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**An examination of the suitability of PADev as a method for effective participatory assessment of the development of higher education institutions: the case of Eduardo Mondlane University (1976-2016)**  
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## CHAPTER 5

### Discussion

This chapter discusses the suitability of the PAdEv methods for effective assessment of the development of an institution such as EMU based on the PAdEv experiment. For that purpose, the discussion is held around the four research questions that are addressed in the following sections: (i) To what extent can the PAdEv method of assessing development and change at EMU in a participatory way be effective in measuring the impact of development interventions at EMU? (ii) Which development interventions were implemented at EMU between 1976 and 2016? (iii) How did the development interventions change EMU between 1976 and 2016? (iv) What is the stakeholders' assessment of the impact of the development interventions at EMU?

#### 5.1. The effectiveness of the PAdEv method in measuring the impact of development interventions at EMU

Concerning the first research question, on the effectiveness of the PAdEv method of assessing development and change at EMU in measuring the impact of development interventions at EMU, the data show that the method itself is flexible to the extent that the model does not require the application of the original design for the validation of the results.

The PAdEv data imported into the NVivo 12 enabled the generation of several analytical categories through open and manual coding of context units, which were small units of the transcribed text that described or represented a specific code afterwards coded in recording units. The precision of the PAdEv tools itself provides insight on potential analytical categories that enlightens the coding process as it leads the collection of specific data set. The consistency of the codes generated through open and manual coding was verified by applying the auto-coding to the data files.

Through the coding process that enabled the categorisation of the data - data classification and reduction - themes (recording units) and subthemes emerged from the data. The most relevant codes were related events, changes, development interventions, and university impacts. The identified themes were (i) external events affecting the university; (ii) changes and its impact on the university; (iii) development interventions and its impact on the university; and (iv) university impacts stressing the PAdEv tool for impact measurement.

Whereas the recollection of events and changes by participants provided the broad picture of the university development context, the development interventions denoted the way the university community experienced change intended to transform the

university in different points in time in order to meet its planned goals. The university impacts enabled to assess from participants' perspectives the relevance of the university in the larger societal environment.

As conceived, PAdDev integrates the following four principles (see Chapter 2): (i) it takes the poverty context as a point of departure, focusing on people's own assessment, valuation, and interpretation of life changes, and what is causal to those changes; (ii) it is a bottom-up approach, based on individual and group discussions among presumed beneficiaries of development interventions; (iii) it embraces a long-term perspective, covering several decades, so as to incorporate the experiences and perceptions of different age-groups within the study population; and (iv) the perspective strives for holism, to apprehend all sorts of development initiatives, irrespective of sector and agency (Dietz, 2012). Moreover, as a participatory approach that impacts evaluation, PAdDev has several assumptions, amongst them collective learning and knowledge production, democratic participation and inclusion, the equal validity of participants' views, and empowerment.

The first principle is based on the presumption of an existing context of poverty alleviation and societal change through external development interventions and beneficiaries' involvement in the identification and assessment of the changes. The PAdDev experiment in EMU was not meant to assess the impact of development intervention in changing a poverty scenario as such. Instead, the PAdDev aim was to portray the trajectory of the university's transformation from a colonial university, severely affected by a massive exodus of teaching personnel, to a well-established higher education institution in the local environment and acknowledged in the region. However, the data showed that Eduardo Mondlane University defined itself as a developmental university, and, as such, from the beginning embraced, relied on, and benefited from international cooperation translated into different forms, since the institution experienced a period of scarcity of human, material, and financial resources.

The second principle concerns stakeholders' participation in the evaluation, which presupposes their active engagement in a situation where, according to Mathe and Greene (1997), various interests and needs generate the content and form of the evaluation. PAdDev workshops were designed to engage (while collecting data) relatively homogeneous groups from all relevant categories of the population in the study area. The demographic, sociocultural, and socioeconomic composition of the community being studied are the relevant categories that define its stratification (Dietz et al., 2011), particularly in the rural community setting, where PAdDev was first developed. Concerning EMU, a different approach to ensure representativeness was employed. Instead of relatively homogenous groups, heterogeneous groups were formed, and for the selection of study participants amongst the university staff, three categories of participants were considered, specifically the demographic characteristics

(gender particularly), academic qualifications ('licenciado', master's and doctorate), and professional categories (assistant, assistant professor, and full professor).

The PAdEv workshops at EMU involved four staff categories divided in the same number of groups. The first category consisted of the boards of directors, which included the deans, deputy directors, and the heads of departments. The second category group included the staff, amongst them lecturers, researchers, and technical and administrative personnel. The third category included the alumni. A fourth category was the group of EMU's central managers representing the central directorates.

The third principle entails that we take into account the institution's life cycle, which requires the inclusion in the sample of elements of the population that have witnessed and experienced all past and present stages of the institution's life. It also highlights the notions of familiarity and memory, either individual or collective, without which it would not be possible to do the listing of events, changes and development interventions as predicted through the PAdEv method that led to further participatory local history writing. The gathering of the data begins from the recollection of past experiences on change and development interventions by the direct beneficiaries, including their valuation of the changes and interventions at the institutional setting.

The usefulness and effectiveness of the PAdEv as a method to assess development of EMU in a participatory way somehow relies on the set of participatory exercises that enabled participants' ability to look back and reconstruct their own contextualised experience of change and development. Apart from being a flexible tool that allows experimentation and adaptation according to the circumstances, PAdEv takes a step further as it intended to combine knowledge about the area's history with an assessment of people's perceived valuations of changes and interventions. In the case of EMU's PAdEv experiment the inventory of the changes and interventions and the participants' assessment on their impacts showed this distinct feature of the method.

Concerning the heterogeneity of the sample's principle, Dietz's vision (Dietz, 2012) is that by including in the sample people of different age groups, gender, and social status, it is possible to compare and contrast certain viewpoints and valuations in a critical reflexive manner. This is rather difficult when key informants are not around or not available due to retirement or death, and that was the case at EMU. The inclusion in the sample of all generations or age-groups is particularly important in the process of reconstruction of the complete history of the institution, whenever the institutional memory is not well documented and preserved.

Since the study population was diverse in terms of age-groups, gender (male and female), occupational category (full professor, associate professor, assistant professor, assistant, intern assistant), working regime (full-time, part-time), functions (lecturer, researcher, and technical and administrative personnel), academic qualification

(doctorate, master's, 'licenciatura' degrees), socioeconomic background (more or less literate, relatively poor, or rich), and so forth, this would enable the constitution of several small groups per unit. Therefore, the heterogeneity that characterises a big, complex, and scattered organisation, such as EMU, required a redefinition of the selection criteria. Therefore, demographic characteristics, academic qualifications, and professional categories were used as the selection criteria.

There was an understanding that group homogeneity does not grant equal social roles/status. Power relations cannot be avoided during participants' interactions. As pointed out by Mathie and Greene (1997), different stakeholders show different kinds and levels of communicative competencies that are quite often correlated with power and status. This phenomenon was indeed observed during the PAdEv workshops at EMU. There were more experienced workshop participants claiming authority over specific knowledge about the institution's circumstances, which inhibited the less experienced participants, and sometimes prevented them from expressing themselves. Amongst the group participants, there were those well-informed people who relied on their own experience to support their statements, and those who had limited information, given their short employment experience.

The fourth principle refers to diversity in experience and perspective so as to build a holistic understanding of interventions' meaning and content. Furthermore, diversity in stakeholders' participation also entails democracy and inclusion. PAdEv workshops are conducted in such a way that participants engage in a conversational-interaction process. Accordingly, people's active participation and engagement is guaranteed using the stick method, also called 'talking stick' (Dietz et al., 2011). By making use of the stick method, each individual in a workshop group takes turns speaking, thus preventing only those participants who dominate the conversation, and have a single perspective and dominant views, from being the only ones heard. It is argued that giving equal voice and equal opportunity to all participants stimulates understanding amongst participants and democratises the conversation taking place. At EMU, the stick method was also employed during the PAdEv workshops enabling full participation in some topics. Since the participants groups included employees from different generations in terms of age and length of service, therefore carrying different experiences and perceptions, it was true that despite their knowledge about a greater number of different interventions, not all participant groups knew of, and were able to assess, the same interventions and changes. Whereas it can be appointed as a PAdEv shortcoming, this is also a positive trait as this fact facilitated the setting of an environment for sharing and collective learning.

PAdEv as a method of information gathering, as argued earlier, was meant to provide a collective reconstruction of the development history of a given area by looking back at development and change. PAdEv allows to show how beneficiaries experience

development and incorporates them in the process of generation co-constructed knowledge from a holistic perspective. As stated by Dietz and colleagues (2013), the method takes into account people's memory of what they have experienced concerning what has happened in their social environment, based on their own value system. PAdEv, by enabling a process of collective learning and knowledge production, also empowers participants as it creates a responsive environment for openness and sharing.

Through this thesis, the past history of some units of EMU was subjectively reconstructed, and this history was cross-checked with factual information. The PAdEv method as originally conceived was revealed to be ineffective when applied in a university setting such as EMU.

The study showed that the urban-setting institution with the characteristics of the study population (highly heterogeneous population), as well as the complex organisational structure (huge organisation with scattered units, integrated in the same power structure, and different layers of decision-making), if not well addressed, becomes a constraint for the successful implementation of PAdEv. The university setting challenged the principles of the PAdEv methodology in such a way that complementary methods were required to reach key informants and cover periods that were not mentioned during the workshops.

Once necessary adjustments were made, the PAdEv experiment with different types of actors enabled the collection of data used to produce an enriched description of events, changes, development interventions, and the way such events, changes, and intervention impacted the university as a whole. The PAdEv approach and the methodology it implied allowed for the gathering of a wide range of information on EMU's history, based on people's memories. However, quite often participants mixed up events, changes, and interventions, and it became a challenge to separate these three elements. On the other hand, the strategy behind the application of this methodology created a good atmosphere for data collection, as the participants did engage in the task of dealing with their memories and making sense of their experiences.

The adjustments and shortening of the PAdEv original design were performed to account for the characteristics of the institutional context, which enabled the redefinition of some categories appointed in the PAdEv Guidebook by Dietz et al. (2011).

The context adjustment of the PAdEv modules made it possible to assess its effectiveness and to challenge some of the PAdEv assumptions concerning inclusion, democratic participation, empowerment, and shared knowledge.

PAdEv is conceived as an impact measurement tool to build up a big picture of development and change in a given area over time (Dietz et al, 2013). Thus, gathering the university community in small groups from selected academic and administrative units, taking into account the principle of inclusion that ensured diversity amongst the study participants by age, gender, occupational category, and length of service, enabled the collection of data on the impact of the development interventions at EMU by pointing out the interventions as remembered by the participants. The data included the description of the interventions' focus and perceived results, and subjective assessment through its usefulness and its effect on the university.

In the case of EMU, it was possible through PAdEv workshops to draw a long list of development interventions, assess them, and discuss their impact. The coverage of the period under analysis (1976-2016) was also possible by including in the sample employees with long, medium and short-term professional ties with the institution, including direct beneficiaries of the interventions, providing, therefore, detailed information on the length, scope, beneficiaries, and expected results. Those who were able to do so, shared detailed information on their experience of change to the extent that fostered interactive learning amongst participants and knowledge construction. The major interventions were well known given the fact that they had been long-term, universitywide and had developed a sense of ownership by performing, prior to design and implementation, a large-scale institutional needs assessment. However, it was felt that the early years (prior to 1975 and 1975-1985) could not be covered as comprehensive as the years after 1985, for the simple reason that it was too long ago for almost all study participants, and almost all early university staff had been foreign, and they were either no longer alive, or had departed from Mozambique a long time ago.

Methodologically, the usefulness and effectiveness of the PAdEv approach was established by adjusting the PAdEv design to fit the university setting with its stakeholders and specific characteristics, putting some of its design assumptions to the test and making it necessary to change the participatory exercises that captured the university development context.

## 5.2. Development Interventions and its Impact on EMU

The second research question allowed the identification of the development interventions that were implemented at EMU between 1976 and 2016.

A sequential analysis of the events that characterised the context of development of the higher education in Mozambique and therefore EMU showed that the departure of Portuguese citizens from Mozambique including lecturers and university students and

the nationalisation policy stated by the transitioning government following the Independence of Mozambique.

The proclamation of Mozambican Independence on 25 June 1975, which resulted from the signing of the Lusaka Agreement on 7 September 1974 between the Portuguese State and the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), a nationalist movement that launched the Armed Struggle for National Liberation with the aim of achieving Mozambique's Independence. This agreement signified the recognition of the Mozambican people's right to Independence, the handover of sovereignty to the Mozambicans, and the recognition of FRELIMO as the representative of the Mozambican people, resulting in the formation of a transitional government (1974-1975)<sup>57</sup>.

In a path-dependent reactive sequence, one can assume that the Independence of Mozambique was the initial event that set into motion the chain of temporally ordered and causally connected events, turning each event in the sequence as both a reaction to antecedent events and a cause of subsequent events. These are the cases of the establishment of the *Centro 8 de Março* (1977); the occurrence of the Civil War (1977-1992); the integration of Mozambique in the Southern African Development Community, SADC (1992); the approval of the Higher Education Law (1993); the emergency of new Higher education institutions (after 1993); the holding of the 1<sup>st</sup> General Election (1994); the launch of the EMU's Strategic Development Plan (1998); the occurrence of the World Economic Crisis of 2008; the discovery of natural resources (2012).

The event was picked as the early contingent historical event that represents the key breakpoint that caused the rupture between colonial period and post-Independence period. In other words, the proclamation of Mozambican Independence marked the period of decolonisation and Independence. This early event triggers subsequent development by setting in motion a chain of tightly linked reactions and counter-reactions expressed in the form of interventions or initiatives that influenced change at EMU.

It also marked the transition from Lourenço Marques University (a colonial university) to Eduardo Mondlane University (a national university). It was the departure point from previously established practices that conditioned the implementation of a range of interventions and initiatives that produced a trajectory of change that affected processes, structure and functioning at EMU. The development path the university experienced over decades, and the interventions implemented to overcome certain conditions was surely determined by the sequence of events that followed the Independence of the country.

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<sup>57</sup> file:///C:/Users/HP/Desktop/Acordo%20de%20Lusaka-doc.pdf

Intervention is seen as a set of sequenced, planned actions or events intended to help an organisation to increase its effectiveness. That is, ‘planned improvement, and reinforcement of the strategies, structures, and processes that lead to organisation effectiveness’ (Cummings, & Worley, 2009, p. 121, as cited in Odor, 2018, p. 62). As deliberate attempts to change an organisation or sub-unit towards a different and more effective state, interventions purposely disrupt the status quo. Development interventions in the context of an organisation are meant to improve the organisation's functioning and increase the capability of individuals and groups to solve organisational problems and to react to external challenges (Shvindina, 2016, as cited in Odor, 2018, p. 63), through participation of the organisational members.

The initiatives recalled by study participants that were implemented at EMU as referred to in the previous chapter, were placed in the following categories: consortiums and networks, funds, projects, programmes, partnerships and events. All fall in the spectrum of development interventions as described above, if considering its main goal, outcomes and effects.

The common feature of the interventions was the fact that all followed the principle of needs assessment prior to the design of each intervention. The level of beneficiaries’ participation before the decision-making regarding the implementation of the initiatives determined the sense of ownership and level of commitment towards the interventions leading to its success or failure.

Sessa & London (2015) point out three types of organisational development interventions, namely individual, group and organisationwide. In the needs assessment, the organisation identifies the type of intervention needed and starts planning to implement that. Whereas individual and group interventions are pertaining to an individual and a group respectively, organisation interventions rely on strategy and policy of, in our case, the university as a whole.

Accordingly, the various interventions mainly aimed at the following purposes: capacity building, curriculum design and programme development, and infrastructure development (including physical, lab and technological equipment).

### 5.3. Changes and their Impact on EMU

The third research question focused on the way the development interventions changed EMU between 1976 and 2016.

The empirical data showed that EMU went through successive changes that affected its processes, structure, organisation and functioning. The changes that took place at EMU will be discussed taking into account Kezar's categorisation of the changes in higher education organisations, that are based on the forces or sources (external environment and internal environment), degree (first-order change: organisational development, second-order change: organisational transformation), timing (revolutionary, evolutionary), scale (individual, interpersonal and organisational level), focus (structure, process and attitude), responsiveness (adaptative, generative), intentionality (planned, unplanned), response time (proactive, reactive), involvement (active, static), and target (process, outcome) (Kezar, 2001).

Concerning the origin, whether it was spontaneous or centralised, by analysing the change that took place in the four domains within the context of EMU, one can argue that both spontaneous and centralised change occurred. The centralised change that is coordinated might be the planned outcome of the development interventions. These include changes in course offer, teaching methodology, management procedures, and others. However, spontaneous, unintended change might also occur as a result of uncoordinated choices of many agents, specifically related to changes in staff's academic qualifications that depend on people's will to pursue further education. This particular change was perceived as highly relevant for the improvement of the quality of education offered at EMU.

Regarding the forces and sources of the changes witnessed at EMU and reported by the study participants, these occurred in different periods of the university life cycle as described earlier and took place in specific domains, such as pedagogy, administration, management, human resources, infrastructure, and property. Overall, the changes resulted from the combination of both external and internal environments, since externally funded development interventions played a great role influencing change in the various sectors. However, the university leadership played a key role taking part in, and enabling the implementation of development initiatives under the scope of university cooperation that benefited academic departments and faculties, including the administrative bodies and sectors or the entire university. Locally, a suitable political and legal environment was created (e.g., Law 1/1993 of 24 June) to ensure the expansion and development of the higher education system, leading to the diversification and differentiation of higher education institutions (*Assembleia da República*, 1993).

Following this path, and taking advantage of the support, the university was able to overcome the critical situation characterised by the exodus of the Portuguese teaching staff, closure of some courses, and shortage of student population in its early stages after the country's Independence in 1975. To ensure its operation, the university initially focused its intervention on training promising young Mozambicans. The

university also performed successive curriculum reforms initiated in 1983, not only to introduce new courses, turn the existing study programmes more relevant, and provide quality education to Mozambican citizens, but also to adjust to the country's socio-economic situation and meet the requirements of the labour market. The academic reform movement led to the establishment of the Quality Office at EMU, in 2012-2013, as mentioned earlier.

Concerning the degree of change, EMU had experienced both types - revolutionary and evolutionary change -, since revolutionary change mainly took place in its early years to overcome the post-Independence crisis. The evolutionary change was experienced through the years as the university changed its mission<sup>58</sup> and vision, structure and culture to accommodate its own attempt to expand its operation and growth and continue to be relevant for the Mozambican society, by following its dynamics.

Based on Kezar's description of transformational change that is triggered by a crisis and affects the core of the institution, and looking at EMU situation right after Independence, one can assume that the crises the university faced demanded a transformational change. The university shifted from a colonial university to a national, developmental university and this shift implied changes in its governance structure, operation, policy towards access, and values expressed through its vision and mission. The university's organisational structure was undergoing a process of change, taking into account the need to fulfil the university's vision and mission, growth and expansion. New academic, research, and administrative units emerged (UEM, 2014a).

Following Kezar's (2001) discussion of the categories of change, all three change scales - individual, interpersonal and organisational scales - might be applied to EMU's context. Change at individual, interpersonal and organisational scales involved the change in the institution's mission in 2013 in response to the new institutional dynamics and development plans. Since individual change also included technology integration into the learning process, EMU introduced blended learning, at postgraduate level, and this approach gained more relevance during the first years of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2021).

If we look at the focus of change across the years, changes in both structure and processes at EMU were expressed in institutional documentation. Changes in the university organisational structure were aligned with the establishment, merging and extinction of academic and administrative units. The establishment of the quality office

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<sup>58</sup> For instance, the university strategic plan 2008-2012 stated as EMU's mission 'to be an institution of excellence in the context of education, science, culture and technology, educating for life the professionals it trains and assuming responsibilities in the process of innovation and knowledge transfer. In this context, the university strives for its integration and affirmation in the regional and international scientific community, as well as for being an agent and object of changes and transformations in society' (UEM, 2008: 12). The strategic plan 2018-2028 stated as mission to 'produce and disseminate scientific knowledge and promote innovation through research, extension and outreach activities, while imparting humanistic values onto generations to face contemporary development challenges of the society' (UEM, 2017: 2).

in 2012 is a clear example of a unit that was missing and became part of the organisational chart in the 2000s. Changes in procedures are documented and translated into norms or manuals, such as Academic Process Management Procedures Manual (DP-UEM, 2015). Changes in process can be related with the appointment of the deans of faculties, schools and centres introduced in 2011 which became a democratic process carried out through elections and involving all the faculty community approved by the rector's office (Dispatch No. 273/RT/2011).

In terms of responsiveness, given its complexity, EMU can be considered as a learning organisation as described by Senge (1990) where there is system thinking, shared vision, team learning, and changes tend to be generative, although adaptive change also occurs in response to some adverse circumstances. EMU organisational development has been based on continuous learning, therefore the institution created conditions for individual and organisational learning. Therefore, the organisation of conferences, symposiums, workshops aimed at its development, as well as to improve the quality of the research and the teaching.

Concerning intentionally/planned or managed change by allowing the implementation of the various development initiatives in line with the university strategic development plan, EMU leadership expressed the willingness to change. Overall, the scope of the initiatives addressed the three pillars of teaching, research, and extension and innovation.

In addition, Eduardo Mondlane University through its life cycle has experienced both proactive and reactive changes. Proactive change included changes in physical infrastructure, staff qualification, and learning methodologies. Reactive change led, for example, to the changes in the curriculum framework for undergraduate studies as a result of the failed implementation of the Bologna curriculum model. Active change also happened at EMU considering the integration of PBL into the teaching and learning process, in addition to the shift in the teaching paradigm from teacher-centred to student-centred learning approach as a teaching philosophy.

Considering the target, the adoption of a student-centred approach at EMU was a change in attitude towards the teaching and learning environment. The introduction of automatic correction of university admission exams, which affected the examination process, and the digitalisation of student academic information through the implementation of the Integrated Academic Registration System (SIGA) also represents a new process that complemented the students' physical academic record.

In conclusion, it can be said that through PADev experiment and the inventory of the major changes, it was possible to place them in the categories referred to above, as

described by Kezar (2001) and have a better understanding on how the university changed its processes, structure, organisation and functioning.

#### 5.4. Stakeholders' assessment of the impact of the development interventions

This section addresses the stakeholders' assessment of the impact of the development interventions at EMU. The stakeholders' assessment of the impact of the development interventions at the institution was discussed taking into account EMU's impact on the quality of education, scientific excellence, and emancipation. The perspectives of the internal and external stakeholders are discussed to show the extent to which the university community and the external stakeholders perceive the impact of the university on the surrounding environment. The perspective of both internal and external stakeholders concerning quality of education, scientific excellence, and emancipation are presented separately but not detached from the main issue by following that order.

Concerning the quality of education, the major reference was the adoption of a competence-based curriculum that demanded a new perspective towards curriculum design and student outcome. In addition, the student-centred approach and the offer of in-service teacher training programmes was also perceived by internal stakeholders as having been influential towards the quality of education and quality of graduates since it contributed to enhance the teaching performance.

The adoption of the competence-based curriculum approach led to a broad movement of academic reform within EMU. Despite the underlying assumption towards the impact of in-service teacher training programme, that was constituted by specific modules, that enabled the teacher to provide a better performance in the classroom, its pedagogic component went through successive developments during implementation to become mandatory and getting a profound impact on staff career promotion.

External stakeholders showed their appreciation of the impact of the university in terms of expectations. External stakeholders have high expectations towards the role model the university must play in the wider Mozambican context, being regarded as the mother university of higher education in Mozambique. These expectations are directed to the provision of quality of education, and the setting of competencies in the network of higher education institutions. Expectations are also high towards the university's outcome, as the graduates must hold high technical and professional competencies to meet the requirements of the labour market and to be able to actively participate in the country's development projects. Meeting these expectations is somehow also related to the implementation of the quality assurance system.

A similar perspective is presented by Esteves (2008) who argued that student-centred teaching is the first condition for achieving pedagogic excellence in higher education. To attain this goal, it is necessary to make an investment in the formal pedagogic training of university teachers.

Concerning the impact of the institution on scientific excellence, both individual and group research were appointed as to lead to scientific publications. The dissemination of the scientific publications in various scientific platforms, as well as the improvement of students' academic writing skills was also regarded as contributing to achieve scientific excellence.

It can be said that to achieve excellence in the field of scientific research demands much more than the level of participation on research activities which result in publications. There are other factors to combine and consider, such as solid research skills, embedded research culture, interdisciplinary perspective towards research, and the link between teaching and research.

From the external stakeholders' perspective, excellence in scientific research is associated with the development of research abilities through staff training at postgraduate level, since the institutional excellence is attributed to the university's ability to train researchers and develop a critical mass that produces knowledge for development.

A diagnosis made by CIPES (2021), showed that EMU is a teaching-oriented university with some research faculties and academics committed to research. For instance, the number of publications released in 2013 in the field of health and natural sciences by the Faculties of Medicine and Sciences (sixty and fifty-five respectively) shows how committed the faculty staff are to engage with the scientific community and to participate in the global process of knowledge production (UEM, 2014). And after 2013, publication output has increased and widened to include many more researchers in other faculties and schools as well.

Nevertheless, according to CIPES (2021), in order to achieve its wish of becoming a research university, it must observe a series of assumptions, among which, to develop a culture of active research, organise research colloquia, attract initial funding for the formation of communities of practice, organise conferences and workshops to share research communications and scientific publications, forming communication channels to foster a positive research environment, instigating the link between teaching and research, and make sure that academics prioritise research over teaching. Furthermore, EMU must value its research function and the organisational context of EMU's independent research centres so that it becomes a repository of know-what (knowledge) and know-how (competencies), as well as a global centre for the exchange of innovative

knowledge and technologies. EMU should also focus on continuous professional development, focused on the development of its investigative capacity adapted to the individual needs of different groups of officials in order to fill identified gaps in research training, and develop institutional research capacity.

Although the institution encountered gains in terms of research capacity created over the years with postgraduate training at master's and doctorate levels and the rise of publications, this diagnosis shows how far EMU still is from achieving excellence in scientific research, since the research practice is still considered by the stakeholders as being in an incipient phase.

With regard to emancipation, EMU admission policy, which addresses regional disparities and ensures inclusiveness and equity towards university access, indirectly contributes to the emancipation of those regarded as economically and socially disadvantaged. It also considers the disability and gender dimensions.

Apart from caring for the access, the university, through the Pedagogic Directorate created a student support unit in 2013, to deal with student's affairs and special education needs with the support of the Directorate of Social Services (DSS). This emancipatory principle is also stressed through the course offer, and that is the case of Mozambican sign language, introduced in 2013 at the Faculty of Education. Moreover, in 2015, a Braille laboratory was installed in the university's main library, and, more recently, EMU launched its Gender Strategy 2020-2030 (UEM, 2019).

The relevance of the gender policy, as well as the sexual harassment policy to support gender equality and human rights, constitutes the means to ensure female emancipation. Although the gender issue has become part of the university community's awareness and has been institutionalised with the establishment of the gender unit in 2008 (Resolution No. 5/CUN/2008), both instruments are quite new and their impact is still unknown. However, the pattern of the relationship between employees themselves, amongst students and between student and teacher will change, since practices concerning harassment and sexual assault were typified as harmful and reprehensible behaviour.

Overall, there was a common understanding that gender emancipation must be secured by the definition and implementation of specific institutional regulations that concerns, for instance, equal participation, equity in access, safety and empowerment.

## 5.5. Considerations on the Effectiveness of PADev

In considering the effectiveness of PADev, one can see whether PADev has advantages or disadvantages, strengths and weaknesses. The analysis also shows where PADev

brings new conceptual, analytical categories and/or methodological categories, and techniques.

Stakeholder involvement and active engagement in the evaluation process defines PAdEv as a collaborative, participatory, and empowerment evaluation approach and research tool. Since stakeholder participation constitutes a principle, the degree of stakeholders' participation affects the evaluation process. As a methodology, it is concerned with defining whose voices to include in the evaluation, how to include them, and determining who will speak for whom to ensure representativeness.

By doing so, PAdEv brings to the organisational context, and to an academic environment, a new concept, the 'voices of the voiceless'. This is a reference to those who might hide or become invisible in the process, and it demands their inclusion through a representative composition of the study population within the sample. If we define the academy as a space for free and open debate of ideas, all actors are able to express themselves before their peers. The idea of freedom to communicate ideas or facts, and autonomy related to universities, problematises this notion of voicelessness.

Another new concept that PAdEv brings to the evaluation context is the concept of 'facilitator'. The traditional evaluator or practitioner or researcher makes room for a new actor who is referred to as 'facilitator'. This person acts as an enabler in the evaluation process, where the participants as the evaluators play a major role. The facilitator encourages participants, elicits participation, helps to reach consensus amongst the participants' conflicting ideas, and designs the evaluation.

The stakeholders' perspective towards evaluation constitutes PAdEv's main characteristic, as well as the evaluation principles and processes. It results in knowledge constructed on the basis of their collective memories and their experiences.

Since the method values peoples' memory and experiences, from where knowledge about the institution is constructed, the rigour and objectivity of PAdEv method can be considered questionable. However, as a flexible approach that allows for adjustments and adaptation, in combination with other techniques, it makes it possible to build an understanding about factual knowledge from experiential knowledge.

PAdEv materialises the 'social realist' idea, as claimed by Searle (1995), that people can (collectively) know about their experiences with social reality and can share those insights with others, although always as a self-perceived phenomenon. PAdEv, by making use of timeline techniques, produces, as stated by Adriansen (2012), visual representations that allow a number of stories to be told along the same line and provides space for multiple representations instead of a singular one.

The PAdEv experiment at EMU involved two major categories of stakeholders, specifically internal stakeholders represented by the university community and the external stakeholders, amongst them foreign entities and local authorities and professional organisations. The representativeness was a principle in the selection of the study sample, and the level of participation and stakeholders' engagement was critical for the success of the experiment. However, PAdEv workshops alone did not engage participants as much as was hoped for, and therefore other data collection instruments were used to complement the PAdEv data gathering tool (PAdEv Workshops).

The data gathered portray PAdEv as a suitable tool and method to account for the historical and institutional changes in university settings, for which other methods might fall short, given the depth of stakeholders' participation and the key role they play in the evaluation process. This approach gives voice to those who benefit from development interventions, placing them at the centre of the data collection process and analysis, enabling, as pointed out by Dietz and colleagues (2013), participatory history-writing at local levels of scale.

Participatory approaches, such as PAdEv, transformative participatory evaluation, stakeholder-based evaluation, and democratic evaluation are inclusive, in the sense that these approaches have as their focus getting all legitimate groups represented in the research.

The PAdEv method stimulates bonding and trust amongst participants, which elicits engagement and active participation in the process of data collection, through which knowledge and consensus is built around the reality of the change and development context. Collaboration amongst the stakeholders aimed to build a history of development and change in an area over time, enabling the development of shared values and an understanding of the institutional development context.

Like in other methods, power dynamics were observed in the evaluation process on two levels. Firstly, between the researcher (facilitator) and the participants (stakeholders), and, secondly, amongst participants themselves. The power balance between the facilitator (herself a member of the university community and not in a position of 'high authority') and participants enabled an open dialogue about personal perspectives and sensitive issues concerning the development interventions. In the rural African context in which it was developed, PAdEv breaks down the power relations by engaging homogeneous groups based on gender, age, and socioeconomic status, allowing all group categories to share their experience of change and development. However, participants in EMU experiment were not grouped based on the above categories but rather as occupational categories and based on their organisational unit in the university. The use of techniques such as the 'talking stick' enhanced full participation, avoiding

the polarisation of ideas and prevailing views of dominant individuals, since all participants were given a voice, therefore avoiding marginalisation of group members.

In the participatory action research paradigm, participants have dual roles, both as subjects and as researchers, as they take part in the design, implementation, and interpretation of the research results. PAdEv participants are also expected to play a dual role, but that was not the case with EMU's PAdEv experiment, since the research facilitator was responsible for the design and interpretation of the data, while stakeholders took part in the implementation of the research. In addition, the subjective experiences of the subjects have also been valued, and the researcher's emphasis was on learning from and learning about the research subjects.

Concerning the utilisation of the evaluation results, the participants' valuation of the development interventions may turn them into change agents, as their assessment may influence decision-making processes and result in new programmatic or project initiatives. PAdEv data and evaluation are more likely useful in improving ongoing programme practices and strategies. Anonymous amongst the participants could openly share their own assessment of the development of the university while providing an insightful and meaningful contribution for the institutional memory.

PAdEv introduced a new methodological tool, within the context of development evaluation studies that allows the conducting of life history research and, in this case, institutional history research: the timeline interview.

As seen by Adriansen (2012), a timeline is an organising principle for historical events which provides opportunities for linking 'the history' to the wider social, political, and environmental context during the interview. Life history research in development studies is linked to oral history projects aiming to explore the culture and history of certain places through the memories and recollections of its people. In this context, people's perceptions of change become a subject to be studied, and PAdEv follows a similar principle. The timeline method provides a visual representation of main events in a person's life for engaging the interviewee in constructing this history in a collaborative effort shared by the interviewer and the interviewee (Adriansen, 2012).

In so doing, a timeline raises issues of linearity and coherence, and ownership and analytical power in the interview situation. According to Adriansen (2012), the interviewee's ownership of the timeline interview and sharing in the analytical power during the interview (although not equally) occurs when the researcher uses a large sheet of paper (A1 sheets) which allows for joint reporting, since the interviewee participates in drawing and writing. Since the interviewee can visualise what is being noted, the paper thus becomes a collective memory, and the shared notes and memories give the interviewee ownership of the interview and room to steer the interview in a

certain direction. In this process, the researcher is the one who ultimately holds the analytical power and holds a privileged position by deciding who is a relevant interviewee by formulating the questions asked and, when they are asked, by directing the flow of the discourse and by having the final power of interpretation. The diagrammatical representation of a timeline enables a visualisation that increases the chances of seeing events and perceptions of these events in the context of wider life experiences. It also reveals tensions and contradictions in the history, as these become apparent when laid out on paper. Through this process, people deconstruct and reconstruct their history; they see different patterns of relationships. The paper and the drawings along the timeline become a tool for untangling the history and for engaging the interviewee in constructing this history.

Like in the timeline interview, PADev exercises also the use of materials such as flip chart sheets, the equivalent to A1 sheets of paper and markers. Although for practical reasons the participants were not expected to draw or write on their own on the flip chart, they did brainstorm and write their ideas on an A4 sheet of paper before sharing their ideas registered on the flip chart placed in the tripod for everyone to see.

At the end, this technique enabled participants to recall past events and experiences and reconstruct the chronological overview of the history of change and the development history of the institution. Through the PADev method, it was possible to combine knowledge about the institution's recent history with an assessment of peoples' perceived valuations of change and interventions. It also allowed for an understanding of the heterogeneity and dynamic interaction between changes and development interventions.

The experience of applying the methodology in institutional environments, particularly in a university, where we find a diversity of actors and academic units with different profiles, has proven to be difficult. In this type of institution, the involvement and engagement of all employees at all levels, including those who have already retired, becomes crucial for its successful implementation. Although it is a flexible methodology, in the sense that it can be adapted to the characteristics of the context and can assume different configurations, the exclusion of some exercises such as wealth group categorisation and wealth group benefits for participants to identify attributes that serve as references for poverty and wealth in their area, and to determine the impact of the best and worst five projects in the different wealth groups from the time of the beginning of their implementation to the time of their assessment by the beneficiaries, weakens the potential of the methodology. In a context in which the stage of development of the organic units that make up the university is a reflection of the history of its implementation and growth.