



CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN ANGOLA: DILEMMAS AND PATHS FOR PROMOTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN ANGOLA: DILEMMAS AND PATHS FOR PROMOTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

Egidio Martina Manuel

Soyo Polytechnic Institute

Nimi ya Lukeni Higher University Institute

SUMMARY

This article aims to analyze the Angolan educational scenario in terms of cultural diversity for the promotion of inclusive educational practices. Methodologically, the text has a qualitative approach and was materialized from the search for documents considered relevant linked to educational policies in the country and abroad, for example, the Basic Law of the Education and Teaching System (Law No. 17/16, of October 7, amended by Law No. 32/20, of August 12) and the Legal Regime for the Initial Training of Kindergarten Teachers, Primary School Teachers and Secondary School Teachers (Presidential Decree No. 273/20, of October 21). In the context of international agendas on human rights, it was necessary to resort to provisions of (UNESCO, 1994 and UNESCO, 2010). The results showed that, taking into account the impact of globalization, Angolan schools must be equipped and capable of implementing the legislative guidelines guaranteed by universal agreements that allow for peaceful habitability, without retaliation and other atrocities imposed by dominant cultures.

Keywords:Diversity, culture, Inclusive Education

ABSTRACT

This article aims to analyze the Angolan educational scenario in terms of cultural diversity in order to promote inclusive educational practices. Methodologically, the text has a qualitative approach and was materialized from the search for documents considered relevant related to educational policies in the country and abroad, for example, the Basic Law of the Education

and Teaching System (Law No. 17/16, of October 7, amended by Law No. 32/20, of August 12) and the Legal Framework for the Initial Training of Kindergarten Teachers, Primary School Teachers and Secondary School Teachers (Presidential Decree No. 273/20, of October 21). In the context of international agendas on human rights, it was necessary to resort to provisions of (UNESCO, 1994 and UNESCO, 2010). The results showed that, taking into account the impact of globalization, Angolan schools must be equipped and capable of implementing the legislative guidelines guaranteed by universal agreements that allow for peaceful habitation, without retaliation and other atrocities imposed by dominant cultures.

Keywords:Diversity, culture, Inclusive Education

1. INTRODUCTION

In Angola today, transformations are manifested in all aspects of social, political, economic and cultural inquiry. This is justified by the fact that, with each passing day, scientific and technological development, considered as essential elements of the aforementioned changes, tends to consider better ways to establish a fair, impartial and attentive framework in all the aforementioned spheres.

This is a country that experienced a long period of civil war, lasting almost 30 years, which according to history began in 1975, having achieved peace and national reconciliation on April 4, 2002, a memorable moment that allowed for a set of notable transformations within the context of the transition from a socialist-oriented economy to a market economy, the approval of the Constitution of the Republic of Angola, in 2010, and the institutionalization of the democratic rule of law, with regular general elections being held in 2008, 2012, 2017 and concurrently, in 2022 (Brás, 2023).

Now, education being a social process that accompanies the evolution of these phenomena, has been the stage for several changes, many of which interfere or condition the interests of large numbers of city dwellers. This is because schools, as key spaces in the educational scenario, are characterized by growing cultural diversity, also resulting from several migratory movements recorded in recent decades. Therefore, it is essential to think about the role and challenges of the professionals who work in these institutions and to fully understand the global causes responsible for this remarkable multiplicity.

The concept of cultural diversity has become one of the frequent debates in the educational area in Angola, of major public initiatives, with the purpose of following up on a constitutional principle with a fundamental desire to build a free, fair, democratic, supportive, peaceful, egalitarian and socially progressive society for all (Angolan Constitution, 2010) and followed in the LBSEE No. 17/2016, of October 7, amended by Law No. 32/20, of August 12, in which educational agents understand the democratization of education as the obligation and duty of the State to grant the same rights to every citizen without distinction of social class, race, and access to education. With this, it is understood that attending to cultural diversity is the most effective and efficient way to achieve the integral development and socialization of the individual in particular and national prosperity in general, conferring rights and duties, stipulated by law, from birth to death, thus promoting inclusive education.

It is in this regard that the present text presented here consists of a study on the theme "Cultural diversity in Angola: Dilemmas and paths for promoting an inclusive educational practice". With the expectation of analyzing how the educational scenarioThe Angolan school has been working on and addressing the phenomenon of cultural diversity among its direct surroundings. It should be noted that, in addition to these, administrative bodies and other entities have also shared this space, each of which presents its own very different habits, customs and beliefs. Therefore, it is the school's mission to guarantee equal educational opportunities, integration and social justice to its members.

Without ambiguity, bringing up the issue of cultural diversity present daily in our schools is precisely the need to also understand the synchronization or even the familiarity that exists in the two terminologies "Education and Culture" that often confuse their impact on the education of children, adolescents and young people. In other words, in one direction the phenomenon of education stands out and in the other, the traditional thought that prevails in culture as the driving force or source that sustains the educational scenario, a favorable environment resulting from the patterns of individuals.

For its organization, the article is divided into the following sections: first, the evolution and organization of the Education and Teaching System in Angola is presented; then, the issue of cultural diversity in schools and its impacts are addressed in different topics, always in an attempt to achieve a more inclusive education. Finally, the details of the

method apparatus, discussion of results and final considerations on the present approach.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Evolution and Organization of the Education and Teaching System in

Angola As in any part of the world, in Angola education is a human right enshrined and derived from the Declaration of Human Rights and the Constitution of the Republic of Angola, and has a properly planned and systematized articulation and horizons.

The Angolan education system, a system that had its genesis in the educational policies of the colonial government, and which has undergone revisions and reforms throughout the post-independence period until today, with an educational reform approved in 2001 in force. This new educational policy of the Republic of Angola provides for the inclusion of local languages of African origin in the Education System, which exemplifies a movement that attempts to rescue these languages to enhance the cultural heritage overshadowed during the period of colonization (Chocolate, 2016).

The same author stated that the evolution of Education and Teaching in Angola is characterized by the existence of three distinct development philosophies, which, in turn, determined different principles of action for the training of human resources. The first moment is characterized in colonial Angola. According to Cruz (2019), education was organized by levels that prioritized Eurocentric knowledge and its submission to the colonizer. It was divided into two groups: one of the European colonizers, the "civilized" and the other of the African natives. It was from this separation that inequality between "colors" (whites, mixed races and blacks) arose. Prejudice and discrimination in the educational area show the strength of the colonizer, which is still reflected today.

The second period, from 1978 to 1991, came with the first Education and Teaching System after independence. According to data collected from the Ministry of Education (June 4, 2014), it was based on principles of democratization and extended free education and continued until the date of the Round Table on Education, where the Ministry of Education defined the five-year period 1991-1995 as the period for preparing and reformulating the new Education System.

In 1977, two years after independence, Angola adopted a new Education and Teaching System characterized essentially by greater opportunities for access to education and continued studies, free education and ongoing training for teaching staff.

In the meantime, with the pressing need to train capable citizens to expand their educational horizons in line with future needs, Angola had to ratify agreements with other parts of the world, with special attention to Eastern Europe, despite the problems that were being experienced at the time, the type of policy adopted by the executive after achieving territorial hegemony and in all social spheres. It is worth remembering that it was decided to embrace the socialist regime, as we know that in this regime, everyone's life is based on principles of equal opportunities and distribution of goods to all.

The aforementioned commitments also aimed to import education professionals to mediate the educational process in Angola. Therefore, the training was directed at some education subsystems, with particular emphasis on secondary and higher education.

The current framework is characterized by teaching and learning, allowing for the individual's comprehensive preparation for the demands of individual and collective life (article 2 of the Basic Law of the Education and Teaching System no. 17/16, of October 7), amended by Law no. 32/20 of August 12, on an essentially scientific basis.

In this sense, teaching and learning are processes that optimize a set of propositions of a given country, and are carried out through the name Education and Teaching System. In the postulates of Angola (2020) in its article 2, the Education and Teaching System is defined as the set of structures, modalities and educational institutions, through which the educational process is carried out, aimed at the harmonious and integral formation of the individual, with a view to building a free, democratic, lawful society of peace and social progress.

In article 17, the operationalization of the Education and Teaching System, aiming to fulfill its purposes, is done through four levels of education and a structure that comprises six subsystems.

As for the **levels**:

- Preschool Education;

- Primary Education;
- Secondary Education;
- Higher education.

As for the **Subsystems**:

- Preschool Education Subsystem;
- General Education Subsystem;
- Technical Professional Secondary Education Subsystem;
- Teacher Training Subsystem;
- Adult Education Subsystem;
- Higher Education Subsystem.

It is believed that with the functioning of the levels and subsystems of teaching and education and the exemption of any monetary payment, except in some specific cases of public schools, the possibility of membership increased for many city dwellers who were also in a situation of financial vulnerability. This opening allowed all those who were not educated in the colonial era for various reasons to embrace this great opportunity, reducing the high rates of people who had disabilities related to the literacy process, taking into account the antagonisms that marked national history.

2.2. The School in ensuring inclusive education

In the current context of education, there has been much debate about cultural diversity in schools, which has been a topic worked on by many authors, in which the ways of respecting and considering diversity have provoked several discussions among those involved in education and teaching systems.

As already emphasized, diversity means multiplicity, variety, plurality of cultures, a differentiation of various cultures, in cultural, linguistic, traditional, religious, political aspects, among others. Here is the reason why it is believed:

These three qualities (multiplicities, varieties, pluralities) are not constructed in a vacuum nor are they limited to being abstract names. They are constructed in the social context and, therefore, diversity can be understood as a phenomenon that crosses time and space and becomes an increasingly serious issue the more complex societies become. It is, therefore, this diversity of cultures that gives rise to the cultural identity of a society (COSTA, 2008, p. 38).

The Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, a common heritage of humanity, points out in article 1 that culture takes on different forms over time and

space. This diversity is manifested in the originality and plurality of identities that characterize the groups and societies that make up humanity. A source of exchange, innovation and creativity, cultural diversity is as necessary for the human race as biological diversity is for nature.

In this sense, it constitutes the common heritage of humanity and must be recognized and consolidated for the benefit of present and future generations (UNESCO, 1994). Furthermore, in its article 5, it describes that cultural rights are an integral part of human rights and that they must be protected in the same way, both as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Cultural rights are an integral part of human rights and must be protected in the same way, as they are universal, inseparable and interdependent. The development of a creative society requires the full realization of cultural rights, as defined in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Articles 13 and 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

In defense of cultural diversity for human rights and against discrimination and racism, UNESCO, still in Article 4 of human rights, on guarantees of cultural diversity, determined that “the defense of cultural diversity is an ethical imperative, inseparable from respect for human dignity”. It implies the commitment to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the rights of persons belonging to minorities and indigenous peoples.

No one can invoke cultural diversity to violate human rights guaranteed by international law, nor to limit their scope. Based on these assumptions, we emphasize that it is urgent to consider and value the different knowledge and cultures of the population in general, and of students in particular, aiming at the integration, inclusion and acceptance of all, regardless of their geographical, historical, cultural, linguistic and psychological backgrounds.

In the context of education, diversity in schools should be seen as normal as existence itself; instead of avoiding it, it is better to get used to living and working with it because diversity, like inequality, are normal manifestations of human beings, social facts, cultures and the responses of individuals to education in the classroom (Sacristán, 2002).

Marín (2003) also states that “education enables the preservation of diversity cultural, creates a democratic space, giving rise to the meeting and coexistence between different cultures”.

Peres (1999) refers to the school in the context of diversity in the following terms:

It must increasingly define itself as a place for meetings, dialogue, affection, coexistence, where everyone feels good and can participate and intervene in instructive/educational activities, interesting and stimulating, regardless of differences in race, ethnicity, sex, age, religion, language, culture – a school open to negotiation and cultural diversity, that is, a multi-intercultural school (PERES, 1999, p. 121).

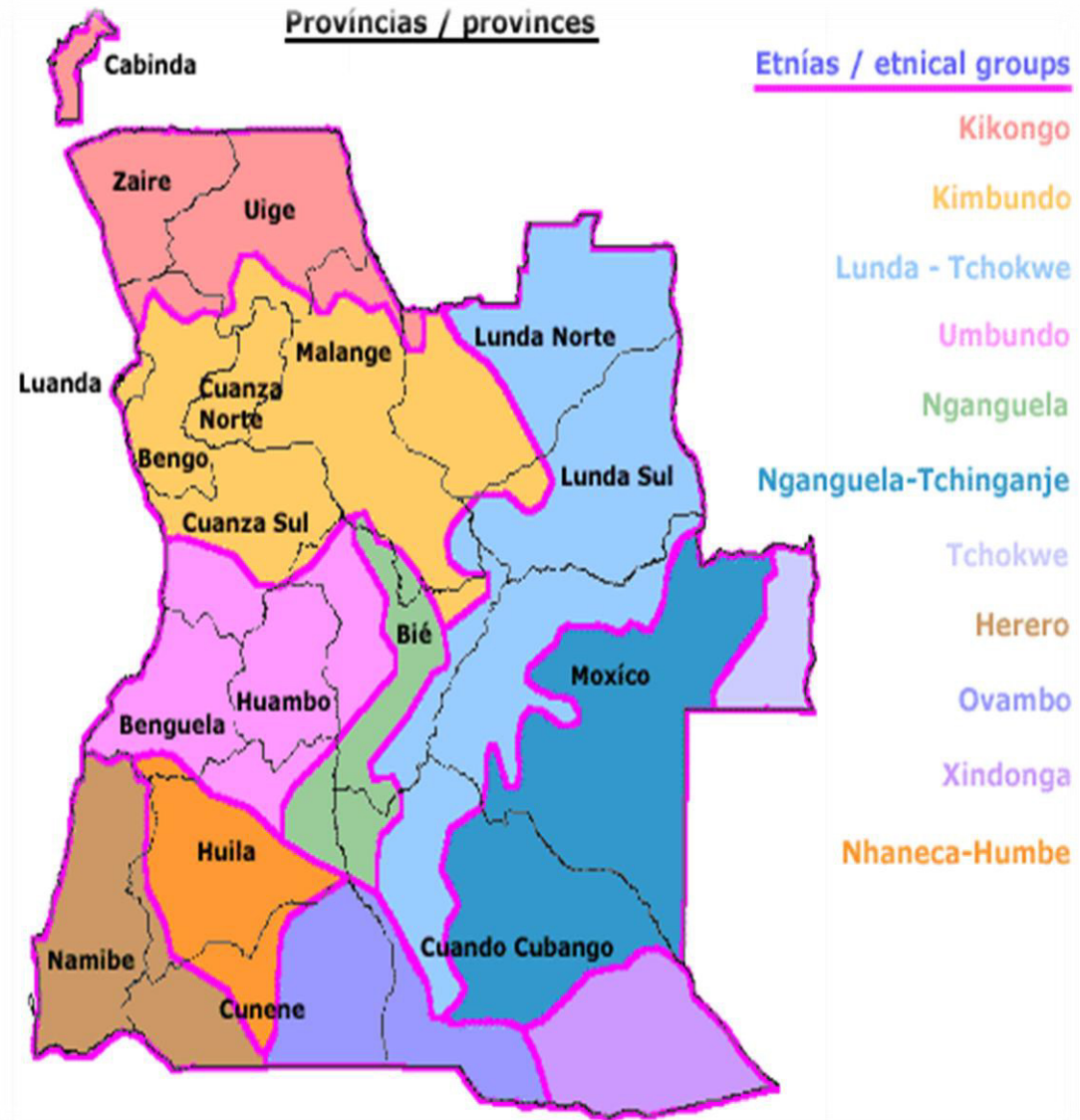
In turn, Varela (2014) highlights that a school that not only guarantees access, or even the achievement of academic success, but also creates the necessary conditions for equal opportunities for access, attendance and success; the adaptation of teaching and learning processes to the heterogeneous characteristics of students; the guarantee of everyone's right to a quality education, which, due to its multifactorial and multireferential nature, must be viewed from a systemic, holistic and integral perspective, correlating processes and results, so that the educational act translates into meaningful learning and prepares students for life.

A school with democratic characteristics, and which above all helps to accept different cultures, which is prepared to deal with heterogeneity, which sets the same objectives for everyone and which creates conditions for community participation. Therefore, the school is characterized by diversity, a place where great human and cultural diversity takes place. Hence the need to invest in a curriculum and pedagogy that responds to this diversity.

It is in this context of cultural diversity that education assumes its role fundamental, not only for the recognition of education for all but also for the recognition of difference as being the condition for the construction of individual processes.

The topic of cultural diversity raises a discussion that has been arising due to the fact that Angola, as a whole, is a nation of several nations, that is, a country, as we mentioned earlier, formed by several ethnolinguistic groups in the macro sense, such as the Bakongos, Kimbundu, Nganguela, Cokwe, Nhyaneka-Humbi, Umbundu, the Cuanhamas and the Hereros as the most expressive of this heterogeneity that constitutes Angola's great cultural wealth (Massanga, 2014).

Figure 1: Ethnic map from Angola



Source: Angola (2016).

3. MATERIAL AND METHOD

This research enables the validity and accreditation of taking a leading position that designates it as standards directed towards the qualitative approach that is related to understanding

9

¹There are 10 major ethnolinguistic groups. The names of the peoples vary greatly depending on the authors. There are sometimes ten different names for a single group. The subdivisions also vary, and there may be around 400 different “peoples”. Among the Bantu languages and Angola, two are entirely Angolan, Kimbundu and Umbundu. Kikongo is also spoken in Congo Kinshasa and Congo Brazzaville. Cokwe is also spoken in Zambia. The groups are Bantu and Khoi-San. The only non-Bantu ethnolinguistic group is the Khoi-San group, nomadic people also called Bushmen.

the essence of behaviors, habits, knowledge and other forms that enhance the current cultural heritage and that are of great interest to all social actors, management members, teachers, students and the community as a whole (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2005 as cited in Cruz, 2019, p. 10).

Regarding the methods, from the deductive and inductive, we started with an analysis of particular data and, consequently, we moved towards general notions of the approach. In other words, the premises raised provided possibilities for an exploration of the collection of particular data (Gil, 2008).

Due to the active role of the researcher, this was characterized by being non-participant, and being understood as passive, due to the fact that the observer only does so in a neutral way, that is, remaining oblivious to the data collected, positioning himself on the outside and remaining a mere spectator.

It should be noted that the observation process was characterized by different stages, the result of numerous observations made over the last 10 years of experience in student life and work in Angola, where it was possible to observe the different ways of looking at the scenario of cultural diversity in the school context, in which an unfavorable climate was noted that did little to benefit the process in question, where the dedication and commitment of teachers in adverse issues was never at its best, as well as the result of dialogues and debates held with different stakeholders in the school community who expressed divergent opinions about the real image of the school yesterday, today and the future perspective.

These procedures were used among the different consultation materials, referring to documentary analysis, carried out through the consultation of reports of activities carried out previously and which are According to Sousa and Baptista (2011), “documentary analysis has become an important technique in qualitative research – whether complementing information obtained through other techniques, or through the discovery of new aspects about a theme or problem”.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The bibliographic review and documentary analysis allowed the study of the links of a historical, pedagogical, didactic, normative, legal and juridical nature that allow determining the categorical apparatus that supports the theoretical relationship and includes the object of research - field of

action. In this, schools, together with their actors, are challenged to coexist in difference through respect and appreciation of the multicultural scenario evident in the classrooms, since, in the post-modern complexity, teaching implies challenges and demands.

It is aligned with the assumptions of UNESCO (2010), which stated that it is urgent to invest in cultural diversity and dialogue. In fact, integrating cultural diversity into a wide range of public policies, especially those in education and other areas – including those that are sometimes quite distant from cultural policies per se – can contribute to renewing the international community's approaches to the two key objectives of development and the pursuit of peace and conflict prevention. Angola is not exempt from this approach, and those responsible for this matter have therefore made efforts to ensure that this reality becomes clear.

We are faced with a free and convenient participation in which everyone, without exception, can be included. These rights are guaranteed by universal agreements that allow for peaceful habitation, without retaliation and other imposed atrocities. It should also be recognized that human rights can be violated or even attempted to be violated. Today, such practices are recurrent, and there are cultural monopolies that are highly likely to instill a specific vision of elevating and degrading contexts.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Due to its affirmation in the context of nations, Angola is a signatory to different legal diplomas at an international level that enshrine peaceful coexistence and enjoyment of the benefits that guarantee a fair, impartial and accepted framework in the full era of postmodernity. As a result of the reflections of the phenomenon of globalization, uncontrollable migratory mobility that has been taking place every day, in addition to the geographical location and vulnerability of its borders, advocate special and careful attention by educational actors in the elaboration of different educational policies, taking into account the growing social heterogeneity that requires the fulfillment of human rights known to all.

Next, cultural diversity is a movement that marks the current educational scenario and is often seen in a prejudiced and discriminatory format in the school environment, thus constituting its main challenges. Therefore, it brings together individuals from the most diverse origins and of skin such as white, black, yellow..., resulting from the

different beliefs, art, morals, customs, language, religion, origin or background that inhabit a specific geographical area.

Given the much-vaunted cultural diversity evident in our schools, education agents must be versatile professionals, and not rely on a single model of student, curriculum, content, pedagogical practices and school activities as a whole.

REFERENCES

- ANGOLA, M. **You peoples, or groups ethnolinguistic.**
<https://lingalog.net/cours/jpc/palops/cinco/angola> , 2016.
- ANGOLA. **Constitution of the Republic of the Republic.** Luanda, Angola: National Press, 2010.
- ANGOLA. Presidential Decree No. 109/11, of 26 May –**Statute of the Teacher Training Subsystem.** Luanda, Angola: Official Gazette Series I, No. 98, 2011.
- ANGOLA. Presidential Decree No. 273/20, of 21 October –**Legal Framework for the Initial Training of Kindergarten Teachers, Primary School Teachers and Secondary School Teachers.** Official Gazette Series I, No. 168. Luanda, Angola: National Press, 2020.
- ANGOLA. Law No. 13/01, of December 31 –**Basic Law of the Education System.** Official Gazette, Series I, No. 170. Luanda, Angola: National Press, 2001.
- ANGOLA. Law No. 17/16, of October 7 –**Basic Law of the Education and Teaching System.** Official Gazette, Series I, No. 170. Luanda, Angola: National Press, 2016.
- BRAS, C. and SILVA, E.A. **Teacher training policies in Angola: trajectory and challenges.** <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/374725423>, 2023.
- CHOCOLATE, FA M. **Teaching in Higher Education at ISCED-Cabinda (Angola): Teacher training - performance - pedagogical practices.** [Doctoral Thesis] Federal University of Minas Gerais, 2016.
- COSTA, M. **Curriculum and pedagogy in times of proliferation of difference: Trajectories and processes of teaching and learning,** 2008.
- CROSS, J.M.S. **The role of Initial Teacher Training Institutions in the creation and development of ICT skills: the case of ISCED – Benguela.** [[PhD Thesis]. University of Lisbon. 2019.

GIL, A.C. **How to develop research projects**. São Paulo: Atlas, 2008. MARIN, J.

Globalization, cultural diversity and educational practice. Curitiba: Educational Dialogue Journal, v.4, no. 8. (Online): <http://www.paulinas.org.br>, 2003.

MASSANGA, J.P. **Cultural Diversity in Cabinda: Study on the Identities and Cultural Practices of the Bawoio of Yabi**. Dissertation presented to the Postgraduate Program in Education – Knowledge and Social Inclusion – of the Faculty of Education of the Federal University of Minas Gerais, as a partial requirement for obtaining the title of Master in Education, 2014.

PERES, A.N. **Intercultural Education: Utopia or Reality? (Teachers' thought processes in the face of cultural diversity: integration of migrant minorities in schools)**. Profeditions, Porto, 1999.

SACRISTAN, G. **Construction of discourse on diversity and its practices: attention to diversity**. Porto Alegre: Artmed Publishing, 2002.

SOUSA, M.J. and Baptista, C.S. **How to do research, dissertations, theses and reports according to Bologna**. Lisbon: Pactor. in <https://prezi.com/8xlgp1-ovtu7/metodologiade-recolha-e-tratamento-da-informacao>, 2011.

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). **World Conference on Educational Needs. Access and Quality**. Salamanca. Ministry of Education and Science of Spain, 1994.

UNESCO. **UNESCO World Report: Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural Dialogue Summary**, 2010. Available at: unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001847/184755por.pdf Accessed on: 14 January 2015.

VARELA, B. **Effectiveness and challenge of inclusive education in Cape Verde**. Dr. António Leren Square. Portugal. Online: <http://excelenciaeducativa.blogs.sapo.cv>, 2014.