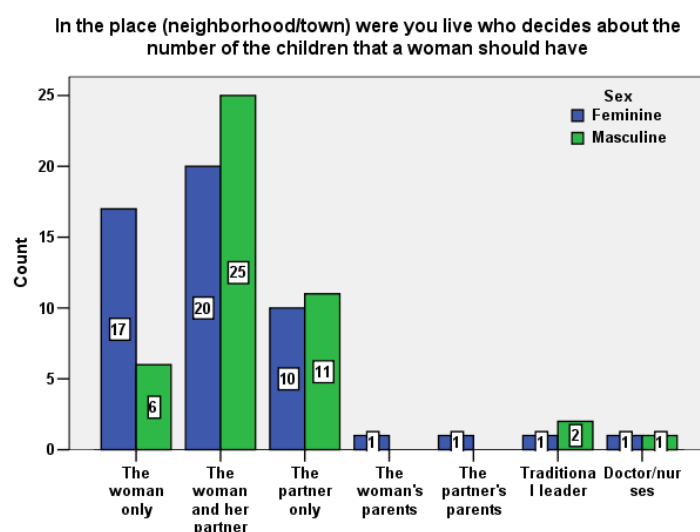
that “good families are composed by many people and the children are the continuation of the name of the families, so it is not good to have only 1 or 2. One must have more, for example 4 like in our family”. Another reason was the following “the norm is to have 2 and not only 1. First born has to be a boy and second born a girl because children must grow up and play together”. Nowadays, many advertisements in the mass media persistently show and talk about the modern family as the one where besides the parents there are two children present, in general a couple. Taking into account that according to the census 2007 nearly 60% of the population in KaMavota had TVs, the effect of these advertisements on the perceptions about ideal family size cannot be ignored.

Furthermore it was mentioned for one of the respondents that “today women do not have any more time to take care of children, which is why they do not have many children like in the past, they watch TVs and movies, and they go to the hair saloon; they even drive cars”. It suggests that the women empowerment is another factor affecting fertility rate. All in all, these perceptions illustrate that despite preference for fewer children (normally a couple) because structural economic problems, the preconditions related to prevalence of high Infant Mortality Rate, weak systems of social security, to have 2 or more children still be seen as socially good.

3.3.3 Perceptions on the decisions about fertility and the past fertility behavior

Two other important aspects were also captured in the data. The first is about “today where does the decision about the number of children that a woman must have in Mahotas/Maputo resides” (Graph 18) and second the “individuals’ perception about the number of births per women in the past in comparison with today” (Graph 19). With regard to the first aspect, people indicated that the decision resides within the couple. The majority indicated that today the decision about the number of children that a women should have is made by the woman and her partner together. This was said by 45 people where 25 were men against 20 women; other 23 respondents affirmed that the woman alone is the one who decides and here exists a difference of opinion between women (17) against men (6); finally other respondents (21) affirmed that the partner alone is the one who decides about the number of children that a women should have. It means that, on one hand reproductive decisions are based on the women agency but, on the other hand men still have a vital role in it.

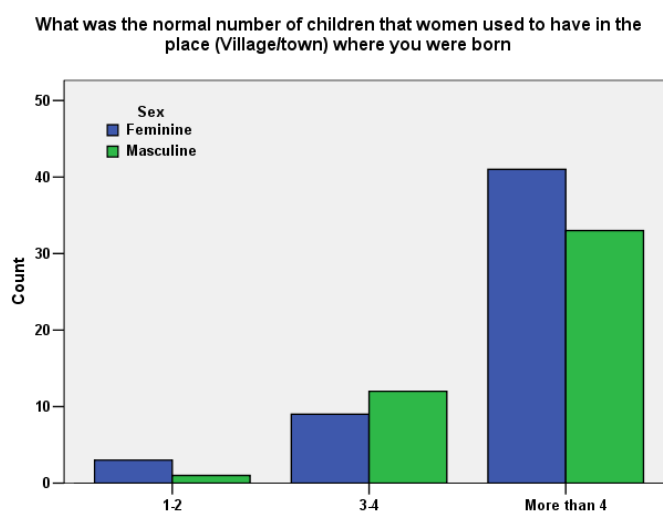
Graph 18: Decision about the number of children



Source: The author's survey

With regard to the past experiences about births, people said that when they were born many women used to have “too many” children who were usually more than 4 children per women (Graph 19), while today it considered that the normal number of children that women should have is between 2 and 4 (Graph 14). According to the respondents the preference for less children in Maputo city are associated to the harsh economic conditions, as was illustrated above, but also it may be linked to declining in mortality, mainly infant mortality, although it still relatively higher, but Mason (1997: 449) argues, “mortality decline is usually a necessary condition for fertility decline, but is not normally a sufficient condition”. It is important at this point to mention that there are several structural, individual and socio-institutional factors that affects fertility which are not part of the debate in this paper since the goal here is not to examine the determinants of fertility decline but the dominant discourse about fertility decline in Mozambique.

Graph 19: Perceptions about fertility in the past



Source: The author's survey

3.3.4 Mortality and fertility in Maputo city

Table 6 compares CDR, Infant Mortality Rate and life expectancy of Maputo city and Mozambique in 1980, 1997 and 2007. According to Arnaldo (2013: 19) the CDR and Infant Mortality Rate of Maputo city are the lowest in the country and the life expectancy is the highest one. According to Dyson (2011: 40), in the process of fertility transition, the urban mortality falls much more rapidly than rural mortality given the reduction of infectious diseases. Moreover Fischer (2010: 6), says that at the micro level, population increase is experienced in the increase of family size as consequence of more children surviving to adulthood. Both authors, emphasize that mortality decline is an important aspect in both fertility decline and population increase in urban areas.

These aspects may explain the observed decline in fertility rate in Maputo city but also rapidly urban growth and urbanization. Moreover it also help to understand the perceptions that to have few children is important today since the chances of surviving to adulthood are greater in Maputo city. At the same time the low levels of mortality and high life expectancy increases the size of family and it may affect the household negatively in economic terms; therefore preferences for fewer children.

Table 6: CDR, Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Life expectancy in Maputo city and Mozambique

Place	CDR (1000 inhabitants)			IMR (1000 live births)			Life expectancy (years)		
	1980	1997	2007	1980	1997	2007	1980	1997	2007
Maputo City	15,1	8,4	10,0	108,0	79,7	65,6	52,4	58,3	56,1
Mozambique	20,5	21,2	14,6	156,1	145,7	93,6	43,5	42,3	50,9

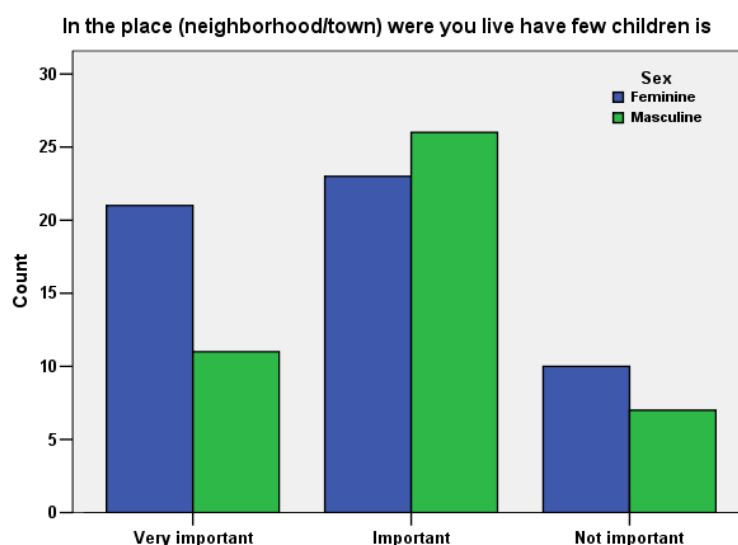
Source: Adapted from Arnaldo (2013: 19)

3.4 Analytical view on fertility decline in Maputo

What does the statistical evidence and the data about fertility perceptions in Maputo suggest under the frame of DTTs? On the one hand, statistically, fertility is declining in Maputo city and probably urbanization, urban growth and low levels of mortality are influencing it, on the other hand, the questions about fertility reveal that people perceived that currently to have fewer children is socially acceptable and economically *necessary* in Maputo city. By exploring the following aspects: ideal/normal number of children; the number of children perceived and considered too many or too few; the decision about the number of children to have and past perceptions about fertility, it was possible to outline what is the discourses and shared perceptions about the decisions on fertility behavior under the statistical figures of fertility decline. This illustrates the power of mixed methodologies by adding social perceptions into numbers.

The majority of the individuals who responded the questionnaire, indicated that they have preference for having few children, and the number of few children is considered to be 1-2 whereas the number of children considered to be too many is more than 4 (Graph 15). In Graph 18 it can be observed that when people were asked to categorize the “importance of having few children” in the place (neighborhood/town) where they live, the most given answer was it is “important” to have few children(49); however significant number of respondents also indicated that is “very important” to have few children (32). Only 17 out of 98 valid answers mentioned that is “not important”. Remarkably more women (21) against men (11) mentioned that it is “very important” to have few children in Mahotas/Maputo.

Graph 20: Perceptions of having few children

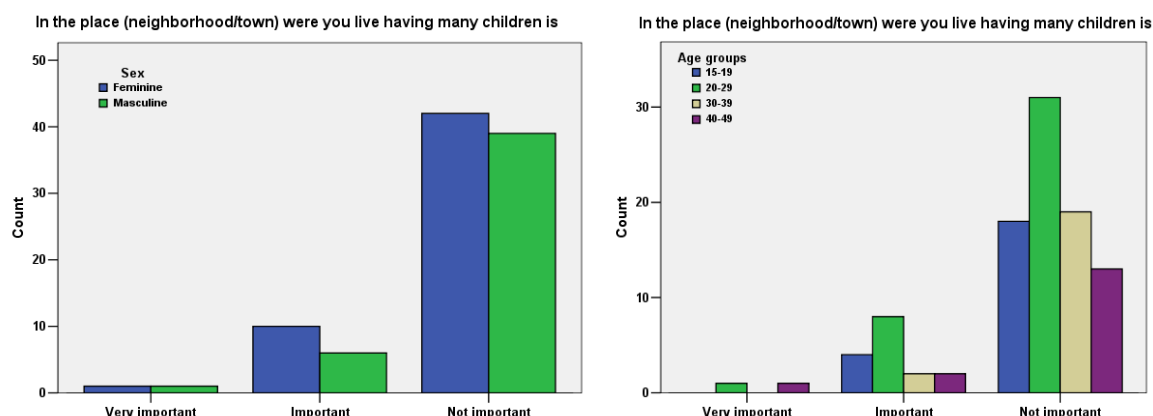


Source: The author's survey

With respect to the question of having many children (Graph 21), regardless the sex and the age of the respondents, almost unanimously the response is “not important” (81 people, being 42 women and 39 men). In conclusion, in the urban context of Mahotas neighborhood and Maputo city having few children is “important” or “very important” while having many children is “not important” at all. Taking into account that 39% of people said that their quality of life is “very bad” and “bad”, large proportion of these responded who are living in relatively poor setting, think that to have *few* children is “important” and to have *many* children is “not important”. This suggests that people in harsh socio economic conditions in urban settings, have preference for low levels of fertility which is claimed to be the preference of people in developed urban settings.

In tandem, it was shown that the main concern in the families of the majority of the respondents is to have “job/work” and that they were not satisfied with their quality of life. This also suggests that regardless socio economic improvement, such as to have a job or house majority of these people consider important to have few children. If so, this implies that the proposition about socio economic development and modernization to be accompanied by fertility decline, could not be factual in some contexts. Furthermore it refutes Arnaldo’s (2013: 45) statement that in all societies, fertility rate declines when the socio economic development occurs and the society modernizes socio economically. Under these propositions to what extent the institutionalized public perception about P&D in Mozambique is still valid to understand and explain the relations between demographic and socio economic dynamics?

Graph 21: Perceptions of having many children



Source: The author's survey

The data presented supports Dyson's arguments about fertility transition in poor settings and among poor people taking place unaccompanied by socio-economic improvements. Notably most of the recent literature about P&D in Mozambique, (e.g. Araújo, 1999; Francisco, 2011; Francisco, 2012; Arnaldo and Muanamoha, 2011; Arnaldo, 2013) is grounded in the principle that fertility decline is vital and indispensable condition for socio economic development in the context of Mozambique, including, necessarily, Maputo city. However, according to Strulik and Vollmer (2010: 4) in their article "The Fertility Transition Around the World-1950-2005"

"we are moving into a world where the distinction between developed and developing countries is of greatly diminished relevance to fertility and the overwhelming trend is for low fertility to become a general feature of poor and rich countries" (Strulik and Vollmer 2010: 4)

If fertility decline may not necessarily be associated with socio-economic development or even with the young demographic structure of the Mozambican population then the institutionalized discourses that dominates the public perceptions about the so called problem of high RNI and its alleged negative implications for socio-economic development might obscure the real causes of underdevelopment and poverty in places like Mozambique or Maputo city, because eventually countries like Mozambique and cities such as Maputo will remain poor but will pass through fertility transition in the forthcoming times. As Fischer (2010: 6) affirms, poor people are perfectly capable of "modernizing" demographically while still remaining poor economically".

This perception about P&D allows emphasizing important aspects: first, population growth might not necessarily be the cause of socio economic underdevelopment; second, demographic composition and structure of population in a given country do not by itself determine the level of socio economic development; third and last, fertility decline is not *sine qua non* condition to achieve structural socio economic prosperity. It seems that, both perceptions the institutionalized and the "non-institutionalized" converge with regard to what must happen to fertility behavior, but the logics seem to be divergent. While the institutionalized perception associates socio economic improvement with fertility decline, the "non-institutionalized" suggests that fertility decline is independent of socio economic improvement. The evidences found in Maputo city support it because fertility decline and structural socio economic improvements are taking place independent from each other.

3.5 The socially constructed *problématique* about P&D and policy making implications

If poor people are capable of reducing fertility even though socio-economically they remain poor, then policy making should not prioritize fertility decline as key change for socio economic development, but focus on improving the social welfare with more (re)distributive policies and social justice. During the interview with Dr. Nhantumbo, from the Ministry of Planning and Development, he said that, the crucial problem in Mozambique is “how the country can satisfy the needs of its ever growing population?” Within the GoM, he answers, they think that increasing production and productivity of the economy is essential and this is what has to be done. However without fair redistribution of the economic resources, increasing the economic output might not generate socio economic and human development.

Fischer (2010: 4) says that “if we were successfully distribute the world’s limited resources, then developmentalism will mean, put progressive taxation and (re)distribution of resources, universalistic health and other social policies at the top of the development agenda”. It is note worth, according to Frank (1973: 17) that focuses only on single aspect such as fertility decline, is to fail to grasp the complexities of the problem of development both at theoretical and practical levels. Moreover it was presented that the dominant neo-Malthusianism perspectives, obscure the real causes of underdevelopment in today’s capitalist world. As Frank (idem) says, in today capitalist world the same processes that generate development in some parts and for some also generate underdevelopment in other parts for others.

Therefore, in Mozambique, instead of the constant political and pseudo-scientific appeals to reduce population growth as strategy to improve socio economically, policy making for development should be about economic policies of employment creation plus universal social policies to provide services such as education, health, social security, but also targeting the most vulnerable among the poor and to provide conditions for people to exercise their Sexual Reproductive Health Rights all the while keeping social justice in the redistribution of the resources. Gradual and systematic implementation of these policies can produce better outcomes in terms of socio economic and human development. It is evident that the trend of fertility in poor settings is to fall independently of socio economic advances (Fischer; 2010; Vollmer and Strulik, 2010; Dyson, 2011). So, poor people in poor countries like Mozambique or Maputo city will become similar to rich people in rich countries like the Netherlands only in terms of fertility behavior while socio economically will remain as they are if the current policy making remain dominated by neo-Malthusian views.

4.CONCLUSION

The present paper started by presenting the established hegemonic, public and institutionalized perspective about population growth and underdevelopment in Mozambique. This perspective argues that the structural poverty and lack of socio economic and human development in Mozambique is caused by high rates of population growth. The supporters of this view argue that, on the one hand, the high RNI is a serious socio-demographic and economic problem because rapid demographic growth is socio economically unsustainable and on the other hand it affects the structure of population by making it younger and this is responsible for increasing in the social expenditures given that it generates ever growing demand of social services such as education and health care cause shortages in savings, hence in investment.

Both the high RNI and young demographic structure are claimed to hinder socio economic and human development differently from DCs where the RNI is low and demographic structure of population is relatively old. Furthermore, high RNI in poor countries like Mozambique is also held responsible for environmental degradation, because, it is argued, in poor settings the use and extraction of natural resources is the only alternative available for survivor of the majority of population. Consequently rapid population growth is equal to high pressure over the natural resources and it leads to environmental degradation and in the end worsens poverty (Araújo 1999: 34). It is appealed that the only solution at hand of the LDCs like Mozambique is to reduce fertility. This paper argues that this dominant and institutionalized knowledge about P&D is *socially constructed* according to values and interests of specific social institutions

Consequently, the main question that this paper asks is *how this hegemonic public and institutionalized perception is socially constructed in Mozambique?* Specifically this study examines from *where* this *knowledge* comes from and *how* it becomes to be taken as the *reality* in the public perception about P&D. The researcher found that the social interaction among institutions such as UNFPA, GoM and research institutions in Mozambique explain partly the prevalence and the origins of this perspective and in the hegemonic public perception about P&D. These institutions are places where this view is reproduced, disseminated and maintained through social interaction in processes of funding, advocacy, policy making and research activities but the origins of these hegemonic views have longer history than these institutions.

Considering that *reality* and *knowledge* are *socially constructed* this paper clarifies how specific social institutions in a specific context construct *reality* and *knowledge*. To achieve it, the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative methods of investigation comprising interviews, small community survey and working with literature. This mixed methodology provided enough data in quality and quantity to analyze the politics and sociology of knowledge about P&D in Mozambique, including data to support empirically the main claims of this paper, that is, knowledge about P&D is socially constructed.

Besides identifying which are the institutions such as UNFPA, the GoM and the research institutions such as Centre for Policy Analysis that are involved in the social construction of the P&D *problématique* in Mozambique, the paper also seeks to identify their socio political location, values and interests. It was found that to exercise the level of control over the hegemonic public and institutionalized perception about P&D in Mozambique these institutions are economically, socially and politically positioned in the relevant places and processes of knowledge production, dissemination and maintenance in Mozambican context which allow them to disseminate their common and shared values and interests.

It was found that, in the institutionalized public and socially constructed perception about P&D in Mozambique, the alarmist perspective which supports that rapid population growth and progressive demographic structure of Mozambique population delays the socio economic and human development is rooted in an outdated Malthusian perspective and supported by the classical DTTs and both perspectives are persistently taken as frames to understand P&D

relationship in Mozambique. These perspectives on P&D are less relevant for scientific inquiry and more for political utility given that tend to obscure the real roots of poverty, underdevelopment and environmental degradation in LDCs and also the unequal power between DCs and LDCs with regard to knowledge dissemination. Furthermore, the recurrent use of both has been purposely done worldwide to delay economic, social and political changes that are fairer and socially relevant for human development in LDCs (Sexton and Hildyard 2005).

The unequal economic and political power among the institutions that participate in knowledge construction in Mozambique contributes to institutionalize a perception that neither help to understand the factual relationship between P&D in LDCs nor to move toward a policy making and socio economic and political reforms that take into account the factual relations between economic and demographic dynamics in Mozambique. Recent approaches, on P&D in LDCs shown that fertility decline have been taking place without socio economic improvements (Fischer 2010: 6). Therefore, if in poor settings fertility is declining without improvements in socio economic conditions, the institutionalized hegemonic public perception in Mozambique that supports fertility decline as key change for improving socio economically obscures the real roots of underdevelopment in the capitalist system.

Empirically, was demonstrated that socio economic development is independent of fertility decline in Maputo city. Although urbanization and urban growth may affect negatively the fertility rate, these processes in many LDCs like Mozambique have been taking place with lack of industrialization and without the necessary growth of infrastructures to support it. In consequence, it is observed that the living conditions in urban spaces like Maputo city are becoming worse, nevertheless fertility is steadily declining. Consequently, explanatory and analytical tools such as DTTs have to consider that economic development dynamics and fertility decline in some context are independent processes. This implies to consider that development of LDCs such as Mozambique or places like Maputo city depends on more broad comprehension and meticulous analysis of the socio economic dynamics that are taking place under the current capitalist society.

To conclude, the main contribution of this paper was to clarify which are the sources and the social processes behind the dominant and institutionalized perception about the *problématique* about P&D in Mozambique. This study provides empirical evidence that the socially constructed, and institutionalized perceptions about the *problématique* of P&D neglect that regardless structural improvements in socio economic terms, fertility among people in poor settings is declining, as recent approaches on P&D are pointing; hence, fertility decline may not be pre-condition for socio economic development. Where from and how this recent *problématique* of P&D in LDCs is being socially constructed and how it affects the current development discourses and policy making processes?

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Appendices

Appendix 1

PP in Mozambique and P&D *problématique*

In a nutshell the Mozambican PP recognizes that high RNI can hinder socio economic development and therefore fertility decline is vital to enable development. However it recognizes the Sexual Reproductive Health Rights including the right of people to decide about how many children they want to have and when¹⁸. Given the little degree of sectorial appropriation from the Government and also these two perspectives about fertility integrated into one policy, the implementation of the PP has been facing thoughtful challenges. According to Dr Nhantumbo “population issues in Mozambique even with the PP approved ten years ago are still addressed as marginal and in general as long run programs and projects funded by UNFPA. Additionally he says “the sectorial activities that are being conducted are not systematic and integrated and the possibility to conduct and assess the implementation of the PP is very limited because the PP was not appropriated by any governmental sector”.

The PP seems to have a clear position with regard to mortality and migration but about fertility it seems that there are some justifiable reserves. Dr Arnaldo for instance says that “no one can determine how many children people must have; it is against human rights, but in Mozambique something must be done to drop the fertility if we want to improve our economic conditions” Dr Elisio mentioned that “our Government will never come out to say how many children we must have. It is against our constitution of the Republic. What we say and we will continue to support is that we must increase the production and the productivity in order to satisfy the needs of our population”. Both statements suggest that recently in Mozambique in some extent perceptions about P&D have been shaped by the politics of human rights but also by developmental discourses and practices when it comes to regulate fertility. Nevertheless the political power did not neglect the need to control individuals and population.

Today P&D in Mozambique can be linked to politics and power. According to Foucault (1978: 139) the modern power had assigned itself the task of administering life and since the 17th century the power over life took two aspects. First, control over the body and, second, on the species body with regard to biological processes of propagation, births and mortality i.e. it seeks to establish regulatory controls over the body and the population. So, in the bio politics of the population, the modern power is situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race and the large scale phenomena of population. In this, the discourses about population control have been taking form in the regulatory norms of fertility of individuals and, at large scale, in the goals and targets of Governments with regard to the size and structure of population. According to Greenhalgh (2003: 196), population phenomena today operates as capacious of domain of modern power with its own imaginary discourses, bureaucratic apparatuses and social effects.

¹⁸ Council of the Ministries of Mozambique. See the introduction of Mozambique Population Policy. Resolution 5/99 of 13th of April
http://www.portaldogoverno.gov.mz/docs_gov/fold_politicas/outrasPol/politica_populao.pdf

Appendix 2

UNFPA: Brief history and presence in Mozambique and its influence on P&D

According to its website¹⁹ UNFPA the United Nations Population Fund, was created in 1967 and has its headquarters in New York. The organization is subsidiary organ of the United Nations General assembly. The Current head of the UNFPA is Dr Babatunde Osotimehin from Nigeria. UNFPA's mission is to address P&D issues with an emphasis on reproductive health and gender equality within the context of ICPD Cairo PoA. The organization seeks to promote the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. It supports countries to generate and to use population data and incorporate it into development policies and programs. One important aspect that has to be tated is that the work of UNFPA is guided by the PoA of ICPD Cairo 1994, which was adopted by 179 Governments including Mozambique. The PoA states that meeting people's need for education and health including reproductive rights is precondition of sustainable development (idem).

The organization is working in Mozambique for more than 34 according to Dr Nhantumbo and in the website of UNFPA-Mozambique we can read that the UNFPA has more than 30 years in Mozambique and the first formal contribution to the Mozambican Government was \$6.2 million dollars between 1979-1985. Following, came five programs which gradually overcome twenty million US dollars and contributed for the integration of the mandate of UNFPA in the agenda of development of the Government of Mozambique. UNFPA has been supporting the development of Mozambique via programs of reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS (Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) prevention among youth, gender and P&D²⁰.

Although the UNFPA starts to work in Mozambique in 1979, its action in Mozambique was stimulated by the ICPD 94. Dr Juaia mentioned that in Mozambique before 1994 the actions of UNFPA were essentially mid and long run programs and projects of emergencies in the field of infant and maternal health. Dr Nhantumbo in turn mentioned that only after 1994, under the PoA of ICPD Cairo, the UNFPA had a framework and a guiding tool to actively push and involve more actors particularly the GoM and civil society. The interaction between UNFPA and GoM under ICPD Cairo 1994 PoA, is the basis for understanding the social construction of the *problématique* about P&D in Mozambique. Without taken into consideration the role that each one of these two social and political institutions played and the impact of the ICPD on both most likely the understanding of the *problématique* of P&D in Mozambique will not be clear.

¹⁹ <http://www.unfpa.org/public/home/about/pid/4629>

²⁰ <http://mozambique.unfpa.org/>

Appendix 3

Geographical localization of Mozambique and Maputo city

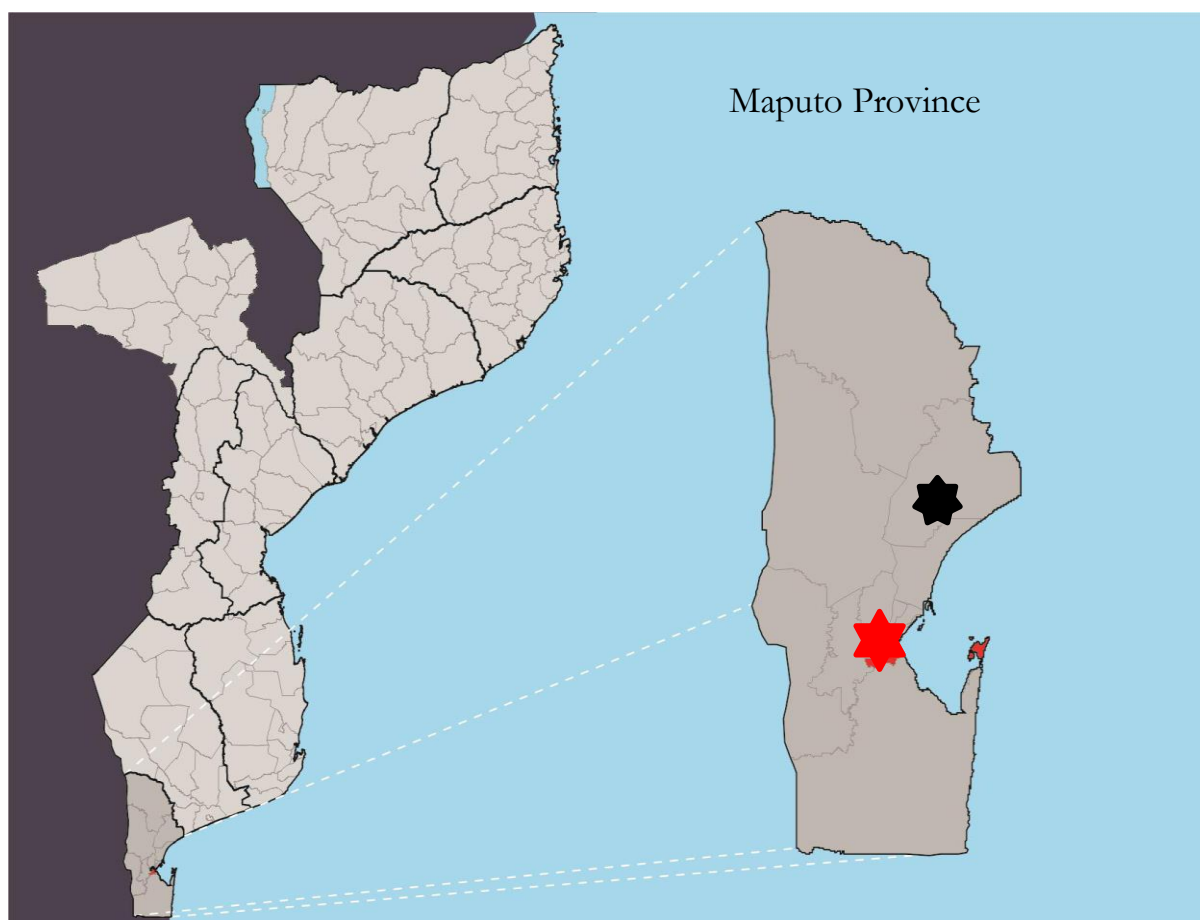


Source: <http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ficheiro:Mo%C3%A7ambique.prov.NS.png>

Legend

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|---------------------|
| 1. Niassa | 5. Tete | 9. Gaza |
| 2. Cabo Delgado | 6. Manica | 10. Maputo Province |
| 3. Nampula | 7. Sofala | ★ 11. Maputo City |
| 4. Zambézia | 8. Inhambane | (Area of study) |

Appendix 4
Geographical localization of the village of Machubo



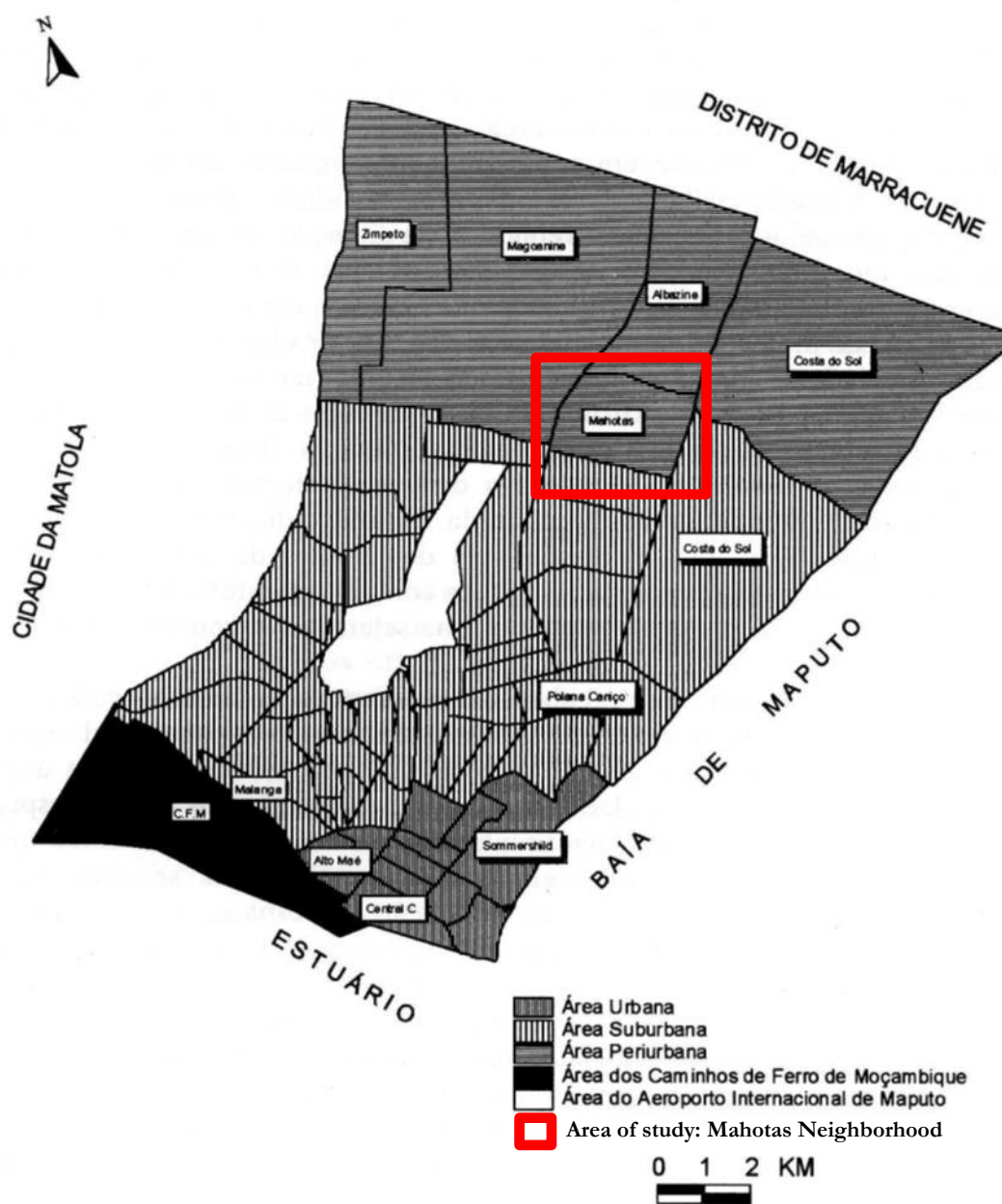
Source: National Institute of statistics of Mozambique (2012)
<http://www.ine.gov.mz/pt/ResourceCenter>

Legend

-  Village of Machubo
-  Maputo City

Appendix 5 Geographical localization of Mahotas neighborhood

178



Source: Araújo 1999)

Elaborated by: José Rafael (Department of Geography of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of EMU)

Appendix 6
Questionnaire of the Survey

Introduction

This is an anonymous questionnaire and it is destined to collect information about reproduction fertility and socio economic development in Maputo city. It is a part of the research project entitled “the social construction of the problems about Population and Development in Mozambique” as partial requirement to obtain MA degree by ISS from Erasmus University Rotterdam. We appreciate your time and availability to participate in this research and we state that any information given by your will be kept confidential and will only be published to respond the ends of this research

Start time ____:

Questionnaire control (mandatory)			
Number of questionnaire ____	Place ____	Date ____/____/____	Number of interviewer ____
Identification of the respondent (mandatory)			
Age (completed age) ____	Present occupation ____	Sex ____	Schooling ____

I. Reproduction

For each question please indicate only one answer

1.1	In the place (neighborhood/town) were you live having children is:	1	Very important
		2	Important
		3	Not important
1.2	In the place (neighborhood/town) were you live not have children is:	1	Very important
		2	Important
		3	Not important
	In the place (neighborhood/town) were you live having few children is:	1	Very important
		2	Important
		3	Not important
1.4	In the place (neighborhood/town) were you live have many children is:	1	Very important
		2	Important
		3	Not important
1.5	How many people live in the house where you live?	1	1-3
		2	4-6
		3	More than 6

II. Fertility

2.1	I you opinion what's the normal number that women should have in the place (neighborhood/town) where you live?	
<i>For each question please indicate only one answer</i>		
2.2	Are there many of few women today having a normal number of children in the place (neighborhood/town) where you live	1 Many
		2 Few

2.3	In the place (neighborhood/town) were you live who decides about the number of the children that a woman should have	1	She alone
		2	Both she and her partner
		3	The partner alone
		4	Her parents
		5	Parents of the partner
		6	Traditional/local Leader
		7	Doctor/Nurse
		8	Other: _____
2.4	When you born women used to have few or many children in the place (Village/town) where you born?	1	Many
		2	Few
2.5	What was the normal number of children that women used to have in the place (Village/town) where you born?	1	1-2
		2	2-4
		3	More than 4
2.6	Here in the place (neighborhood/town) were you live is considered that a woman has too many children if she has how many?	1	1-2
		2	2-4
		3	More than 4
2.6.1	Why?		
2.7	Here in the place (neighborhood/town) were you live is considered that a woman has few children if she has how many?	1	1-2
		2	2-4
		3	More than 4
2.7.2	Why?		

III. Socio economic development

Today here in the place where you live there more or less people looking for?

For each question please indicate only one answer

3.1	Formal job	More		Less	
3.2	Primary Education	More		Less	
3.3	Secondary Education	More		Less	
3.4	Tertiary Education	More		Less	
3.5	Hospitals and clinics	More		Less	
3.6	Transportation	More		Less	

Today here in the place where you live there more or less availability of the following items?

For each question please indicate only one answer

3.2.1	Formal job	More		Less	
3.2.2	Primary Education	More		Less	
3.2.3	Secondary Education	More		Less	
3.2.4	Tertiary Education	More		Less	
3.2.5	Hospitals and clinics	More		Less	
3.2.6	Transportation	More		Less	

3.7	How do you rate you quality of life today? <i>Mark with an X the answer given</i>	Very good	Good	More or less	Bad	Very bad
		1	2	3	4	5

3.8 What is the major concern in your family today? (Indicate only one option please)

1	Job	2	Basket food	3	Medicine	4	Medical care	5	Schooling
6	Clothes/Shoes	7	Agriculture supplies	8	Products for domestic cleaning	9	Products for hygiene	10	Other

Ending time ____:

Thank you for your participation (End of the interview)