Share-net Youth Week

Unpacking approaches to HIV- & AIDS-related education: rights, morals, science & culture

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Outline

I. International response – conditions & contents

I. Study of school-based HIV- & AIDS-related education in Mozambique
   a. Framework for understanding HIV- and AIDS-related education
   b. ‘Culturespeak’ is everywhere: an analysis of cultural narratives in approaches to HIV- and AIDS-related education in Mozambique

- Word on terminology
Education – the social vaccine?

Positive impact of education, but...

Global Campaign for Education *Deadly inertia* (2005)
- Overcrowded classrooms, management systems under-resourced

IBE *The Quality Imperative* (2005)
- Increasing demands on education; HIV & AIDS one in many
- No clear time allocation
- No specific or relevant assessment
School-based HIV- & AIDS-related education in Mozambique

Rationale & aim
Broad acceptance of importance, but little understanding of:

a) different forms of school-based HIV & AIDS education, and

b) how these relate to broader curriculum & ideas concerning what it means to educate.
Approaches to HIV and AIDS-related education: tripartite framework

- Review of literature on HIV- and AIDS-related education initiatives from around the world
- Review & clustering of commonly used terms
- Three approaches: moralistically, scientifically & rights informed approaches to HIV- and AIDS-related education
1. Moralistcally informed: family, marriage responsible behaviour & moral development

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.
Methods

- Interviews, FGDs, non-part. observation, documentary analysis
- Young people (grade 9) & (peer) educators in 3 schools
- Policy makers & staff international agencies
- 2010-2011 (7 months)
'Culturespeak’ was everywhere

‘When you’re talking about behaviour change ... most important is to take into account people’s social and cultural dimensions. So that behaviour change can really be effective’ (Giulia, multilateral agency)

‘We have very complex issues, the question of gender, that girls are not able to say ‘no!’ because we have cultural issues that are very strong’ (Lina, multilateral agency)

‘In relation to polygamy, our fathers there in the province, they stay with three to five women. And that is natural to them, and in that way they are valuing tradition.. (Enoque, 17 yrs)

‘Values were lost as a result of the mixture of cultures ... because individuals used to be educated by the entire community (Sr. Sergio, policy-maker)
Culture as bounded, something people ‘have’
Culture as a site of continuous struggle & creolisation
Additional theoretical strands

Feminist postcolonial scholars: e.g. Sangari, Chowdury, Spivak

Culturalism:
- ‘a particular logic and set of discourses that homogenize and pathologize […] non-Western places and peoples,’
- attributes phenomena such as gendered discrimination & violence to ‘‘timeless’ traditions and anti-modern sentimentality’ (Piedalue, 2016: 3)

Enculturation: schools as sites of power, preparing young people as future community members & citizens
‘Here in Mozambique there are cultural and historical questions, we, the women, have always been inferior to men. [...] We need to explain to girls that within a relationship there is not one person who dictates. What we need to have is a difference [...] a man does this, a woman does that’ (Sra. Adelaide, Ghandi school)

‘Women’s ‘inferiority syndrome … [whereby] the woman always submits herself to the man’ (Sr. António, KaPfumo school)

‘If there isn’t dialogue, [...] we will not be able to reach our objectives. Because they have those practices … and they are radical, radical. They won’t accept the elimination of these practices, so there has to be a dialogue, a mobilisation, a sensibilisation so that they themselves start [...] incorporating our objectives” (Sra. Viviane, MoEC)

“In the time of our grandparents, parents, it was a taboo to talk about the vagina, the penis, sexual relations. In our modern world we adopt these approaches. [...] So we need to raise awareness ” (Sra. Vania, MOEC)
Participants engaging with HIV-related education: key themes

1. Culture: traditional vv modern
   a) Cause: ‘barrier’ vv lack of community
   b) Cure: Cultural practices as ‘entry points’ and moral ‘culture’ vv scientific knowledge & modern values

Quadrapartite framework: Culturalist approach to HIV-related education, with solutions for the epidemic sought in hybrids of:
   a) the traditional (i.e. moral cohesion), and
   b) the modern (science & rights, rational choice & values such as monogamy)
In closing

- Reified understanding of ‘culture’, whereby it becomes a ‘thing’ to be possessed and manipulated in the response to HIV and AIDS (Taylor, 2007)

- Mozambican culture mainly understood as referring to the traditional & Mozambique as ‘pre-modern’

- Emphasis culture obscures structural causes of vulnerability to HIV & AIDS

- And re-inscribes of ‘traditional’ gendered modes of being

- Thus complicating, in multiple ways, feminist critiques of the structural nature of gendered violence & discrimination
Thank you