

MEDIA CONSUMPTION AND IDENTITY FORMATION: THE CONSUMPTION OF
LATIN AMERICAN TELENOVELAS IN TWO NEIGHBOURHOODS OF MAPUTO IN
MOZAMBIQUE

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To my beloved mother, Adéli(n)a Joaquim Nhamutabe, a widow who overcame all challenges and raised five kids.

To my late father, Naftal Ofumane Chissico, who I believe would be very proud of this moment of my life.

To my late brother, Alberto Cumbi Ofumane, whose teachings in my childhood were the foundation for who I am today.

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To my friends and colleagues from Eduardo Mondlane University, who we started this journey together.

On a personal note

At the age of 17 I lost my older brother, who was my second father. We lost our father when I was too young, so I have very limited and blank memories of him. After my brother passed away, I started living alone. I had very few friends, so I spent most of my time listening to the radio. Beside the teachings from the broadcast education programs and, of course, the music, the radio profoundly inspired me to study Journalism at university, as I wanted to become a broadcaster to inspire many people as they did.

Fortunately, I was admitted to study Journalism at university, where I ended up staying as Journalism teacher. Surprisingly, most of my idol broadcasters I listened to when I was young and lived alone were now my students. So, I can say radio had huge influence in my personal and professional life.

Studying the way people in two neighbourhoods in Maputo interact with soap operas and make their own meanings of them, as part of their identity formation, goes beyond theoretical rationale: there is a personal motivation behind it, as I believe that the exposure to any media (text) can shape people's identity.

Abstract

This study explores how the residents of two neighbourhoods in Maputo, *KaMaxakeni* and *KaMpfumo* interact with and make meanings of (Latin American) telenovelas, as part of their identity formation process. It is guided by questions on how the residents of these two neighbourhoods interact with telenovelas in their daily lives; how this shapes their own values and understanding of themselves and the world in which they live; what aspects of telenovelas they value, and what meanings they make from them; and, finally, what determines their choices of media consumption.

The study adopted reception theory, rooted in qualitative methodology. This approach explores the ‘insider’s’ perspective of the research subjects, taking the actors’ perspective as the empirical point of departure. Using a purposive theoretical sampling procedure, targeting those families who are avid viewers of telenovelas, the data were generated through participant observation, focus groups discussions, and individual interviews.

To understand and interpret the *interface* between the telenovela (medium) and its viewers (audience) in Maputo, the study used qualitative thematic content analysis of the telenovelas viewing process by the residents of KaMpfumo and KaMaxakeni.

The data show that the residents of KaMpfumo and KaMaxakeni in Maputo interact and make sense of the telenovelas in various ways. *Telenovelas are used as an educational tool; they are used to reinforce daily life world practices; they shape people’s personal character; they become another family presence; they are used to build or strengthen physical and virtual viewing networks, and, “Pure” telenovela viewing is a relatively rare occurrence.*

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Brazilian soap operas attract twice as many viewers as nightly news bulletins on state television. In fish markets, hospital waiting rooms and government offices, Brazilian soap operas have become a Mozambican staple, underpinning a cultural bridge across the country. (Lopes, 2012. Web)

Mozambique is a Portuguese-speaking country, located in Southern Africa and home to 30 million inhabitants (2017 Census projections). About 66,6% of its population live in rural areas and 39% are illiterate (INE, 2017). Television is ranked as the most consumed media among the 21, 8% families who own a TV device (INE, 2017). Soap operas are just behind the primetime news as the most viewed TV programs (Intercampus, 2010). Viewing telenovelas can be regarded as entertainment or pleasant moment, as a moment for people to escape their own reality and experience the life of characters in telenovelas (Herzog, 1944; Carveth & Alexander, 1985; Lemish, 1985; Rubin, 1985; Radway, 1987; Götz (2004), but they are also regarded as spaces of interaction, where the viewers actively negotiate the meanings they make from these media products, based on their own context (Hall, 1980; Ang, 1985; Silverstone, 1990; Livingstone, 2000, 2003; Strelitz, 2005). , Understanding how the residents of two neighbourhoods in Maputo interact with and make sense of telenovelas is a fundamental contribution for the ongoing debate about the relationship between media texts and their audiences.

Social and political context

Mozambique gained its independence from Portugal in 1975, following 10 years of warfare led by the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) (Nsiku, 2008: 3). The struggle for independence in Mozambique aimed at the restoration of Mozambican sovereignty and the creation of a national and cultural Mozambican identity (Nsiku, 2008: 4). Consequently, after independence, FRELIMO, led by Samora Machel, adopted Portuguese as the official language, a measure aimed at uniting a multilingual and multicultural (not just multi-ethnic) polity (Lopes, 2012; Firmino, 2010). Forty-three languages are spoken in Mozambique (Ethnologue, 2006 in Nsiku, 2008). Apart from Portuguese and Asian languages such as Mandarin, Gujarati, Hindi, and

Urdu which are also used as native languages by a number of Mozambicans, the vast majority of the languages spoken in Mozambique belong to the Bantu group (Lopes, 2005: 18, in Nsiku, 2008).

However, 45 years after gaining its independence and 28 after the peace agreement that ended the 16-year civil war, Mozambique still faces many development challenges including political and military instability, and economic and social inequalities. The country is placed in the low human development category by the United Nations Human Development report – 180 out of 189 countries and territories (Human Development Report – HDR, 2019)— with nearly 50 percent of the population still living in poverty (World Bank, 2016).

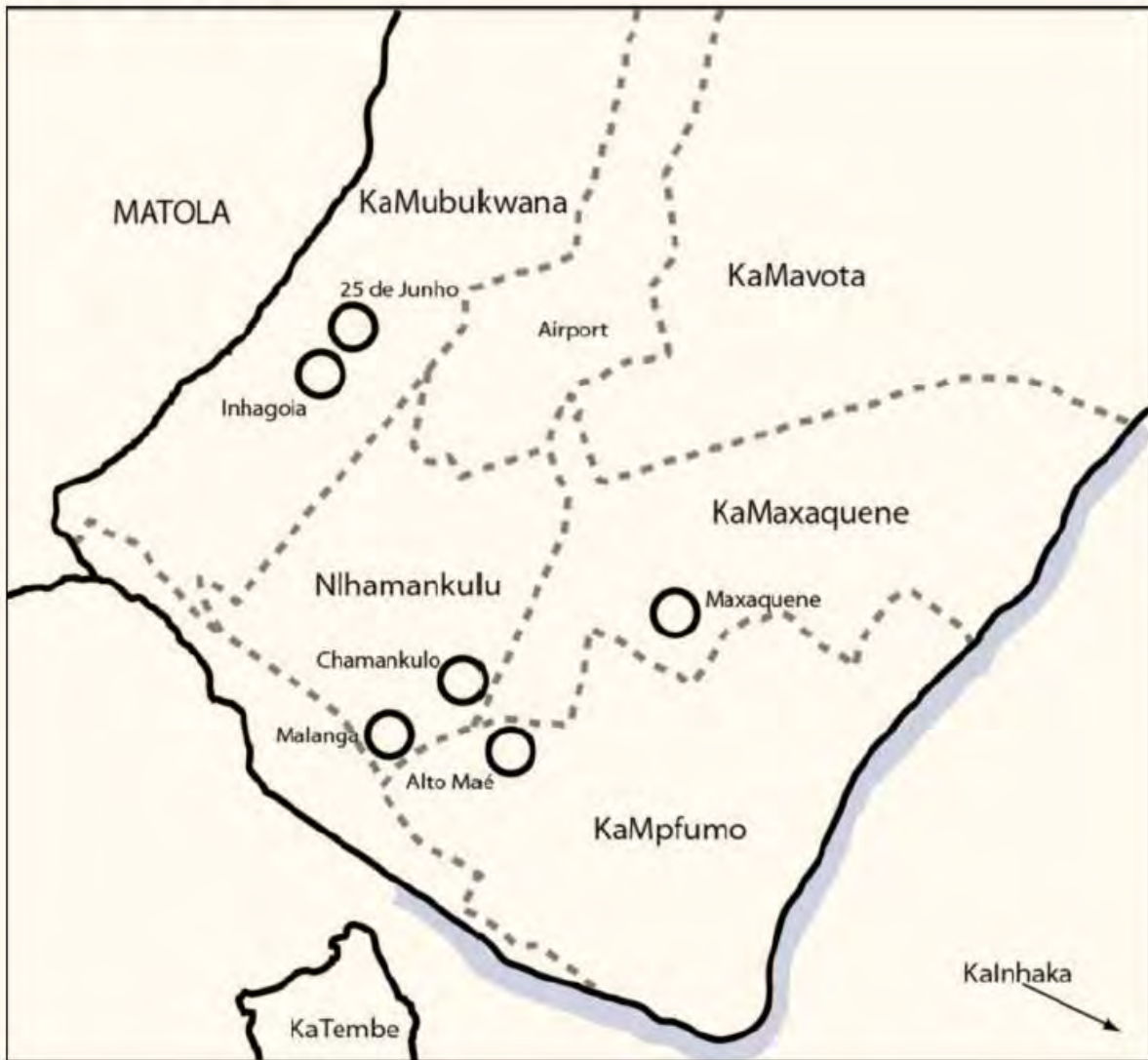
Maputo, the capital of Mozambique, is home to approximately 1.1 million of the country's 29 million inhabitants (INE, 2017). It is composed of seven Administrative areas called municipal districts, each composed of settlements called *bairros*. With the exception of KaMpfumo area, most of the *bairros* are informal and poor, and are where the vast majority of citizens live. According to Barros *et al* (2013), the city inherited the dualistic structure from the colonial period, with a rich town characterised by tall buildings (formal urban area), largely settled by non-Africans, and a poor town characterised by small houses (informal urban area) and where Africans have settled (Barros *et al*, 2013). Like any other developing country, Maputo faces conditions of inequality and poverty (estimated at about 36.2% in 2008/9), environmental problems, political instability¹, violence and crime (Tvedten et al, 2013).

Like in any other city in a developing country, Maputo faces bad conditions of inequality and poverty, environmental problems, political instability², violence and crime (Tvedten et al, 2013). Another problem the city faces is urban poverty, which was estimated at about 36.2% in 2008/9, affecting mainly the informal urban areas (Tvedten et al, 2013).

¹ This is not exclusive to Maputo, but the town is largely affected as most people move to the capital for safety and for better life opportunities.

² This is not exclusive to Maputo, but the town is largely affected as most people move to the capital for safety reason and for better life opportunities.

CITY OF MAPUTO



Source: Tvedten et al, 2013, P.2

The poor area of the city is characterised by clusters of ethnic minorities (Borsdorf and Hidalgo, 2013; Cahill, 2010 in Barros, 2013). These ethnic groups consist of rural people who came to Maputo right after the independence and during the civil war, and, due to their low level of education and limited resources, settled on the city's outskirts in African wooden houses. Since Maputo's municipal housing policy is reliant on the private market and is aimed at the city of tall buildings, this marginalised population is concentrated in low-quality houses in the city's poverty belt (Barros, 2013: 78).

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS, MAPUTO DISTRICTS

Urban District	Economically active population %	Poor housing %	Life expectancy Years	Secondary education %
KaMpfumu	56.1	12.6	67.6	45.6
KaMaxaquene	51.5	84.1	52.2	15.4
NIhamankulu	53.9	61.5	55.5	17.9
KaMavota	53.5	80.5	54.1	17.5
KaMubukwana	52.2	74.2	56.7	18.0

Source: Tvedten et al, 2013, P.3³

The two areas from which my study has drawn participants are KaMpfumu and KaMaxakeni: the former relatively “rich”, the latter the poorest judging by the percentage of poor housing in each sector.

Mozambique is exposed to a variety of social, economic, and cultural influences which are a consequence of the country’s openness to the global market. Hollywood movies and Latin American telenovelas, particularly from Brazil and Mexico, are among the entertainment products that are most consumed in Mozambique (Jedlowski & Rêgo, 2019). The popularity of telenovelas gives them a special place in people’s daily lives (Vigouroux and Mufwene, 2008; Lopes, 2012). Research shows that media shape people’s identities, reinforcing or challenging local cultural identities (Castro, 2000; Mawere, 2010; Wane, 2011; Lopes, 2012; Belém, 2015. Web).

Telenovelas

Telenovelas are considered the Latin American variation of the continuous serial (Frey-Vor, 1990: 3; Jedlowski & Rêgo, 2019) which was aired on television in the 1950s, especially in Brazil and Cuba. From their origin in the 1940s, Latin American soap operas were influenced by the global entertainment industry. Originating from Radionovelas or radio soap operas, they were initiated

³ It is important to note that this is the most “recent” available source about socioeconomic indicators of the Maputo districts.

by the same US conglomerates which had started the North American radio soap opera in the 1930s (Frey-Vor, 1990: 3). However, the increasing production of telenovelas in a range of Latin American countries (Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Peru, Venezuela, Colombia and Chile) in recent years⁴ has brought about a greater independence from North American programme imports (Frey-Vor, 1990).

In most Latin American countries, including Brazil and Mexico, telenovelas constitute one of the export commodities, not only to other Latin American countries and Hispanic networks, but also to over 100 countries throughout the world (Frey-Vor, 1990: 4; Rêgo and La Pastina, 2007; Rego in *Zurcher*⁵; Alessandro Jedlowski & Cacilda Rêgo, 2019). Rêgo and La Pastina (2007) point out that high production values and the universality of themes are key factors for the success of Latin American telenovelas. Additionally, they have experienced adaptations and changes to meet the tastes of international audiences.

The history of (Latin American) telenovelas in Mozambique starts with Brazilian soap operas and is close to the history of television in the country. The first telenovela aired on Mozambican Television (TVM), and by extension in the country, was *O bem amado* (Loved One), in 1986, for six hours a day, four days a week (Belém, 2015, web; Wane, 2011, web; Castro, 2010). In the following years up to the present day, both TVM and other privately-owned TV stations aired Brazilian and other Latin American telenovelas. Currently, both free-to-air and cable TV channels air at least two different telenovelas daily, and in some cases more than once.

Despite being the first channel to air a Brazilian soap opera, there are currently very few Brazilian telenovelas aired on TVM. But Brazilian, Mexican and Turkish ones are frequently aired by the privately-owned STV (Soico Televisão). Miramar's connection to Brazilian TV network may justify the predominance of Brazilian telenovelas in its programming. While the privately-owned stations may be driven by business interests, the public station's programming is driven by government interests, beyond the station's control. TVM is currently airing some Chinese soap operas, a situation that may be attributed to the existing partnership between the Mozambican and

⁴ It is worthy to note that this article was published in 1990.

⁵ Cacilda Rego, Utah State University website, 22 August 2017 - <https://lpcs.usu.edu/stay-connected/news/cacilda-rego-finding-culture>

Chinese governments, and the Chinese company StartTimes' leadership of the digital migration in Mozambique. It is worth noting that all telenovelas aired on the various TV channels in Mozambique are translated into Portuguese (Rêgo and La Pastina 2007). Despite this massive distribution and the popularity of Latin American telenovelas in the country, there is a paucity of studies of this genre. Most of the references to soap operas in Mozambique, especially Latin American telenovelas, are available on online news articles or short and unpublished academic articles (Castro, 2010; Schossler and Wandscheer, 2010; Wane, 2011; Belém, 2015).

The scarcity of studies on Latin American telenovelas in Mozambique limits a systematic understanding of the genre and requires comprehensive study explaining the relationship between the telenovelas and their audiences. This study is concerned with the ways in which local Maputo families from the KaMpfumu and KaMaxakeni *bairros* interact with Latin American telenovelas, in particular, one Brazilian and one Mexican one which are most common on Mozambican TV. Focusing on two neighbourhoods in Maputo, this study can be considered a first step towards an understanding of the consumption dynamics of telenovelas among Mozambican audiences.

The selected telenovelas are *Vidas opostas (Opposite Lives)*, *Os Mutantes: Caminhos do Coração (The Mutants: Pathways of the Heart)*, and *Fruto proibido (Forbidden Fruit)*. I give a brief story outline of each story.

Vidas opostas (Opposite Lives)

Vidas Opostas (Opposite Lives) is a Brazilian *telenovela* originally aired on Record TV network. It tells the story of Miguel (Leo Rosa), a young rich man from a traditional family, and Joana (Maytê Piragibe), a student and tourist guide who lives in a slum. Although dating an elegant and rich fashion designer, Erínia (Lavinia Vlasak), Miguel falls in love with Joana, and they decide to marry. Everything goes well until Joana's ex-boyfriend, Jackson (Heitor Martinez), leaves prison and decides that he wants to date her again.

When he finds out about her new romance, he tries to force Joana back by keeping Miguel as a hostage and threatening to kill him. Hopeless, Joana unites with the people in the slums and the criminal is killed. These events produce contradictory reactions: a part of the society, authorities

and press, consider Joana and Miguel heroes, but another sector, influenced by corrupt policemen and Jackson's partners, accuses them of being drug dealers and they swear to kill the couple (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0923512/> on 16/05/2020).

Caminhos do Coração

Os Mutantes: Caminhos do Coração (The Mutants: Pathways of the Heart) is a Brazilian *telenovela*, originally aired at the Record TV network.

Men and women are transformed into vampires, cats, snakes, spiders and werewolves, which attack the streets of São Paulo and disseminate evil as an epidemic. The terrified population pursues the mutants.

Storyline

The story develops around Maria Luz who is accused of killing Dr. Socrates Mayer, owner of one of the largest private clinics in the country, Progênese. Dr. Júlia, an affiliated physician of Progênese, created genetically modified human beings, mutants with superpowers. Júlia has always maintained a secret laboratory on the fictional island of Arraial, where she performs the experiments that originated the mutants. She is helped by Górr, who has the power of hypnosis, and the super intelligent child Eugénio.

Maria Luz has lived in the circus of Don Peppe, with her parents Ana Luz and Pepe, all of her life. She is the main attraction of the circus where she was raised and met first love interest Fernando. Maria is also the best friend of Juanita, her sister-in-law. Maria falls in love with Fernando when he gets involved with Esmeralda. After Maria discovers that she is an adopted child, she finds herself in a tight spot: the police find her lying near Socrates' dead body and accuse her of killing him. Maria then discovers that her real father is the person she is accused of killing. This was set up so that Maria could not inherit Socrates's large wealth.

Fruto proibido

Fruto proibido (Forbidden Fruit) is a Turkish-origin telenovela, translated many languages, including Portuguese. This is the reason why this is part of telenovela watched by the residents of Maputo. When asked about its origin, people watching this telenovela erroneously affirmed it is a Mexican, Colombian or Venezuelan. The telenovela tells the story of ties between people from different social status.

Zeynep Yılmaz (Sevda Erginci) and Yıldız Yılmaz (Eda Ece) are two sisters who are very fond of each other, but their dreams are completely different from each other. Yıldız's life changes completely when she meets Ender Argun (Şevval Sam), the queen of high society.

Ender wants to use Yıldız to get rid of her husband Halit Argun (Talat Bulut) and makes an irresistible offer to Yıldız, which will change her life. While Yildiz's life was fluctuating in this way, the firm where her sister Zeynep worked was bought by a businessman named Alihan Taşdemir. Alihan is a rich businessman, described as arrogant, and Zeynep is the opposite of her boss. This contrast between the two turns into attraction after a while. But here is a detail that Zeynep does not know, Alihan is Halit's partner and the brother of his second wife. (translated from Turkish, using Google translator; source: <https://www.milliyet.com.tr/gundem/yasak-elma-dizinin-konusu-nedir-oyuncu-kadrosunda-kimler-var-2679344>, 16/05/2020).

Theoretical Approach

Many theoretical approaches have been used to explain the relationship between text and consumers (Lasswell, 1927; Featherstone, 1987; Bennett, 1982; Hall, 1982; Morley, 1989; Dahlgren, 1998; Strelitz, 2000; Storey, 1999; Tomlinson, 1991). Some of the scholars have argued the centrality of media consumption for identity formation (Featherstone, 1987; Storey, 1999 in Strelitz, 2002). In *Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media*, John Thompson (1995) argues that central to the process of self-formation are the mediated symbolic materials – such as soap operas. On the same theoretical basis, Kellner (1995) argues that in contemporary industrial society a ‘media culture’ has emerged, which helps produce the fabric of everyday life, shaping

political views and social behaviour, and providing the materials from which people forge their very identities.

However, many other scholars have strongly criticised this “media-centred” approach. For instance, Tomlinson (1991) argues that on the one hand, we have the media as the dominant representational aspect of modern culture, while on the other, we have the “lived experience” of culture (Strelitz, 2002). There is therefore a need to see the relationship between media and culture, in the process of identity formation, as an interplay of mediations between culture-as-lived-experience and culture-as-representation. Following Tomlinson, Strelitz (2008) notes that “our media consumption choices and the meanings we take from the media are shaped by these lived cultural experiences while the media we consume also impact on how we make sense of these experiences” (Strelitz, 2008: 63).

The consumption and popularity of (Latin American) telenovelas in Mozambique, particularly Brazilian and Mexican ones, prompts a diversity of debate in the society. Some consider it an additional and important educational tool on various topics. Others regard the telenovelas as a consumption commodity, produced by the *mass* culture industry, aiming to promote foreign culture and values that undermine local culture and identity (Mawere, 2010; Mendes, 2012). One way or another, both views are rooted in the ‘media-centred’ approach, which identifies the centrality of media consumption as central to identity formation (Featherstone, 1987; Storey, 1999 in Strelitz, 2002). This study, however, explores the active audience and symbolic distancing theories, where lived experience is regarded as playing a central role in identity formation, allowing people to actively interact with and make their own meaning of the media content (Tomlinson, 1991, in Strelitz, 2002). The aim of the study is to understand how the residents of the *KaMpfumo* and *KaMaxakeni* areas of Maputo make sense of Latin American telenovelas as part of their process of identity formation. It was guided by questions about how the residents of these two areas interact with telenovelas in their daily lives; how this shapes their own values and understanding of themselves and the world in which they live; what aspects of telenovelas they value, and what meanings they make from them; and, what determines their choices of media consumption.

Methodology

The study adopts a qualitative methodology, where reception theory is rooted. Philosophically, qualitative methodology is rooted in phenomenology, which explores the “insider’s” perspective of the research subjects, taking the actor’s perspective as the empirical point of departure (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Priest argues that when the goal is to understand the “insider’s” perspective, one requires a holistic and inductive approach that provides the opportunity to develop a descriptive, rich understanding and insight into the individual’s beliefs, concerns, motivations, aspirations, life styles, culture, behaviour and preferences (1996, cited in Mabweazara 2009).

Due to its phenomenological nature, qualitative methodology is *naturalist*, meaning that the research is conducted in the natural setting of social actors. It focuses on the process rather than outcome, emphasising the actor’s perspective (insider perspective). Qualitative methodology also seeks to understand social action in terms of its specific context (idiographic motive), rather than attempting to generalise to some theoretical population. The aim is to describe and understand events within the concrete natural context in which they occur, so that the research process is inductive, resulting in the generation of new hypothesis and theories. Here, the researcher is the main instrument in the research process (Bryman, 1984:77).

Thesis outline

Six main chapters compose this thesis. The first one is the thesis Introduction, where I present the background to the study, highlighting the context of research, the relevance of the study, the goals and methodology applied. In the second chapter, I present the theoretical framework that underpins this study, through reviewing the literature that informs the consumption of global media products by local audiences.

My literature review focuses mainly on qualitative audience studies, where some basic theories are highlighted, such as cultural studies, reception theory, active audience, ethnographic audience studies, representation in soap operas and symbolic distancing theories. These theories argue that lived experience plays a central role in identity formation, allowing people to actively interact with and make their own meaning of the media content, as opposed to media-centeredness approach

(Tomlinson, 1991:67). The chapter also includes the history of soap operas, from their origins in the United States in the 1940s, to recent times, with a focus on the development of Latin American telenovelas, and their spread from Brazil and Mexico to the Portuguese and Spanish-speaking diasporas.

Chapter 3 explains my methodological approach, highlighting the philosophical foundations of qualitative methodology, the sampling procedures, as well data generation and data analysis procedures.

In the Chapter 4, I present and discuss the research findings, where the six categories derived from the data are discussed, namely: Telenovela as educational tool; Telenovela reinforces daily *life world* practices; Telenovela shapes people's personal character; Telenovela as home companion; From physical to virtual viewing networks, and "Pure" telenovela viewing is a relatively rare occurrence – very often people watch telenovelas while doing something else. These categories correspond to the way the audience of Maputo area engage with and make meaning of telenovelas. The conclusions to the study are presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter offers a theoretical framework within which the study is located. The major theories highlighted are cultural studies, reception theory, ethnographic audience studies, representation in soap operas and symbolic distancing. The chapter also provides an overview of soap operas starting from their origins in the United States in the 1940s, to recent times, with a focus on the evolution of Latin American telenovelas, and their spread from Brazil and Mexico to the Portuguese and Spanish-speaking diasporas, including Mozambique.

Soap operas: Origin, history, and main features

Soap operas can be understood as the serial form of popular fiction and drama, told in episodes over an extended period, with different characters being featured at different times (CRT, 2016: 3). In the 19th century, many countries serialised stories and novels (in newspapers, magazines or distributed as ‘colportage’) which were absorbed by the newly emerging mass readership (Gerlinde Frey-Vor, 1990; Kontranowiski, 2017; Jedlowski & Rêgo, 2019).

The soap opera genre began on the U.S. radio networks in the 1930s and moved from there to Latin America, Argentina, and Brazil in the early 1940s (Communication Research Trends (CRT), 1990: 2). Soap opera literature considers the radio serial the basis of modern TV soap operas, and the most direct influence on the Anglo-American soap opera (CRT, 1990: 2). The continuous day-time serial became a tool in the commercial struggle for listeners and advertising revenues (CRT, 1990: 2).

As a result of the huge listenership of radio soap operas, most advertisers and sponsors, mainly producers of soap, detergents, toothpaste and other household goods, started purchasing transmission time, when they aired their own-produced soap operas, aiming to target the consumers (Frey-Vor 1990: 2). Procter and Gamble, an established soap and cooking oil conglomerate, was among the first to advertise on radio and sponsor soap operas. The company had sponsored 22 serials in 1939, worth U\$8,750,000 (Buckman, 1984 in Frey-Vor 1990: 2). This highlights the place that radio soap operas occupied in the broadcast industry at that time.

Distinguishing characteristics of soap operas are their continuity from one program to the next (seriality); they are ‘domestic novels’, often with a mother figure at the centre, romance, and

melodrama; and that the stories are suspended until the next episode which is a primary element in developing audience loyalty (La Pastina et al, 2003:13; CRT, 2016: 3). However, most striking is their longevity: “The early North American radio soap operas often broadcast for more than ten years, some even for twenty years” (Frey-Vor, 1990: 2). The British soap opera, *Coronation Street*, is the longest-running TV soap opera in history, starting in December 1960 and reaching its landmark 10,000th episode in 2020. (Wikipedia; BBC⁶). This contrasts with telenovelas, whose storylines have definite endings (Allen, 1995; Matelski, 1999; Tufte, 2000). North American Soap operas also reflect an everyday world in which events flow seamlessly to create an air of realism. This is designed to give the audience a sense of immediacy: as they reflect the larger culture’s calendar, they provide a parallel to the viewer’s own world, known as ‘Real-time orientation’ (Wittebols, 2004 in CRT, 2016:3).

In the early 1950s, criminal plots were introduced, and later that decade soaps were broadcast on television (Allen, 1995:32; Matelski, 1999:7). In order to attract a diversified audience, producers of soaps had to appeal to American daytime audiences, primarily the female viewers, and by 1970s and 1980s business moguls, fashion designers, middle- and low-income families were featured in these soaps (Allen, 1995: 32; Matelski, 1999: 8). Additionally, television soap operas focused on family and personal relationships, conflict and/or chaos; good and evil characters; and generally presented a materially comfortable upper middle-class existence (Geraghty, 1991; Allen, 1995; Barker, 1997; CRT, 2016).

Latin American soap operas

There is a shared understanding that Latin American soap operas originated from European newspaper stories and novels that were introduced as pamphlets in Latin America in the 1930s to promote theatrical performances (Matelski, 1999:10; La Pastina et al, 2003:11). From the print format they were transformed into electronic versions in Cuba, known as “radionovelas”, from early to mid-20th Century and became a huge radio success (Matelski, 1999:27; Miller, 2010:200-201). These first Cuban radionovelas were influenced by French theatrical drama and Latin customs (Matelski, 1999; Miller, 2010). The Latin customs comprised traditional Latin tales, songs

⁶ <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-54906433>

of heroes and heroines, and tales of mystery and terror which were featured in the radio serials (La Pastina et al, 2003; Miller, 2010). Due to their rapid success and popularity, by the 1940s the Latin America *Radionovelas* had attracted the same US conglomerates which had started the North American radio soap opera in the 1930s (Frey-Vor, 1990: 3). Later, in the 1950s, these programmes were introduced in Brazil, Venezuela, and Mexico (Matelski, 1999; Tufte, 2000). They subsequently spread to the whole Latin American region, including Spanish speaking areas in US, making Cuba a pioneer of these drama programmes (Matelski, 1999). These programmes became popular in the US and were extended to TV serials in the mid-1950s (Allen, 1995; Matelski, 1999; Tufte, 2000; Miller, 2010).

The increasing production of telenovelas in a range of Latin American countries (Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Peru, Venezuela, Colombia and Chile) has brought about a greater independence from North American programme imports (Frey-Vor-CRT, 1990: 3). In most Latin American countries, telenovelas constitute one of the export products, not only to other Latin American countries and Hispanic networks, but also to over 100 countries throughout the world, including Mozambique (Frey-Vor, 1990; Jedlowski & Rêgo, 2019; Rêgo and La Pastina, 2007: 89; Ascosta-Alzuru, 2003; Tufte, 2000; Aldama and Rojas, 2013). The success of telenovelas is attributed to planned marketing strategies targeting diverse geo-political regions, high production values, and the universality of the featured themes (Rêgo and La Pastina, 2007; Ribke, 2015). Additionally, Latin American telenovelas have made adaptations and changes to meet the tastes of international audiences, including translation to more than 100 languages world-wide. Telemundo, a US-based Spanish language network aimed at Hispanic communities (Ribke, 2015), is one of the biggest suppliers of Spanish-language content with its programmes broadcast to more than 100 countries in over 35 languages, featuring mostly Mexican titles (Pinon, 2014; Cornejo 2016). Initially, the company imported telenovelas from Latin America, but later started relying on its own American actors of Hispanic descent to produce its programmes (Aldama and Rojas, 2013; Pinon, 2014). By the 1990s, the company started competing with the Brazilian Globo TV, one of the largest television companies in Latin America engaged in telenovela production and distribution to 130 countries worldwide (Matelski, 1999; Miller, 2010; Pinon, 2014). Other big companies that produce telenovelas include Televisa from Mexico, Venevision (Venezuela), followed by Columbia's RCN and Caracol TV (Miller, 2010). Soap operas are now the most exported forms of television and are watched in diverse social settings (Barker, 1997).

Latin American telenovelas share many features with the Anglo-American soap operas, significantly their depiction of strong, independent, heroine characters (Barker, 1997; Hamburger and de Almeida, 2001; Werner, 2006; Artz, 2015), and similarly expressive men who share their emotional needs (Tvsa, 2015; Mytvnews, 2016). Telenovelas vary in type but they tend to cast the middle class as people with good virtues in life, whereas the very rich are often depicted as bad characters who are rarely happy (Acosta-Alzuru, 2003; Barker, 1997). But the Latin American telenovelas also differ from Anglo-American ones in many ways, such as their narrative structure: telenovelas are not as open-ended as the American soap opera (Frey-Vor 1990: 4). Most telenovelas consist of 150 to 250 episodes, which air over a period of six to nine months continuously (Frey-Vor-CRT, 1990: 3; Rego⁷; Allen, 1995: 17; Barker, 1997: 63; Acosta- Alzuru, 2003:18; Miller, 2010: 2). Rêgo and La Pastina (2007: 93) adds:

Latin American telenovelas are broadcast daily, ‘have very definitive endings that permit narrative closure’ normally after 180 to 200 episodes depending on their popularity and are designed to attract a wide viewing audience of men, women, and children.

The happy ending of the telenovela combines and terminates the various plots and great number of subplots. Another distinctive feature of telenovelas is their particular relationship with melodrama and links to the storytelling, songs and verses of oral culture (Geraghty, 2005: 7). While US soap operas are broadcast in the early afternoon, Latin American soap operas are shown during prime time, in the evening (Frey-Vor-CRT, 1990: 5; Rego⁸). There are also other differences in content, style, narrative, identity, and format (Barker, 1997; Acosta- Alzuru, 2003; Miller, 2010). Barrera and Bielby, 2001; La Pastina et al, 2003). The modern genre is a combination of Latin traditions and topical global social and cultural trends (La Pastina et al, 2003). This genre expresses the cultural beliefs of Latinos and their everyday lived realities (Barrera and Bielby, 2001: 52). The visual representations of this culture are illustrated by Latin style, such as the way Latinos comb their hair, dress, and live in modern Latin society (Barrera and Bielby, 2001). Moreover, the characters in these telenovelas are often exceptionally attractive, glamorous, passionate, and rich

⁷ Cacilda Rego, Utah State University website, 22 August 2017 - <https://lpcs.usu.edu/stay-connected/news/cacilda-rego-finding-culture>

⁸ Cacilda Rego, Utah State University website, 22 August 2017 - <https://lpcs.usu.edu/stay-connected/news/cacilda-rego-finding-culture>

(La Pastina, et al, 2003; Everyday novelas blogspot, 2015). Most of studies on Latin American telenovelas emphasise its melodramatic character, which makes them attractive to audiences (Mazziotti *in* CRT, 1993)

But, like other soap operas, telenovelas “share the paradox of being successful and disdained at the same time” (Allen, 1995:3; Acosta- Alzuru, 2003:193). Telenovelas are successful because they capture viewers’ attention in the way they mix world events with the everyday experiences of viewers (Miller, 2010: 4; Ribke, 2015:15), and with topical issues such as political corruption, giving them a transcultural appeal (Barker, 1997: 21; Ribke, 2015:15; La Pastina et al, 2003). However, critics consider telenovelas a negligible genre for their lack of depth, having morally questionable characters, and substandard production values in relation to Hollywood film production (Acosta- Alzuru, 2003:193).

Telenovelas in Mozambique

The history of (Latin American) telenovelas in Mozambique starts with Brazilian soap operas and is linked to the history of television in the country. The first telenovela aired by Mozambican Television (TVM), and by extension in the country, was the Brazilian *O bem amado* (*Beloved*), in 1986. It was aired for six hours a day, four days a week (Belém, 2015, web; Wane, 2011, web; Castro, 2010). In the following years up to the present, both TVM and other privately-owned TV stations have Brazilian and other Latin American telenovelas as one of their entertainment attractions. Based on the analysis of their programming, currently, both free-to-air and cable TV channels in the country air at least two different telenovelas daily, and in some cases more than once.

Currently a variety of telenovelas are offered to audiences on the three main TV stations in the country (Mozambique Television (TVM), Soico Television (STV), and Miramar) (Intercampus, 2010). Despite being the first channel to air a Brazilian soap opera, very few Brazilian telenovelas are currently aired on TVM. Lately there has been an increase of Mexican and Venezuelan soaps, and from 2019, Chinese and Indian ones (TVM website). The privately-owned STV frequently airs both Brazilian and other Latin American telenovelas, as well as some Turkish ones (STV website). Meanwhile, Miramar airs predominantly Brazilian telenovelas, probably due to its

ownership structure: Miramar is part of the Brazilian Record group. However, it also airs other Latin American telenovelas (Miramar website).

This scenario offers a general picture of the telenovela consumption landscape in the country. The three telenovelas chosen for this research are presently aired free-to air at least in the capital cities of all provinces. The government of Mozambique is currently expanding TVM signal to all district villages in the country (TVM website). Additionally, the introduction of low-cost cable TV services in the country, such as Zap and StarTimes, has increased the number and variety of telenovelas offered to Mozambicans. Besides Latin American telenovelas, Turkish soap operas are positioning themselves among the viewers' preferences. This was notably common among the families interviewed for this study.

Telenovelas are thus a popular television form which privileges narrative. As Sollers notes, narratives are “the ways in which a society speaks to itself” (Sollers, cited in Laing, 1998: 7). They provide explanations for the way things are; they potentially answer the question, “how shall we live?” and they offer us frameworks for understanding the way the world is constructed (Barker, 1997: 29).

To understand soap operas and their consumption amongst particular groups of people one needs a cultural understanding of where such narratives come from, how they are constructed, and how they link and respond to broader societal structures and practices. I now turn to various conceptual frameworks to ground my later analysis of Mozambican reception of Latin American telenovelas.

Cultural Studies

The original ‘home’ of Cultural Studies was the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), established at Birmingham University in 1964 by Richard Hogart, its first director, and Stuart Hall. The Centre was an innovative academic enterprise that represented a break with the dominant American communication models at the time, which viewed audiences as passive consumers of mass culture (Turner, 2003: 62/72; Wolfson, 2015: 1). Cultural Studies examines popular culture and everyday life, which had hitherto been dismissed as “inferior” and unworthy of academic study (Johnson, 1986: 45; du Gay et al 1997: 13). Its approaches transcend the

confines of a particular discipline such as literary criticism or history; it is politically engaged; it rejects the distinction between “high” and “low” art or “elite” and “popular” culture; and analyses the circuit of its production, distribution and consumption (Turner, 2003:226; Grey, 2004: 32; Johnson 1986).

Around 1964, members of British Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), notably Stuart Hall and Richard Hoggart, engaged in a series of studies and debates concerned with cultural meanings generated in different forms, and their relation to everyday life. As a result of this movement, cultural theorists started developing tools or models for cultural analysis.

Sturt Hall’s encoding/decoding model, developed during his time at the CCCS and first published in 1973, is said to have been a precursor to later circuit models developed by cultural theorists (Leve, 2012: 2). The Encoding/decoding model represented an historical shift from the linear conception of all-powerful message to introducing a complex structure for analysing the circulation of cultural meanings and their discursive elements. Here, Hall argues that “just as the construction of the message is an active, interpretive and social event, so is the moment of its reception” (Turner, 2003: 72).

In the 1980s, Richard Johnson attempted to answer the question, “What is cultural studies anyway?” He proposes a circuit of culture as a guide to approaching the analysis of cultural processes from different aspects. Taylor et al argue that his model could be seen to highlight lived experience in favour of social structure, which “preserved the impact of material conditions on textual production” (2002: 608). The circuit of culture model describes the interaction of the five key processes ‘through which any analysis of a cultural text or artefact must pass if it is to be adequately studied’ (Du Gay *et al.* 1997: 3; Turner, 2003:228). These processes are representation, identity, production, consumption, and regulation (Turner, 2003: 228). Its value lies in its clarification of the kinds of questions that need to be asked in a study of a cultural artefact, product or practice: How is it represented? What identities are associated with it? How is it produced and consumed? What mechanisms regulate its distribution and use? (Turner, 2003:228). The ‘moments’ of the circuit of culture can be understood as “points of notation within particular ‘cultural processes’, that is, articulated moments in the processes that construct meaning(s)” (Leve, 2012: 5). Below I provide a brief overview of articulated moments of the Circuit of Culture, aiming to provide a context of how the consumption of Latin American telenovelas in Mozambique links

to global structures of production and circulation of cultural products, and how the existing power dynamics in this process can shape the identity formation of the residents of Maputo.

Production

Du Gay (1997) argues that in ‘late modern societies’, the economic and the cultural’ are irrevocably hybrid categories that exist in a ‘mutually constitutive relationship’ (Grey, 2004: 33), and that what we think of as purely economic processes and practices are, in an important sense, “cultural” phenomena (Du Gay, 1997: 61; Grey, 2004: 31). If we accept that “culture” structures the ways people think, feel and act, then “producing” culture should be dealt with as intentional process aiming specific “economic” outcomes (Leve, 2012: 7). The “cultural economy” then signifies a break with the more generally understood “political economy” that tends to represent economic processes and practices as “things in themselves” and which has the effect of objectifying the people involved and leaving out the cultural dimensions – the meanings and values these activities hold for those people (Leve, 2012: 7; Grey, 2004: 32). This approach, a product of the cultural turn within the human and social sciences, is presented in opposition to “a powerful tradition of thought” which continues “to haunt contemporary academic debates about the relationship between “economy” and “culture”, and which sees the two terms “as somehow mutually incompatible” (Grey, 2004: 33). Du Gay (1997) dismisses this idea that there is an opposition between the economic and the cultural as “simply untenable” and of “little practical or theoretical utility” (Grey, 2004: 33). Instead, he argues that all economic practices, such as industrial manufacturing, business organization, distribution, advertising, design and marketing, are treated as cultural phenomena as they depend on meaning for their effective operation (Du Gay, 1997: 64; Grey, 2004: 33).

Regulation

Cultural regulation is any sort of cultural policy or politics aimed at controlling the meanings of a cultural text or artefact by cultural institutions (Grey, 2004: 42). Kenneth Thompson (1997: 3) adds that regulation can also refer to the process of making things appear regular or natural, thus linking it to the establishment of norms. He explains:

Meanings regulate and organise conduct and practices – they help to set the rules, norms and conventions by which social life is ordered and governed. They are, therefore, what those who wish to govern and regulate the conduct and ideas of others seek to structure and shape (1997: 1).

As demonstrated earlier, soap opera is one of the most important export products for most Latin American countries. These cultural products are part of a cultural and economic system that regulates or shapes consumers about the topics discussed. This is an important aspect of the way the residents in Maputo interact with Latin American soap operas, and the meanings they make of these cultural products.

Identity

Identity is the process or set of practices involved in establishing who ‘I’ am, in relation to ‘you’: self in relation to others (Grey, 2004:27). Du Gay *et al* (1997) advocate a non-essentialist view of identity that sees identities as socially constructed and historically contingent. One of the basic assumptions of the circuit of culture is that identity is a cultural process rather than a fixed given (Grey, 2004: 29). In other words, identity is the cultural process that locates us in the world in relation to ‘others’ and offers the link between us and the society in which we live. This process occurs through the engagement with various cultural manifestations and artefacts, such as telenovelas. While we understand that the residents of Maputo are exposed to multiple cultural texts in their daily lives, this study’s contribution is to discover what role soap operas play in the way they build their own identity as Maputo citizens, as Mozambicans, and in their relationship with the world. Our assumption here is that identities are constructed through a cultural process where individuals are active agents who are capable, to varying degrees, of negotiating their sense of self or subjectivity (Grey, 2004: 29). As du Gay *et al* suggest, “They are no more passive ‘victims’ of socialization than they are biologically conditioned subjects” (1997:68).

Texts, forms or Representation

In Cultural Studies, representation denotes a language related to issues of class, power, and ideology, and is situated within the context of “discourse” (literariness.org; Grey, 2004: 38). Stuart Hall’s (1997) work presents a useful understanding of representational practices that articulate

particular ways of understanding how representation shapes, and is shaped by, the world around us.

To produce effective communication, representation relies on some kind of common understanding between the communicators (Grey, 2004: 91), which Hall (1997) calls “conceptual maps”. He argues that in sharing a similar “conceptual map”, “we are able to build up a shared culture of meanings and thus construct a social world which we inhabit together” (Hall, 1997: 18)). “Conceptual maps” (culture) organize, our experiential knowledge of the world (material things, abstract notions, movement), establishing complex relations between them (Hall, 1997: 19). By the 1980s researchers were focusing on the representation of different groups and issues in soap operas (Brunsdon, 1981: 33). These included the representation of the female sex, social class, race, and other issues of a social character (Brunsdon, 1981: 34). The relationship between soap operas and the life lived by women as their main consumers gave rise to research into the soaps’ representation of women and the identification that female viewers may set up with them (Brunsdon, 1981: 35). Identification between viewers and soaps may refer to identification with the particular characters, which extends to the situation in which they find themselves, or else the viewing process, concerning the active process of reading the soap opera through its serial structure and traditional female capacities for managing the personal sphere (Brunsdon, 1981:35).

Consumption

Finally, consumption refers to the moment at which consumers and product come together. Du Gay *et al* define it as “the production of meaning through usage” (1997: 86). It is a site where power, ideology, gender, and social class encounter and shape one another (Inglis and Almila, 2016: 108). The study of consumption involves exploring the negotiations, representational formats, and rituals in the encounter between someone’s social life and a commodity. The consumption of cultural objects by consumers can empower, demean, disenfranchise, liberate, essentialise, and stereotype. Consumers are trapped within a hegemonic marketplace (Denzin, 2001: 325; Leve, 2012: 7; Inglis and Almila, 2016: 108) in which they express their identities through the cultural products they consume (Du Gay *et al* 1997: 86). From this perspective, Hall (1980) identifies three possible positions that audience could take in relation to their sense-making

of any text: *dominant, negotiated, and oppositional decoding* (Morley and Brunson, 1999:268). Cultural Studies reject the dismissive notion of consumers as “dupes” (Leve, 2012: 7). Mackay (1997) highlights the potential for acknowledging positive pleasurable associations with consumption and its role in the construction of identities (Mackay, 1997:77). Consumers are understood to have an important active and creative role, not a passive, corrupting nor “determined” one (Leve, 2012: 7).

Audience-centred approach

Drawing on Cultural Studies, reception theory refers to the body of theories that shift their attention away from the author, the production processes, and the text itself to the reader. It is based on Stuart Hall’s (1980) encoding and decoding model which demonstrates that media texts have no inherent meaning, but offer ‘potential’ positions that readers can ‘take up’ or ‘identify with’: the audience makes its own meaning of the text (Hall, 1980: 130). Hall suggests three positions of meaning-making: the dominant (or hegemonic) reading, in which interpreters share the text’s encoded meaning and produce the preferred reading; the negotiated reading, in which the readers reach a middle ground between the preferred reading and the reading produced by their own contextual conditions; and finally, the oppositional reading, in which readers completely go against the encoded message (Hall, 1980: 130). Reviewing this theory, Strelitz (2008) argues the need to see the relationship between media and culture, in the process of identity formation, as an interplay of mediations between culture-as-lived-experience and culture-as-representation. He adds that “our media consumption choices and the meanings we take from the media are shaped by these lived cultural experiences while the media we consume also impacts on how we make sense of these experiences” (Strelitz, 2008: 63).

Based on this approach, research has come up with useful findings about audiences’ engagement with soap operas. de Bruin (2001: 8) presents results of how teenage girls from different ethnic backgrounds interpreted the Dutch version of *Good Times, Bad Times*, showing that young people from diverse ethnicities talked a lot about soaps in their daily lives (de Bruin,). A later study (2006) suggests that participants use soap operas to construct or reinforce their own identity (CRT, 2016:14). Gotz (2004) describes three functional reasons why 6 to 19 year olds are fascinated by

the soap opera and the *Big Brother* reality TV format: the situational function: soaps structure everyday life and create a specific situation (p. 67); the interactive function: a new subject of conversation every day (p. 68); and the subjective-thematic function: everyone makes something different out of the soap opera (p. 69, in CRT, 2016: 12). In this last category, Gotz notes that soap operas serve as entertainment, information providers, counsellors, thought provokers, and need satisfiers for the young viewers (CRT, 2016: 12). In the same publication, Quin (2004) provides a similar overview of young people's soap opera viewing in Australia.

Through interviews conducted with a group of 13-14 year olds, Dorothy Hobson (2004) describes the list of the most used words to describe why they watched soap opera, namely: "interesting", "funny", "good", "exciting", "good acting", "good storylines" (CRT, 2016: 12). She concludes that "far from being badly affected by the storylines, these young people revealed that they questioned the representations and were aware that these were media productions which also had a function as entertainment for the broadcasters" (CRT, 2016:12. "Their sophistication as viewers was evident. Their viewing patterns showed that they chose programs which were related to their youth, their favourite characters were either young, or ordinary, and programs had primarily to be funny" (Hobson, 2004: 144). In a similar study with young people in Brazil, Machado-Borges (2004) argues that viewers' engagement with telenovelas should be seen as part of the practices of coping and hoping that make up their lives:

Their dialoguing with telenovelas is neither duped nor completely subversive, and it does not preclude laughter or pleasure. It is a way for viewers to imbue their lives with fiction, images and fantasy, not only to momentarily escape from reality, but also as a way to hope and act in order to be embedded as a subject, as 'someone who counts,' in a society where 'counting' is anything but self-evident for the majority of the population. (Machado-Borges, 2004: 154).

The way audiences engage with soap operas has also been a topic of interest for research. CRT (2016) points out a number of ways audiences engage with soap opera, including structuring their days around a viewing schedule, learning new behaviours from them, and using them as tools for shaping or understanding identity (CRT, 2016:12). Madill and Goldmeier (2003, cited in CRT 2016) describe seven categories identified by the viewers of the *EastEnders*, a British soap opera.

These include reduced troubles, gender, relaxation, social activity, community, realism, and Britishness. Indirect learning is also another way the audience engage with soap operas. In a study about New Zealand soap opera, *Shortland Street*, de Bruin (2010, 2011b in CRT, 2016) finds that audience members evaluated the life skills of the characters and indirectly judged their own life skills which Simonnes and Gjelsten (2004, cited in CRT 2016) describe as a “parallel school”.

Ethnographic reception studies

Ethnographic reception studies combine the ethnographic approach of anthropology with the principles of reception studies. It emphasises the appropriation of media products as a localised phenomenon within the frameworks of domestic and familial relationships and the “lived experiences of media consumers” (Moore, 1993:32; see also Thompson, 1995: 174; Gallagher, 2003:27). Rooted in reception studies, it suggests that the context of use, the text itself and how audiences make texts meaningful, should also be examined. Since “[one] cannot determine in advance which aspects will be involved in the reception of a particular symbolic form”, this approach allows the researcher to access the ways media messages are appropriated and integrated into the contexts of everyday life (Thompson, 1995: 177-178). It shows “how people actively and creatively make their own meanings and create their own culture, rather than passively absorb pre-given meanings imposed on them” (Ang, 1985: 98).

Audience identities can be examined from both individual and group aspects within their day-to-day social settings, making it easier to understand how they define themselves, what they do with the cultural products that they consume (Strelitz, 2005:39), and how and why they appropriate selected elements of media products into their local cultures. Thus, even though the “circulation of information and communication has become increasingly global ... the process of appropriation remains inherently contextual and hermeneutic” (Thompson, 1995:174). Katz and Liebes’ (1993) reception analysis of *Dallas* (a North American soap opera) by Israeli viewers from a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds found that “viewers typically use television fiction as a forum for discussing their own lives” and that “value comes not from the program but from negotiation with it” (1993:154). Furthermore, the nature of involvement of the viewer, in relation to understanding,

interpretation, and involvement varied in relation to social and cultural background (Katz and Liebes, 1993: 6).

Drawing upon Katz and Liebes' findings, Miller (1995 in Barker, 1997:123) examines how a Trinidadian audience received a North American soap opera, *The Young and the Restless*. In this study, Miller states that audience group identity plays a role in the understandings made of a media product. Studying the consumption of Western, Middle Eastern, and locally produced media by adolescents in Zawiya, Morocco Davis and Davis (1995) also reveal a relationship between their exposure to the media and their use of these images to re-imagine aspects of their lives, particularly in relation to social behaviour, choice of mate, and career aspirations. The authors argue that many of the adolescents were eager to reconcile the tensions between their traditional Islamic values and the more contemporary and modern media-relayed ones, and this negotiation served to define their identities as adolescents and young adults.

The ability to contextualise the consumption and reception of media texts within a social setting has also been favoured by feminist researchers. In her study of the British soap opera *Coronation Street*, Lovell (1981) found that the soap played a progressive role amongst British women by challenging the values of patriarchal society through a representation of the norm as "broken marriages, temporary liaisons" and the interruption as "marriages and 'happy family' interludes" (1981:50). Radway also contextualises her female readers of the romance novel within their familial environment to discover how her readers saw themselves first as women and then as mothers (Radway, 1987:7). For these women, the act of reading was a bid for independence which served as an escape from the physical and emotional demands of domestic labour.

In the Latin American context, Tufte's (2000: 58) study shows how audiences use "hybrid spheres of signification" to define their modernity and their cultural citizenship. Similarly, Martin-Barbero *et al* (1993) recognises the influence that the urban-rural dynamic has on audience understanding and appropriation of media products. According to these authors, the audiences use media products to vicariously experience other situations (Thompson, 1995:). Media texts are therefore "a literary experience open to the reactions, desires and motivations of the public" (Martin Barbero *et al*, 1993:228), since audiences exchange places with the characters in the narrative and reconfigure their identities and popular cultures in response to them (Tufte, 2000; Das, 1995; Martin Barbero *et al*, 1993). In the same vein, telenovelas have also been shown to integrate with other media and

their messages are circulated, appropriated, and reiterated by audiences in their everyday situations and encounters of the audience (Machado-Borges, 2006).

Globalisation

Globalisation can be defined as the intensification of global social relations that unite distant localities in a way that the local events are conditioned by events taking place miles away, vice-versa (Santos, 2002: 31). Globalisation can be traced to the 19th Century when European countries “scrambled” Africa for its resources (Barker, 1997:17).

Today, the dominance is done not by the military, rather by what is called global trade, 70% of which is controlled mostly by the biggest western multinationals, and where local economies should be open to global market (Santos, 2002: 36). This situation is also applicable to social and cultural products, mainly driven by the (global) media, and this is called media imperialism.

Media imperialism is the term used to describe the ways in which media, through their global spread of mass industry products, dominate people’s lived experiences and their cultures. As noted earlier, soap operas constitute one of the major export commodities for some Latin American countries. Due to the (Portuguese) language proximity, Mozambique is a major consumer of Brazilian telenovelas, but also of other Latin American ones, taking into account that these products are translated into receiving countries’ languages, to meet local audiences’ needs (Rêgo and La Pastina, 2007; Alessandro Jedlowski & Cacilda Rêgo, 2019). The consumption of Brazilian telenovelas in Maputo can therefore be seen as cultural dominance perpetuated the dominant Latin American cultural industry.

Media imperialism has largely been attributed to globalisation, the “growing interconnectedness of different parts of the world” (Thompson, 1995:149) which gave rise to complex forms of local-global interaction and interdependencies that were often dependent upon the telecommunications infrastructure. One of the results of globalisation is that localised activities in different parts of the world begin to be shaped by one another (Thompson, 1995:149-150). This gives rise to a “complex, creative interface between the globalised diffusion of media products and their localised

appropriation” (Thompson, 1995:151) and a growing relationship between global cultural forms and locally lived cultures (Strelitz, 2005:30).

Scholars of media imperialism state that this cultural ascendancy linked to globalisation still exists today and is promoted by Western countries not only through media content but through ideological and technological advancement (Barker, 1997; Barker, 1999; Stevenson, 2002; Fourie, 2007; Kim, 2008; Boyd-Barret, 2015). This is exemplified through the evident American lifestyles in most countries, which can be observed by the existence of fast foods such as Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC), MacDonalld’s, drinks like Coca Cola, jeans clothing shops and computer software such as Microsoft and Apple (Kim 2008; Boyd-Barrett, 2015). And, of course, TV formats such as soap operas and reality TV. The core argument of this approach is that “global media are dominated by American-owned multinational corporations which disseminate pro-capitalist and pro-American values” (Barker, 1997:184). These theorists argue that media imperialism is maintained by these powerful transnational corporations in the world that have eroded traditional communication systems and national boundaries through technological advancements in electronic communication such as optic fibre cable, satellite and digital migrations (Boyd-Barret 2015; Kim, 2008; Barker, 1999; Barker, 1997). These technological advancements, they argue, are what has led to “interconnectedness and interdependence” in the world today and have fashioned one global identity and culture or popular consciousness (Barker, 1997:23).

Media imperialism has been described in various ways, as communication imperialism (Sui-Nam Lee, 1988), electronic invasion (Thompson, 1995), cultural synchronization (Hamelink, 1983), and ideological/ economic imperialism (Mattleart, 1994), with each alternate phrase emphasising a particular aspect or effect of global media production, distribution or reception. However, the original media imperialism thesis which was developed by Schiller (1976:9; later Mattleart, 1994 and Thompson, 1995) emphasises its economic foundations and cultural consequences. Media imperialism is defined as “the way in which large multinational corporations, including the media of developed countries dominate developing countries” through the international proliferation of economic and cultural products that “attract, pressure, force and sometimes even bribe social institutions to correspond to or even promote the values and structures of the dominating centre” (Schiller, 1976:9). Schiller (1979) adds that multi- and transnational corporations operate in a core-periphery model of global power that manipulates global audiences and positions them as

consumers of capitalist products. Focus is placed on how the ownership, structure, distribution, and content of the media in a periphery country are subjected to external pressures from the media interests of core countries without a proportionate reciprocity of influence (Boyd-Barrett, 1977 in White, 2001). Schiller (1979) also underlines the cultural impact of media imperialism, where culture is defined as the particular way of life or the works and practices of a particular group of people (Williams, 1983:60). He argues that the ruling sector's imposition of their imagery and cultural perspectives upon other cultures, through the monopolisation of international trade, shapes social consciousness throughout the system at large (Schiller in Strelitz, 2005:36). The long-term consequences are a reduction in the diversity of cultures internationally. The values and habits (the culture) of an economically powerful group of people (Tomlinson, 1991:3) thrived at the expense of the less powerful, thus reducing the variety of global cultures, or "global cultural homogenisation" (Strelitz, 2005:35).

Global cultural homogenisation is where a foreign culture dominates within a receptive country and eventually suppresses and obliterates the domestic and local practices by which local collectivities make sense of their lives (Strelitz, 2005:35). Globalisation and media imperialism scholars emphasise that the apparent interconnectedness brought by globalisation is not accompanied by technology transfer in the various areas, which lead to higher costs of media production of products such as soap operas in developing countries (La Pastina and Straubhaar, 2005:276). This relative expense of producing local cultural products results in relatively undeveloped cultural industries in developing economies. As a result, local audiences turn to both regional markets in search of cultural products that reinforce their identities as well as the relatively cheaply-distributed Western products (Straubhaar, 1991; La Pastina and Straubhaar, 2005).

However, it should be noted that recently countries like Nigeria, China, India, Middle Eastern and Latin American countries have increased the local production and export of cultural products. Scholars argue that this is a result of the audiences' attraction to common language and culture (Lievrouw and Livingstone, 2006; Straubhaar, 2003; Sinclair et al, 2002). While not established as competitors of Western media, these cultural industries have proved to have large market. (Lievrouw and Livingstone, 2006; Sinclair et al, 2002; Gates and Funnell, 2012; Chadha and Kavoori, 2000; La Pastina and Straubhaar, 2005). Thus, the current growth of regional media markets globally offers an alternative to hegemonic Western media products and points to an

increased importance of emerging production centres (Lievrouw and Livingstone, 2006; Straubhaar, 1991).

Critiques of the media imperialism thesis

Media imperialism is based on the understanding that audiences are passive subjects who are isolated from their contexts and who are mere receivers of media messages, rather than readers of them (Moores, 1993:6). Rejecting this thesis, some theorists argue that the ideological implications of a media text can only be assumed after understanding the audience's engagement with it – a text does not become culturally significant until it is read ...reading an "imperialist" text becomes the crucial issue in judging cultural imperialism (Tomlinson, 1991:42). Thus, the researcher must take into account the audience's critical sophistication, together with their location within a particular social and cultural context (Tomlinson, 1991:47). This approach is founded on the assumption of a diversity of audiences as opposed to a homogenised audience, each of which are rooted within their separate lived cultures (Hall, 1980 in Boyd-Barrett and Newbold, 1995:338), and who experience and interpret media products from the perspective of these particular cultural contexts. This approach regards audiences as active and critical, with complex and reflective responses whose cultural values are more resistant to manipulation and invasion than the media imperialism thesis gives them credit for (Tomlinson, 1991:49-50).

Theorists have also raised questions about whether global media products are necessarily imposed upon local audience cultures (Tomlinson, 1991:94). This comes from the understanding that media products are no longer regarded as "closed, privileged sites of meaning" (Machado-Borges, 2006), but "dynamic sites of struggle over representation, and complex spaces in which subjectivities are constructed and identities are contested" (Spitulnik, 1993:296). In this approach, audiences' interactions with media texts are seen as giving rise to a variety of interpretations, translations and transformations of the foreign culture in relation to more familiar, local experiences (Tomlinson, 1991:45). This emphasizes the argument that audiences are active participants in the interpretation and decoding of polysemic media messages and that during the reading act, the words are given life by the reader (Hall, 1980). A text's polysemy is the possibility that it offers a number of

different meanings (Barker, 1997:115-6). Texts structure aspects of meaning, and guide the reader, but cannot fix the meaning, which is the outcome of the reader's engagement with the text.

Media products play an identity reinforcement function, since audiences may seek media representations that either strengthen their identification with particular social groups (Harwood, 1999:29) or that give "salience to something important in their own life or situation" (Harwood, 1999: 29). Through foreign media products, audiences are also invited to experience lives in other societies (Appadurai, 1996; Thompson, 1995). This helps them to produce new cultural meanings (Cheng, 2006) and to create "communities that cultivate shared and public notions about facts, values and contingencies of human existence" (Boyd-Barrett and Newbold, 1995:144). It makes available experiences that otherwise would have been unavailable to them, and because such an experience is a mediated one, allows them to see themselves in a situation that is radically different from their own (Thompson, 1995:119-189).

As it can be seen, there are many approaches that challenge the media imperialism thesis' argument that global media products have a necessarily obliterating or homogenising effect upon local cultures. These audience-based approaches emphasise the view that audiences actively engage with global media products, and drawing upon their social and cultural environments, selectively appropriate some aspects into their lives.

Cultural proximity

This concept was initially developed by Joseph Straubhaar (1991) in *Beyond media imperialism: Asymmetrical interdependence and cultural proximity*. He argues that audiences have a variety of preferences which have a class dimension, limited by a viewer's economic and cultural resources (Straubhaar, 1991; La Pastina and Straubhaar, 2005). He suggests that poor audiences prefer products that are locally produced, close to their culture, and directly relevant to them in linguistic terms, rather than hegemonic global media products (Straubhaar, 1991 and 2003). He also argues (1991 and 2003) that when people who prefer nationally and locally produced products cannot access them on the local market, they choose cultural artefacts that are similar to theirs in terms of ethnicity, religion, language or nearby areas geographically. The audiences' preference for local programmes is evidenced in most countries that seem to produce their own programmes during

primetime television, such as local news that feature local topical issues (La Pastina and Straubhaar, 2005: 276). In contrast, the elite have the economic wealth to choose global media products, and often choose to consume global television channels (Straubhaar, 1991; Straubhaar, 2003; La Pastina and Straubhaar, 2005). While the consumption of Latin-American telenovelas in Maputo may be seen as an obvious choice because of the language factor, this study does not address what Maputo viewers' preferences might be if they were equally exposed to global and local cultural products.

Symbolic distancing

The insights into symbolic distancing are part of a theoretical claim that the artefacts produced by the culture industries provide the resources for cultural resistance to dominant or hegemonic society's meanings (Strelitz, 2005: 80). Taking the active audience thesis further, some scholars suggest that this appropriation of media materials enable the audience to 'symbolically' take some distance from the conditions of their day to day lives (Thompson, 1995; Kim, 2008, 2010). For these theorists, global media provide a 'resource' for individuals with which to think about their own lives and conditions critically, and this is called 'symbolic distancing' (Strelitz, 2005:79; Kim, 2008: 394). By critically analysing their own conditions, the audiences are enabled to imagine new possibilities of freedom within the multiple constraints of their social contexts.

In sum, these scholars argue that the consumption of global media does not necessarily have hegemonic effect on audiences, but rather, they may contribute to self-formation, helping viewers to reflect on their actual circumstances and lives (Strelitz, 2005; Kim, 2008: 396). As Schröder (2010) points out, "at any given point in time, our sense-making of a newscast, or a sitcom, or a blog, is indebted to the intertextual web of meanings which we have previously harvested from those media forms, and from the whole mediatized world we live in" (Schröder, 2010: 6). Globalisation here is not seen as a domination of Western products, but as providing a resourceful cultural stream for people to use for self-recreation, in a reflexive relationship between self, culture, and society (Strelitz, 2005; Kim, 2008: 394). Md Azalanshah Md Syed *et al.* 2015's study on how Malay women engage with Asian soap operas and how they select and translate these

materials to represent themselves is a practical example of symbolic distancing (Md Azalanshah Md Syed et al, 2015).

Viewing soap operas as para-social interaction

According to the concept of para-social interaction, the audience learns to recognise and more importantly, to interact with the highly stylised “images” presented by the mass media communicators, especially those entertainers, talk show hosts, “personalities” and journalists who appear frequently on television (Levy, 1979:69).

Many studies emphasise the role of soap operas in helping to connect people (Livingstone, 1988; Miller, 1995 in Allen, 1995). “For many of the other reasons provided, such as regularity, topicality and involvement, soap operas provide a common topic of conversation among viewers” Livingstone (1988:73). In the same study, Livingstone (1988) further notes that “...talking about the events portrayed may serve several functions: for demonstrating opinions, checking and exploring differences in perceptions or judgement, sharing experiences, demonstrating consensus or normality, cueing discussion of significant issues or providing a safe and convenient forum for such discussion” (p. 73).

Conclusion

In this chapter I locate the consumption of soap opera in Maputo within a broader theoretical and historical context, by examining theories and approaches to understanding viewers’ engagement with media texts. Based on the cultural studies understanding, as well as on ethnographic reception studies, the salient idea is that audiences are active consumers of media texts who are able to appropriate and negotiate the meanings of texts. This offers useful insights into understanding and interpreting how the residents of Maputo appropriate Latin American telenovelas and how they negotiate the meanings of these texts in their own lives, in a continuous exercise of building their identity.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

This chapter describes the methodology used for the study and considers how the data were generated and analysed. It also explores the philosophical foundations of qualitative study, the main questions arising on validity and reliability of this kind of study, and what role the researcher plays in the process.

The study adopted a qualitative methodology, focusing on reception theory. Philosophically, qualitative methodology is rooted in phenomenology, which explores the ‘insider’s’ perspective of the research subjects, taking the actor’s perspective as the empirical point of departure (Bryman, 1984: 78; Babbie and Mouton, 2001: 28). Adding to this understanding and quoting van Maanen *et al.*, (1982), Jankowski & Wester (1991) define qualitative research as a form of long-term first-hand observation conducted in close proximity to the phenomena under study. The authors explain that qualitative research is performed in a naturalistic setting with emphasis on everyday behaviour and is often descriptive in nature. Furthermore, when the goal is to understand the “insider’s” perspective, one requires a holistic and inductive approach that provides the opportunity to develop a rich understanding of, and insight into, the individuals’ beliefs, concerns, motivations, aspirations, life styles, culture, behaviour and preferences (Priest, 1996, cited in Mabweazara 2009:56).

Due to its phenomenological nature, qualitative methodology is *naturalist*, meaning that the research is conducted in the natural setting of social actors. It focuses on process rather than outcome, emphasising the actors’ perspective (insider perspective). Qualitative methodology also seeks to understand social action in terms of its specific context (idiographic motive), rather than attempting to generalise to some theoretical population. The aim is to describe and understand events within the concrete natural context in which they occur. The research process is thus inductive, resulting in the generation of new hypothesis and theories. Here, the researcher is the main instrument in the research process (Bryman, 1984: 78).

As a research tradition, reception research is the in-depth study of actual processes through which media discourses are assimilated to the discourses and cultural practices of audiences. It is a

comparative textual analysis of media discourses and audience discourses, whose results are interpreted with reference to both the historical context and the cultural setting, and the “con-text” of other media contents (Jensen, K B et al; 1991:139).

Adding to this thought, Mabweazara (2009) explains that reception research is the empirical production of meaning in peoples’ encounter with media discourses, exploring media experiences through the medium of extended talk. This method does not study the media use as it happens in natural situations of everyday life (Schroder et al, 2003, in Mabweazara, 2009). It seeks to illuminate audience’s practices and experiences, through “getting those involved to verbalise them in a *non-natural but open situation* of the qualitative research interview”. The interpretation of data is made with reference to the surrounding socio-cultural system, which is conceptualised as a historical configuration of social practices, context of use, and interpretative communities (Jansen & Rosengren, 1990: 218 cited in Mabweazara, 2009: 58).

This approach is also rooted in the ethnographic research tradition, which is concerned with the analysis of multiply-structured contexts of action, aiming to produce a rich descriptive and interpretive account of the lives and values of the subjects of investigation (Morley and Silverstone, 1991).

In this study, I explore how the residents of KaMpfumo and KaMaxakeni neighbourhoods in Maputo interact, engage, and make meaning of Latin American telenovelas, based on their own life experiences. Therefore, it was fundamental to explore and understand their specific context and everyday life. Geographically and formally the two neighbourhoods are inside Maputo city and very close to each other and to the prime area of the city, however, they present opposite social and economic conditions. KaMpfumo is where the middle classes live, and is characterized by tall buildings, ‘well’- structured health and education centres, clean water and sanitation systems, formal economic activities, and public and private services. In contrast, KaMaxakeni is where poor people live. It is characterized by informal settlements and poor infrastructure, with poor water and sanitation systems (in some cases non-existent), without tarred roads, insecurity, informal economic activities, poor health and education institutions.

The choice of the two neighbourhoods was to understand how these different social groups make their choices of the telenovelas, and how they interact with the content they chose to consume in

their everyday lives. I did not consider specific telenovelas, as the choice of particular media product among the residents of Maputo was also a matter of interest for this study. As Strelitz notes, “Our media consumption choices and the meanings we take from the media are shaped by these lived cultural experiences while the media we consume also impacts on how we make sense of these experiences” (Strelitz, 2008: 63).

Data collection methods

The data for this study were generated through participant observation, focus groups with selected members in each family, as well as individual interviews. The appropriateness of the participant observation method is that the natural setting of the telenovela viewers helped me to explore their social reality and experience all the negotiation processes taking place inside the family environment (Deacon, D. et al, 2007). Morley and Silverstone (1991) call this a *rule-governed* process: the rules which govern and facilitate this process.

Television viewing has to be understood within the structure and dynamics of just such a context of actions – the domestic environment” (Morley and Silverstone, 1991: 150). Knowing this environment is critical as the observation method is rooted in the belief that “interactions and behaviours, and the way people interpret them, are central to social life. (Deacon et al. 2007: 51).

The focus of analysis are both individuals and the family as a group. It was important to focus on individual family members to understand the particular and specific nuances of individual behaviours and responses. Additionally, according to Morley and Silverstone, “household or family, as the basic unit of domestic consumption offers the most appropriate context for the naturalistic investigation of the consumption and production of televisual (and other) meanings” (1991:150). They argue that an understanding of family dynamics, of the structures of daily life, and of the family system are a necessary precondition for understanding the place of television/media (consumption) in the household. Discussing the role of the researcher in ethnographic studies, Morley and Silverstone (1991) argue that from a naturalistic perspective, participant observers aim to learn the rules of the culture of the people they are studying (family

dynamics for the case of this study), and to interpret events and actions according to those rules. The objective was not to identify universal laws, but rather to produce detailed descriptions of the concrete experience of life within a particular context (Morley and Silverstone, 1991: 154).

Qualitative interviews generally refer to in-depth, loosely semi-structured interviews. In these interviews, the researcher is often regarded as co-producer of the data, which are produced from an interaction between researcher and interviewee(s) (Byrne, 2003: 181). This method was particularly appropriate for this study as it provided better access to interviewees' views, interpretations of events, understandings, experiences and opinions about the telenovelas. The method is also useful taking into account the epistemological foundations of the qualitative methodology, adopted in this study: "...this approach tends to be used by those who come from an *ontological* position which values people's knowledge, values and experiences as meaningful and worthy of exploration" (Byrne, 2003: 182).

One recurrent issue that researchers raise about the use of qualitative interviews for research are the epistemological and ethical issues, mostly related to power relations between the interviewer and interviewee, difference of age, class, gender, ethnicity and religion. In order to address these issues, I continually engaged in a reflexivity process throughout the study, both during the observation day, as well as the focus group discussions and individual interviews. As Byrne (2003) points out:

Reflexivity involves critical self-scrutiny on the part of researchers, who need, at all stages of the research process, to ask themselves about their role in the research. It also involves acknowledging that the researcher approaches the research from a specific position and this affects the approach taken, the questions asked, and the analysis produced. (2003: 184).

In order to allow interviewees to express their views and experiences freely regarding their interaction with, and construction of meaning of, the telenovelas, I also conducted in-depth individual interviews. The interview process followed a semi-structured format with individual members of each family, exploring how each of them interacts with, and make sense of, the telenovelas.

I also used focus group interviews with family members present during the watching sessions in each family. On the one hand, the group dynamic offers the participants more freedom to express their views on, and meanings of, telenovela viewing openly. On the other, the group dynamic may inhibit some participants who are naturally shy. Overall, focus groups are concerned with exploring the formation and negotiation of accounts within a group context: “how people define, discuss and contest issues, through social interaction” (Tonkiss, 2004: 194). This comes from the understanding that all human beings are engaged in the process of making sense of their (life) worlds. (Bryman, 1984; Babbie and Mouton).

It is also an assumption that opinions, attitudes and accounts are socially produced – shaped by interaction with others – rather than being discretely formed at the level of the individual...Moreover, the group context makes visible how people articulate and justify their ideas in relation to others (Tonkiss, 2004: 194).

A detailed description of the experience and outcomes of each method employed is given in the chapter four, as well as the analysis of how appropriate each method was to the particular context of KaMpfumo and KaMaxakeni telenovela viewing.

Sampling procedure

The study adopted a purposive theoretical sampling procedure, targeting those families who are avid viewers of telenovelas. In theoretical sampling, “instead of looking for typical cases, the researcher deliberately seeks out respondents who are most likely to aid theoretical development by extending and even confounding emerging hypothesis” (Deacon et al., 1999: 52).

On this basis three families were purposively selected based on their availability to be part of the study, combined with their viewing habits of the Latin American telenovelas: one from KaMpfumo and two from KaMaxakeni. In the approved research proposal, I had proposed four families for the study, two in each neighbourhood, however, the data generation period coincided with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The participant observation in the first family’s house started on 2nd February 2020, when other countries in the world and in Africa were already

suffering from the pandemic. The fourth participant observation session was scheduled for the last week of March 2020, but the Government had already introduced safety measures, prohibiting gatherings and limiting physical contact. In the same week, the government of Mozambique formally declared a State of emergency, which legally reinforced the restrictive measures.

Contrary to the ‘snowball’ procedure proposed initially, identifying families willing to be part of the study was extremely challenging. My first approach was to use known people to help identify families, however, it quickly became an inefficient way, as people could not accurately explain the purpose of the study. Then I tried a second approach, which consisted of talking to the *bairros* (neighbourhoods) local leaders. I introduced myself and asked for support in accessing people’s houses. This did not work as well. There was a risk of being misinterpreted as doing a political or government-related study, and so there was a risk of having biased results. Then, I adopted another approach, which beside being tiresome, worked out. The approach consisted in walking the entire neighbourhoods (12 km² for KaMpfumo and 12 km² for KaMaxakeni) and knocking on people’s doors. It was very challenging to convince people to be part of the study, especially with the ‘strange’ request of getting into their houses and watching telenovelas with them, especially in a poor neighbourhood like KaMaxakeni, with high crime rates. Overall, negotiation skills played a central role in convincing people to participate in the study.

As this is qualitative research, my concern was in providing intensive insights into the phenomenon, rather than generating a generalizable perspective (Deacon et al, 1999: 43).

Qualitative thematic content analysis

Reception analysis focuses on studying the discourses of the media and those of the subject in order to make an empirical comparative analysis (Jensen, 1988: 4). Aiming to understand and interpret the *interface* between telenovela (medium) and its viewers (audience) in Maputo, I thus undertook a qualitative thematic content analysis of the telenovela viewing process by the residents of KaMpfumo and KaMaxakeni. To that end, categories were generated based on the data collected within the participant families. This approach enabled me to focus on aspects of the telenovela viewing that are significant to the viewers (Schreier, 2014; Hansen et al, 1998). The themes or categories are the specific patterns found in the data that I was interested in, including words,

meanings, images, representations, ideas or messages (Deacon et al. 1999; Joffe and Yardley, 2004). Thematic content analysis aims to understand the underlying meaning of the apparent themes or categories within the data, which requires interpretation (Joffe and Yardley, 2004; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; Schreier, 2014). This was done by analysing the meanings and social constructs in those images, words and representations, rather than counting the number of times in which the themes were used in a text or image as any quantitative content analysis would demand (Joffe and Yardley, 2004; Schreier, 2014).

The themes or categories generated in this study, took into account the themes that fed the family discussions during the telenovela viewing, as well as those that were raised during the family focus groups and individual interviews. They also result from my understanding and familiarity, as a researcher, with the research environment, based on the time spent with each family (Hansen et al., 1998: 107). As Hansen *et al* note, “The researcher needs some familiarity with the content, structure and general nature of the material to be analysed in order to be able to set up categories that will be sufficiently sensitive to capture the nuances of the texts” (1998: 107). To that end, I spent between one to two days watching telenovelas with each family, before conducting the interviews. The length of time in each family depended on the level of their comfort with my presence in their space – refer to chapter four for more details.

Validity and reliability in qualitative studies

Positivist-rooted quantitative scientists have long criticised the validity and reliability of qualitative research methods, which rely mostly on unstructured interviews, participant observation, life history, and group discussion (Bryman, 1984: 78). As opposed to quantitative studies, qualitative research methods suggest that the researchers should immerse themselves in the lives of their participants in order to observe their behaviour, their responses to media products within their natural settings, everyday lives, social conventions and identities (Flick, 1988; Bryman, 1984; Bryman, 1988; Moores, 1993).

Criticism over qualitative methodologies is also derived from its reliance on the social as opposed to the natural sciences, and for placing too much reliance on “imprecise, value-laden and particularistic” (Lindlof, 1995: 9-10) methods. The main criticisms centre on the issues of validity,

reliability, and reflexivity which challenge the quality of data that is generated, the authenticity of the findings, and role of the researcher.

Validity in quantitative research refers to the representativeness of an audience sample and the ability to generalise the research findings of a sample group to a larger population (Gray, 2003:15). However, since qualitative research draws upon a limited number of participants and its findings are firmly situated within a particular social group, it does not claim either representativeness or generalisability to different or larger populations. Nor does it claim replication of the results of its studies under the same conditions (Bryman, 1988: 37), or that it is applicable to an entire social unit. Instead, it challenges the entire definition of validity proposed by quantitative researchers and defines the generalisability of a study in relation to theoretical propositions rather than to populations (Bryman, 1988:123).

The three selected families from two neighbourhoods in Maputo for this study do not represent the whole population of telenovela viewers in Maputo, but a specific group whose understanding provided insights into the meanings and value of these media in the lives that specific group.

Qualitative studies are also criticised because of the subjective involvement of the researcher in the data generation process, and the reliance on intuitive (based on feelings rather than facts) rather than authoritative (information received from sources) knowledge (Henrichsen et al, 1997). These are issues that raise questions about the reliability of such information. Arguing against this criticism, qualitative research theorists note that the thickness of description enhances the professionalism, quality, and validity of the findings, and the presentation of the multidimensional context of the participants' environment allows the researcher more accurately to map the social conditions and make sense of the ways other people make sense of the world (Geertz, 1973; Maxwell, 1992; Lindlof, 1995). Additionally, Deacon (1999: 3) and Maxwell (1992:281-4) argue that since each study adopts "competing definitions of what counts as a legitimate and worthwhile approach to the investigation of social and cultural life", validity ought to be judged on a case-by-case basis relative to the purposes and circumstances of each study and is not inherent in technique. The same methods may produce valid data in one circumstance and invalid data in another.

To address concerns about reliability and validity of data in this study, I applied multiple qualitative techniques, as already described. This allowed me to check and confront the data

generated in different stages of the study (participant observation, family focus groups and individual interviews).

My role as researcher in the (qualitative) study

Another criticism of qualitative studies is on the *reflexivity* of both the generated data and the research findings (Gough, 2002). The role that the researcher plays within the research process, not only through their physical presence in the research environment, but also because of their subjective involvement in analysing and interpreting the data, has a significant impact in the findings of the study. “Whenever a social scientist is present, the situation is not just what it would have been without [him/her]” (Becker, 1996:61).

However, for qualitative researchers, every act of communication in social reality is already a kind of “performance” (Lindlof, 1995:13-18), therefore, rather than distorting the social reality presented, the researcher’s presence offers insight into social understandings and processes. In both research traditions researchers are “part and parcel of the world they want to investigate” (Denscombe, 2002:19-20). Thus, “[a]ll types of social research are in a sense artificial because they necessarily involve an intervention into the lives of those being monitored” (Moore, 1993:33). Researchers often choose to investigate cultures that they inhabit thus making them “participant observers” in their own studies (Gray, 2003:17). Consequently, any distortion that the researcher introduces to the study is therefore minimal and does not have a detrimental effect.

Another ethical concern regarding qualitative studies is related to power dynamics developed during the study. Responding to issues of power, qualitative researchers argue that they resist treating their participants merely as subjects (Clifford, 1986 in Moore, 1993), and that they adopt more flexible and less structured research methods (Becker, 1996) that shift the power balance back to them. They also encourage the use of unstructured or semi-structured interview guides as a way to limit their authorial function.

In order to engage with my research participants and distance myself from the findings of the study, I always made my role and my position as a researcher among them clear, which should not limit their participation. I always emphasised that their participation was voluntary and they should

keep their daily practices, and my presence in their houses was only possible with their permission. I also made it clear that they had the power to stop the interview session or their participation in the study at any time, if they were not willing to continue. Recording every aspect of their behaviour during the observation and asking questions about some situations also helped balance my role as a researcher. I used an interview guide to ensure that the discussions are in line with issues relevant to my research (Byrne in Seale, 2004).

A journey into the data generation process

I started generating data through participant observation technique. This was fundamental as I wanted to understand the viewing of telenovela within the structure and dynamics of the domestic environment (Morley and Silverstone, 1991:150). The observation time with each family depended on the level of comfort and saturation, so I spent between two and three days with each family.

Despite physical access to the families' houses, access to their private sphere was not as easy as expected. In the first day of observation at the first family's house, they had arranged the house in a different way from their normal routine: the sewing machine in the living room was covered by a fabric so that it could not be seen. There was no sign that the woman owner of the house was a tailor. I noticed this only on the second day. I noticed a similar behaviour and scenario with the second family: on the first day all family members were in the living room at the telenovela time. However, this was not realistic, so on the second and third day, only one family member was at home by the telenovela time, while the others joined later. As Moreley and Silverstone note, "...access to the private sphere of the household is always a matter of degree [...] there will almost always be some areas of the household which are forbidden to a stranger" (1991:157). To overcome this *natural* barrier and ensure the data generated reflects the natural family dynamic of telenovela viewing, I had to insert myself into the families' environment. One way I did this was by starting conversations about different topics concerning their daily life, or about common problems or occurrences affecting the city or the country. Bringing snacks like chocolates and biscuits also helped to get people more friendly and comfortable to behave naturally.

I used focus groups and individual interviews to get a deeper and detailed insight into families' telenovela viewing. Focus group discussions with all family members served primarily to follow

up on aspects raised or observed during the participant observation. Morley and Silverstone (1990:150) argue that the household or family, as the basic unit of domestic consumption, offers the most appropriate context for the naturalistic investigation of the consumption and production of televisual (and other) meanings. By asking questions about “small” things they did or said throughout the observation period, they realized I valued each moment of the viewing process. The technique was particularly important and helped warm the relationship between the researcher and the family members.

As stated above, I also conducted individual interviews with selected family members in each family. Initially the idea of doing interview for “academic research” frightened everyone. Participants were concerned and implicitly expressed discomfort with the possibility of “difficult” questions during the interview, despite many attempts to clear this idea. However, things became unclouded when we started the conversation (interview) and they realized it was basically about their daily experience of telenovela viewing. They felt more comfortable and open to tell their stories about their telenovela viewing.

Participants in this study are mainly female. Women are the most active viewers of telenovela within the families. They are the ones in control of which telenovela to watch and at what time: “My husband is just accompanying me during the telenovela time, he follows the telenovela I watch at that specific time, and he is not always available”, stated one participant. (“When my husband was not a taxi (cab) driver, and therefore could come home earlier, I always “grabbed” him to watch the telenovela when my favourite one started”, said another participant. Robert Allen wrote that soap opera was considered “women’s” form, due to its “gendered” appeal to female audience (1995:7). It is worthy to note that even in cases where men, generally young men, were watching telenovelas together with other family members, they never played an active role. They were never involved in discussions about the telenovelas, and they always sat in the corner or back row of the living room, never in the front row.

During the two-day observation at one of the families, the husband spent of the time either outside, or just popping into the living room to talk to his wife, not to watch the telenovela. “He doesn’t watch telenovela every day, just once in a while. For some telenovelas that he likes, we usually watch together”, noted his wife. This scenario is also explained in the CRT (2016) as a result of the leading and dominant roles played by women in soap operas.

In soaps, women characters appear much more frequently and in roles that carry more weight in terms of the plot than they do in other television programs. The contents of soaps revolve around themes that, due to socialization, occupy women's thoughts – themes such as relationships and personal and social problems.” (CRT, 2016: 9).

In the same publication, Alan Redfem (2015, in CRT, 2016) brings a study on program preferences by age and gender among British audience. In this study, he describes that “male audiences prefer sports, factual entertainment, and culture programs and female audiences prefer reality TV/talent shows, game/quiz/panel shows, chat shows and soap operas” (CRT, 2016: 10).

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, I present the main findings of the study and how these relate to broader theoretical debates in the field of soap operas around the world. The aim is to highlight the specific aspects arising from the process of viewing, and engaging and interacting with telenovelas by residents of the two neighbourhoods in Maputo. The time spent with each family during the participant observation, the focus group discussions, as well as the outcomes of the interviews conducted with individual family members allows me to identify various themes that emerged, helping us to understand and interpret telenovela viewing in the Maputo area.

The following themes are derived from the interaction with the families, based on their own conceptual frameworks and viewing experience (Morley and Silverstone, 1990:152-3): telenovela as educational tool; telenovelas reinforce daily life world practices; telenovelas shapes people's personal character; telenovelas as another 'presence' in the home; from physical to virtual viewing networks, and "pure" telenovela viewing is a relatively rare occurrence. In the following pages I describe how these themes were discussed by Maputo residents following their viewing experience, and how they link to other studies and theories about soap operas.

These categories may be intrinsic to the viewing experience of the residents of Maputo area, but they also reinforce findings from other studies around the globe. A number of studies have discussed how the audience engages with soap operas. For instance, in her 2004 study on "why 6- to 19-year-olds are fascinated by the daily soap operas and the Big Brother format", Maya Götz describes three functional reasons: *the situational function*: soaps structure everyday life and create a specific situation; *the interactive function*: a new subject of conversation every day; and *the subjective-thematic function*: everyone makes something different out of the soap opera (Götz, 2004, in Feilitzen, 2004: 69; CRT, 2016, P. 12). Additionally, Madill and Goldmeier (2003) (cited in CRT 2016), describe seven categories identified by the viewers of the *EastEnders*, a British soap opera. These include 'reduced troubles, gender, relaxation, social activity, community, realism, and Britishness' (CRT, 2016:13). The CRT publication also notes that "audience members engage with soap operas in many ways, ranging from structuring their days around a viewing schedule to learning new behaviours from them, to using them as tools for shaping or

understanding identity” (CRT, 2016: 12). Investigating the popularity of soap opera among British viewers, Sonia Livingstone (1988) notes that concerns about escapism, realism, relationship with characters, critical response, problem-solving, role in viewer’s life, emotional experience and entertainment were among the reasons why British viewers watch soap operas (Livingstone, 1988: 55).

Telenovela as educational tool

This theme explores participants’ meanings about telenovelas as an important tool for their education on several aspects of life.

From the data generated the selected families, both from the participant observation as well as focus group and individual interviews, participants reported that watching telenovelas provided them with an opportunity to learn something “new” for their life.

Studies about the role of soap operas for educational purposes have suggested a huge impact of this genre on the audience, ranging from adolescents’ attitudes towards their sexuality, women’s confidence and openness to discussing family planning with their partners, empowering and reinforcing women’s position within family structure (Mohammed, 2001; Md Azalanshah Md Syed et al, 2015). Learning “new things” is one of the benefits that viewers in Maputo area get from telenovelas. Most of the time this learning process happens through identification with telenovela’s stories or with a specific situation or character. As one participant from KaMpfumo noted:

There is always something new to learn from telenovelas. As a tailor, I always get to know new dress models and other clothing, especially from female characters, and that helps me to satisfy my clients. People usually regard what they see in telenovelas as inspiring and ideal. My children always imitate what they see in telenovelas and I encourage them to practice the good things we see, such as being good student, working hard to achieve personal goals.

Another resident in Kamaxakeni concurred:

Most of telenovelas teach us a lot of things that we can use in real life, unfortunately some young people prefer using the negative aspects. I learn a lot from telenovelas. Now that my husband is a taxi (cab) driver and I spend most of the time at home alone, I learn some new cooking techniques and how to help my husband manage our house.

But learning new “things” from telenovelas does not mean people completely reproduce things the way they see them in telenovela, they rather “domesticate” that knowledge to their particular needs and context. As de Bruin (2006) notes, “rather than being influenced by the characters, storylines and representations of the soap, viewers use them for their own purposes” (CRT, 2016: 14).

KaMpfumo

de Bruin (2010, 2011b) calls this indirect learning, and Simonnes and Gjelsten (2004) call it ‘parallel school’. According to these authors, “audience members evaluated the life skills of the characters and indirectly judge their own life skills” (CRT, 2016: 13). Livingstone (1988) argues that “...soap opera appears to contribute towards the social knowledge required to live in the modern world” (p, 71).

As soap opera focuses on contemporary and realistic problems, so this learning focuses on problem-solving. This could be general in nature, learning about the lives of other people who may be either like or unlike oneself, and thereby feeling one’s general understanding is enriched. Or it could be more specific, like learning about particular problems faced by, or may yet face, the viewer (Livingstone, 1988: 71). As one KaMpfumo resident put it:

The whole thing about this telenovela is that it teaches you that for any favour that people do to you, you should know there will be a return, so nothing is for free. It is always like this in real life, when people need something from you, they can pretend to be your friends and do whatever you want so that tomorrow you will not refuse to return the favour.

KaMpfumo

The learning process through telenovelas among Maputo viewers happens both from positive and direct behaviour or actions from their favourite characters, but also indirectly from negative actions

and behaviour displayed in telenovelas. “There are a lot of bad people doing bad things in the telenovela, but you should know that they are actually telling you not to do those things. Unfortunately, some people use those “bad tactics” in their life, especially young people”, noted one KaMpfumo resident

She continued:

As you can see, parents are choosing fiancés for their children. It happens a lot in our society, when rich people think their children should not mix with poor people, or some white and Asian people, they do not allow their children to choose their spouses out of their cultural context. So, when you watch telenovela, you should understand that what they are doing is actually criticising that behaviour.

This observation raises an important aspect of how some of the residents in Maputo are not passive consumers of cultural texts, rather, they actively engage and interpret important topics such as racism and the conflicted coexistence of people from different social and economic classes.

From physical to virtual viewing networks

This theme discusses how participants in the study usually discuss issues from telenovelas with people close to them, but also with people who are distant, through mobile phones: what I call *viewing networks*. As Morley and Silverstone (1991:15) note, the media, in general, are an integral part of the everyday, so that the process of viewing or reading is extended into a longer process of conversation and social dialogue through which media materials are “digested”.

Telenovelas help people to connect with one another and give them a sense of community. People share the same conversation topics, based on what their favourite characters “did” in the last episode of the telenovela. As one participant, a resident in KaMaxakeni noted:

Me and one of my sisters, who lives in different neighbourhood, we always discuss a lot about the telenovela, how the story is evolving and what may happen next. We are always anxious to celebrate the happy end, because we hate bad

people (characters) doing bad things in the telenovela. So while this moment doesn't come, we try to guess and share what we would like to see. KaMaxakeni

The 'chat with the neighbours' experience fits with Horton and Wohl's (1956) concept of para-social interaction, which suggests that viewers can enter a drama through means other than identification. They may experience interactions between characters as if they themselves are participants, retaining their identity and playing against the characters, taking sides, answering back, and reacting emotionally (Livingstone, 1988: 68).

Horton and Wohl (1956, in Levy, 1979) suggest that the mass media have created a new form of social interaction, a relationship of "intimacy at a distance" in which audiences experience the illusion of face-to-face, primary relations with family and friends in remote locations. They call this form of interaction "para-social", and contend that in a para-social relationship, audience members react to mass media performers or the characters they portray *as if* the communicators or characters were part of the audience's peer group (Levy, 1979:1 (69). Another resident in KaMaxakeni explained:

Watching telenovela is always a way of being part of conversation matters that we, the women, like to share with friends, so, whenever an episode comes to an end, we want to know what others think about what we "all" saw. And, if for some reason you did not watch the last episode, it feels like you were not "there", you feel out of the conversation.

On the same topic, Miller, (1995 in Allen, 1995: 226) points out the centrality of gossip in social relations, a practice reinforced by soap operas. "There is a considerable evidence for the centrality of gossip to social relations...and, the impact of soap operas [...] is to enter into this world of gossip...").

We use things from telenovela to start a conversation on a certain topic, about our own life. It is always pleasant to be able to give your opinion about the stories we see in telenovela, it becomes part of us and we feel part of that imagined world., noted one resident of KaMaxakeni.

When people are physically close, the telenovela reinforces the family and friendship networks among Maputo viewers. Telenovela offers topics for conversation between neighbours, set fashion trends among residents, and people even adopt telenovela characters' names for themselves or for their close relatives.

We named that boy Alonso because he has been obsessed with my niece, the same way Alonso from the telenovela does. This is not the first case, very often we give names from telenovela characters to people close to us, based on their behaviour. Most of them are not official names, some of them end up in people's documentation, but the point is, they become very popular because people in the neighbourhood agree that those people behave like those characters, explained a participant in the study, resident in KaMpfumo.

Telenovelas also strengthen neighbourhood networks. In one of the participant family's house, as the telenovela time approached, a child from the neighbouring house came to ask for the remote control handset. When I asked about that situation, they explained that that was because the two houses had the same TV device type and both watched the same telenovela, and the neighbour's remote handset did not function.

In this regard, telenovela is an important tool in building local networks, based on people's viewing habits. In KaMaxakeni area, for instance, one of the participants in the study shows that viewing telenovelas becomes the moment when neighbours and other friends can come together. During the two observation days, I could notice people from the neighbouring houses in the living, coming to watch telenovela together. When I asked about this scenario, she explained that "the neighbours did not come because they do not have a TV handset, it is just a moment we like being together to share not just telenovela, but also other topics". She added "We like watching telenovela with anyone, from neighbours to friends, they are all welcome, it is our moment as some of them are not at home during the day, so this is the time we share so many things". This has been emphasised by Thomas Friemel (2008, cited in CRT, 2016), in a study on how Swiss children used television programs as part of their social selection.

Sharing telenovela moments, stories, and other aspects of telenovelas within the larger networks of viewers – neighbours, friends, and family members, among the residents of Maputo-- is

definitely an important part of their lives. The restricted networks of viewers, composed mainly of close friends, play an even important role as *safe spaces*, where they can share the most intimate conversations, fed or inspired by telenovela.

There are things from telenovela I comment only with certain people, my close friends, especially those that relate to our personal and love relationships' life. For example, in one of the episodes, a couple was having very tense moment, and the reason was similar to what my cousin was going through, so we started shared our opinion and advise about how she could overcome that situation, stated one participant, resident in KaMaxakeni. This experience is echoed in Mohammed's Tanzanian research (2001).

Telenovela reinforces daily *life world* practices

This theme discusses how people use telenovelas to cope with daily problems/challenges, as indicated by Noble: "The important function that television 'programmes such as soap operas' has [is] in demonstrating social skills...such as making friends, manipulating bureaucratic processes, coping with parental demands, knowing what to wear and how to dance" (1975:29 qtd. in Livingstone, 1988: 72). For Maputo residents, telenovelas play an important role in their daily lives, offering a number of tools to overcome daily challenges. As one KaMpfumo resident explained:

Once I saw one of the characters in the telenovela behaving like a crazy, in order to solve some problems he had in life, so people could not pay much attention to him, and he managed to solve it. So one day I went to hospital and there was a long queue to see the doctor. I remembered that episode from telenovela, and I started shouting louder, pretending I was in terrible pains, so everyone felt sorry for me and they put me in front. Fortunately it worked, I did not stand in the queue to see the doctor and I came home to look after my child.

Viewing telenovelas by Maputo residents also serves to reinforce their faith and beliefs.

I like that particular telenovela (Terra prometida – Promised Land) because it has a biblical story and, as Christians, it means a lot in our lives. It also helps us understand some of the stories from the Bible. It is also a way to show us how others deal with faith, and how people can sometimes use faith for personal gains, noted one KaMaxakeni participant.

While telenovelas help residents of Maputo to strengthen the already existing family and friend relationships, at some point they also provide viewers with the necessary skills to manage the sometimes tense relationships with people around them, avoiding confrontations and disputes. As a resident of KaMaxakeni explained:

As you know, most people in this neighbourhood are unemployed, so they are always watching other people's life. One of telenovelas I usually watch, about life in a Brazilian favela (slum), has exactly the same stories, so it is really helpful for me on how to deal with neighbours in this situation. I always practice some of the techniques I see and it always helps; I like to be in peace with people, but unfortunately there is always someone who will find a way to start an argument.

Similar findings have been reported by Descartes and Kottak (2009) in their ethnography study about a Midwestern American community.

The data presented above suggest that viewing similar situations to their own lives, reinforces the connection and sense of identity of Maputo residents, which is also similar to Livingstone's view: "Programmes are seen to parallel the lives of the viewers, so that similarities are apparent and appreciated, and contrasts are thought-provoking... when their own problems are portrayed they can enter a community of others who, through experiencing the same problems, can be imagined as understanding and validating the viewer's own experience" (1988: 68-71).

Telenovela shapes people's personal character

This theme demonstrates how stories, characters and other situations from telenovelas help to shape viewers' personal character and identity. People choose to be "good people" and forgive more as a result of stories seen in the telenovelas.

Respondents in both KaMaxakeni and KaMpfumo highlighted that the characters in telenovelas they watch contribute a lot to their acceptance or refusal of new ideas, of certain behaviour or attitudes, and consequently the decision to adopt certain ways of living. Much of the literature on soap opera emphasises the forms of identification between the audience and the characters portrayed as central to the attraction of the genre (Miller, 1995:223). Identification with telenovela characters, depending on how close the character's behaviour or role is to the viewer's own personality and interests, is a key shaper of participant viewers' identities. As some respondents from KaMaxakeni noted:

I like Valentina in *A Dona* telenovela. Her strong and independent character inspires me to be a strong woman like her. Sometimes when I feel weakness at something I am doing, I try to remember her to get inspired. We know that what we see in telenovelas is a performance, but most of those situation reflect completely what we are going through in real life, so at some point we can use similar approaches to deal with the situation.

Another participant added:

I like Josué in the telenovela. He is true leader, and that is inspiring in real life. Nowadays there is a scarcity of true leaders, not only at religious level, but also at political and in our communities, so it is really beautiful to see such a true leader who mobilises and inspires his people. KaMaxakeni

Telenovelas viewed by participants also influenced their living style choices. Inspired by stories from telenovelas, people chose to be more honest, humble, forgiving, and caring. As one KaMpfumo resident reported:

Telenovelas had a huge influence on how I view and deal with life today. It has inspired me to forgive more and be more tolerant with people. Whenever I have a problem with someone, I always take time to think carefully and make good judgement – that is how one of my favourite characters in the telenovela acts. It really helped me to understand that you should never make decisions in moments of rage as you will not use your best judgement capacity.

However, using aspects of telenovela in their own lives does not mean that participants are passive consumers, rather, they actively use them as reference points to evaluate and compare with their own lives (Strelitz, 2005; Kim, 2008). The nature of the relationship between telenovelas and the viewers depends on the level of proximity of the story, the character, or other aspects of telenovela to people's own life.

We are more inclined to follow and comment about things in the telenovela that are close to our own life. As you know, telenovelas talk about so many stories, some of them do not make sense for us as Mozambicans, they reflect different realities, but, some of the things feel so real to us, those are kind of things that call our attention the most. ”, states one participant, resident in KaMaxakeni.

Telenovela as another family presence

A lot has been said, both in this study, as well in others, about the role that soap operas play in people's lives, providing a number of teachings, pleasures, and even skills needed to deal with daily challenges and problems. But sometimes people watch telenovelas just as a background stimulus for conversations with family members. During the time spent with families doing participant observation, I could often times see family members engaging in conversation during telenovela, around various topics of their daily lives, but not about the telenovela. They used the telenovela time as an opportunity to talk about their family matters and concerns, share their personal challenges and views about politics, entertainment, fashion, celebrities, cost of living, and much else, as reported in Machado-Borges' (2004) study (CRT, 2016: 12)

In some cases, people who spend most of the time at home, also use telenovelas as a way not to feel alone. As a KaMaxakeni resident noted: “I always spend time at home, while my child and sister go to school. After I finish housework, the only thing I can do is to watch telenovela. I watch almost all telenovelas being aired all the day, some with more attention, and others with less”. In these circumstances, people do not necessarily follow the stories or other moments in the telenovela, rather the telenovela characters are just visitors, who are welcome to share family's space. KaMaxakeni Companionship has also been identified by Livingstone (1988: 58) as one of

the reasons why British audiences watched soap opera. The “presence” of telenovelas in people’s homes also offers a relaxed moment for the viewers, it helps to divert from daily problems.

You know, when you are watching telenovela you forget about most of your problems, it feels like there is someone there with you who takes you to another world, where all your problems are gone and you focus your thoughts on the good things. This does not mean that you are running away from your problems, but it is important because you need to cool your mind, reflect on yourself and find inspiration to deal with your problems, stated one participant, resident in KaMaxakeni.

These experiences reported by participants are echoed in the literature by commentators who argue that soap operas provide contact with the wider world, compensate for a lack of ‘listeners’ in their lives and make people feel part of a bigger “community” of viewers (CRT 2016: 18).

“Pure” telenovela viewing is a relatively rare occurrence

Families are always excited when it is time for their favourite telenovela, members are curious to see what happens next with their favourite character, to see what befalls the bad guy, how the love story evolves, and how their hero saves the poor men or women. But this does not mean people will be sitting in front of their TV devices with 100% of their attention throughout the telenovela: they are always doing something else while watching telenovelas (Bausinger, 1984; Bryce, 1987; Gunter and Svennevig, 1987; Morley and Silverstone, 1990). Doing housework such as cooking, cleaning, looking after children, reading, talking to neighbours, are some of the things that telenovela viewers in Maputo do while watching their telenovelas.

My availability to watch telenovelas depends mostly on other schedules during the day. When I have time, I sit to watch the telenovela, but sometimes I just watch while doing other things, as time allows me. As you know, now we have some TV channels which exclusively air telenovelas 24/7 hours, so you must be aware of other commitments in life”, said a resident of KaMaxakeni.

Selective viewing is also another practice I witnessed. People pay special attention to their favourite characters and moments during the telenovela, and after that, they tend to focus their attention to other things. Most of the telenovelas that Maputo residents watch are aired at least twice a day, and people can also watch their favourite telenovelas online. These are some of the reasons why people do not need to focus on their chosen telenovela at a particular time when it's on TV. "Are not you worried about missing an episode of your favourite telenovela?" I asked the mother who did not join us in the living room to watch the telenovela, and the young girl who stayed outside when the telenovela had started, and only joined 30 minutes later, and the mother who came home late, after the telenovela had started. "If I miss something today, I can watch it again tomorrow", was the same answer they all gave.

That people have to make a living also affects their viewing habits and behaviour. "I have my favourite telenovelas, but sometimes I cannot be home that specific time, because I have to make a living outside, so I do watch when I have a chance", stated a participant, resident in KaMaxakeni. In one of the participant family, they sell beer at home and the wife is a tailor. On many occasions she had to serve customers who came to buy beer during her favourite telenovela time. On one of the days, she missed almost 90% of the episode, because she had to finish sewing school uniforms for two customer girls.

They missed classes today because they did not have a uniform, so their mothers are making pressure so that they do not miss classes tomorrow again, that is why I must finish today. This is always like, there are few days that I sit down and watch the full episode of telenovela without touching at other things. Even though I have my daughter and husband helping me in most of the things, I am the mother of the family, I have always to make sure things are Ok, stated the woman, a resident in KaMpfumo.

The growth of digital culture and the availability of satellite transmission has changed viewing patterns for some (CRT 2016: 14). For those lucky enough, online access to the telenovelas is a way of 'catching up'. As one KaMaxakeni participant noted, "I don't mind missing the time for my favourite telenovela on TV, I can always watch it online, whenever I want".

Locating the study in the context of the ‘new audience’ concept

The development of new technologies in recent decades, driven mainly by the emergence and massification of the Internet, led to profound transformations in media and communication. As a result, the concept of audience also changed, shifting from the notion of the fixed identity of the conventional, passive “receiver” towards active identity (Zhao, 2018: 132).

Throughout the data generation process, participants often demonstrated or mentioned changes to their *audienceship* (their status of being audience) as a result of technological transformations of the viewing process. First, one of respondents from KaMaxakeni noted that her viewing of telenovelas is no longer determined or defined by TV programming: she is free to watch her favourite telenovela at any time through digital platforms. Second, participants also reported how digital platforms became an extension, and somehow a replacement, of old TV devices, and how they became active audiences, participating in debates about the topics and stories from the telenovela. As one resident of KaMaxakeni explained:

Thanks to live streaming services offered by the TV channels on YouTube or Facebook, nowadays we are not only sharing conversations about stories coming out from the telenovela, we also share short videos of the most interesting parts that will feed our conversations. These services also allow us to engage with wider audience community (sic) through chat services. To some extent, we know that the broadcaster also reads our comments, and, on some occasions, they respond to some of the comments posted in chat.

Comparing the viewing patterns in the two neighbourhoods

As described in the context section, KaMaxakeni and KaMpfumo present opposed social and economic conditions. Here, I present some viewing patterns arisen from each neighbourhood, which may be attributed to these differences. During the participant observation period, I could notice that in KaMpfumo, at least one family member has a formal job, while in KaMaxakeni all family members depend on small business and other income generation activities. This scenario is relevant to telenovelas viewing habits. In KaMpfumo, the family’s favourite telenovela is somehow determined by the working schedule of the member with formal job, as they value the moment together to watch “their” telenovela, whenever possible. In KaMaxakeni, however, each

family member has its own favourite telenovela; some, those without any occupation, have enough time to choose between the numerous telenovelas aired almost 24/7 hours, so they can watch telenovelas anytime during the day. Those with some occupation, their watching scheduled is defined by the availability of “free”, which is always at night. For example, one resident in KaMaxakeni stated that she knows all telenovelas being aired during the day and she can choose whichever she wants to watch at any time, because she spends all day at home.

Another difference I noticed during my presence in the families’ houses is the level of understanding and interpretation of the telenovelas storylines. In my first day watching telenovela at one of KaMpfumo’s family, and despite having explained my purpose and my role, the woman sitting with me in the living room has been explaining what the telenovela was about, why the producers used that storyline approach, and how people should not perceive the story in the telenovela as an appeal to practice what they see. On the contrary, in KaMaxakeni, people tend to make their own interpretation and construct their own stories out of the telenovelas, which sometimes do not correspond to the telenovela’s original storyline – people make their own meanings taking into account their social and material conditions.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

The debate about the interaction between the media and their audiences has been evolving for approximately 50 years. Studies from different parts of the globe reveal some similarities, but also particular differences, all offering interesting and useful insights.

My study about telenovela viewing in Maputo was informed by a large theoretical framework. It was motivated by my interest in the role that popular genres, such as soap opera, play in Mozambicans lives and construction of their identities.

The introduction set the stage, giving an overview of the research process and thesis outline.

The initial thoughts for the study focused on the viewing of Brazilian telenovelas in the two neighbourhoods, but as the study evolved, I realized that due to the introduction of low cost cable TV services providers, which offer specialised soap opera channels, Brazilian telenovelas are no longer the only available soap operas in Mozambican market. Other Latin American soap operas are offered on these channels, as well as Turkish soap operas. This scenario was evident during the data generation process within the selected families, where Turkish, Mexican, Venezuelan and Colombian telenovelas were among the watched telenovelas. A contributing factor to this scenario is that all telenovelas offered on these new channels are translated (dubbed) to Portuguese (Rêgo and La Pastina, 2007). As a result, the scope of the study was broadened to cover telenovelas in general, instead of Brazilian ones only.

The main literature for the study is discussed in Chapter 2. It covered a range of theories that explain media consumption in different moments, and research history in different parts of the world. Particular attention was given to qualitative audience-related theories such as cultural studies, reception theory, ethnographic audience studies, active audience, representation in soap operas, symbolic distancing theories and more. These theories argue that lived experience plays a central role in identity formation, allowing people to actively interact and make their own meaning of the media content, as opposed to a media-centred approach (Tomlinson, 1991, in Strelitz, 2002). The theories were particularly important to the study as they helped on the one hand, to position

the study within broader theoretical debates/frameworks, and on the other hand, they offered a foundation to explain and interpret the key findings of my study.

Chapter 3 outlined my methodology. A qualitative methodology was chosen as it seemed more appropriate for the study due to its phenomenology foundation. It allowed me to explore the viewers' perspective on telenovela viewing (Bryman, 1984; Babbie and Mouton, 2001), and to understand how it shapes their identity. I did participant observation with three families, two in KaMaxakeni and one in KaMpfumo neighbourhoods. KaMaxakeni is one of the poorest neighbourhoods of the city of Maputo, with poor infrastructures and services, as opposed to KaMaxakeni, which is the central area of the town, with functioning basic services and good infrastructures. This method allowed me to immerse myself in the residents' social reality and experience the negotiation processes in the family environment. I also conducted focus group discussions and individual interviews with family members. Qualitative interviews provided better access to interviewees' views, interpretations of events, understandings, experiences, and opinions about the telenovelas.

The families were purposely selected based on their viewing habits of telenovelas. Initially I had proposed four families for the study, two in each neighbourhood, but, the data generation period coincided with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, so, I ended up working with only three families, but this situation did not affect the quality of the data.

Chapter 4 examines the findings of the research. On examination, the data generated in the research revealed six key themes which were used to discuss the participants' viewing experience. The themes help us understand and make sense of telenovela viewing in the two neighbourhoods. These are: Telenovelas as an educational tool; Telenovelas reinforce daily *life world* practices; Telenovelas shape people's personal character; Telenovelas as another family presence; Telenovelas are used to build or strengthen physical and virtual viewing networks, and, "Pure" telenovela viewing is a relatively rare occurrence.

Learning new things, as well as acquiring new life skills, make up the first theme of how the residents of the two neighbourhoods in Maputo interact with telenovelas. In this category, telenovela is used as an educational tool. Similar studies in diverse contexts have also emphasised education as one of the many ways audiences engage with soap operas. However, for the residents

of KaMpfumo and KaMaxakeni, learning things from telenovela does not mean completely adopting behaviours, practices or applying certain life skills; people always chose those aspects that are most appropriate for their own lives, without discarding the knowledge, skills and practices they possess from previous life experience.

The data also shows that telenovela helps people to build networks of viewers, both physically and virtually. People in the two neighbourhoods share telenovela moments and stories with close and distant friends and family. Here, the cell phone plays a central role as people spend a significant amount of time making comments and sharing their views on certain aspects of telenovela.

Overall, telenovela viewing in the two Maputo neighbourhoods can provide, on the one hand, this group experience, where people use aspects from telenovela to feed their daily conversations, share their experiences and feelings about characters, topics and stories. On the other hand, telenovelas are an important element in providing tools for people to cope with daily challenges, offering pleasure and life skills. It is a way for viewers to imbue their lives with fiction, images and fantasy, not only to escape from reality, but also “as a way to hope and act in order to be embedded as a subject, as ‘someone who counts,’ in a society where ‘counting’ is anything but self-evident for the majority of the population” (CRT, 2016: 12).

The study also revealed that when watching telenovelas, the residents of KaMaxakeni and KaMpfumo do not dedicate 100% of their attention to watching even their favourite telenovela. Rather, their viewing process is mostly selective and conscious, according to their (1) availability to watch telenovela and to (2) their interests. In other words, telenovela watching is incorporated into the rest of their lives: they continue to cook, chat, do other things while ‘watching’. People tend to focus their time on telenovelas that provide the experiences and feelings they need in their continuous engagement with life beyond the telenovela.

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APPENDIX 1: SYNOPSES OF TELENÓVELAS

Vidas opostas (Opposite Lives).

Synopsis

Miguel, a young millionaire considered a maths genius who had spent the last five years doing his doctorate in the UK, returns to Brazil to dedicate himself to climbing, his favorite sport. During one of the climbing sessions, he meets Joana, a young adventure sports guide. Joana comes from a poor family and lives on a dangerous hill in one of the most troubled neighbourhoods in the city of Rio de Janeiro. Despite already being engaged to the elegant and rich stylist Erínia, Miguel and Joana fall madly in love with each other.

Years earlier, Joana had been the girlfriend of a high school classmate who later became a dangerous drug dealer, the passionate Jeferson, who was later arrested and spent four years in jail. Everything becomes complicated when Jeferson is released from jail just when Miguel breaks his engagement to Erínia and starts dating Joana. Jeferson returns to the hill where he lived, leading a gang of drug dealers.

Miguel and Joana's love triangle with the drug dealer results in a revolt in the community against the bandits and leads to Jeferson's death and that of a corrupt police officer. The event will have terrible consequences, drawing the most absurd accusations against the couple.

The telenovela does not only tell the story of Miguel and Joana, there are many other characters some funny, some romantic, and others violent.

One of the most fascinating characters is Miguel's mother, the millionaire Isis Campobello. She is a widow and presides over a powerful holding company that her late husband had left her. Despite being beautiful, she has lived alone since the tragic death of her spouse, desperate to find love equal to the one she had lost. Surprising her, the youth of her passion, Bóris Sanches, a fearless and romantic adventurer, who had supposedly been dead for 30 years, returns. He helps her to protect her son and face the villains that surround her such as the vice president, Mário Botelho. Botelho cowardly betrays the confidence that Isis had placed in him and prepares a coup to bring her down and take her fortune. Other villainous characters include Félix, a profiteer and

underhanded lawyer; and Maria Lúcia, a sensual and evil woman, cousin of Isis, who does not hesitate to ally herself with those who plot against her.

It tells the story of the fight between honesty and corruption within Justice and the Police. On the one hand, the perverse deputy Dénis Nogueira, a dangerous psychopath who hides behind the mask of a good, intelligent, refined and cultured man; on the other, the clumsy but wholehearted and courageous prosecutor Leonardo, fighting against the enemies of the law and having to deal with the amusing, although damned, three women who torment his life: mother Lizinha, daughter Carla, and the former wife Patrícia. Besides them, there the sweet police officer, Maria do Carmo, with whom he falls in love.

There is also the story of the friendly residents of the neighborhood in which Joana lives: her mother, Lucília, and her father, Haroldo, who is brutally murdered by bandits; Carlinhos, the young man torn between football and the criminal world; Madalena, an orphan of the urban war that is offered to millionaire Isis.

Likewise, the universe of the outcasts is portrayed: life in jail, gangs, battles between gangs, and the chic world, of the rich, famous, in comfortable houses.

Overall, the story mixes love and violence, wealth and poverty, dreams and brutal reality, honesty and corruption, order and chaos, heroism and villainy. (https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vidas_Opostas, 16/05/2020).

Caminhos do Coração

Os Mutantes: Caminhos do Coração (The Mutants: Pathways of the Heart)

Synopsis

The Mayer family belongs to São Paulo's traditional elite. It is composed of the brothers Sócrates, Aristóteles and Platão Mayer. Ari is widowed and has three mutant children: Toni, who can deviate from bullets and has over human strength, Rodrigo, who has hypnotic powers, and Danilo, who has super agility and marries Lucinha to hide his homosexuality from his father. Platão is married to Irma and has two daughters: Regina and Cléo, who are discovered to have the powers of survival

and astral projection. The Mayer family is one of the shareholders of Progênese, together with Mauro Fontes and Josias Martinelli. Josias is married to Cassandra and is the father of Lucas, who reads thoughts, and Janete, who has the power of clairvoyance.

After her arrest, Maria is helped by federal police officer Marcelo Montenegro, with whom she falls in love. Marcelo had recently been widowed by the death of Mabel who was poisoned. The poisoned sweet that killed his wife was intended to be eaten by his mutant daughter Tatiana. By helping Maria to escape from the prison, Marcelo becomes a fugitive from the law and the couple go through several adventures to escape the unscrupulous commissioner Taveira, who feels an unanswered desire for Maria.

Platão and Josias are murdered when they discover who is responsible for Socrates', Dr. Walker's (an American researcher who discovered the truth about the mutants) and Mabel's deaths. Maria and Marcelo are seeking to discover who hired serial killer Eric Fulisy to commit all the crimes.

At the end, it is revealed that Júlia hired Fulisy. She also hired attorney César Rubicão to kidnap Maria, when she was still a baby, and leave her anywhere. He chooses to leave her at the circus. Thirty years later, Socrates reveals that he would leave his entire wealth to a foundation, shocking his family. Afraid that it would harm her experiments, Júlia hired Eric to kill him and put Maria on the crime scene because she knew that Socrates would leave Maria his fortune if they ever met each other again. She suspected that if Maria received his wealth, she would close Progênese and harm her experiences. Júlia then decided to eliminate all those who discovered or suspected that she was responsible for Socrates' death. She also hired Eric to kill Rosana and nurse Ruth among other failed killing attempts. Helga, former wife of Eric, who became a better person after leaving him, also suffered attacks, as did Tatiana, Marcelo and Maria. In court Rubicão reveals, via hologram, who was responsible for the crimes. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caminhos_do_Cora%C3%A7%C3%A3o, 16/05/2020).

Fruto proibido (Forbidden Fruit)

Synopsis

Zeynep is a beautiful girl who adheres to her ethical values and works as a manager assistant. When the company she works is taken over by another company, she starts to work together with

a young businessman Alihan (Onur Tuna). Alihan is an arrogant, cool, serious, and rich guy who does not refrain from hurting people. Starting from his first day at the company, Alihan and Zeynep fight like cats and dogs. Neither of them takes steps backward. Alihan likes the way Zeynep behaves and starts developing some feelings for her.

On the other hand, Yildiz dreams about having a wealthy life. In order to become close to the rich people, she works as a waitress in a well-known restaurant. She has been dating with a rich man and aims to get married to him so that she could escape from her low-income life. However, she eventually understands that her boyfriend does not have any intention to get married to her.

Yizild's life changes dramatically when she gets a job offer from the queen of high society, Ender (Sevval Sam).

Ender is a beautiful middle-aged woman who is married to respectable businessman Halit (Talat Bulut). Ender is the third wife of Halit and lives in a big luxurious house together with her son and two step-daughters. Ender and Halit pretend to be a happy couple in front of other people. But in fact, they do not love each other. When they are alone, they do not respect each other and have a dispute all the time.

Ender wants to get divorced from her husband without losing her social and financial status in the society. She knows that her husband is so clever and planned. Previously, Halit got married two times and got divorced from his wives without giving them any alimony or compensation. Ender does not want to be in the same situation as Halit's ex-wives. For this reason, she makes a plan and hires Yildiz.

According to Ender's plan, Yildiz will work as Halit's assitant at the company. She will do her best to seduce Halit and have a romantic relationship with him. By this way, Ender will blame her husband for infidelity and get a high compensation in court. Yildiz, eventually accepts Ender's offer but she has her own plans too. Her decision not only will affect her life but also that of her sister. (<https://www.turkishdrama.com/forbidden-fruit-yasak-elma.html>, 16/05/2020)

APPENDIX 2: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Key viewing aspects	Family one (Maria Cremilda's family)	Family two (Matusse's family)	Family three (Bia's family)
Primary telenovela	Vidas opostas (Opposite lives)	Caminhos do coração (paths of the heart)	Fruto proibido (Forbidden fruit)
Other telenovelas	Not mentioned	- Terra prometida (promised land) - A Dona (the madam)	Malhação and other not mentioned.
How often	Everyday	Every day and different telenovelas	Every day, different telenovelas throughout the day.
Reasons to watch telenovelas	- The telenovela is interesting - Like the storyline - The telenovelas teach us a lot of things, especially it shows us on how people can be bad and how to deal with those situations	- The telenovela has a biblical story - We learn a lot from there - It's a vengeance story, full of love and hate	To spend time To learn many things for life.

Who watches telenovela at home	The whole family, except the husband, who watches telenovelas once in a while	The whole family, except the father, who is taxi (cab driver)	The whole family, and on some days, friends and neighbours.
What they like in telenovelas	Like the teachings that help cope with real-life challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Powerful character - Most of them teach us a lot of things that we can use in real life 	Fun and comic scenes in telenovela provide joy and help to relax.
What they do not like	People who are too eager for money that would do anything to have it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Display of sexual or erotic scenes, especially when there are children around - The falsity in telenovela, because are things that happen every day - Betrayal and falsity 	Violence and mistreatment.
Useful aspects from telenovela in real life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn innovative ways of doing things and work 	Humbleness, forgiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning how to relate to others - How to overcome difficult times

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn how to deal with people with different personalities - Learn new skills for life. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New life skills.
Example of practical usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managing personal relations with friends and neighbours - Negotiation skills, both in business and in social life. 	“Once I was inspired by a telenovela scene to forgive someone”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “I always use examples of uneducated people to tell my son he should be different and better” - “I also practice how to deal with others in my daily life” - “Sometimes we use the same jokes from telenovelas with our friends” - “we also use some teachings from telenovela”.
Who do you talk doabout telenovelas	With the family and some friends	Family members and friends	With family, neighbours and friends.
What aspects of telenovela you usually discuss?	Specially about fashion, but we usually talk about other interesting things, including some characters.	The stories of telenovela; characters’ behaviour	The stories from telenovela, the characters’ behaviour, as well as characters’ style and fashion performance.

<p>Relation to storylines</p>	<p>In some cases/parts of the telenovela, the story may be true, specifically when the parents choose fiancés for their children. It happens a lot in our society, when rich people think their children should not mix with poor people, as well as some white and Asian people, who do not allow their children to choose their spouses out of their cultural context.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most of the stories are true - Most of them happen every day in real life 	<p>Some stories can be true. Actually if you follow well the telenovela, there's always a teaching, they are teaching you should not do certain things.</p>
<p>Relation with characters</p>	<p>Easily connect to characters who relate to their life.</p>	<p>There is a "connection" to characters whose roles/life relate to their own life or inspire positive attitudes.</p>	<p>Characters always influence personal behaviour and inspire some imagination. "Sometimes you are stuck with no idea on something important, and suddenly you see a similar situation in telenovela, then you use the same ideas for your own situation".</p>

APPENDIX 3

Translated consent form



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

School of Journalism & Media Studies
Rhodes University

Tema da pesquisa: O consumo dos média e formação de identidade: O consumo das telenovelas Brasileiras em duas áreas diferentes da cidade de Maputo

Folha informativa do participante

Gostaríamos de convidá-lo a tomar parte no estudo acima mencionado, mas antes da sua decisão, por favor leia a seguinte informação

Qual é o propósito deste estudo

Com este estudo pretendemos entender como é que os residentes de KaMpfumo e Kamaxakeni interagem e constroem sentido das telenovelas Brasileiras, com base na sua experiência de vida.

Quem está a realizar o estudo?

O estudo está a ser realizado por Alvo Ofumane, estudante de Mestrado da Universidade de Rhodes, com o número de estudante: 15o3877
Ele é orientado pelo Prof. Lynette Steenveld.

A quem é pedido para participar?

O estudo abrange indivíduos consumidores assíduos das telenovelas Brasileiras. Portanto, quatro famílias das duas áreas de estudo serão seleccionadas, com base nos seus hábitos de consumo de telenovelas Brasileiras, sendo duas de *KaMpfumo* e outras duas de *KaMaxakeni*. O foco na família como unidade de análise visa entender a interacção e dinâmicas de poder dentro do ambiente familiar, enquanto assistem às telenovelas.

Os seus direitos como participante da pesquisa

A participação neste estudo é completamente voluntária e anónima. A informação recolhida durante a pesquisa será usada apenas para o propósito deste estudo e serão feitos todos os esforços para garantir a confidencialidade da informação pessoal dos participantes. Por favor note que enquanto o seu nome será registado com a informação, o mesmo não será usado no relatório. Toda a informação identificável será armazenada de forma segura em um computador protegido com chave de acesso, e apenas o pesquisador (e o supervisor se for

aplicável), e os membros do comité de ética terão acesso à mesma. Toda a informação identificável será destruída após o estudo ou depois de 15 anos, dependendo do que acontecer primeiro.

Se decidir não participar, não haverá consequências negativas. Por favor esteja ciente que se decidir participar, poderá sair do estudo à qualquer momento e os seus dados serão retornados a si ou serão destruídos. Também poderá decidir não responder a uma pergunta específica.

O que irá acontecer com os resultados do estudo?

Os resultados deste estudo irão fornecer a informação necessária para entender e interpretar como as telenovelas são usadas como um instrumento adicional no processo da formação da identidade pelos residentes das duas áreas da cidade de Maputo. Esta será uma grande contribuição para as várias abordagens teóricas que tentam explicar a relação entre os textos mediáticos e a audiência, portanto, o relatório deste estudo será usado para fins académicos, primeiro ao nível da Universidade de Rhodes e Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, mas também em qualquer parte do mundo, com interesse no estudo.

Folha de Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido

**** A ser assinado em duplicado - uma cópia a ser devolvida ao pesquisador e uma cópia a ser retida pelo participante**

Obrigado pela sua participação. Ao retornar este formulário, está indicar que leu a descrição do estudo, é maior de 18 anos, e que concorda com os termos descritos no curto questionário que se segue:

Li este formulário e recebi uma cópia do mesmo. Compreendo o propósito e a natureza deste estudo e estou a participar de forma voluntária. Entendo que poderei sair do estudo à qualquer momento, sem nenhuma penalização ou consequências. **Tive todas as minhas perguntas respondidas para a minha satisfação.**

Yes / Sim

No / Não

Concordo em fazer parte deste estudo e por este meio concedo permissão para que os dados gerados desta pesquisa sejam usados nas publicações do pesquisador sobre este assunto.

Yes / Sim

No / Não

Concedo permissão sob as seguintes condições:

Concede permissão para que a pesquisa seja gravada e salva para fins de revisão pelo pesquisador, supervisor/investigador principal, e o comité de ética.

Yes /Sim

No /Não

Concede permissão para que as gravções desta pesquisa sejam usadas em apresentações ou documentos deste estudo.

Yes /Sim

No /Não

Nome e assinatura do participante _____

Data _____

Nome e assinatura do pesquisador _____

Data _____

Contacto

Se tiver quaisquer questões à qualquer momento sobre os procedimentos deste estudo, poderá contactar o pesquisador +258-848482629;

alvoofumane@gmail.com

Obrigado por levar tempo para ler este formulário

APPENDIX 4

Example of observation and interview notes (rough, not edited)

Second family: Mr. Matusse's family

Family members: Mrs. Isaura Armando Bila – mr. Matusse's wife and mother; Luísa Marcelo – one of the daughters; Jenifer Priscila Júlio – another daughter – the two daughters seem having around 23-27 years old.

Residence: Kamaxakeni neighbourhood

Telenovela: Caminhos do coração (paths of the heart)

Watching telenovela at Mr. Matusse's family: Observation notes

Telenovela Time: 17:30-18:30

First day: 10/02/2020

At Mrs. Isaura Bila's house, she and other family members are in the living room, some having meals, a man, visibly a visitor, is sitting in one of the armchairs and eating food (later I learnt he is the father of one of Mrs. Isaura's granddaughter)

The family members are all paying attention to telenovela, but once in a while they take care of house work – follow up question: do they sit like this every day?

Mr. Matusse, the head of the family and who I negotiated with, is not at home as he is taxi (cab) driver, her wife, Ms. Isaura, is in charge of the family.

Overall, the first day did not offer a lot for my observation purposes.

Second day, 11/02/2020

- Arrived on time, only one family member was at home, the young man who was also present in the previous day, together with the children. The waitress informed that the rest of the family went somewhere nearby – it shows the family is not always tied to telenovela time, the telenovela does not guide their life schedule, but rather just a part of the house devices;
- The two of us start watching telenovela, he seems comfortable with my presence, but there is no much talking, beside the kids around
- *Do you chose a telenovela to watch or you do it by chance, based on your availability?
- 20 minutes after the telenovela started, the rest of the family members arrive at home, the mother and her two daughters (Mrs. Isaura and her two daughters);
- One of the daughters comments a scene of the telenovela, but the conversation doesn't evolve much

- *They are all excited when a teaser of another telenovela that is aired in late hours is being showed during the break, they say they can't lose tonight's episode of "escrava Isaura" (slave Isaura)
 - To follow up question – *what do you most like in Escrava Isaura telenovela that you were so excited?
- Ms. Isaura also sings a song from a coca cola advertisement during the break – she looks very familiar with the advertisement;
- Ms. Isaura and one of the daughters comment one scene of the telenovela, clarifying what was happening;
- The two daughters and the young brother (the young man who was at home when I arrived) talk about various topics, but not from telenovela – telenovela time seems a good moment to have conversation or chat about other things in life;
- One of the daughters and their young brother comment about one scene of the telenovela, but not clear what the conversation is about;
- One of the daughters argues on what a character in the telenovela says (a woman doctor doing human/mutant experiments), saying she is doing a cruel thing.

Third day, 12/02/2020

- Only one daughter (Luísa) is at home when I arrived, she was not watching TV. Ms. Isaura and the other daughters (Priscila) are not at home
- The daughter at home invites me to sit in the living room and switches on the TV.
- 10 minutes later the young man arrives and not coming to the living room, but taking care of other things inside the house
- The daughter (Luísa) inside the house is partly watching telenovela and handling her cell phone and other things in the house.
- 20 minutes later Ms. Isaura and the two daughters arrive.
- Ms. Isaura is not sitting in the living room for telenovela, and the rest of the family is not also very keen in watching telenovela today.
- Overall, the day is not very productive in terms of observation, they all seem worried with other things, but not sure what that may be, so their attention is not in the telenovela.

After the telenovela ends, I ask if I can ask questions, they are all comfortable to have the interview, so I start with follow up questions, based on things I observed during the three days.

Follow up questions - group questions

*Do you chose a telenovela to watch or you do it by chance, based on your availability?

- One of the daughters (Luísa) normally choses what to watch; Ms. Isaura and the other daughter also chose specific telenovelas, but their choices are influenced by other

schedules as they are doing small businesses during the day. So Priscila watches the 11pm telenovela, while Ms. Isaura's favourite telenovela is at 9pm.

*do you worry/rush home when the telenovela time comes while you are away from home?

- Priscila doesn't worry as she can watch in her cell phone (TV play), but here data becomes additional cost.

*Yesterday you were all excited with *escrava isaura*'s teaser of the upcoming episode, what do you most like there?

- Ms. Isaura (the mother) likes it because of one of the character (Ms. Alonso), his obsession for a woman and the crazy and evil things he does to get Isaura; also, because in tonight's episode, the bad man was going to "pay" his sins, he is a bad man and treats badly Isaura, the key character of the telenovela; overall, they all like the story of the telenovela, it helps to understand the cruelty of the slavery time, and how love can change everything.

Qualitative Interviews' guiding questions for individual interviews

- Can you give the name/s of telenovela/s you watch?
 - Terra prometida (2pm) (the telenovela has a biblical story, so as bible readers, we learn a lot from there, but other aspects of the telenovela are not necessarily in the Bible);
 - A Dona – reason: it's a vengeance story, full of love and hate.
- How often do you watch telenovelas?
 - Priscila – I watch once in a while as I already saw the first part, so I already know most of the story;
 - Luísa, the other daughter sees telenovela when she has time.
- Why do you watch this/these particular telenovela/s?
 - Mother Isaura – Terra prometida (2pm) (the telenovela has a biblical story, so as bible readers, we learn a lot from there, but other aspects of the telenovela are not necessarily in the Bible)
- What aspects of telenovelas do you like?
 - I like the powerful character of one of the woman in the telenovela, independent and determined – A Dona – Priscila
 - Ms. Isaura – A Terra prometida – I like Josue's character's role, he is a leader and that is inspiring in real-life.
 - Ms. Isaura – because most of them teach us a lot of things that we can use in real life, unfortunately some young people prefer using the negative aspects – I learn a lot from telenovelas.
- What you don't like?

- Ms. Isaura – I dislike telenovelas that display sexual or erotic scenes, especially when there are children around
- The falsity in telenovela, because are things that happen every day – Priscila.
- Betrayal and falsity
- Do you believe in the storyline of the telenovela? How true it may be?
 - Most of the stories are true. For example, the 7pm telenovela (*Amor sem igual – unique love*), those are stories that happen every day.
- Who do you prefer watching telenovelas with? Why?
 - It is always pleasant when everyone is present.
- Do you discuss issues from telenovelas with friends/parents?
 - Ms. Isaura – when my husband was not taxi driver, I watched with him, I warned him of the telenovela time and we sat to watch; I also like watching with my grand daughter, because she always helps to explain the stories in the telenovela, it is horrible watching alone.
- What aspects of telenovelas do you find relevant to your daily life and how?
 - Luísa – many things, eg. “do not do to others what you don’t want to be done to you”; always forgive (once I was inspired by telenovela to forgive someone).
- What characters do you like in those telenovelas and what you don’t like and why?
 - Luísa – Maria (her role, in the beginning she suffers from a crime she did not commit, but at the end everything becomes fine); Marcelo Pedro (he always like justice); and Vavá (no given reason).
 - Ms. Isaura – she likes Isaura because her role teaches a lot, “anyone watching can learn a lot from her”; she learnt from her godmother, who became a mother to her “nowadays is rare to find people with that personality in real life”.
- Do you use some of the teachings or scenarios/discussions from telenovelas in your daily life?
 - Answered in previous questions.
- How do you relate telenovelas to your own culture (aspects of life around you)?
 - Being generous, humble and forgive others.
- Do you think telenovelas impact on your own life and culture?
 - Ms. Isaura – yes, the way I relate to other people, I learnt a lot from *caminhos do coracao*, particularly forgiveness; I don’t watch a telenovela for granted, I always watch because there’s something I can use from there. (she doesn’t like movies because are violent and they teach banditry for children; one of the grandson used to imitate the use of the gun that he saw in a movie).

APPENDIX 5

Signed consent forms

Academic Research Information and Consent Form - TEMPLATE

Folha de Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido
** A ser assinado em duplicado - uma cópia a ser devolvida ao pesquisador e uma cópia a ser retida pelo participante

Obrigado pela sua participação. Ao retornar este formulário, está indicando que leu a descrição do estudo, é maior de 18 anos, e que concorda com os termos descritos no curto questionário que se segue:

Li este formulário e recebi uma cópia do mesmo. Compreendo o propósito e a natureza deste estudo e estou a participar de forma voluntária. Entendo que poderei sair do estudo a qualquer momento, sem nenhuma penalização ou consequências. Tive todas as minhas perguntas respondidas para a minha satisfação.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concordo em fazer parte deste estudo e por este meio concedo permissão para que os dados gerados desta pesquisa sejam usados nas publicações do pesquisador sobre este assunto.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concedo permissão sob as seguintes condições:

- que o meu nome não seja divulgado

Concedo permissão para que a pesquisa seja gravada e salva para fins de revisão pelo pesquisador, supervisor/investigador principal, e a comitê de ética.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concedo permissão para que as gravações desta pesquisa sejam usadas em apresentações ou documentos deste estudo.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Nome e assinatura do participante Isaura Amanda Bilo
Data 12-02-2020

Nome e assinatura do pesquisador Alvo Cotumane
Data 12/02/2020

Contacto
Se tiver quaisquer questões à qualquer momento sobre os procedimentos deste estudo, poderá contactar o pesquisador +258-848482629; alvocotumane@gmail.com.

Obrigado por levar tempo para ler este formulário

Academic Research Information and Consent Form - TEMPLATE

Folha de Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido

** A ser assinado em duplicado - uma cópia a ser devolvida ao pesquisador e uma cópia a ser retida pelo participante

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Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concordo em fazer parte deste estudo e por este meio concedo permissão para que os dados gerados desta pesquisa sejam usados nas publicações do pesquisador sobre este assunto.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concedo permissão sob as seguintes condições:

Não divulgar o meu nome

Concedo permissão para que a pesquisa seja gravada e salva para fins de revisão pelo pesquisador, supervisor/investigador principal, e o comité de ética.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concedo permissão para que as gravações desta pesquisa sejam usadas em apresentações ou documentos deste estudo.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Nome e assinatura do participante Jennifer Pusca Júlio

Data 12.07.2020

Nome e assinatura do pesquisador Alvaro Abital Oliveira

Data 12.07.2020

Contacto

Se tiver quaisquer questões à qualquer momento sobre os procedimentos deste estudo, poderá contactar o pesquisador +258-848482629; alvoofumane@gmail.com

Obrigado por levar tempo para ler este formulário

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Folha de Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido

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Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concordo em fazer parte deste estudo e por este meio concedo permissão para que os dados gerados desta pesquisa sejam usados nas publicações do pesquisador sobre este assunto.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concedo permissão sob as seguintes condições:

Concedo permissão para que a pesquisa seja gravada e salva para fins de revisão pelo pesquisador, supervisor/investigador principal, e o comité de ética.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concedo permissão para que as gravações desta pesquisa sejam usadas em apresentações ou documentos deste estudo.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Nome e assinatura do participante Maria Cecília

Data de 09/2020

Nome e assinatura do pesquisador Alvo Otumane

Data de 09/2020

Contacto

Se tiver quaisquer questões à qualquer momento sobre os procedimentos deste estudo, poderá contactar o pesquisador +258-848482629; alvootumane@gmail.com

Obrigado por levar tempo para ler este formulário

Academic Research Information and Consent Form - TEMPLATE

Folha de Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido

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Li este formulário e recebi uma cópia do mesmo. Compreendo o propósito e a natureza deste estudo e estou a participar de forma voluntária. Entendo que poderei sair do estudo a qualquer momento, sem nenhuma penalização ou consequências. Tive todas as minhas perguntas respondidas para a minha satisfação.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concordo em fazer parte deste estudo e por este meio concedo permissão para que os dados gerados desta pesquisa sejam usados nas publicações do pesquisador sobre este assunto.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concedo permissão sob as seguintes condições:

Concedo permissão para que a pesquisa seja gravada e salva para fins de revisão pelo pesquisador, supervisor/investigador principal, e o comité de ética.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concedo permissão para que as gravações desta pesquisa sejam usadas em apresentações ou documentos deste estudo.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Nome e assinatura do participante Roba Abdul Ismail Abasi
Data 11/03/2020

Nome e assinatura do pesquisador Alvoofumane
Data 11/03/2020

Contacto

Se tiver quaisquer questões a qualquer momento sobre os procedimentos deste estudo, poderá contactar o pesquisador +253-848482629; alvoofumane@gmail.com

Obrigado por levar tempo para ler este formulário



Academic Research Information and Consent Form - TEMPLATE

Folha de Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido

**** A ser assinado em duplicado - uma cópia a ser devolvida ao pesquisador e uma cópia a ser retida pelo participante**

Obrigado pela sua participação. Ao retornar este formulário, está indicar que leu a descrição do estudo, é maior de 18 anos, e que concorda com os termos descritos no curto questionário que se segue:

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Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concordo em fazer parte deste estudo e por este meio concedo permissão para que os dados gerados desta pesquisa sejam usados nas publicações do pesquisador sobre este assunto.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concedo permissão sob as seguintes condições:

noo concedo o nome no caso

Concede permissão para que a pesquisa seja gravada e salva para fins de revisão pelo pesquisador, supervisor/investigador principal, e o comité de ética.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Concede permissão para que as gravações desta pesquisa sejam usadas em apresentações ou documentos deste estudo.

Yes / Sim
No / Não

Nome e assinatura do participante Isma marcelo
Data 12.02.2020

Nome e assinatura do pesquisador Alvo
Data 12/02/2020

Contacto

Se tiver quaisquer questões a qualquer momento sobre os procedimentos deste estudo, poderá contactar o pesquisador +258-848482629, alvoofumane@gmail.com

Obrigado por levar tempo para ler este formulário