

# **SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS WHO SEND THEIR CHILDREN TO EDUCATION CATECHESIS.**

## *SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS WHO SEND THEIR CHILDREN THE EDUCATION OF CATECHESIS.*

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### **SUMMARY**

This article is part of a questionnaire prepared by the master's degree course in Administration and Regulation of Education at the Samora Moisés Machel Academy. Its objective is to analyze the importance of catechism education for society. A survey conducted in one of the neighborhoods of the city and province of Nampula aims to understand parents' expectations regarding religious education, in particular the "catechism" of their children. It is a fact that education, particularly Christian education, has a great influence on people in their relationships with others, whether at work, in the family, in leisure, and among other spaces. The methodology used in the preparation of this work was field research, which consisted of presenting a survey to several Christian parents in order to gather their sensitivities regarding the subject. Therefore, this brought advances rarely investigated in Mozambique and makes it clear that parents do have expectations regarding the education offered by religious institutions. Thus, it can be concluded from this study that parents send their children to catechism to seek their preparation for a better future and the preservation of religious values in the family, denying that it may simply be a culture inherited from the Portuguese people, even with the existing discrepancies between expectations and reality.

**Keywords:**Catechesis education, expectations, religious institution.

### **ABSTRACT**

The present article is part of a questionnaire developed in the Master's Degree in Administration and Regulation of Education at the Samora Moisés Machel Academy. Its objective is to analyze the importance of catechesis education for society. A research done in one of the neighborhoods in the city and province of Nampula, aims to understand the expectations of parents in relation to religious education, in particular the "catechesis" of their children. It is a fact that education, particularly Christian, has a great influence on man in his coexistence with others, whether at work, in the family, at leisure and among other spaces. The methodology used in the elaboration of this work was the field research that consisted of the presentation of an inquiry to several Christian parents in order to gather their sensibilities in relation to the subject. Therefore, this brought advances rarely investigated in Mozambique and makes it understand that parents do have expectations regarding the education offered by religious institutions. Thus, it is concluded from this study that, parents sending their children to catechesis to seek their preparation for a better future and the conservation of religious values in the family, denying that it may simply be a culture inherited from the Portuguese people even with the divergences between expectations and reality.

**Keywords:**Catechesis Education, expectations, religious institution.

## ***1 INTRODUCTION***

Education is an important tool for human development, which, through instruction, the transmission of culturally and socially acceptable ideas in the family environment, the transmission of religious beliefs or even the transfer of knowledge to other generations in officially recognized institutions (schools, universities, etc.), enables people to serve society well. This development is a process in which institutions take on the appropriate responsibilities in directing and regulating these generations. As the church is one of the oldest and largest educational institutions in Mozambique, there has been little debate about its importance, its teaching methods, results, even the quality of the product and its infrastructure. In response, this article focuses on the importance of Christian education and its main objective is to analyze the expectations that parents and/or guardians have when they guide their children to enter catechism, as well as the contribution of the church as an educational institution.

The questionnaire's outline consists of four starting questions and this work only focuses on the object that seeks to answer the question "Why do parents take their children to catechism?". Through the treatment and statistical analysis of the data, the presentation, interpretation and analysis of the results were made with the help of research work previously carried out, which culminated in the final considerations in accordance with the reality of the research field.

## ***2 RELIGION, EDUCATION AND CULTURE***

In preparing this article, it was noted that there is a lack of works that speak about religious education in the conventions of this work, mainly literature on Catholic Christian education and the contributions of catechesis as a model of education in Mozambique. However, the works consulted lead to some inferences that support the results of this research that will be presented below.

Education comprises a process of forming a person according to the objectives that the society in which he or she is inserted creates, shaping them to meet its expectations through the clear interpretation of its moral, ethical and cultural values acquired and freely recognized by it when it is lived. FROBEL, (1993/2010. (p.48), considers that, "it is, therefore, undeniable that the only objective, the only end of all education and doctrine, consists in the integral cultivation of the original divine essence contained in man, thus helping to manifest the infinite in the finite, the eternal in the temporal, the celestial in the earthly, the divine in the human

and in human life.” However, Christian education is a pillar for societies. It is seen as a means of helping families to achieve spiritual, moral and ethical well-being. It is through these means that families force the youngest to go to church to study catechism because, “in the substantive view, religion is a system that encompasses beliefs, practices, values and organizations. In the functional view, religion offers norms, cohesion, tranquility, stimulus, meaning, experience, maturity, identity and redemption” (COUTINHO, 2012, p.171). In this sense, religion constitutes a beginning for life in general. For a person, the teachings learned from religion will influence him/her for the rest of his/her life, regardless of the space in which he/she is. Religion constitutes a center of unification of various aspects linked to people, societies and governments, for example, according to FERREIRA (2012, p.7), he considers that “religions influence even the modification of legal concepts already “consecrated” by new interpretations, trying to free these concepts from terms tainted with meanings currently considered prejudiced and absolutizing.” This influence ranges from ideas, actions and collective practices that directly interfere in human relations and social interactions.

However, Catholic Christianity uses catechesis as a model to educate and transmit this knowledge to people, through a curriculum designed within the churches that respects all phases of the construction and constitution of the mind. For COUTINHO (2012, p.181) “religions comprise collectivities within which practices are developed, beliefs are elaborated, defended and discussed. Its organizational component is part of the essence of religion”. Thus, catechesis involves a discussion for elaboration in order to allow the sequential transmission of the values, beliefs and practices adopted by the church to the new generations. NÓBREGA (1993/2010, p.94) defines Catechesis as being:

A poetics, a production of souls, which shapes the product with the writing knowledge authorized by the Council [Meetings of great religious representatives], is like a technology of the body that controls the will and the objects of the will, replacing the targets of warlike desire with passive Catholic virtues, guilt, contrition, repentance, submission, humility and obedience.

Although catechesis is a form of education not controlled by the state, in Mozambique this education is guided by objectives and purposes that societies desire. THE CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION (1997, apud MENDES 2017) states that the purpose of Catholic education, in all its forms, is the promotion of the human person, which implies an integral education, which does not only present knowledge to be acquired, but also values to be assimilated and truths to be discovered.” Mozambican societies are destined to formal education controlled by the state with the aim of transforming man to serve them through science and technology as a condition to allow better insertion in the market.

employment (PEE, 2020), but religious education also transforms man and does not exempt him from entering the world of work. To this end, educating through religion, particularly catechesis, is an essential teaching method and it is necessary to historically associate it with its relationship to the culture, values and beliefs of each society, since, according to DA SILVA (2004, p.5) “to study religious phenomena, one must be attentive to the uses and meanings of the terms that, in a given historical situation, generate beliefs, actions, institutions, books, conduct, rites, theologies, etc.” The same author emphasizes that,

Many religious movements seek to rethink gender roles, sexual options, engaged political participation, conflicts in the name of faith, new spiritual practices, alternative liturgies and theological revisions, in accordance with the needs of modernity, highlighting the role of women and minorities within society and their cultural expressions (DA SILVA 2004, p. 5-6).

Therefore, religious sects must keep a close eye on developments in science and technology so that people who attend churches do not dissociate themselves from globalization, since nowadays religious groups are present in the media, on television channels, radio stations and newspapers. Many publishers and record companies have their strong point in the religious public. Religious groups in Western Congresses or theocratic governments in other regions of the world lead to a new type of doubt (DA SILVA, 2004), for this reason the future of religious education needs to keep up with social transformations. Therefore, churches must keep a close eye on teaching, looking at the desires of believers without necessarily giving up faith, beliefs and values, since consumerism in modernity assumes a strong role in social development through the construction focused on new knowledge and new teaching methods. DA SILVA (2004, p.9) considers that,

The appreciation of pluralism, of access to knowledge of different theories, methods, experiences and points of view has become the basis of the educational process” therefore, “the teaching and responsible study of religion must be multidisciplinary and multicultural, without valuing, for example, certain standards that Western and bourgeois culture considers universal and superior.

Teaching religion on new horizons in accordance with globalization and cultural changes must mark a new model of catechism teaching, since currently teaching for the future has served as the fundamental objective for organizations and institutions.

## **Religiosity and society**

According to the 2017 census results published by (INAE, 2019):

Mozambique is a secular country with more than 27 million inhabitants and it is estimated that of this population 42.6% practice the Christian religion between Catholic, Evangelical and Anglican, approximately 26.2% follow Catholicism and just over 57.5% of the Catholic population is young between 0 and 19 years old.

These data show the influence of the Catholic Church on Mozambican societies, since in addition to this, Islam, Zion, other religions and unknown religions represent just over 44% and the population without religion represents 13.4% of Mozambicans (INAE, 2019). These data reveal the greatness of Christianity, particularly the Catholic Church, in Mozambican societies. The Catholic Church emerged in Mozambique through the colonial invasion in the 15th century led by Vasco da Gama. In the 500 years of colonial exploitation, the church, through missionary and commercial activities, was used as a weapon to appropriate land, wealth, freedom and mainly for the introduction of colonial culture, greatly obstructing the cultures and traditions of Mozambicans (GERECHT, 2015). With the proclamation of independence, the church lost its properties to the government (PEREIRA, 2006), but with the outbreak of the civil war, the church played a leading role in the country's development, as there was a need for help from the church, which required the return of confiscated assets and the resumption of church activities (PEREIRA, 2006). This understanding culminated in the church's direct interference in the signing of the General Peace Agreements in Rome.

The influence of the Catholic Church in the country remained dominant years after independence and the recognition of multiculturalism and religious freedom, which meant that Mozambique still lives with the contours of religious cultural domination to this day. Even with the emergence of new Protestant churches, the Catholic religion has a strong control over state policies, given that it advocates peace, unity and free will (LAW No.the1/2018, of June 12).

In the area of education, the state recognizes the influences and contributions of other institutions existing in the country beyond formal institutions, such as the family and religious institutions (PEE, 2020), however the last two as educational institutions will deserve an analysis in the present study focusing on their interactions.

### **3 PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS**

In order to provide answers that will emanate the position of the church as an educational institution from the perspective of families, a field survey was conducted using a quantitative-explanatory approach. The questionnaire was addressed to 140 people, of which 73 were men and 67 were women, and the selection and exclusion criteria were established. Thus, individuals under 18 years of age and those who do not have children and/or students attending catechism were not targeted by the survey in question. Of those surveyed, 57.2% are married by de facto union or union

marital, 12.1% are divorced and the rest 30.7% are single. On the other hand, it is clear that most of the respondents are heads of families composed of married couples, thus preserving the biblical teaching that advocates marriage as a fundamental condition for the constitution of a family. See the following table.

Table 1: State the father's civil status and/or the one in charge of education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	43	30.7	30.7	30.7
	De facto union	44	31.4	31.4	62.1
	Marital Union	36	25.7	25.7	87.9
	Divorced	17	12.1	12.1	100.0
	Total	140	100.0	100.0	

Source: The authors

Table 2 presents data on the respondents' education. It can be seen that 2.1% did not attend school, 13.6% attended elementary school, 25.7% and 35.0% completed primary and secondary education respectively, and 23.6% completed higher education. From this data, it can be inferred that most respondents have notions of reading and interpretation, that is, they are people who have their own ability to seek information and determine its meaning according to their convictions.

Table 2: Level of the father's education and/or the manager's education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Elementary	19	13.6	13.6	13.6
	Basic	36	25.7	25.7	39.3
	Average	49	35.0	35.0	74.3
	Superior	33	23.6	23.6	97.9
	None	3	2.1	2.1	100.0
	Total	140	100.0	100.0	

Source: The authors

But also, 19.3% are young people up to 25 years old, 25.0% is between 26 and 33 years old, 30.7% range from 34 to 40 years and the rest 25.0% is over 40 years old, as shown below. The population considered to be adults was the one that participated most in the study and could thus contribute to the greater effectiveness of its results. Therefore, it is considered that people aged over 34 years old experienced the contours of colonization or the post-independence period.

Table 3: Age range of the father and/or guardian education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	From 18 to 25 years old	27	19.3	19.3	19.3
	From 26 to 33 years old	35	25.0	25.0	44.3
	From 34 to 40 years old	43	30.7	30.7	75.0
	Over 40 years	35	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	140	100.0	100.0	

Source: Authors

In the study, the variables in question that helped to draw inferences about how parents who take their children to catechism education think about the type of teaching are:

- 1) Prepare the child for the future;
- 2nd) To preserve the religious values of the church
- and; 3rd) For reasons of social culture.

Therefore, the interpretation and analysis of the results obtained are presented below.

#### 4. Prepare the child for the future

The results in Table 4 show 89.3% of parents who fully and partially agree with the idea of sending the child to catechism to prepare him for the future.

Table 4: Preparing the child for the future.

		frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I completely agree	78	55.7	55.7	55.7
	I partially agree	47	33.6	33.6	89.3
	I do not agree	12	8.6	8.6	97.9
	I can't say	3	2.1	2.1	100.0
	Total	140	100.0	100.0	

Source: Authors

And according to the cross-referencing with demographic data there is a 1% difference between men (49.6%) and women (50.4%) meaning in this way that there was a gender balance in participation in the study, in addition to that 50.7% are married by marital and de facto union, that is, more than half of the people believe partially or fully that religious teachings help to prepare society for a future life as illustrated in table 5. This number is representative in terms of the universe, as it means that this variable was more widely accepted by people who know the meaning of family in the church.

Table 5: Marital status of father and/or guardian

						Total
		Single	Union of Fact	Marital Union	Divorced	
Prepare the child for the future	Concord Plenary.	26	24	18	10	78
	Concord Partial	13	15	14	5	47
	No I agree	3	4	4	1	12
	I don't know to say	1	1	0	1	3
Total		43	44	36	17	140

Source: authors

Similarly, most married parents agree with DURKHEIM (1993/2010) that religion enters people as a way of providing tangible means for the union of man with God, because to reach the final destination one must follow the paths as unity, as individuality and as plurality and for its perception it depends on good religious education. As can be read, 89.3% of those surveyed expect from this education, a man capable of knowing how to be and live according to the guidelines of the sacred scriptures, for the prosperity that in DURKHEIM (1993/2010, p.15) "Each society sets a certain "ideal of man", of what he should be, from an intellectual, physical and moral point of view, this ideal being the very pole that guides education."

But despite these convictions, reality shows the opposite, if we take as an example the political intolerances that are provoked by influential people in today's world, giving rise to wars, riots and evictions that constitute a repression of full life. Individualism serves itself to its own pleasure, ignoring what has been learned as a religious man, because he is increasingly transformed, feeling increasingly autonomous in his practices and free conscience of his own acts and management of his own social movement through the separation of the church from the secular states (FERREIRA, 2012). As a result, parents always live in expectation because most modern youth do not worry about the future and one of the main reasons are the divergences between religious laws and state policies (LAMA, 2010), regarding the criteria for access to freedom and a stable social and economic life.

#### 4.2 PRESERVE RELIGIOUS VALUES

The preservation of values is one of the oldest traditions of any society. And the church, as a society, does not dissociate itself from this thought and consequently it is transmitted through teachings to people. However, in table 6 below, the results show that 93.6% of parents fully and partially agree, respectively, that sending their children to catechism is a way of seeking and preserving religious values in the family and the rest. This variable shows a very small difference in relation to those who do not agree or do not know how to say, which means that there is an efficiency in the transmission of church values to families with greater incidence.

Table6: Preserve the R Values religious

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I completely agree	99	70.7	70.7	70.7

	I partially agree	32	22.9	22.9	93.6
	I do not agree	4	2.9	2.9	96.4
	I can't say	5	3.6	3.6	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Authors

An important relationship is that people who are married and in a de facto union share the same thought and, of these, they comprise more than half (56.56%). Therefore, catechesis can be seen as a way to align the person in society through the valorization of family education using Catholic actions as a foundation. On the one hand, LOPES (2010) emphasizes that this education reinforces the construction of a man for the church, connecting the interior of himself with his congregation. On the other hand, these thoughts constitute great obstacles for this man to value the rest of the world different from the one he believes in, due to the fact that each religion claims to be the only true one (LAMA, 2000), causing practitioners to lose commitment to their own faith because they do not recognize the teachings of other religions and consequently conflict with the values expected by parents and society, greatly driving frustrated expectations.

##### 5. Because it is culture

Regarding this variable, it can be seen from Table 7 that, 60.7% of the parents surveyed fully and partially agree that it is cultural to go to catechism, but this thought is equally divided between men and women. But also 36.4% does not agree and 2.9% can't say. Therefore, there is a balance in the number of people who fully agree and those who disagree, meaning that this hypothesis divides those surveyed.

Table 7: By qEU and Culture.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
VValid	I completely agree	51	36.4	36.4	36.4
	I partially agree	34	24.3	24.3	60.7
	I do not agree	51	36.4	36.4	97.1
	I can't say	4	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	140	100.0	100.0	

Source: authors

Through this analysis, the idea emerges that people ignore looking at catechesis as a culture inherited from the people of the Iberian Peninsula who, according to (NÓBREGA, 1993/2010, p.82), "catechesis emerges as a way of evangelizing indigenous and African peoples in the spiritual conquest of new lands, through the repetition of the dogmas of the Catholic Church..." and seek salvation in it, as can be read previously. This percentage balance is due to the existence of

religious diversity, and at some point an individual must adopt a new religious belief that is not part of their cultural heritage. This variable generates controversy because it shows a great dispersion in the results, so the majority of people aged between 34 and 40 (56%) do not agree with this thought, leading to the understanding that the younger generations are following the church not because it is culture. And this, in part, may be the result of the diversity in religious adherence as we have seen today, people looking for certain meanings of answers to family or even economic problems within the churches.

## **OUTCOMES**

This article sought to analyze the issue of parents' expectations when sending their children to catechism. In this sense, the results obtained allow us to conclude that parents and/or guardians take their children to catechism with the aim of preparing them for the future and/or preserving the religious values of the church in the family. However, it is also concluded that there are strong possibilities that it is a cultural tendency to take children to catechism, since many of these parents come from colonial ideologies or are from Catholic families that lived through the period of domination by the Catholic church. However, on the other hand, due to globalization trends, parents of the new generations do not agree with the fact that it is cultural to take children to catechism, as agreed by the CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION (2007, apud MENDES, 2017, p.7) which,

Today's culture is permeated by various problems that are causing a widespread "educational emergency." With this expression, we refer to the difficulty in establishing educational relationships that, to be authentic, must transmit vital values and principles to the younger generations, not only to help them grow and mature individually, but also to contribute to the construction of the common good.

In short, it can be stated that catechesis education is seen as a way to guarantee a prosperous future through Christian teachings that are passed on in families from generation to generation, as highlighted by (NÓBREGA, 1993/2010 and DURKHEIM, 1993/2010).

## **SUGGESTIONS**

This article suggests new research that can answer whether a person trained in catechesis education presents qualities in accordance with the expectations of parents and/or guardians.

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