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Perilous Protection

Discipline, Chastisement and Child Protection in Schools in Zanzibar



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ABSTRACT

This project concerns children's and adults' ideas of punishment and protection in primary and Qur'anic schools in Zanzibar, Tanzania. (Inter)national child protection interventions that aim to eliminate the use of corporal punishment in schools are frequently rejected by students and teachers for being perceived to introduce 'Western' ideas of child rearing and morality. Physical chastisement is both legally and culturally accepted in Zanzibar and efforts to ban it spark legal and ethical debate. Appropriate chastisement is considered to shape children into proper persons and to protect them from social exclusion. This ethnographic inquiry demonstrates how development agencies' child protection programmes are embedded in social relations that are themselves informed by age and gender, embodied and affective, and defined by an internormativity that unites international, Islamic and Swahili cultural values and norms. It explores how the concept of 'child protection' should be understood beyond a singular normative order of well-being and instead reflect and respond to the relationality of children's realities.

Above all, this doctoral research explores what being young and being safe mean from multiple perspectives in Zanzibar. It intends to make a contribution to knowledge about child protection by investigating the assumptions of different groups of people. The project also challenges views on the positions anthropologists can occupy, the methods they employ, and the impact anthropological research can have. The research contributes to the bodies of knowledge in the fields of child protection, children's rights, the anthropologies of childhood, development, Islam, and the body, as well as to regional ethnographies of Zanzibar and Swahili societies.

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A NOTE ON LANGUAGE AND TRANSLATION

All translations from Swahili unless otherwise noted are mine. All interviews referred to in the text were conducted in Swahili between January 2014 and July 2015. To protect my interlocutors' anonymity I use pseudonyms. Swahili including words derived from Arabic are given in Standard Swahili Spelling (Kiswahili Sanifu).

GLOSSARY

Adabu good behaviour, manners, courtesy
Adabu mbadala alternative discipline
Adhabu punishment, chastisement
Akhlaq Islamic concept of ethics
Bakora cane, walking stick
kubaleghe to reach puberty
Buibui Long black full body-covering gown worn by Muslim women
Kuchapa to smack, hit
Chuo Qur'anic school, also *madrasa*
Dawa medicine
Fimbo a stick; a type of cane
Hadith teachings and traditions of the Prophet
Haki right
Haya shame
Heshima respect
Kidunia worldly
Kidini religious
Kiislamu Islamic, Muslim
Kijana youth
Kisiasa political
Kosa mistake
Madrasa Qur'anic school, also *chuo*
Mikwaju a type of cane
Mji Mkongwe Stone Town
Mkunga wa jadi traditional midwife
Mtoto, (pl. Wa-) child
Mtoto mchanga baby
Mwalimu teacher
Mzungu (pl. Wa-); kizungu 'Western'/European person; 'Western'/European way
Magharibi; kimagharibi 'West'; 'Western'
Nidhamu discipline
kupiga to hit
Sharia Islamic law
Sheha village head
Shehia village, area
Sheikh religious authority
Tabia character, behaviour
Udhalilishaji abuse
Uganga healing, magic
Ukdi female Islamic Teacher
Unguja the main island of the Zanzibar Archipelago
Ustadh male Islamic Teacher
Ustaarabu civilisation
Utu humanity, personhood
Ubinadamu human-ness
Viboko a type of cane

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For you, Oma
Your departure sharpened my sight

*Everyone starts at the beginning of the road, and the world is in an endless state of
childhood. (Tayeb Salih 1969: 88)*

INTRODUCTION

Witnessing Protection and Punishment



“Have you seen this video?”, Samira asks, when my phone vibrates as she already forwarded it to me. “It’s quite shocking and I wonder what to do about it.” It is around midday in June 2014 and I am at Save the Children’s office in Stone Town, following up on the latest child protection activities. I press play. A primary school-aged girl is sitting on a bed topless, wearing only pink trousers. Her upper body is covered in lengthy bruises, that in shape and size resemble others I have seen caused by caning. An adult, who seems to be taking the video, asks questions about the marks, as the girl recounts being hit by

several teachers with multiple canes. “Where is this and who sent you this?”, I ask Samira. “Well, that’s the problem. A friend forwarded it to me, because they know I work in child protection, but they also just came across it as it was circulating on WhatsApp. My friend hoped we could follow up the case and find out who the people are, where the video was taken, or where it happened. From how the adult speaks, it must be here in Zanzibar. But we don’t know if it happened at a state school or a madrasa, and if anyone reported it as a case.”

This thesis explores children’s and adults’ ideas and experiences of punishment and protection in primary and Qur’anic schools (*madrasas*) in Zanzibar, Tanzania. It looks closely at disagreements regarding the compatibility of universalised and vernacular standards of protecting children provoked by internationally initiated child protection programmes. These programmes aim to ban the use of corporal punishment and to replace it with alternative forms of discipline. Thereby national and international child rights activists are changing the archipelago’s moral and political landscape. I argue that well-intended child protection interventions overlook the contexts and factors in which corporal punishment makes sense and may even be considered a protection itself. By building on insufficient understandings of physical chastisement, these programmes decontextualise childhood in harmful ways and thus interfere with Zanzibari children’s full achievement of social personhood. This results in programmes being rejected.

In this introduction I lay out the scope of the topic of this thesis and its guiding arguments. I explore the broadest effects of protection and punishment in Zanzibar – ethical debate and moral revolution. People’s changing perspectives on children’s experiences of pain caused by physical chastisement are communicated through images like those in the opening vignette (Sontag 2003). The visible pain of others in public discourse “demands a collective as well as individual response” (Ahmed 2004: 20), particularly if “the object of ‘our feeling’” (ibid. 21) is a child. In Zanzibar, the politics of children’s pain has largely been constructed through international child protection interventions that ‘read’ children’s skin as a moral call for interference (Ahmed and Stacey 2001). Against this background, I place my argument and tease out the differences between the protection of children and ‘child protection’. This

allows us to understand Zanzibaris' reluctance towards international child rights-based protection programmes that try to ban teachers from using corporal punishment as an ordinary form of discipline in the context of hierarchies of knowledge and aspirations of 'modernity'. After considering the relationship between anthropology and child protection by means of discussing my research objectives, I review some central scholarly discussions. Instead of having one literature review, I intentionally use literature throughout the thesis and sum up my theoretical position in relation to other theories at the end. This is followed by a discussion of my methodology and fieldwork. I conclude this chapter with an outline of the thesis.

I On Ethics and Morals: The Protection of Children and 'Child Protection'

In Zanzibar child protection interventions against corporal punishment cause moral discussion. Too easily they turn into moralising enterprises in the political sphere that either combat "unethical practices" or encourage "ethical practices" (Fassin 2015: 21). Accordingly, child protection actors consider physical chastisement as 'unethical' and child protection interventions against it as 'ethical'. Standardised social policy as promoted through specific legislative interventions, puts into question the protection of children as a general practice through adults' actions to keep children safe. As applied in Zanzibar, it suggests that people do not sufficiently, or adequately, protect their own children.

Exploring attempts at moral revolutions – like the one caused in Zanzibar by child protection interventions – enables a deeper understanding of how morality works for children and adults and how it is shaped by them (Appiah 2010: preface). As "*moral* refers to values" (Kleinman 2006: 1f), it is not synonymous with 'good' in an ethical sense of the term, as people's shared moral experiences can be both good or bad. Expressed and enacted values may also be "inhuman", as in communities that support "violence toward women, or other abuses" (ibid.: 2). Still, given the opportunity to explain, all people who protect and punish think and claim to live moral lives (Lambek 2010). Therefore, in the context of this thesis what is moral is best understood "as what is local", and ethics as referring to universals (Kleinman 2006: 2). Investigating the categories of Zanzibari children and adults that structure

morality in the archipelago, as well as how they and external actors, like international child rights activists, review these morals in an ethical way, allows us to understand the knowledge system around discipline.

In Zanzibar, Save the Children and UNICEF, in collaboration with the Zanzibari government, lead the implementation of child protection defined as “a set of measures and structures to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation affecting children” (Save the Children 2013: 5). The approach aims to improve children’s life quality by restricting practices considered harmful or abusive¹ according to the United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) of 1989. Child protection programmes suggest that children’s lives should be free from corporal punishment and work through strategies that aim to change how children are treated through various tools of enforcement, i.e. the law. I investigate the changing legislation, rules and regulations regarding children’s safety in Zanzibari schools, considering that the “vocabulary of rules and their infringement” (Das 2012: 134) deriving from them can help us to think of ethical issues.

In my fieldwork, I set out to learn about Zanzibaris’ views on ethical questions, such as what actions are considered right or wrong in moments of correcting children’s behaviour. To locate the ethical, I considered it “intrinsic to action” (Lambek 2010: 39), as habit – “the site of both repetition and newness” (Das et al. 2014: 3) – is “the site on which the working of ordinary ethics can be traced” (Das 2012: 142). Recognising the routines, habits and “small events of everyday life as the expression of the moral” (Das 2015b: 117; Das 2010: 376), I focused on one of the most ordinary actions in Zanzibari children’s everyday lives – physical chastisement as a means of discipline and the promotion of supposed alternatives to it.

The moral debate caused by protection interventions is defined by three sources of knowledge: Islam, Zanzibari-Swahili ‘cultural’ practice, and globalised child rights standards. With 99 % of Zanzibaris being Muslim, and public life and society being strongly influenced by Islamic values, the Qur’an, ‘religious tradition’ as well as

¹ UNICEF classifies “child labour, child marriage, birth registration, female genital cutting, justification of wife-beating and violent discipline” as indicators in relation to which child protection must be framed (2015: 89).

‘local tradition and custom’ are referenced most frequently when people reason about the use of corporal punishment (Al-Azmeh 1993; Gil’adi 1992). International development organisations’ child rights policy-centred approaches play additional roles in shaping ideas about child protection.

Within each discursive sphere, childhood, protection, and punishment are conceptualised differently. Frameworks like CRC are not sufficiently inclusive of other more locally specific definitions of what childhood and protection constitute, even though a general understanding of children as human beings in need of protection can be encountered everywhere. How we conceive of children and childhood, and also how we think about children’s safety and well-being, are influenced by the socio-cultural contexts in which we learned to think and know. ‘Child protection’ has even been considered “a misleading name for the work, which always entails engagements with families, or systems of ‘care’, within which vulnerable or at-risk children and young people are living” (Cooper 2015: 142). To understand what child protection is in Zanzibar, I studied ideas about childhood, protection and punishment from various points of view.

Zanzibari children and adults often perceive CRC-based protection interventions as ethnocentric, at odds with local moral understandings of child rearing and as putting forward “a new vision of childhood” (Fassin 2013: 110). This vision is understood as based on “particular western notions of childhood and child protection” (Twum-Danso Imoh 2013: 473), while Islamic and Zanzibari notions are excluded from such globalised models (Rosen 2007). Following this, child protection programmes in Zanzibar are perceived as inherently ‘owned’ by the ‘West’ and as introducing a ‘Western’ concept of modernity and morality, overruling Islamic religious and Zanzibari-Swahili vernacular values and ideas concerning childhood and child rearing.

Since cultural and religious values are deemed crucial for the development of personhood and morality, not only do international child protection actors face opposition in their endeavours, but local Zanzibari child protection workers are equally critiqued for promoting a decay of Zanzibari-Islamic morality. Inversely, vernacular modes of know how to care for children and approaches to specifically

Islamic imaginations of ‘modernity’ hold the least authority in official discursive hierarchies of protection knowledge. Child protection interventions are about “changing values, attitudes, and practices beyond the delivery of professional services”, but fail to see the cultural and historical significance of these values, especially their positive features (Boyden, Pankhurst and Tafere 2012: 519).

This thesis engages with corporal punishment as an ethnographic example of the wider issue concerning the moral judgements that child protection interventions cause. The denunciation of child abuse is now part of “a global rhetoric that is broadly viewed as common sense”, even if violence against children and their exploitation “remain part of ordinary life in many countries” (Fassin 2013: 110f). Up to the 1970s, corporal punishment was ‘normal’ in many countries of the Global North (Brockliss and Montgomery 2010). It was only with the emergence of a child rights perspective that it started to be questioned and “the line between abuse and discipline discussed” (Montgomery 2008: 157). Nevertheless, in the United Kingdom, for example, children can still be hit as long as no mark is left (GIECP 2016). Today’s concept of childhood and the related behaviour towards children in ‘Western’ societies is a product of its own time and a socio-historical construct (Ariès 1962).

In Zanzibar, childhood is largely conceptualised around the ideas of formation and socialisation, and physical chastisement (*adhabu*) is used to assure that children become moral persons with manners and courtesy (*adabu*). Here, like in many places, corporal punishment is “an integral, albeit contested, feature of school life” (Humphreys 2008: 527) and includes “hitting, striking, wounding, or bruising a dependent child for the purpose of punishing, disciplining, or showing disapproval” (Ember and Ember 2005: 609). However, there is disagreement concerning what physical chastisement entails.

According to the Zanzibari government, “corporal punishment does not apply in the education system” while caning is said to be administered in schools as “a legitimate and acceptable form of punishment [not intended to] be violent, abusive or degrading” (GIECP 2012: 2). While in many Global North societies, caning children is considered physical violence, the prevailing discourse in Zanzibar categorises it merely as a form of discipline. In schools and homes, appropriate chastisement is

commonly used “to socialize children and bring them into conformity with adult expectations” (Lancy 2008: 178) and is even regarded as a form of protection that shapes the unformed child into the proper person he or she must become. These Zanzibari understandings of acceptable child disciplining techniques collide with globalised conceptualisations of violent behaviour against children (Das 2007; de Carvalho 2012).

Since corporal punishment is both legally and culturally accepted in Zanzibar, child protection interventions are not only moral and political, but also legal undertakings (Rottenburg 2009). Zanzibar’s socio-legal pluralism, which includes both *Sharia* law and common law, further complicates a legal justification of interventions. Various interpretations and translations of international legal frameworks like the CRC into local contexts add to this “knotted multiplicity” (Mitchell 2014: 176) and demand interrogation (Merry 2006; Goodale 2006). Zanzibari society represents an example of circumstances in many contemporary settings in sub-Saharan East Africa (Askew 2002; Caplan and Topan 2004; Burgess 2009): situations in which new social forms – like programmes against physical chastisement – emerge, as citizens build their lives in innovative ways by combining elements from or choosing between “past and futurity” (Appadurai 2004; Parkin 1994), often adapting old values to new circumstances promoted as important for ‘development’.

Tanzania, to which the half-autonomous Zanzibar belongs to, is one of the few countries² where corporal punishment has not fully been prohibited in any setting (GIECP 2016). At the same time, Zanzibari government actors in collaboration with international organisations are committed to establishing a national institutionalised integrated child protection system, which is rare across East African countries. In light of this apparent contradiction, Zanzibar’s Education Act of 1988 includes Regulations for Corporal Punishment that restrict the administration of caning to up to three strokes to the headmaster, only few teachers adhere to them. The Zanzibar Children’s Act of 2011, a comprehensive child rights law, pays particular attention to children’s matters including child safety. In Article 14 it states that children should not be “subjected to violence, torture, or other cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment”, but also allows parents to “discipline their children in such manner

² Other countries include Nigeria, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, and Colombia.

which shall not amount to injury to the child's physical and mental well-being". Without a legal prohibition of children's chastisement, attempts to regulate it as expressed within the Act remain vague and cannot outweigh older clauses like the Education Act's Corporal Punishment Regulations.

Corporal punishment is simultaneously ordinary and extraordinary, normalised and contested. While UNICEF (2011)³ considers it the most common form of violence⁴ experienced by children on an everyday basis in Zanzibari schools, locally it is frequently not understood as violence. Only its harsh application that neglects Islamic rules for administration is rejected, while its 'lighter' application – smacking – is generally accepted. In the context of this discursive conceptualisation, cases of corporal punishment are rarely reported to institutions that were established as part of the national child protection system in Zanzibar. At the Child Protection Unit⁵ I was told that out of all cases that were reported as 'violence against children' in 2015, there was not a single report of a corporal punishment case neither at school nor at home. Determining the line between discipline and punishment, and the compatibility of Islamic with secular child rearing norms, is difficult.

Physical chastisement is made extraordinary under the international gaze, by condemning it and opposing its continuation based on children's rights approaches (GIECP 2016). Through a CRC lens, corporal punishment is a violation of human rights, specifically of Article 19, which emphasises the need for protecting children from physical and psychological violence. Child rights actors and discourses problematise corporal punishment for increasing physical aggression in children (McGillivray 1997: 220), undermining children's rights to dignity and bodily integrity and affecting their engagement with schooling and their capacity to learn (Morrow and Pells 2017). Understanding corporal punishment as a form of child abuse determines the perception of its continuation as a violation of the claims made by international conventions like the CRC⁶.

³ Tanzania was the first African country to conduct a *National Study on Violence against Children* in 2009 (UNICEF 2011).

⁴ According to UNICEF, violence against children includes: physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. Physical abuse includes hitting (2011: 7).

⁵ The CPU was established in 2009 and launched in 2010. They register all abuse cases of children (approximately one to two cases per day), offer counselling, referrals to the hospital, and legal advice.

⁶ Tanzania ratified the CRC in 1991.

Such overlaps and collisions lead to only a partial acceptance of protection programmes in Zanzibari schools. Zanzibari teachers, parents and students agree that non-physical forms of chastisement can serve as additions to physical discipline but cannot fully replace them. This is also the case because child protection programmes have unintended consequences and create new difficulties for children. Universalised protection approaches, as applied in Zanzibar, do not succeed in abolishing physical discipline, but instead, and certainly unintentionally, replace or even augment it with less visible but equally harmful alternatives. I explore the social issues that develop when social movements and campaigns redefine physical chastisement as a problem (Merry 2009: 25) and suggest that the ways in which people assure children's safety are insufficient and must be replaced with globalised approaches to child protection.

Recalling Abu-Lughod's (2002) famous questioning of the necessity to 'save' Muslim women, I explore the implications of approaches that attempt to 'save' and protect Muslim children. Like her, I emphasise the importance of "recognizing and respecting differences" as "products of different histories, expressions of different circumstances, and manifestations of differently structured desires" without being cultural relativist (ibid.: 787). This underlines the need to acknowledge multiple ways of protecting children in different contexts, without one notion of 'child protection' applying to all. Against this backdrop, I consider how Zanzibari children "might be called to personhood (...) in a different language" (ibid.: 788) to children in the Global North, where the standards that underpin protection activities originate. This enables us to imagine different paths toward social change that may improve children's lives.

II Child Protection and Anthropology: Research Objectives and a Brief Introduction to the Anthropology of Children

Research aims and objectives

Primarily, the thesis contributes to knowledge about children's discipline, chastisement and protection by contextualising some Zanzibari children's and adults' lives and concerns as well as the ethical and moral issues at stake in the complex child protection reality I encountered in Zanzibar. Secondly, the research intends to help improve the links between trends of legal theory-driven universalisation and

evidence-driven contextualisation to ultimately help reduce the dangerous potential inherent in protective intervention to unintentionally decontextualise and so disrupt children's relations with family and community in Zanzibar (Bourdillon 2014: 500; Bourdillon and Myers 2012a: 441). This research contributes to the bodies of knowledge in the anthropologies of childhood, development, global health and Islam, as well as to regional ethnographies of Zanzibar and Swahili societies. Engaging with the fields of children's rights and legal and informal child protection, it aims to speak to scholars and practitioners in the fields of education, health, politics, aid and law, who work at the intersections of child rearing, abuse and protection.

An anthropological study of child protection in Zanzibar can point out the tensions that arise between the different values and practices created by Zanzibari children and adults, and local and international child protection activists. By turning our attention "to the overlooked and unconsidered" in the Zanzibari child protection reality, we can uncover "the relevance of 'the spaces between'" (Axelby and Crewe 2013: 213) and what they mean to understanding conflicts. This exploration of Zanzibari practices to protect children, understandings of being human and living a 'good life' (Messer 2002: 333), refrains from denouncing "other ways of living and being in the world" (Scheper-Hughes 2016⁷). While this research cannot offer "definitive answers about what practices and behaviours are harmful to children", it generates insights through analysing conceptions of harm on local and global levels and providing explanations of the contexts in which harm occurs (Montgomery 2015: 35). My research elicits understandings of potentially harmful child-care practices and broadens knowledge about cultural constructions of violence (Korbin 2003), and their various meanings in different contexts (Crewe 2010: 49). Comprehending the Zanzibari child care environment in the broader frame of differing child-care practices, may improve child protection knowledge and practice by diversifying understandings of relationships between caregivers and children and their influences on children's development (Buchbinder et al. 2006).

In Zanzibar, child protection interventions have predominantly relied on 'modern Western' knowledge systems. Through this dominance, non-Western knowledge

⁷ Scheper-Hughes' speech at Berkeley, May 2016, https://news.berkeley.edu/berkeley_blog/can-anthropology-save-the-world/ [Accessed: 07 February 2017]

systems have been marginalised and disqualified (Escobar 1995: 13). This point of departure positions my exploration of Zanzibari ways of knowing about children's safety and well-being. By considering child protection as a non-static category, I engage with understandings of protecting children that are more inclusive of reasoning that originates outside of 'Western' child rights discourse. Thereby, I take seriously the richness and complexity of how Zanzibari children and adults themselves conceive of protection and being safe, and relate it to official child protection practitioners' aims. My ethnographic data shows *how* children are considered as protected from potentially harmful practices and acknowledges protective measures that Zanzibari people employ to keep children safe. Child protection policy makers and practitioners might overlook or neglect these modes of knowing about safety for they do not fit easily into dominant protection narratives, which frequently focus on what 'goes wrong' instead of strengthening and revaluing existing positive community-based protection efforts.

While every society conceptualises abuse differently, all define a line between acceptable and non-acceptable practices (Archard 2004). However, these differing views of children affect how they are punished (Montgomery 2008: 156), cared for and raised. Instead of formulating generalised, abstract alternatives, I consider "alternative practices in the resistance grassroots groups present to dominant interventions" (Escobar 1995: 222) – Zanzibari children's and adults' appropriations of and conflicts with current child protection programmes. Investigating the meanings that "actors assign to the objects, situations and symbols (...) that fabricate their social world" (Augé and Colleyn 2006: 4) enables a deeper understanding of what protection means to whom. This research on the attempt to contextualise globalised child protection standards and how programmes operate and translate into local contexts, may be incorporated, appropriated or contested, shows why in Zanzibar children might still not be safe, while adults already claim they are protecting them. Interrogating the processes of child protection development aid elicits "how different people and groups are constrained by, yet able to subvert, the objectives of others" (Crewe and Harrison 1998: 1), like those of well-intended child rights actors.

In line with the recent “discursive explosion around ethics” (Caplan 2003: 1) in anthropology, this research examines “pre-existing moral landscapes to which the carriers of rights culture bring their message of change and improvement” (Rabinow 2001: 142). I explore the ethical assumptions behind globalised protective interventions and the moral issues these cause for people in Zanzibar. I interrogate CRC-based child protection programmes in which a “self-critical attitude” has been observed as “often lacking” (Bourdillon and Myers 2012b: 617). These programmes influence Zanzibar’s political and moral landscape through child protection actors’ dissemination of moral truths “through which we construct children” (Fassin 2013: 111) and their well-being. I consider how these practices “relate to moral categories and ideas of a good life on the ground” (Reynolds et al. 2006: 295) and potentially cause tension in everyday child rearing. Through the analytical tool of ‘problematization’ (Fassin 2013: 111), I explore “the set of discursive or nondiscursive practices that makes something enter into the play of the true and false” (Foucault 2001: 1489) and thus constitute child protection as my object for thought.

Morality is about what people do, what they do not do, and what they say and think they are doing. Therefore, I investigate what both adults in Zanzibar and international development actors “think they are up to” (Geertz 1974: 482), when they say they are protecting children. Here, I emphasise what Zanzibaris already know to do to help young people be safe and become full social members of their society. Instead of asking whether hitting children as a form of discipline is good or bad, I explore what people think they are doing when they hit children. Describing things “in their positivity – in terms of what they produce, do, create, make possible” and “not in terms of what they do not do or are not” (Davis 2000: 19) – as is frequently the case with aid workers’ Eurocentric perspectives that underline what people do not know or do properly –inspires my exploration of processes that intend to increase children’s protection. I prioritise Zanzibari people’s ‘diagnostic’ categories as “the starting points of or building blocks for a constructivist approach to knowledgeable intervention” (ibid.: 69) and reconsider child protection interventions from the children’s and adults’ perspectives involved in them.

Child protection organisations tend to conceptualise physical chastisement like an illness that can be treated with a specific cure. Since the “prescription of the correct cure is dependent on a rigorous analysis of the reality” (Ngugi wa Thiong’o 1987: ix), I am critical of a “too uniform and unilateral diagnosis” (Biehl and Petryna 2013: 14). Child protection as a category, much like disease, is multi-layered and determined by many factors. Zanzibari children and adults, as well as child protection actors are “plural beings” and can’t be reduced to specific populations (ibid.). The local realities in which they practice what they consider moral and others suggest what is ethical, frame, orient, and constrain child protection interventions as they take place in Zanzibar. Therefore, and as “treatment” – whether of an illness or of a practice conceptualised as such – should be “embedded in people’s social lives in order to work” (Beckmann 2012: 706), I explore what child protection interventions *do*, intentionally and unintentionally, to abolish corporal punishment in Zanzibar, and how this is received in society.

While applying anthropological knowledge to human rights concerns is “not an ethical responsibility” (Fluehr-Lobban 2013: 49), I acknowledge my power “to identify an ill or a wrong” (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 419) to avoid collaborating with the relations of power that sustain unintentionally harmful effects of child protection programmes and equally of excessive physical chastisement in Zanzibar. However, I consider the question of that ill or wrong to need rephrasing. Therefore, this thesis does not question whether child protection interventions should or should not exist, as arguing “for or against engagement represents something of a false choice” (Crewe and Axelby 2013: 40). Instead, and “assuming the genuine will of child protection actors and policy makers is to protect children’s best interests” (Seymour 2011: 228), I consider what existing interventions *do* by considering the possibility of moral and ethical issues arising in their context, regardless of them being deemed to ‘fail’ or ‘succeed’ (Das 1999).

Denouncing certain practices is the task for child rights activists, but it often leaves us in the dark about the *whys* and *hows* of what works and what falls short in helping us understand better why well-intended protection programmes ‘fail’ or get rejected. Therefore, I follow the call to conduct ethnography from within development and through exploring the “interstitial spaces” between development theory and practice,

and people's realities, to offer insights into what in Zanzibar's child protection sphere is and is not regarded to 'work', and what is not (Mosse 2005). While "questions of morality have become increasingly important to the anthropology of development", this is not first and foremost an 'Aidnography', for that might lead to "missing bigger, more fundamental questions" (Gardner and Lewis 2015: 110). Without making "the social so complex as to make it useless for any policy purposes that demand some reduction of complexity", I acknowledge the impact that conveying an event's meaning, such as children's chastisement, can have concerning its location in the everyday (Das 2007: 217). Ultimately, this aims to avoid that a supposedly child-centred system may practically "further marginalise children and ignore the conditions of their vulnerability" (Cooper 2012: 495). By describing and analysing processes of change, and influencing alternative visions (Gardner and Lewis 2015: 3), I finally hope to "open up space for policy innovation" (Mosse 2005: 242) and to rethink child protection interventions in Zanzibar and the 'Global South'.

My ethnographic approach inclines me to take my informants' viewpoints and Zanzibari cultural strands seriously. This guides my interest in multiple understandings of protection, and conditions my hesitation to rush to make moral judgements. Without defending "the overarching authority of universal human rights", I investigate moral discussions and tensions and take different moral positions that exist in Zanzibar seriously (Fassin 2012: 2f). This may enable deeper understandings of knowledge practices that legitimise and authorise discourses about children and their protection in Zanzibar. While I have no "ambition to discern the best way to live or resolve particular dilemmas" (Lambek 2015: 1), I remain aware of the impossibility of political neutrality and ultimately tend to side with those who claimed to suffer from well-intentioned interventions.

Introducing the anthropology of children

Central to discussions about children's well-being and its possible absence are children themselves. Since the 1920s, anthropological explorations of the diversity of childhoods and children's lives started to grow (Mead 1928; Malinowski 1929; Firth 1936; Fortes 1949; Lévi-Strauss 1955; Richards 1956), focusing mainly on processes of socialisation and cultural transmission (Montgomery 2008; LeVine 2007). These early accounts "set the stage for an unrelenting critique of universalist, psychological

explanations of childhood” (Evers, Notermans and Ommering 2011: 2). For a long time, children appeared “in ethnographic texts the way cattle make their appearance in Evans-Pritchard’s classic, *The Nuer* – as forming an essential backdrop to everyday life, but mute and unable to teach us anything significant about society and culture” (Scheper-Hughes and Sargent 1998: 13f; see also Hirschfeld 2002).

Ariès’ (1962) famous claim that childhood is a social construct contributed to the foundation for a turning point in anthropological and sociological considerations of children’s lives and to theorising childhood (Alanen 2014; James, Jenks and Prout 1998; Jenks 2009; Woodhead 2009). This paradigm shift increased ethnographies’ sensitivity towards different constitutions of children’s lives, childhood’s socially constructed nature, their own agency in shaping them, and various ideas about children and their well-being in different places (Wyness 2015; Crewe 2010; Montgomery 2001; Honwana and De Boeck 2005). Anthropological accounts now directly considered children as meaning-making and agency-exercising subjects entangled in relationships of power (i.e. Morrow and Richards 1996; Boyden 1997; Hecht 1998; Montgomery 2001 and Hart 2011). From the 1980s, child abuse and children’s suffering became a distinct topic of anthropological research (Korbin 1981; Scheper-Hughes 1992; Bluebond-Langner 1987).

While I know of no ethnographies that address Zanzibari childhoods specifically, children’s lives along the Muslim Swahili coast more broadly have addressed circumcision rites in Mafia island (Caplan 1976), children’s perceptions of reality through songs in Mombasa and Lamu (Eastman 1986), childhood and children’s songs in Mombasa (Knappert 1990) and Swahili children’s lives and their concepts of illness in Lamu, Kenya (Gearhart 2014). Nevertheless, as none of these accounts focus specifically on childhood in Zanzibar, their relevance to my research remains limited.

Corporal punishment has been covered in ethnographic accounts of the Chaga peoples in Tanzania (Raum 1940), physical correction in Tonga (Morton 1996), punishment culture in Nigeria (Last 2000), corporal punishment in Kenyan schools (Archambault 2009), physical chastisement of Luo children in Kenya (Aagard-Hansen 2013), and most recently in Twum-Danso Imoh’s (i.e. 2012, 2013) work on

children's perceptions of physical punishment in Ghana. Like this research, these accounts particularly focus on the socialising power of the practice in the lives of young people. Studies on child well-being have included explorations of changes in child care (Badasu, Oppong and Waerness 2012; Gottlieb 2004) and numerous accounts by aid organisations, sometimes in cooperation with anthropologists (Save the Children 2011; UNICEF 2010). Relevant studies on childhood poverty in the Global South emphasise existing inequalities as central risks to children with corporal punishment being one of them (i.e. Pankhurst, Negussie and Mulugeta 2016; Morrow and Singh 2014; Pells 2012).

Compared to explorations of children's chastisement, research into the effects of child protection measures for children is rare. Child protection as a distinct policy field and central ethnographic object has come into focus only recently (Hart 2012; Boyden, Pankhurst and Tafere 2012; Pells 2012; Montgomery 2015). Bourdillon and Myers' special issue of *Development in Practice* on child protection unified pressing anthropological critiques of "standardised, one-size-fits-all policies to protect children" (2012b: 615). Similar arguments are expressed in Wessells et al. (2013) study of community-based child protection mechanisms in Mombasa and in Waterhouse and McGhee's (2015) volume *Challenging Child Protection*. Ethnographic accounts of child protection have identified universalised protection approaches as problematic in their potential to decontextualise (Bourdillon and Myers 2012a; Hart 2012). Yet, a concern with the religious, bodily and gendered aspects of protection and punishment, specifically from children's perspectives, remains disregarded and many accounts supposedly concerned with children's protection and well-being are more about children's non-protection and potential harms. I therefore refrain from using 'well-being' "as a euphemism for discussions of poverty, ill-health, and suffering" and instead approach it "in the positive, constructive sense that the term implies" (Mathews and Izquierdo 2009: 39)⁸.

Following this, my project responds to calls for child-centred research on child protection (Scourfield and Coffey 2002: 331), as children are seldom asked about

⁸ Other ethnographic approaches to children's well-being are concerned with HIV/Aids and treatment approaches in Zanzibar (i.e. Dilger 2007; Beckmann 2009) and beyond (Fassin 2013).

their own understandings of harm, which renders their own experiences and insights invisible (Montgomery 2015: 41). I explore “what makes life meaningful for growing children, what enables them to fit constructively, and to their own satisfaction, into the societies in which they live” (Bourdillon 2014: 501f). I focus on what the CRC calls “spiritual and moral development” (Bourdillon 2014: 501f), and follow the call for investigating how “women and children are imagined as governmental subjects” (Babül 2015: 117) in Muslim states. Focusing on children’s bodies as loci of protection, socialisation and “the battleground for their rights” (Montgomery and Cornock 2013: 19) in light of their gendered Muslim identities, enables a phenomenological understanding of both interventions that aim to protect and of actions that intend to chastise and correct (Nieuwenhuys 2008: 5).

Recent debates around child protection ask whether current organisational tendencies to define child protection as a discrete policy or programme area, that is separated from health, education, and other development-oriented activities, may encourage single-issue approaches (Hart 2016; Waterhouse and McGhee 2015). Debated here is whether development programmes may generate new issues in different areas of children’s lives if particular “ills” – like corporal punishment – are addressed in isolation. Tackling corporal punishment as a harmful practice in society requires a local community starting point (Twum-Danso Imoh 2016), which anthropologists are particularly well-positioned to locate. This holds true in reverse for child protection – if protection interventions genuinely intend to improve children’s lives, they should take children’s and adults’ views in the communities in which they operate seriously and as a point of departure for planning and implementation.

III Methodology and Fieldwork

Methodological approach

In this participatory and phenomenological investigation of the meanings and operations of punishment and protection in children’s lives, I take seriously, follow and represent my participants’ perceptions and experiences (Merleau-Ponty 1962; Kleinman 1988, 1980; Jackson 1996). Instead of only reviewing adult-made child protection policies, I focus on how children perceive violence and possible protection from it in Zanzibari schools. Thereby, I restrain from “proposing that we know best

the best interest of the child” and thereby denying them their “right to participate in the structuring of their childhoods” (Mayall 2011: 431). Influenced by ideas on balancing power in teacher-student relationships, on the coloniser and colonised (Freire 1970), and on disciplinary mechanisms used in prisons, hospitals and schools (Foucault 1977), I engage “with the ‘grand narrative’ of children’s rights as it unfolds in the interaction between non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the children they seek to support” (Reynolds et al. 2006: 295).

I explore “the social reality of the lifeworld” (Jackson 1996: 19) of Zanzibari children and adults to generate insights into their embodied realms of experience (Mascia-Lees 2011; Lock 1993). This enables an interpretation of children’s knowledge through their own bodies and perception, by casting them in terms of “the formulae they use to define what happens to them” (Geertz 1973: 14f). Through radical empiricism and hermeneutics I conceptualise experiences as including both relational and individually specific moments and move between different child protection actors and institutions in Zanzibar – “the whole conceived through the parts which actualise it and the parts conceived through the whole which motivate them” (Geertz 1974: 491) – to create an inclusive image of this specific situation. Following this, my exploration of child protection interventions is inevitably an ‘ethnography of global connections’ in search of their productive friction (Tsing 2005: 3). Such connections are hardly traceable without facing up to claims of universality that lie “at the heart of contemporary humanist projects” (ibid.: 6f), and through the CRC are also the kernel of global child protection agendas. Taking the travel of universal child protection aspirations as my ethnographic object (ibid.: 7), I trace them in the “sticky materiality of practical encounters” (ibid.: 1) and explore how some of these ambitions translate into the context of children’s lives in Zanzibar.

Research with children (and adults)

The categories of adulthood and childhood are unstable, “since the contour of each comes to be formed in relation to the other” (Das 2015b: 60). And because adults structure children’s living conditions and hold responsibility for guaranteeing their well-being, data on child-adult relations is central to research on children’s protection (Toren 1999: 18). Commonly, children’s ‘otherness’ to adults makes them conceptually strange (Jenks 1982) and the ‘child’ was long constructed by adults and

anthropologists as “the paradigmatic other” (Rapport and Overing 2000: 29). But children are not simply passive recipients of the world and they create narratives of their own (Das 1989: 264). Conducting research with children meant recognising their importance as people with voices, who thus deserve to be heard and respected (Saunders and Goddard 2010; Punch 2002). This child-centred ethnography treats young people as speaking subjects and research co-participants (Meloni, Vanthuyne and Rousseau 2015: 107) and prioritises their views, voice and agency without excluding adults’ perspectives (Cheney 2007; Montgomery 2008: 6). Acknowledging the contrasts within and between both children’s and adults’ narratives and within each set of them, I oppose fictitious dichotomies between the two, “as their daily activities involve almost constant interaction” (Morton 1996: 20).

Children should be included in ethnographic research on the same basis as adults, as only they can offer researchers access “to what they know as children about the peopled world” (Toren 1999: 82). Therefore, there is a need in any social analysis for complementing “what adults have to say about the world with a contemporaneous study of how, exactly, children are constituting over time the concepts their elders are using” (Toren 1999: 16). Recognising and respecting the variations that exist in child rearing and socialisation practices enables a broader understanding of social life, specifically regarding the acquisition and transmission of cultural beliefs and practices (Froerer 2009: 5). Both child protection and corporal punishment are emotive research subjects. As this research seeks to avoid rushed value judgments, I look particularly at conceptualisations of children “within their own cultural contexts, and at the consequent implications this has for the ways that they are treated” (Montgomery 2008: 13).

During fieldwork I was particularly conscious of children’s voices that disagreed with the dominant universalised child rights discourse, as these “highlight the complex realities of children’s lives” (Twum-Danso Imoh 2013: 484). Situating their knowledge about their own worlds and their experiences of international protection programmes contributes to knowledge about child protection practice (James 2007: 266) and may “improve our understanding of their situation and the problems they face” (Bourdillon and Myers 2012b: 618). With this focus, consulting young people can elicit child protection research and may ultimately help protective policies and

programmes benefit children (Bourdillon and Myers 2012b: 617; Evers et al. 2011: 6). My research shows, that for protection programmes to be accepted, they should not be reduced to technical and generalised interventions, that they need to build on existing community-based ideas about protecting children, and should acknowledge diverse systems of morality. This includes avoiding setting children “apart ideologically as a category of people excluded from the production of value” (Nieuwenhuys 1996: 237) and developing national laws without their involvement (Rosen 2007: 297).

Considering child protection practice in Zanzibar through the lens of childhood, builds on the assumption that “goals move from top to bottom while information moves from bottom to top” (Das 1999: 108). Policy-driven child protection goals move similarly, but they miss valuable information from ‘below’ – from children who are supposed to benefit from interventions and adults who are supposed to apply them. This echoes Foucault’s conceptualisation of parrhesia as a form of criticism, directed “either towards another or towards oneself, but always in a situation where the speaker or confessor is in a position of inferiority with respect to the interlocutor” (2001: 17f). The assumption that the “parrhesiastes is always less powerful than the one with whom he speaks” and that “the parrhesia comes from ‘below’, as it were, and is directed towards ‘above’” (ibid.) mirror the present situation. Only by listening to children and taking their views seriously, they may become critics of practices that target them but may fail to do so in the best terms.

Children have received less attention from anthropologists or development studies scholars, than from aid agencies (Axelby and Crewe 2013: 114). However, it is particularly in aid contexts that their perceptions should be attended to; as part of minority world-initiated development interventions, specific globalised discourses, policies and practices affect young people across the majority world (Ansell 2017: 6). Otherwise, relying exclusively on assumptions of child well-being that build on ‘Western’ policymakers’ experiences of childhood, may create child protection policy that is irrelevant for children’s realities elsewhere (Mosse 2005). Child protection programmes in Zanzibar are examples of processes that are implemented through non-governmental organisations like Save the Children in collaboration with the Zanzibari government. Despite the profound effects of most educational, legal

and political processes on children, they are rarely consulted on “child care proceedings that are in the best interest of the child” (Freeman and Veerman 1992: 29). Even though aid workers ‘collect’ children’s voices and present this as collaborative, these are often used to construct truths that serve specific interests and agendas. This renders children’s knowledge a manipulable subject that distorts the relationship between knowledge and information.

The absence of young people’s voices in ethnographic material has been criticised as significant (Richards 1956: 63). While Zanzibari children are central to child protection practice, in society they are also obliged to demonstrate restraint and silence. The dilemma of not regarding children as entitled to speak when they could offer crucial insights on practices that concern them, influenced my decision to understand them “in their own terms” (Montgomery 2001: 166). I consider children’s moral logic of primary importance, for “one cannot measure the bearing of another’s life (beyond the requirement upon it of justice) without seeing it from that other’s perspective” (Cavell 2005 in Reynolds et al. 2006: 300). To explore Zanzibari children’s moral lives and ethical challenges, I consider the moral issues that children encounter when they are involved in child protection programmes and the values and obligations they deem important in their lives and on which they hold each other to account (Woods 2013). In my research these include manners/courtesy, chastisement, safety, piety, empathy, and respect.

(Child-)friendly research methods and their challenges

To gain a variegated insight into children’s and adults’ experiences of protection interventions, I combined participatory⁹ and collaborative visual and sensory research tools with more traditional ethnographic methods like participant observation and interviews (Pink 2009; Pink et al. 2004). I used drawing, photography, story and poetry writing to understand children’s experiences of protection and punishment, as here “the interview method is not adequate” (Toren 1999: 19). This approach helped to bring out the “embodied and sensory nature of social interactions and environments” (Pink 2009: 20), to grasp the sensory richness

⁹ I refer to these methods as ‘participatory’, while simultaneously questioning this concept’s implications.

of children's environments and to show that "there are experiences to which children might give expression that are beyond the reach of adults" (Das 2015b: 59).

To avoid an "over-reliance on one type of data collection" (Morrow and Richards 1996: 101) I used multiple research strategies and worked with visual ethnographic methods, because "seeing comes before words" and "the child looks and recognizes before it can speak" (Berger 1972: 7).¹⁰ These methods intend to empower children to keep the lead in assigning meaning to matters that affect their lives by prioritising their discourses and building discussions on them (Beazley et al. 2009). Since understanding informants' inner lives "is more like grasping a proverb, catching an allusion, seeing a joke" – or "reading a poem" (Geertz 1974: 491), I turned to these modes of making meaning. With adults I used a mixture of methods within an ethnographic approach that intertwined semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with theory. Participant observation was my central tool of inquiry when in schools, Save the Children's office and workshops, as well as people's homes and Stone Town's community at large.

During my eighteen months of fieldwork I worked with a core group of sixty child research participants between the ages of nine and sixteen in four state primary schools and two community-run *madrasas*. Other research participants included teachers, parents, religious leaders (*sheikhs*), community leaders (*shehas*), child protection policy makers and implementers (Save the Children, UNICEF), Zanzibar government officials, and university students of the Diploma in Child Rights Protection at Zanzibar University (ZU)¹¹. I conducted forty-eight semi-structured interviews, twelve focus group discussions, six draw and write workshops and three photovoice sessions. The themes I asked my young research participants to keep in mind while drawing, writing, or taking photographs, were childhood (*wakati wa utotoni*), manners/courtesy (*adabu*), punishment/chastisement (*adhabu*), and safety/protection (*usalama/ulinzi*). Needless to say, their expressions went far beyond these ideas.

¹⁰ See Appendix I for an evaluation of these methods by the children who participated in them.

¹¹ Zanzibar University in Tunguu is a private Muslim college largely funded by Saudi Arabia. During fieldwork I was affiliated with the institution and, in return for affiliation, requested to teach the course in Child Rights-Based Approaches for one term. The course was part of the Diploma in Child Rights Protection that was established in cooperation with Save the Children.



Figure 0.1. Young research interlocutors during a focus group discussion, 2014.

All research activities with young people were conducted in empty classrooms at schools and *madrasas* during thirty-minute time slots that teachers identified as suitable regarding children's availability. Only the researcher and the research participants were present and each research group consisted of ten children, with equal gender distribution. During the sessions I distributed disposable cameras, paper, pens and crayons, explained the research themes and gave children two weeks to produce stories, poems, drawings and photographs. After collecting their creations, we co-analysed them in semi-structured group discussions that followed research activities and assured that children's own interpretations of their productions were given highest priority. Qualitative thematic analysis was used to bring out key themes that emerged from the data, aligning them with my guiding research question: *Why are well-intended child protection interventions rejected in Zanzibar?* The question's scope widened upon entering the field and included further: *What are children's worldviews of 'protection' and 'personhood' in educational settings? How do these perceptions vary between children according to age and gender? How are concepts of childhood, protection and personhood embedded in social relations between children, and children and adults? What role does the body play within these concepts and relationships, how are they mediated through it and how is this connected to gender differences? What other discourses of protection, personhood*

and childhood do children's worldviews contrast with and how do power relations influence these differences?

Consent and confidentiality¹² are critical in ethical research with children and young people (Morrow and Richards 1996; Abebe and Bessell 2014; Morrow and Boyden 2014). Throughout fieldwork consent remained a “process” that had to be renegotiated through repeatedly communicating information (ibid.: 92; ASA 2011: 5) and re-establishing my project's intentions. Through signed consent letters, I obtained informed consent from both parents/guardians and child researchers. Before starting research activities, all participants were informed about research themes and intent and ensured of confidentiality and their right to opt-out at any point. Instead of relying solely on informed consent (Morrow and Richards 1996: 95), I allowed informed dissent throughout research meetings with my young interlocutors and gave children the opportunity to refuse to participate, in case their situation or motivation had changed. Confidentiality and children's anonymity is guaranteed through the “removal of identifiers” and the “use of pseudonyms” (ASA 2011: 5). This ensures their protection and safety, especially regarding sensitive matters like protection and punishment, which was inevitably difficult to discuss.¹³

Draw and write and photovoice emphasise children's often side-lined voices and offer them opportunities to take leading roles in research projects (Wang 2006, 1999). Both methodologies centre on visualising children's realities and understanding their views of their environments and worlds. Photovoice – a participatory action research method in which individuals “use cameras to photograph their everyday (...) realities” and focus on issues that concern them (Baker and Wang 2006: 406) – was a particularly valuable research tool. Children's photographs documented situations seemingly less biased by my direct physical presence in the moment and enabled them to show everyday situations as they encountered them.

¹² Before starting fieldwork, I attended the Bloomsbury Training Course ‘Working Ethically with Children and Young People’ in November 2013. It covered topics including confidentiality, sampling, collecting data, power relations, consent, dissemination of findings and reward and recognition.

¹³ To fully ensure protection, I anonymised some children's photographs that showed other children than themselves or children who were not part of my research groups with black bars over the eyes.



Figure 0.2. Student interlocutors during photovoice and draw and write sessions, 2015.

Photovoice aims to provide safe engagement spaces for children who may be reluctant to contribute in group discussions or interviews and may “feel more autonomous and in control if asked to take their photographs” (Darbyshire et al. 2005: 423). The draw and write technique is premised on the assumption that drawing is “an enjoyable, participatory activity in which children of all ages can take part”; drawings “have been used as indicators, to reveal information that was deemed too difficult for the child to talk about or to facilitate adult/child communication” (Backett-Milburn and McKie 1999: 389). The technique “provides children with a choice for imparting information in ways that might be familiar to them” (Angell et al. 2015: 19). As drawing can help anthropologists ‘see better’ in the process of doing ethnography (Causey 2017), ‘improved’ seeing also applied to children as researchers in their own rights as they actively shape their worlds and the research processes (James and Prout 1997).

Children felt most comfortable and familiar with poetry and story writing, as both are highly respectful and respected art forms in Zanzibar. Here children dared voicing their opinions freely and in ways that did not contest Zanzibari-Swahili rules of communication. Poetry writing became an insightful way to understand children's experiences of and views on protection, punishment and personhood. Their poems revealed more critical stances towards the violence they experience in their communities that could not be captured in drawings.

Despite the fascinating insights that creative visual methods offered, they also had limitations, were not always immediately 'child-friendly' or 'person-friendly' (Punch 2002: 337) and created unexpected challenges. The participatory assumptions inherent in the creative approaches (Lomax 2012: 107) created issues of power and representation (Christensen 2004). They introduced new tensions and complexities that showed the limits of this approach and did "not in themselves provide a fail-safe shortcut to children's experiences" (Lomax 2012: 114). Since they mostly build on assumptions of what children in the 'West' are accustomed to, applying them in the 'non-West' was sometimes complicated and suggests the need to think beyond "feel-good participation in research" (Beazley et al. 2009: 376).

As a choice of methods is always influenced by how one perceives the status of children (Punch 2002: 322), others' different perceptions of children's status led to objections towards some of my methods. Working with participatory research methods in a society that favours children's passivity and obedience, had me reconsider the appropriateness of this approach. As Raheem (13) emphasised, "some children don't want to speak about the way they are brought up at home (*malezi ya nyumbani*) because when they do, they will get difficulties (*watapata shida*)". Many children I worked with were extremely shy to speak their mind, especially in a critical way. This restraint – the *adabu* (the manners) that is highly valued in Zanzibari society and perceived as necessary to adhere to by children as to avoid *adhabu* (punishment) – complicated my attempts to have them express their views.

Participatory research in schools implied a "social intervention" (Kirby 2001: 76) in an existing network of relationships. Some methods occasionally risked rather than increased children's well-being for failing to sufficiently account for children's

broader social networks and the processes that establish them as people in their communities. “She called us when we were studying, so while our friends were learning we missed class. I advise her to call us during our break or when we don’t study”, Lodi (12) lamented. Despite agreeing with teachers that their students should only take part when they were not in class, this could not always be guaranteed, as visible from the feedback. While none of my young interlocutors complained to me about this in person, they must have found it difficult to decline to take part”, even if opting-out of activities was an option, due to their perceiving me “in a ‘teacher’ role” (Fargas-Malet et al. 2010: 178). Thereby, working with a participatory approach sometimes put children in conflict with the adults in their lives and the social roles expected of them. The difficulty of assuring that children were protected “from harm that might result from taking part in research conducted by researchers” occasionally put their “right to be properly researched” at stake (Beazley et al. 2009: 370).

Photographs ultimately remained “an unapologetic reduction of reality from three dimensions to two” (Causey 2017: 35). Children’s realities and experiences went beyond what was possible to capture in an image, and for some “to take photos on these themes is not nice” (Marshed 14). Working with photovoice meant negotiating power relations concerning adults’ influence on children’s lives and the roles associated with them. Despite letting me conduct photovoice sessions with students, many teachers forbid cameras being used on school grounds which resulted in most images being taken outside schools in children’s homes and communities. But even in the communities, “many elders didn’t want to be photographed by us” (Saumu 13). Children’s imagined ‘freedom’ to visually document their lifeworlds was inevitably constrained by the rules that applied to the school space. Photovoice was further influenced by the wider locale in which my research schools were embedded, like a local photoshop assistant who was hesitant to develop children’s images, as he considered them ‘bad images’ and of ‘lesser’ quality for being out of focus or taken in the dark. Furthermore, children worried about punishment from their teachers, when they forgot to bring their cameras for me to have their pictures developed.

During one photovoice evaluation session, a teacher entered the room and asked whether I needed a cane. He suggested, that if I ‘hit the students a little bit’, they would do their work better. Events like this influenced children’s views and fears of

both teachers and myself. Conducting participatory research in a ‘normalised’ system of physical punishment, where teachers may have an intimidating impact on students, conditioned the possible influence of teachers’ pure presence may have had on my research. It meant working in a parallel system within which ‘mistakes’ were punished according to the rules that applied to the school and that could not easily be outplayed.

Drawing, which is frequently conceived of as enjoyable and a participatory activity open to children of all ages (Backett-Milburn and McKie 1999: 389), created comparable challenges. While some children enjoyed drawing, others felt belittled by the task or considered it inappropriate, like Naima (14), who said, “I would have preferred to go somewhere to visit instead of drawing or taking photos”. As drawing depends on children’s “actual perceived ability to draw”, it was not a “simple, ‘natural’ method” to use (Punch 2002: 331). My young interlocutors’ limited familiarity with drawing complicated and challenged the assumption that children everywhere perceive it as an adequate means of expression (Mitchell 2006). Insights that could be conveyed through drawing were restricted. It became a more useful tool when supplemented with children’s written or verbal explanations of their images (Toren 1999: 20).

Additionally, some meaningful or personally relevant responses may not have been drawn or written down, as that may have been “just as emotionally or practically problematical for the child as would be the act of speaking them” (Backett-Milburn and McKie 1999: 394). Accordingly, instead of free-handed drawings, children often produced traced images, echoing their lack of familiarity with creative arts or their fear of doing something ‘wrong’¹⁴. As in school-based research children may say “what they think adults want them to say” (Fargas-Malet et al. 2010: 178) and try to “present a ‘correct’ response to adult questions” (Angell et al. 2015: 21), this may have influenced my data.

Even though these possible consequences were unintended, they were caused by tasks I gave them and illuminate the challenge of avoiding harm in research

¹⁴ A Zanzibari learning approach still largely rewards for and builds on learning by heart, and includes neither arts nor music classes, which are considered *haram* (forbidden according to Islamic law).

situations. This is particularly pressing when working on sensitive matters such as physical harm, especially when precisely this may be caused by the method. Therefore, the assumption that methods like photovoice and draw and write are particularly suitable to working with children should be seen as more complicated than it appears. Child-friendly research always depends on and is biased by the contexts in which it is applied. And as with adults, “preferences and competencies vary from child to child” and finding “the ideal methods for research with children” was impossible (Punch 2002: 337). Thus, photography and drawing only offered partial perspectives into children’s lives and served as additions to but not an adequate “substitute for children’s voices” (Mitchell 2006: 69). To gain insights on difficult experiences, such as those of violence or pain, it remained important to combine children’s visual accounts with observations and anecdotes they offered in less formal situations of research, such as after group sessions or during private visits.

Overall, supposedly child-friendly participatory methods were influenced by unequal power relationships between adults and children and the hierarchy underlying this. The ideas of children’s agency and entitlement to participation inherent in and crucial for using these methods were often contrary to the expectation of Zanzibari children’s passive position at the bottom of society’s hierarchy. Applying creative methods in contexts where creativity is little valued and supported was challenging and the anticipated agency I hoped my approach would grant my young research participants was less than assumed. Young people’s roles in society should be considered before involving them in certain research approaches as the amount of power they wield determines “to what extent can they be empowered” (Strack et al. 2004: 56).

Fieldwork

The fieldwork this thesis draws on was conducted between January 2014 and July 2015 in Stone Town, Zanzibar.¹⁵ During fieldwork I lived alone in a flat in Stone Town for most of the time. Previously having moved between different areas in town and having lived with and without both Zanzibaris and ‘others’ (including international development workers, other long-term ‘expatriates’, and mainland

¹⁵ I have visited Zanzibar since 2009, when I attended a two-month intensive Swahili course at the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA) as part of my first degree.

Tanzanians) let me gain a sense of the city and its inhabitants as well as establish multiple relationships with a range of people with diverse identities. My typical research day was usually split in half. I spent either mornings or afternoons at my six research schools, observing or conducting research tasks with my young interlocutors. Two of the primary schools were pilot schools of Save the Children's 'Positive Discipline' programme, while the other two, as well as the Qur'anic schools, were not. The rest of the day I spent with Save the Children staff or other authorities at child protection institutions, ranging from governmental to religious bodies, and at workshop and meetings concerned with the establishment of the national child protection system. On weekends, I attended *madrasa* on Sunday mornings when it was attended by more children than during the week.

Fieldsites

In Zanzibar, state and Qur'anic schools are important locations in children's lives and key intervention sites for internationally initiated child protection programmes. Schools are neither neutral nor detached from the meanings ascribed on them. They are formed by both the students and teachers inhabiting and co-creating them and by their subjection to local and international gaze: they are "nodes of material connections to places near and far" (Ansell 2009: 1999). More than isolated fieldsites, schools are physical and cultural environments embedded in wider society. They are places where children's roles, relations, and expectations are debated and manifested. As on-going places they shape and contest social relationships, and consequently raise methodological and ethical difficulties (Anderson and Jones 2009). As micro social worlds, they reflect wider societal tendencies. Access to the schools that became my fieldsites was established in cooperation with a Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) employee, who arranged introductory visits. This helped me to obtain permission from head teachers before starting research activities. It also enforced my official status as a researcher, which helped teachers feel free to participate in the project and to grant students permission to do so too.¹⁶ Nevertheless, access had to be continuously renegotiated.

¹⁶ These steps were particularly helpful regarding the *madrasas*, which had not received researchers before and where access was particularly sensitive and in constant need of renegotiation, partially also regarding my status as a female non-Muslim researcher.



Figure 0.3. Observation from the back of a class at one of my research schools, 2014.



Figure 0.4. Observing in a classroom at a school on the outskirts of Stone Town, 2014.

All my fieldsites were located in and around Stone Town, the only urban centre of the archipelago. I chose to focus on urban and peri-urban sites only, because child protection programmes were operating there and put into question most actively. The sixty children, whose perceptions are at the centre of this thesis, attended four primary and two Qur'anic schools located in and at the periphery of Stone Town. All were located in what is classified as the district of 'Zanzibar Urban/West'

(*Mjini/Magharibi*). One school was in the old part of Stone Town, known as *Mji Mkongwe* (Old Town), two were across the old creek of *Darajani* in *Ng'ambo*, and one was by Amani Stadium on the town's periphery. The two *madrasas* were in the same district, one in town and the other one on the outskirts. This mix of locations allowed for insights on the various realities children face in different urban settings.



Figure 0.5. Peri-urban *shibia* on the periphery of Stone Town and location of one fieldsite school and one *madrasa*.

Positionality, language, dress, and conduct

My various roles during fieldwork meant that I had to constantly renegotiate my positionality. Researching child protection and corporal punishment included witnessing cases of physical chastisement while sitting awkwardly in the back of primary school and *madrasa* classrooms. This entailed being a frequent witness to situations that “‘Western’ activists would deem an abuse of children’s rights” (Perry 2009: 49) and classify as violence. In light of the spectrum of conflict that opened as I entered my field of inquiry, this thesis aims to reflect the blurred lines of participant observation and political intervention. This account foregoes political dialogue with child protection policy makers and is primarily a reproduction of a social situation that aims to speak for itself. Echoing Nieuwenhuys’ claim, that “both abstract universalism and cultural relativism posit an essentialist approach to social phenomena” – at once treating childhood and the other ‘culture’ as “enduring

phenomena” (2008: 6) – my research abstains from both. As “with pain there is a moral demand to respond to its expression” (Cavell in Das 2007: xi), this also held true for witnessing Zanzibari children’s pain. It was impossible to be interested in both child discipline and protection but at the same time remain “outside the order of it” (Das 2015a). The anthropologist as a witness within regimes of intervention poses a “struggle of varying intensity to retain an independent space or perspective for claims to knowledge production” (Marcus 2005: 34). Objectivity remains an imaginary in emotionally loaded moments of watching children being hit. As “‘witnessing’ links anthropology to moral philosophy” and only observing is “a passive act which positions the anthropologist above and outside human events as a ‘neutral’ and ‘objective’ (i.e., uncommitted) seeing I/eye” (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 419), my own role as an observer shaped my positionality.

Witnessing children’s chastisement, of course, made me want to ‘take sides’, even though “this flies in the face of the anthropological nonengagement with either ethics or politics”, as this itself results in an ‘ethical’ and moral position (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 419). During these non-verbal inactive moments I felt most in conflict with my role. Watching children being hit, I often felt the need to intervene – because, in the end, I personally did not agree with it. Recognising that my personal beliefs inevitably influenced how I saw, understood and interpreted the world I encountered in Zanzibar, I never intervened and limited the degree to which I would allow my data to be biased at the point of direct interference. The ethical dilemma inherent in my positionality and the endeavour to live an ethical life, was certainly “haunted by what is one’s responsibility in allowing such a state of affairs [rape, torture etc.] to persist” (Das 2015b: 79; 2007). Eventually, I settled on the position that it is a question of timing rather than of engagement or non-engagement. Finally, this also served as a preventative measure of potentially being prohibited from accessing the schools.¹⁷

To finance fieldwork, I took up consultancy work with Save the Children and other development organisations. For some research participants, fellow researchers and

¹⁷ In my presence, children were hit with canes on arms, legs, or back. I never witnessed the causing of visible, severe injuries, but was reported incidents and shown injuries post-occurrence. In a more ‘seriously harmful’ situation I may have had to compromise my non-intervention stance.

aid workers, this blurred the line between my anthropologist and development worker positions. Some research participants assumed I was a child rights activist or aid worker. This linked to the expectation that I held and promoted a denouncing ethical stance on corporal punishment. After observations or interviews my interlocutors frequently asked, ‘what I really thought about caning children?’ I never lied, but always explained that I personally, because I was raised without physical discipline, did not believe in its effectiveness. I emphasised that this was secondary to my research, as I cared to learn about Zanzibari people’s positions on the matter.¹⁸ I repeatedly explained that as a white foreigner I may look like many people who work for child protection organisations and promote certain values, but that instead I wanted to listen to the views of children and adults participating, and potentially benefitting, from these programmes.

This blurry positionality also conditioned some interlocutors’ expectation of remuneration for research participation, as is common practice for participation in aid organisations’ workshops or research projects. For financial and ethical reasons, and to be able to “fully guarantee research participants’ interests” (ASA 2011: 3), I did not attend to monetary expectations. Nevertheless, the blurring was also productive, as the appointments with some of the Zanzibar child protection system’s key institutions let me gain insights and access to perspectives of actors involved at the core of protection practices and processes. Particularly my engagement with local Save the Children employees offered insights into the emotional and technical sides of the field in practice that intertwined personal beliefs and professional aspirations.

Aware that Save the Children’s role as both research participant and partial funder of my research demanded that “the potential for conflict between their different roles and interests should be made clear to them” (ASA 2011: 7), I openly discussed the implications of my multiple involvement at the onset of my research. To manage Save the Children’s expectations, who generously allowed me into their organisation as a PhD research affiliate, I presented the nature of my exploration from the start,

¹⁸ Openly holding different views on child discipline to many of my informants certainly influenced how some of them spoke to me about the matter. However, such a disagreement, which, most importantly, was not enforced by judgement but simply communicated on demand, never restricted discussions about the subject. Instead it helped to gain even more insights on the specificities and supposedly important details, when reasoning in support of physical chastisement.

and confirmed that collaboration would not endanger the integrity of my research. There was a possibility of my research findings being interpreted as negative criticism or as conflicting with Save the Children's views, as "in *parrhesia* the danger always comes from the fact that the said truth is capable of hurting or angering the *interlocutor*" (Foucault 1983: 17). To avoid this, I shared ethnographic studies, which had previously been perceived as offensive by aid workers, after anthropologists had worked with both development organisations and programme beneficiaries (Mosse 2005). Despite this and aware that positionality always affects research relationships, Save the Children invited all forms of anthropological investigation and considered this kind of study as necessary for genuinely improving their work for children.

My fluency in Swahili – the local language of Zanzibar – enabled me to work without research assistants, to conduct interviews and discourse analysis and to use translation to explore the grounding of (social) laws and norms in language (Richland 2013). Ethnography is a form of art and "a work of translation, that demands all the senses" (Scheper-Hughes, speech given in May 2016). As we also interpret each other's interpretations, one 'true' picture of reality becomes impossible (Geertz 1973). Speaking Swahili certainly brought me closer to an 'ideal anthropological position' (Rabinow 1977) and became a counterpart to my obvious non-Swahili heritage. It allowed me insights into society that may have been restrained by assumptions provoked by my appearance. Finally, of course I remained a "marginal, fictive native[s] at best", but benefited from being relatively more insider than outsider "by mastering the skills of translation, sensitivity, and learned cultural competencies" (Marcus 1998: 118). Speaking Swahili helped me to "offer understandings of social relations and practices and to assist with acts of interpretation and translation, to promote exchanges and to stimulate debate" (Axelby and Crewe 2013: 228); yet it could not but only produce one interpretation of a social situation. As all art and every act of writing are "a product of translation", this research is ultimately a "process of cultural understanding" (Abdallah, speech given in July 2016¹⁹), in which some things inevitably remained "untranslatable".

¹⁹ Speech given at the Africa Writes Festival, British Library, London, July 2016, not available online.

Dress was historically used “as one of the most important and visually immediate markers of class, status, and ethnicity in East African coastal society” (Fair 2001: 64) and mattered also to my self-presentation as a researcher. Always wearing a headscarf and clothes that fully covered my body, was frequently commented on by Zanzibaris as ‘showing that I respected myself’ (*kujiheshimu*), reflecting how my choice of dress influenced how people perceived me. Being cognisant that “clothing serves as a means to improve status” (Keshodkar 2013: 153), but also aware that “in some respects foreign researchers are like children” (Fair 2001: 61), veiling let me classify my social position as an adult woman.

What I wore mattered most at the *madrasas* where I conducted research, and at Zanzibar University (ZU), where I was an affiliated researcher and guest lecturer. At these institutions, unlike in the officially secular public sphere, Islam was the main defining factor in determining norms and behaviour. At *madrasas* I was repeatedly advised to tighten my headscarf when my hair was visible. At ZU I had to sign a code of conduct that outlined the “ethical and moral standards” on campus and included guidelines on “dressing modestly” and “having to cover the head, putting on loose long dresses, not exposing the body from the neck down to the ankles”. Accordingly, I sought to model my behaviour in a manner acceptable to the norms and customs of Zanzibar; including, appropriate forms of greeting, paying respect to authorities and gender relations, actively performing docility by displaying my subordination and demonstrating patience in a hierarchical system. Nevertheless, my status as a person remained liminal, as I remained an unmarried, childless, non-Muslim woman, living alone and moving around without restrictions, opposing a commonly adhered to adequacy expected of adult women.

IV Thesis Outline

The chapters are structured in three sections. The first section establishes a Zanzibari-Swahili cosmology of childhood and protection which serves as a starting point to a comprehensive understanding of the concept of protection. The second section brings this Swahili *Weltanschauung* into conversation with other discourses outside of it. The final section follows this dialogical approach by returning to a reconstruction of experiences in Zanzibar and contrasting them with a less context-

bound power analysis. This serves as a point of departure for a final outlook and conclusion.

In Chapter 1, I lay out my argument from a focus on ‘the child’ in Zanzibari society and what it is thought (not) to be here. Through childhood narratives by children, young people and adults equally, I reconstruct what childhood means, where, when and how it takes place, and how it is negotiated in relation to other children and adults. The example of the social practice of greeting illustrates the inherently social meaning of being young and shows the multidimensionality and fluidity of the notions of ‘child’ and ‘childhood’ in Zanzibar. Chapter 2 focuses on concepts of personhood, person-making, and morality. Building on the previous chapter’s definitions, it revolves around people’s understandings of person formation and the ‘making of’ children in Zanzibar. While establishing the moral universe of ‘being’ and ‘becoming’, I introduce my argument that in the archipelago the co-constructing concepts of *adabu* (good manners, discipline, courtesy) and *adhabu* (punishment, chastisement) are key to child rearing practices and socialisation, and hence to achieving social personhood (*utu*). Discussing the fuzzy relationship between those two concepts in relation to the normalisation of physical chastisement, I draw on socialisation theory to establish how Zanzibari children learn ‘to be in the world’ and are made to fit into it. This includes a consideration of disciplining norms, its materiality, the idea of making and correcting mistakes, and children’s reactions to punishment.

In Chapter 3, I complete establishing the Swahili social universe of protection and childhood by introducing the three discursive spheres that influence everyday life in Zanzibar: the religious realm of Islam (*kidini*), the cultural domain of the Swahili (*kitamaduni/kienyeji*), and the global aid/governmental realm (*kisiasa/kiserikali/kiinternational*). I explore how protection is understood according to each mode of knowing in order to approach the instability of the terminology’s use, which is central to the conflict inherent in current approaches to ‘child protection’. This moves my inquiry towards ‘child protection’ and takes my argument further by pointing to the frequent incompatibilities and tension between religious, cultural and aid conceptualisations and discourses of ‘protection’.

In Chapter 4, I bring Zanzibari-Swahili notions of childhood and protection into conversation with understandings beyond this worldview. Building on the ideas of ‘the body’ and ‘violence’ I consider children’s bodies as loci of protection from actions that may be considered violent according to the previously outlined discursive spheres. The chapter explores the differentiation between *kuchapa* (to smack) and *kupiga* (to hit), of which the former remains widely tolerated, is regarded as part of person-making and is not considered as violence in Zanzibar, while the latter has come to be at stake regarding conceptualisations of ‘violence’. I reflect on this through the concept of ‘pain’ in relation to the bodily experience of protection, punishment, and personhood. As pain is still regarded as a necessary part of child rearing, I consider an unintentional shift in society away from visible (now unacceptable) to invisible (still acceptable) violence against children caused by development approaches to child protection.

Chapter 5 engages with the ideas of ‘discipline’ and ‘punishment’ and how children and teachers perceive them in the school setting. ‘Positive Discipline’ (*adabu mbadala*) has become a central concept for child protection programmes against corporal punishment. Nevertheless, in Zanzibar the concept practically translates into ‘alternative punishment’ as it is misappropriated in various ways. The discussion of this mistranslation is built on children’s feedback notes collected through ‘Suggestion Boxes’ in Positive Discipline pilot schools over a period of two years, as well as around interviews with teachers. The discussion visualises the co-existence of different systems of thought about discipline and punishment in educational settings and elucidates the tension that I argue exists between protection aspirations and reality. In Chapter 6, I explore how the CRC-enshrined rights to ‘protection’ and ‘participation’ become opposing rather than reinforcing categories in the Zanzibar child protection context. I consider the power relations, tensions and linkages between the two and explore their interdependence in regard to aid aspirations to realise children’s rights to protection and participation. Even though children’s and adults’ lifeworlds and discourses are inseparable, an artificial islanding of children through spatialised protection approaches creates the misleading idea of separability. This takes me to the relevance of children’s responsibilities – an addition of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children to the global rights discourse without which the latter is barely accepted in Zanzibar.

In Chapter 7, I discuss protection in relation to gender and Islam. Building on Zanzibari notions of the body in the public and private spheres, I discuss how boys' and girls' protection is approached differently, and explore how this relates to ideas about masculinity, femininity, and religion. I focus specifically on the physical abuse of boys and how this taboo in society is a pressing protection issue. This links child protection to the discourse of women's rights and the conceptual equation of women with children. In Chapter 8, I reunite the Swahili world with the international world by considering the hierarchy of protection practices that build on universalised ideas of well-being in light of a discussion around decolonisation, 'Westernisation', and secularisation. In order to conclude I bring things to a close in Chapter 9. I draw together the main arguments of the thesis and link them to children's ideas of being 'the nation of tomorrow'. I suggest four key areas around which to rethink current child protection practice in Zanzibar to be better suited for a more situationally sensitive and fluid approach. I end with considerations for future research.

PART I

FORMATIONS OF CHILDHOOD

CHAPTER 1

“A Child is Someone who Greet the Elders”: **Narratives of Childhood and Personhood in** **Zanzibar**



On an afternoon in October 2014 about eighty pairs of hesitant eyes look at me curiously, as I sit in the back of a classroom at Mawingu Primary School. Sitting on the only other existing chair except the teacher's, I feel awkward and too visible for my own liking. “What is your religion?”, a small boy of about ten asks me, a football jersey shining through his worn-off white school uniform. As I hesitate to answer, the teacher indicates the other students to continue asking, before it will be my turn to respond. A girl stands up, keeping her head low only glimpsing at me as she phrases her question: “Are you married?” Accompanied by giggles, she sits back down on her empty rice bag, her seat on the cracked concrete floor. More questions

follow: “What is your tribe?”, “Why is education the key to life?”, “What is a good government?”, “Why is there Malaria in Africa?”, “Why is Zanzibar poor?”. Particularly the poverty question concerns the teacher, and she steps in to ‘help’, before I can attempt an answer. “We are poor because we are a third [world] country; we are still developing”.

This is an account of some ordinary children’s everyday experiences in one city on one island in a country in Africa. It is a balancing act between geographical particularities – for what the children I met think about their lives is shaped by their lives’ constitution in this specific place – and the benefit of drawing parallels and mapping patterns between events that are never singular to one place. As visible from the opening vignette, the themes of the questions by students, who were my subjects of many hours of observation, reflected their own ideas about what influences Zanzibaris’ realities: Religion, status, ethnicity, education, politics, health, poverty. These elements reoccur throughout the accounts I present in this thesis. These, I hope, will increase knowledge about young people’s lives in the Western Indian Ocean.

In Zanzibar, as elsewhere, there are various understandings of what constitutes children, childhood and personhood. In several ways such conceptualisations “are part of ‘culture’ not aspects of ‘nature’” (Richards 1956: xxxv). In what follows I explore the multidimensionality of what ‘children’ as “plural and heterogeneous categories” (De Boeck and Honwana 2005: 1) imagine and are imagined (not) to be and what being a child and a person can mean in Zanzibar. I show how such multi-faceted narratives are negotiated in a constantly changing web of meanings, actions and interpretations, and are imprinted by religious, cultural, and political regimes of thought (Montgomery 2008). Even in one place, a child is a condition of multiple elements, all variable or scalar, without necessarily functioning together in one social field only. As children’s lives depend on their relations with others, those links demand investigation, contrasting perspectives amongst them and ways in which they act upon each other.

In this first chapter, I pave the way towards broader understandings of how children are protected and punished in Zanzibari schools and society by initially looking at what “cultural invention” (Kessel and Siegel 1983) it is we are talking about, when speaking of Zanzibari children. For all human societies recognise distinctions “between children and adults and the age-linked emergence of children’s abilities to learn, work, and participate in community activities as they grow and develop” (LeVine and New 2008: 3), I explore the matter in terms of a social ecological approach concerned with the interplay and relationships between individuals, communities and history. Primarily, I acknowledge the non-fixed state that being young and experiencing childhood in Zanzibar implies, by exploring how childhood is constructed, how it constitutes a realm of learning, how children are both social ‘beings’ and ‘becomings’, and finally a social category of their own. This is necessary for a thesis about child protection, as only by learning about people’s assumptions about childhood first, it becomes possible to also understand how people think about protection.

I Constructing Childhoods in Zanzibar

Historical constructions of childhood: empires, education, and ethnicity

Children reflect the complexities of the worlds they inhabit. Therefore, Zanzibar’s historical and cultural hybridity is fundamental to thinking about children and childhood in this place, as it resonates the many layers of these ideas. Especially “the revolution in 1964, the question of ethnicity, and the impact of Islam” are indispensable in scholarly enterprises on Zanzibar’s culture and history (Nisula 1999: 14). All children are born into specific social environments and affected by historical constructs that undergo changes and reinterpretations over time (Schwarzman 1978: 9). Therefore, people in different cultural contexts develop certain views of children’s nature and related sets of beliefs about how best to ‘culture’ it (ibid.). Due to changing ideas about childhood, there is no such thing as a unified Zanzibari attitude concerning the topic (James and James 2001). Childhood remains a product of historical circumstances and best understood in relation to them.

“A child should receive education to study worldly matters”, is written on Fatma’s (12) photograph of three girls wearing white headscarfs writing into their notebooks.

Another of her photos shows two girls laughing brightly: “A child should be happy to continue her studies”. In Zanzibari state schools today children learn from a curriculum based on the one introduced during the British Empire. Alongside the state school system, all Muslim children, and even some of the approximately 1 %²⁰ of other denominations, spend the other half of their days at Qur’anic school (*madrassa*, or *chuo*). These private or community-based, independently run, religious schools are seldom registered and staffed with teachers (or advanced students) of all educational levels. Considering the amount of time children spend here, “they are of crucial importance in the formation of Muslim childhood” (Rajabi-Ardeshiri 2011: 692). My young interlocutors considered education a core right and separable into worldly education (*elimu ya kidunia*) at state schools, and religious education (*elimu ya kidini*) at *madrassa*. Ruwaida (10) explains: “Children learn at school, *madrassa*, and tuition so they can live a good life (*maisha mazuri*). Mother and father help children pay their fees.” Linking education, economic status and parents as providers, indicates the relationality that shapes children’s lives.

The powers that formerly occupied the place and people’s minds still shape children’s educational reality under a nationally enforced trope of sameness. Various models of childhood existed in Zanzibar over centuries. These were influenced by people coming across the Indian Ocean as part of one of the central trading routes and hubs of slave trade between the East African Coast, the Middle East and India. Additionally, foreign systems of forceful rule, amongst which the Omanis and the British took centre stage, had their impact. Children growing up during the days of the Sultan of Zanzibar and Oman – who relocated his empire’s centre from Muscat to the archipelago from the 1830s onwards and ruled for two centuries – experienced childhood differently to those raised under the British Protectorate from 1890 (Wilson 2013: 12). Zanzibar’s gain of independence in 1963 and the period after the violent revolution on 12 January 1964, when the Union of mainland Tanganyika and the islands of Zanzibar was formed and followed by a socialist government, equally influenced children’s realities (Lofchie 1965; Maliyamkono 2000; Parkin 1995).

²⁰ This 1 % of non-Muslim children is hardly recognisable in public life, for, as a local development worker told me: “Even if we have Christian children in Zanzibar, they will also dress like Muslim children, they will cover up, because it is what all the other children do”.

Today, Zanzibar has its own government, but decisions concerning the United Republic of Tanzania are made by the mainland Union government, frequently leaving Zanzibaris with a sense of neocolonisation and voicelessness (Mwakikagile 2008). Dependence of mainland Tanzania is a long debated political issue with repeated demands to regain the archipelago's independence. Islamic movements like *Uamsho* (Awakening) utilise this dissatisfaction to gain support by intertwining religious and political demands such as the desire for independence and the creation of an official Muslim state through an Islamic revival on the verge of turning into fundamentalism (Turner 2009; Parkin 1995). This "revival of Islamic religiosity" (Keshodkar 2013: 9) often materialises in anti-Christian public missionary preaching "in favour of Islam" (Ahmed 2008: 4). This links to more general forms of violence, particularly against children and women, and mirrors the situation on a socio-political level. This contextualisation of efforts to protect and practices that may harm children, acknowledges Zanzibar's complex socio-political nature, that is prone with tension from within its own society (McIntosh 2009).

The education system and childhood memories are interwoven with Zanzibar's colonised past and also link to questions of ethnicity. In the archipelago, "the construction of a racial state began not with British conquest in 1890 but with the actions of Omani Arabs who conquered Zanzibar" and "built on a much older political culture of Arabocentrism that for centuries had accorded status and prestige to those who claimed connections to the Islamic Middle East" (Glassman 2011: 23). With the overthrow of the Sultan in 1964 – commonly referred to as the 'Zanzibar Revolution' – ethnic conflict and persecution peaked (Glassman 2011). The event formed "the climax to years of growing racial, ethnic, and partisan tension" in which "probably one-third of all Arabs on Unguja Island were either killed or forced into immediate exile" (Burgess 2009: 1). Later this was followed by "their mass exclusion from government employment" (ibid.), which largely prevails until today.

The aftermath of the Omani rulers' overthrow stirred ethnic hatred and fostered it through the school curriculum. With ethnicity being "more a relationship than the property of a group" (Augé and Colleyn 2006: 129), power relationships changed after the revolution and "a socialist government of mainly African descent ruled Zanzibar: Arab-ness became disqualifying, African-ness was qualifying and the more

public aspects of Islamic activity and rituals were discouraged and even condemned” (Larsen 2004: 127). Ramadan, a friend in his early thirties who self-identifies as of ‘Arab’ decent, illustrates this drastically, recalling his early school years in the late 1980s: “I was one of the few Arab kids in class. Teachers made fun of us. They always said that Arab women swept the floors with their breasts. It was so embarrassing.” As in other East African states, like Rwanda and Kenya, where genocides or inter-ethnic violence occurred, in Zanzibar today ethnicity is largely a taboo topic and upon inquiry usually denied existence. How memories of the Zanzibar Revolution are constructed – “as either the original sin or the triumph of the independence era” – continues to determine whom Zanzibaris associate with or “welcome to their homes as in-laws” (Burgess 2009: 2).

The fact that along the Swahili coast, Arabs were considered “superior to non-Arabs” (Caplan 1976: 22) echoes the colonial racial paradigm, that depicted Arabs as landowners, Indians as merchants, and “the African [as] the downtrodden” (Sheriff 2001: 301). In Zanzibar this still holds true, as in local museums one can see “the privileging of Omani history and identity” (Boswell 2011: 64), while references to the socialist revolution and its effects on contemporary society remain absent in displays (ibid.: 65). However, I was repeatedly told, “there is no space for ‘tribes’ (*makabila*) today, because Zanzibar does not have any”, Amal, a young social worker in her twenties explains. Another local female aid worker supports this, explaining that “people follow culture (*utamaduni*) here, but there are no ethnic groups. Over the years people have mixed (*wamechanganya*) so you cannot differentiate between them (*kuwatenganisha*)”.

Zanzibar’s “extraordinary complexity” as neither exclusively “African, Arabian or Indian but partaking of each of these” (Parkin 1995: 201) influences perceptions that “Zanzibar isn’t Africa, it’s the Arab world in Africa”, as a non-African development worker emphasised. While Zanzibar is part of Africa, the connotations this trope includes, emphasise parallels to Middle Eastern and Arab states, often perceived as stronger than those with continental African countries. Due to Zanzibar’s past as “an Arab colonial state” (Middleton and Campbell 1965: 1), Swahili identity entails various categories: “Generally identified as freeborn coastal Muslims, many of whom were of mixed African and Arab descent, who lived primarily in urban areas

and spoke the Kiswahili language” (Fair 2001: 30). Following this, Swahili-speakers may identify as African and/or Arab, Persian, or Indian (Glassman 2011: 4f).

Swahili society has been considered “the epitome of ethnic fluidity and racial indeterminacy” (Glassman 2011: 4f) and non-static Swahili identity embodies an ongoing social process (Eastman 1971). Swahili people never claimed “a single cohesive ethnic identity” (Ntarangwi 2003: 47) and in terms of ancestry and residence were historically perceived “as a very fluid population” (Fair 2001: 31). Swahili worldviews are plural and shifting (Loimeier and Seesemann 2006: 1) and resonate many Indian Ocean cosmopolitan societies’ nature (Kresse and Simpson 2009). Multiple descent lines, the integration of Islam into Zanzibari-Swahili culture, and other Arabic influences reflect the culture’s syncretic nature and contribute to Swahili people often being regarded rather “Arab” than “African” (Ntarangwi 2003). Child care, punishment, and protection are affected by these factors that as a complex puzzle create the social construction of childhood in Zanzibar.

Furthermore, childhoods are subject to socio-cultural constructions, with the particularly significant impact of Islam²¹. Zanzibari identities are commonly constructed through Islam and in opposition to Tanzania mainland. Regardless, people also differentiated between Zanzibaris, claiming that they originate from various places outside Zanzibar (Larsen 2008: 31). Distinctions from mainland Tanzania were essential parts of identity construction for many of my interlocutors, with Islamic ideas about child care and socialisation at the centre. “Nowadays, children are being stolen (*wanaibiwa*), and it all started in mainland (*bara*)”, Ukdi Faiza, one of the female *madrasa* teachers I worked with, expresses her worry about threats to children and locates them outside of Zanzibar. Regarding corporal punishment, she claims, that “many cases of children being severely harmed (*kuumizwa vibaya*) from being beaten don’t happen here. They come from the mainland, where they punish harshly (*wanatoa adhabu kubwa*) and where men hit women much more.” On a similar note, my friend Kauthar’s grandmother, originally from Pemba but now living in Dar es Salaam, emphasises dismissingly, that “in Dar

²¹ Zanzibaris follow the Shafi’I school of Sunni Islam (Ingrams 1931: 77), with Ibadhi and Sufi influences as well as reformist and fundamentalist influences persisting (Beckmann 2010; Parkin 1995).

there is no morality (*akhlaq*)”. Using the Arabic term for ethics, instead of the Swahili term (*maadili*), she stresses the importance of this morality being Islamic – the deemed acceptable Muslim way of life.

Socio-cultural constructions of childhood: puberty and marriage as transition markers

Zanzibari Islam strongly affects imaginations of childhood and plays a critical role in conceptualisations of age and gender. Multiple meanings are attached to children’s age and their process of growing up and closely linked to gender. Definitions of the period from birth to ‘adulthood’ and their application to girls and boys depend on the lens applied to understanding these ideas. The categories of ‘child’ and ‘adult’ are not stable and “the boundaries of childhood and adulthood are not given in advance” but “created in the context of actual interactions between adults and children” (Das 2015b: 79). Perceived changes to these definitions showed in a conversation with Bi Muna, my local Swahili teacher of many years:

Childhood lasted until a child got married (*anaolewa*²²). Until a husband becomes your supervisor (*msimamizi*), you are under her parents’ protection. When you reach puberty (*kubaleghe*), then physically (*kimwili*) you are an adult (*mtu mzima*), but regarding your environment (*mazingira*) you remain a child until you marry. This is different to the political view (*mtizamo ya kisiasa*) where you reach adulthood at the age of eighteen. You remain a child even until twenty or thirty, if you are still being fed (*ukilishwa*) by your mother.

As evident from her explanation, what was often presented to me as ‘cultural’ (*kitamaduni/kienyeji*) understandings of how young people transition through life stages includes ideas beyond the age of eighteen as a marker of adulthood and is based on the concept of puberty (*kubaleghe*) with its beginning depending on gender. This idea makes the end of being a child (*mtoto*) and the transformation into a youth (*kijana*) a unique and individual temporal unit.

²² In Swahili there is a difference in the terminology of ‘marrying’ actively for men (*kuoa*) and ‘being married (off) to someone’ for women (*kuolewa*), which grammatically is the passive form of the verb.

Other than reaching puberty (*kubaleghe*), and as in Bi Muna's explanation, getting married (*kuoa/kuolewa*) was another marker of the end of childhood. A local child rights development worker explains:

Childhood (*utoto*) lasts from being born (*kuzaliwa*) until puberty (*kubaleghe*) at fourteen or fifteen, when you become an adult (*mtu mzima*) and can be married (*kuolewa*). In Islam childhood lasts from zero to fifteen years. Before reaching puberty, children have no sins (*dhambi*), but from then onwards when you sin (*ukifanya dhambi*), it counts (*utaandikiwa dhambi*). If you aren't married (*kuolewa/kuoa*) and you live at home you remain a child. That is the border (*mstari*). After that you are an adult. Even if you are twenty-five. If you are not married, you are still a child, both men and women.

Her elaboration combines the non-linearity and unboundedness to specific age concepts of *kubaleghe*²³ and marriage as central to categorising childhood. Upon reaching puberty – between the ages of nine and fifteen – female and male children also start being separated in domestic and public life. Echoing Bi Muna's elaboration and emphasising the relevance of personhood (*utu*) as the aim of socialisation, the point in time “when your sins start counting” represents childhood's end, and also when “you become human” (Mitchell 2014: 52).

For girls this is expressed in terms of the onset of menstruation (*kuvunja ungo*) which used to imply their marriageability. Islam, referencing the Qur'an and *hadith*²⁴, also institutes the first symbolic differentiation made between male and female children, when at a boy's birth two goats are slaughtered and for a girl only one, reinforcing particular ideas about man- and womanhood (see Chapter 7). Ruwaida (10) expresses her understanding of what childhood means:

Childhood starts when you are born until age fifteen. Boys are children until they reach fifteen years and girls when they turn fourteen. From then on

²³ The concept *kubaleghe* is in line with the Islamic legal definition of puberty – *bulugh* – which accords the ages of fifteen for boys and nine for girls as those of physical and sexual maturity, but differentiates *rushd* – the maturity of the mind as separate. <https://www.al-islam.org/religion-al-islam-and-marriage/beginning-sexual-life-bulugh-and-rushd> [Accessed: 9 November 2016]

²⁴ The collected traditions of the life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.

Muslim boys and girls are called adolescents (*mabalehe*). During their childhood (*utoto*) they learn different things. Their parents teach them so to help them live a correct life (*maisha yatakayofaa*) in the future.

According to these explanations, Zanzibari boys' and girls' childhoods differ greatly and end at different times (Montgomery 2008: 53). "Rather than chronological age, biological changes or socially recognized rites of passage" (Montgomery 2005: 478), gender determines the length of childhood.

Furthermore, religion was said to structure children's ageing process. Various religious leaders I worked with referred to the *Triple Seven Hadith*, which indicates three key life stages Muslim children pass through as they become adults. From birth until age twenty-one this happens in intervals of seven years. During each of these stages a child, Sheikh Mubarak told me, has particular needs that demand specific forms of child rearing²⁵:

About child rearing (*malezi ya mtoto*) the Prophet (saw) said: 'Play with them (*chezeni nao*) in the first seven years, teach them (*waelimisheni*) from the age of seven, and befriend them (*wafanyeni marafiki*) during the third stage.' From birth until age seven, be close to them, listen to them and play with them.²⁶ From seven to fourteen, rear them (*kumlea*), teach them (*kumsomesha*) and give them education (*elimu*) and knowledge (*taaluma*). From fourteen to twenty-one children start to sit with the elders (*kukaa na wazee*) and being taught lessons (*mafunzo*). Start treating them as friends (*mfanye marafiki*) and don't hide anything from them (*humfichi kitu*). After passing through these stages they are an adult (*mtu mzima*).

Islam structures these socio-cultural constructions of Zanzibari childhood, which are also inevitably interwoven with 'cultural' (*kitamaduni*), or more localised, aspects as well as what is referred to as 'tradition/custom' (*mila/desturi*) – to reiterate the terms my research participants used to differentiate between the two. While, of course,

²⁵ He referred to the Qur'an sura 26, verse 18, and *hadith* Musaffaab (kumsaba'an).

²⁶ Qur'an sura 12, verse 4 (1-7).

Islam is inevitably cultural in itself, this interwovenness complicates a clear distinction.

Global constructions of childhood

Alongside the aforementioned factors that influence Zanzibari childhood realities, the influence of global forces, like the increasing presence of aid organisations, is crucial. The rights-based discourses they utilise additionally influence definitions of age and gender. According to the CRC, people below the age of eighteen are ‘children’, and above this age are ‘adults’. As my discussion shows, these conceptualisations do not immediately align with other understandings that matter to being young in Zanzibar, but have started to mix and influence people’s own conceptions. Both young and older interlocutors echoed these universalised definitions of childhood, as did twelve-year-old Maimuna, for whom “a child is everyone from the age of zero until eighteen”. Accordingly, the circulation of these globalised ideas about childhood and well-being must also be considered regarding what shapes childhoods in the archipelago.

Particularly in conversation with Zanzibari aid workers the difficulty of combining differing childhood definitions was clear. “Who is considered a child in Zanzibar is ambiguous. The international translation (*tafsiri*) and the religious translation differ. Here, not at eighteen, but when a child reaches puberty (*akibaleghe*), they are an adult (*mtu mzima*). But we have to agree on one definition only”, a local protection worker explains. Another local child rights actor underlines this tension between international regulations and vernacular thinking: “From puberty, we see children not as children anymore. From age fourteen girls can marry, get adulthood responsibilities, care for others and contribute to the family.” Acknowledging the conflict between existing definitions of childhood enables comprehending Zanzibari children’s lives. How their roles are viewed and how they are attributed agency and responsibilities, varies in these discursive spheres (see Chapter 5), as does what children do and what is done to them in the context of protection (see Chapter 3).

II Childhood as a Realm of Learning

The social space of childhood “is structurally determined by a range of social institutions” (James 2007: 270). An examination of the impact that schools have in shaping children as young social subjects offers important insights while recognising that the school has always been a “primary institution through which the state inculcated its own standardized notion of childhood” (Decker 2015: 41).

Vernacular forms of education

Different forms of vernacular education existed before a formalised school system was introduced through colonial powers. Echoing the importance of differentiating childhood from adulthood with the onset of adolescence, the decline of initiation rituals that used to accompany young people’s social transformation must be noted. “Both Quranic and initiation schools were threatened by the arrival of Western schools in the late nineteenth century” (Decker 2014: 27). Long before institutionalised schooling was established, the initiation rites of *unyago* for girls and *jando* for boys served as realms of learning for male and female children. They played central roles in young Zanzibari’s passing through their life stages.

German and British colonialism influenced education systems, government, and law along the Swahili coast and “today we find ‘traditional’ systems of education such as *unyago* (a puberty ritual for girls) alongside local Islamic schools (*vyuo* [sg. *chuo*] or *madarasa* [lit. classes]) and government-run schools (*shule* or *skuli*) modelled after the British system” (Stiles and Thompson 2015: 7f). Today the rites having largely disappeared and with an increasingly conservative Islam are rejected for ‘dangerously’ encouraging pre-marital sexual engagement. They are frequently considered ‘unislamic’ for being purely ‘traditional’ (*mila*) and hence incompatible with adequate piety, or even to constitute an antithesis between Islamic *sunna*²⁷ and ‘African’ tradition.

During *jando* boys around the age of fourteen would, besides being circumcised, also learn valuable life skills. Bi Amina, a teacher at SUZA in her late forties, explains:

²⁷ The oral record of the teachings, sayings, deeds and silent permissions (or disapprovals) of the Prophet and his companions.

Jando is done to boys and usually takes place outside of the city in a village or the bush (*porini*), where they are circumcised (*kufanyiwa tohara*²⁸). In the past (*zamani*) boys were circumcised from age seven onward, because *jando* was part of their training (*mafunzo*) about the body's changes during adolescence. You were circumcised and taught different things. Boys learned about bravery (*ujasiri*) to face problems, how to work, to have respect, to love their parents, and how to live with a woman. They stayed between one to three weeks with the circumciser (*ngariba*). He taught them morals (*maadili*) like respecting their elders (*kuwaheshimu wakubwa*), being strong (*kuwa shupavu*), and accountable (*uwajibikaji*), and about their responsibility (*majukumu*) of protecting their families (*familia*), clans (*ukoo*) and 'tribe' (*kabila*). Those lessons introduced the youth (*kijana*) into adulthood (*utu uzima*, lit. full personhood). When they recovered (*mpaka watapoa*) there were celebrations. Today circumcisions are done at hospitals between seven days to a month or a year after birth. Therefore, boys don't get this education anymore, but some of the *madrasas* provide similar lessons.

More than only a circumcision rite, *jando* used to be a realm of moral education and learning about sociality in Zanzibari society, and a means of preparing boys for adulthood. For girls *unyago* served a similar purpose, as Bi Amina explains:

With *unyago* a girl becomes an adult (*mtu mzima*). It is held before she starts menstruating (*kuvunja ungo*). The girl is taken to an instructor (*somo*) chosen by her family - often a grandmother or an aunt. She stays indoors for seven days while being taught to look after herself (*kujihifadhi*): keeping her menstrual blood from staining her clothes, cleaning herself (*kujisafisha/kujitoharisha*), and respecting herself (*kujiheshimu*) and others. She learns to protect herself (*kujilinda*) and to not have sex with boys (*asiwe na mashirikiano ya kimwili*²⁹). You learn taking care of the house and looking after children (*kutunza watoto*). After starting menstruation, a girl is called *mwari* and learns to identify (*kujitambua*) as an adult. She visits the *somo* three times during the first three months of her period (*hedhi*). The day she

²⁸ *Tohara* comes from Arabic and means clean (*safi*).

²⁹ Lit. 'to not have physical collaboration'.

comes outside again, there is a celebration and the drums called *unyago* are played. A few days before marriage the *unyago* happens again to teach her how to be a good wife (*mke mwema*), how to have sex (*tendo la ndoa*³⁰) with her husband and to massage him (*kusinga mume*). Today *unyago* has declined (*imeondoka sana*) and depends on the family. Children are taught about their changes during puberty at *madrassa* and at school.

Jando and *unyago* were primary institutions through which boys and girls acquired knowledge about woman- and manhood. In Richard's description of the *chisungu* initiation ceremony in Zambia, she emphasises that "women's magical knowledge, owned and used by women" transforms girls into women and successful womanhood as "something that is taught and learned" and "not a 'natural' attribute", as girls who have not had their *chisungu* performed are considered "rubbish" (1956: xxxiv). These long established vernacular modes of knowledge transmission – of which descriptions are rare for their inherent mystery and secrecy (Lancy 2017: 97) – were put at stake through the colonial regime. With the establishment of British colonial girls' schools in Zanzibar from 1927, the school system started operating "as the state's primary weapon" against indigenous initiation ceremonies "that marked the transition from girlhood to womanhood" (Decker 2015: 33) and eventually replaced locally owned with externally imposed knowledge.

The de-authorisation of initiation instructors who guided girls through maturation, apparently served "to protect young girls from early marriage and premature exposure to sex" (ibid.: 41). However, more than an attack against local custom, this was "part of a colonial campaign to inculcate 'Western' understandings of age and childhood" (ibid.: 33f) by overpowering local "biocultural benchmarks (puberty, initiation, marriage, and motherhood) inherent to Swahili definitions of childhood and adulthood" (ibid.: 34). Thereby, 'Western' educators' measurement of maturation according to numerical age and the number of schooling years was part of the colonial schools' aim "to institutionalize quantifiable stages of childhood" (Decker 2015: 34). Today both rites have almost disappeared, certainly in urban Zanzibar, and only prevail in the villages where, as many informants suggested, the combination of Islamic and 'traditional' practice was less contested.

³⁰ Lit. 'the act of marriage'.

Institutionalised spaces of learning

Zanzibari children's 'triple-schooling'

My young interlocutors identify state school, religious school, and tuition classes as the three educational spaces children attend regularly, with shifts of school and *madrasa* varying between mornings and afternoons every few weeks.³¹ Most children start their education at age four or five with going to *madrasa* and nursery schools, and enter primary school about two years later. While state primary schools are government regulated³², there is no institutionalised regulation of *madrasas*. Instead, *madrasas* have their own systems and curricula, and teach combinations of the Qur'an, Arabic, Religious History, Maths, and English. "Many parents take their children to *madrasas* (*vyuo*, sg. *chuo*) that teach all subjects because that is like extra tuition for their children", Bi Muna explains as we discuss education. A local development worker explains children's daily routines:

Children are very busy in Zanzibar. They go to *madrasa* Saturday to Thursday and then have two days to rest. From Monday until Thursday they are in school and *madrasa*. Saturday and Sunday only at *madrasa*. Thursday and Friday only at school. And there is tuition as well. Some *madrasas* have a full curriculum which means double or triple schooling children. I think it's too much.

Despite having undergone the same system as a child, his stance on children's 'triple schooling' reflects the busyness that defines young people's daily schedules. Children themselves recounted their routines less critically. Upon asking them to describe a typical day in their lives, boys' and girls' accounts resembled, a main difference being girl children more frequently mentioning chores like washing clothes. All accounts reflect children's multiple locations and tasks of a single day, and mirror the demands they face. Yussuf, a twelve-year-old student from Maulidi primary school explains:

³¹ Most state schools operate two-shifts per day due to the large number of students.

³² Education reform is regulated by the government of the United Republic of Tanzania.

At 5 am I go to the bathroom to get ready and then to the mosque. After returning I make my bed and help with housework. Then I eat breakfast, put on my school uniform and go to school (*skuli*). Afterwards I eat lunch and rest. I wake up at 2.30 pm and go to *madrassa* (*chuoni*). We read for half an hour and at 4 pm we have a break (*risesi*). After prayers, we revise and go home. At 6 pm I go to the mosque again. At 7 pm I have tuition (*twisheni*). After half an hour I go home for dinner. Before sleeping I watch some TV.

Amira's (13) day, a student at Miembe Mirefu school, offers insights into her schedule and the different meanings of each day of the week.

I wake up at 5.30 am. At 6.30 am, after prayers and cleaning, I eat and go to school. Afterwards I do housework. At 2.30 pm I go to *madrassa* (*chuoni*) and return at 5.30 pm to eat dinner and wash myself. I pray again and rest until 7 pm. Then I go to tuition (*tuisheni*) until 8.30 pm. I rest and watch television until 9 pm before sleeping. On Thursdays and Fridays, I wash my clothes after school, because there is no *madrassa*. Fridays, I groom my hair and visit friends and family. On Saturday morning and evening I go to *madrassa*. On Sunday I rest, because there is no *madrassa* in the evening.

While these insights are not typical for every Zanzibari child, they show the various involvements children navigate in their everyday lives and emphasise the importance of different learning spaces – school, *madrassa*, and tuition. These accounts suggest a potential conflict between state and religious school systems – both practiced alongside with equal relevance. While state school classes run from Monday to Friday, originally based on a non-religious British curriculum and conceptualisation of time, the religious school system operates predominantly on weekends and pauses on Thursdays and Fridays, when according to the state curriculum children are 'off' school. A weekend without any type of education is seldom known to Zanzibari children.

What children 'like' and 'dislike' about going to school

My young research participants' thoughts on what they liked and disliked about school and *madrassa*, offer further insights into characteristics of the Zanzibari

education system through the eyes of its attendees. Listening to what made them want to go to school or not, illuminates aspects about schooling and learning that matter to children. Regarding their positive feelings about schools, there was a general emphasis on the importance of education, and numerous repetitions of the metaphor “education is the key to life (*elimu ni ufunguo wa maisha*)”. Children’s reasons why they liked going to school included:

because “with an education I can drive our country’s nation (*niendeshe taifa la nchi*)” and “education is the command of God (*amri ya Mwenyezi Mungu*)” (m 13)

because “education is light (*nuru*) and can get you any job” (f 12)

“when I can study calmly (*kwa utulivu*) without being hit like a donkey” (m 12)

“when the teacher lets me use the library to read a story to change my thoughts a bit (*nibadilishe mawazo*)” (f 13)

“when I can read the Holy Qur’an (*Kurani takatifu*), the *hadith*, and the names of Allah” (f 13)

because “the Qur’an is everything” (m 18)

because the Qur’an is “the guide (*muongozo*) of our lives” (m 15)

My young interlocutors’ reasons for disliking attending school included:

“school tires me because when one person misbehaves (*atafanya ukorofi*) or causes chaos (*zogo*) the whole class is punished” (f 12)

“because we are hit (*tunapigwa mikwaju*) and punished (*tunaadhibiwa*) every day” (m 14)

“because other children laugh about me when I don’t understand something in class. They also exclude me because my school uniform (*fomu*) is not nice. And I don’t have notebooks to write into, no bag, shoes and pens.” (f 13)

“because some days we don’t study or teachers teach somewhere else and come whenever they like” (m 13)

because of “being caned (*kupigwa mikwaju*)” (m 15)

“being hit (*kupigwa mikwaju*) and hurting (*kuumwa*), sitting on the floor when reading, and the heat (*joto*)” (m 14)

“being hit without a reason” (m 11)

“receiving punishments that keep me from going to class when the teacher is teaching” (f 13)

“when the teachers don’t respect me (*kutoheshimiwa*)” (f 10)

“the old and bad (*kibovu*) building. When it rains we all get wet.” (m 18)

Zanzibari students enjoy school/*madrasa* when they can study in quiet environments without physical discipline, and feel free to learn and educate themselves with worldly and religious knowledge. They dislike poor infrastructure, being hit, bullied, made fun of, or when they cannot study due to teachers’ absences. Both state primary school and *madrasa* are central parts of Zanzibari children’s education, despite constituting differently structured spaces of knowledge transmission. Similar in both are the forms of discipline applied to correct children’s behaviour. The use of corporal punishment – the cane (*bakora*) or stick (*fimbo*) – to chastise children for perceived ‘misbehaviour’ is an ordinary practice in both settings. While learning processes are central to childhood and socialisation in Zanzibar, children’s “fear of physical punishment” is “intimately associated with education” (Last 2000: 376). Understanding childhood as a realm of learning and structured by specific spaces and knowledge, emphasises the complexity of children’s lives according to the meanings these spaces generate and their influence on childhood experiences.

III Children as Social Beings and Becomings

Considering children as ‘adults-in-the-making’ is a “limiting perspective” which neglects valuing children “for who they are and what they can offer in the present” (Adams 2014: 164). Children, too, are social actors in the spaces they dwell in. Acknowledging their agency as ‘beings’ helps recognising how they actively partake in reproducing cultural processes and societal norms (Uprichard 2008).

Learning sociality or “A child is someone who greets the elders”

In Zanzibar, childhood is defined by ‘learning’. Central to children’s learning are processes of becoming social beings in communities. Teaching “the value of sociability” (Gottlieb 2004: 137) is a central goal of every child rearing agenda.

Zanzibari children's sociality is particularly well explored by focusing on one specific theme that emerged from the data children generated – the concept of 'greeting'. Greeting expresses the underlying conceptualisation of a child as an essentially social being. Rarely viewed as free-standing entities, children were always perceived as relational. Hence, children's sociality – their being-in-relation to others – represents my interlocutors' associations with childhood and children.



Figure 1.1. “The child has to greet their elder (*mkubwa wake*), it has good manners (*adabu*). You have to love the child and the child has to love you. It is not good to hit the child all the time.” (f 14)



Figure 1.2. “This picture shows that the child greets their elder (*mkubwa wake*). This picture shows good manners (*adabu*).” (m 14)

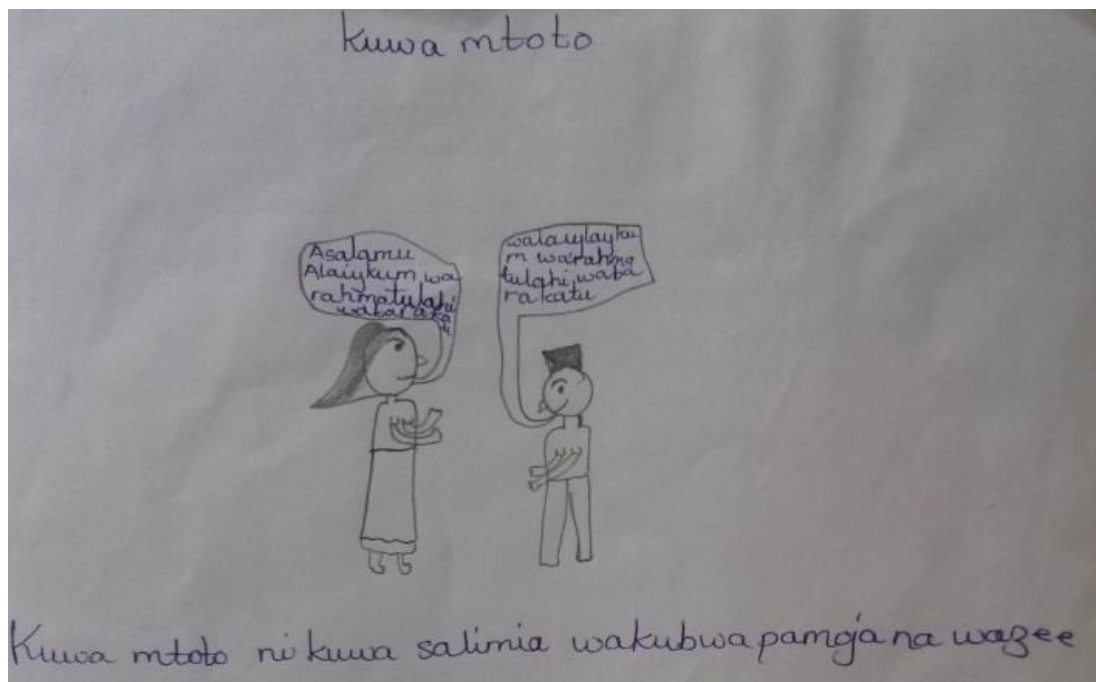


Figure 1.3. “Assalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh – Wa alaikum assalam wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh. To be a child means to greet (*kumasalimia*) older people and the elders.” (f 13)



Figure 1.4. “Good manners (*adabu*) are important for children. When children respect each other (*wakiheshimiana*) they build love for helping each other in society or in their families.” (m 17)

The above images are part of my research participants’ creative productions on the notions of childhood, courtesy, chastisement, and safety. Depicted in all of them is the action of greeting – a fundamentally social and unifying action. They reflect children’s views about the importance of paying respect to elders and peers through greetings, thereby cultivating love and connection, good manners, friendship and community. The power of what seems like a most taken for granted action is expressed through children’s descriptions of what it does: to build and establish sociality, status, manners, and safety.

Bi Zacharia, a young primary school teacher, explained, that “when a child doesn’t greet you (*hasalimii*) they show that they don’t have manners (*hana adabu*). It shows that their parent hasn’t raised them well (*hagamlea vizuri*), which is very bad as it shows that even the parent has no manners.” Her explanation reflects the sociality inherent in the act of greeting and courtesy between people and the importance it is attributed in Zanzibar. The vigour with which this custom is taught from an early age onwards was evident during an observation at a *madrassa* in June 2014:

A group of small children – the youngest about three or four years old – sit in a circle around a female teacher, repeating her recitations with shrilling voices. While talking to them she pokes them with her cane and taps them lightly on their legs. Now what is probably the nursery group is told to stand up to practice greeting each other. “When we meet we greet each other (*tukikutana tunasalimiana*) – *Assalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh*”³³ the teacher commands and all perform, now standing across from one another shaking each other’s little hands.

Not only for children greeting was a fundamentally social act, but also for anyone of a subordinate position, considering age or status, including myself. Greeting is only one of many metaphors that may be considered regarding the characteristics it intends to produce and inculcate: respect, obedience, love, morality, and social personhood, all highly valued characteristics in the Zanzibar context (Beckmann 2010: 621).

Respect, obedience, and love

Greeting is essentially about respect. “Respect (*heshima*)”, Bi Muna tells me, “means to respect yourself (*kujiheshimu mwenyewe*), before respecting others. If you respect yourself, you will be respected by others.” Navigating relationships between children and others is structured by its appropriate display. Rahma (13) describes that “respect is for the young ones (*wadogo*) to respect our elders (*wakubwa*) and vice versa. You must respect them like our parents, both young and old”, pointing out the importance and meaning of reciprocity for paying respect to all human beings regardless of age (Wiredu and Gyekye 1992). Despite reciprocity’s importance, respect is usually established and initiated one-directionally – from young to old. This is visible in Mohamed’s (12) drawing of a man with a suitcase and an elderly woman with a walking stick and a handbag walking through a village. A child sells fruit at a table, and another child sweeps the floor. It is subtitled “a person can help an old person, this too is respect”.

“Respect means listening to elders and obeying orders (*kutii amri*)”, Salum (12) wrote underneath his drawing. As a much encompassing idea for Zanzibari children,

³³ Formal Muslim greeting, lit. “may the peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you”.

respect ties into the need for obedience (*utii*) and the establishment of love (*upendo/mapenzi*) in relationships. Zahor's (10) essay echoes this: "Children should always be responsive (*msikivu*) and quiet/calm (*mtulivu*). A naughty child (*mtoto mtukutu*) is warned with words. But if they still don't listen, you hit them with a stick (*huchapwa bakora*)". One of fifteen-year-old Ali's photographs of a girl sitting in a dark room with a bowl in front of her and food in her hands, reads: "This person is helping their parent. God will pay you for it. And your parents will love you and you will be treated well (*utaona malezi mazuri*³⁴)". These accounts suggest that children's obedience to parents functions as a tool for building love and respect. Obedience may even serve as protection itself, because "accepting and obeying commands from those who love them is likely therefore to keep them safe as they explore and learn about the world" (Liao 2012: 352). Despite the generalising nature of this claim, the suggestion that obedience produces safety resonates with many of my young interlocutors' ideas. Respectively, Maimuna (12) regarded love and empathy between children important, in her photo of two girls, one of them kissing the other on the cheek while that one smiles shyly:



Figure 1.5. "Children should love each other (*wapendane*).” (Maimuna 12)

³⁴ Lit. 'you will receive good parenting/care'.

Children's empathy for each other is also emphasised in Marwan's (13) image of two boys inside a house. The younger one cries and holds his cheek, while the older one gently touches his cheek and looks at him with his hand on his shoulder, what looks like a consolation:



Figure 1.6. “When one child faces a problem, another child shows them compassion (*amburumie mwenzake*). The other one should not laugh at them but instead calm them so that when it is his turn he will also receive help (*anapokutwa atasaidiwa*).”

This illustration of children's compassion and companionship reflects even young children's clear conceptualisation of what social relationships may do.

Learning sociality, cultivating morality, approaching personhood

“Childhood is the state when children learn to define which of what they do is bad and which is good”, Naifat (16) writes in her essay. Eventually, childhood is a realm of learning sociality and morality, and to attain full social personhood in society. Naifat's reflection depicts Zanzibari childhood as the period during which children are made social by being taught and learning morality. The period of growing up was defined less by age but rather indicated by the development of a moral understanding. Childhood as a process of developing a moral understanding of life encompasses children's varieties of learning and them being and becoming social. The example of greeting as a social practice that serves to cultivate morality, generate respect,

obedience, and love as part of moral development made this clear. Physical punishment (*adhabu*) – as several of my young interlocutors’ accounts showed – is a consistent part of this learning process. Deeply engrained in this model is the idea that children only learn to behave well and morally through punishment. The specific link between courtesy and chastisement is explored in Chapter 2.

Finally, learning sociality and morality link into the development of personhood. As Bi Muna put it, “the aim of raising a child is for them to be sane (*akili timamu*, lit. a sound mind). But the aim is also that they have humanity/personhood (*utu*). Society expects them to have *utu*.” The importance of personhood, or ‘humanity’, is echoed in Ahmed’s (13) photo of a boy in a blue jacket: “A child is someone who loves their parents and listens to what they say. They raise you from childhood (*udogoni*) until adulthood (*utuzima*). We must respect our elders and peers. When you are sent to do something and you refuse, this annoys the parent (*umekera nafsi yake*³⁵).” His explanation mirrors the limits of parental responsibility – adulthood (*utu uzima*) and the importance of obedience.

In Swahili an adult is called *mtu mzima* (a whole/healthy/undivided/entire/complete person). Adulthood is referred to as *uzima* (wholeness or entirety) or *utu uzimani* (full/complete personhood/humanity). A child can be called *mtoto* (pl. *watoto*) or *mwana* (offspring), and childhood is described as *utotoni* (child-ness/-hood) or *udogoni* (small-ness/-hood). Now if adults are considered ‘whole’ or ‘complete’ people and adulthood as the peak of acquiring personhood, it follows that children must be seen, at least partially, as ‘incomplete’ or ‘unfinished’ people, who are not yet in possession of full personhood. This shows that Zanzibari understandings of children emphasise both notions of children as ‘beings’, as social actors actively constructing childhood *and* as ‘becomings’, as also adults in the making (Uprichard 2008: 303). For their perceived lack of full social personhood before reaching adulthood, children are considered human, but yet incomplete. Surpassing a dichotomy of the concepts by considering children and childhood as both being and becoming, increases children’s agency, “as the onus of their agency is in both the present and future” (ibid.: 311). For “the concept of ontogeny (becoming) is a better category than ontology (being) for capturing the creative, conjugated forms of

³⁵ Lit. ‘you are offending their soul’.

earthly existence” (Mitchell 2014: xxv f), children in Zanzibar both *are* and *are becoming* persons. The terminology underlines childhood’s non-static nature, but existence as a sphere in constant flux and remaking. Childhood is a time of being small and not ‘complete’ (in terms of achieving personhood) but simultaneously a period of becoming less small and more complete by gradually acquiring characteristics considered necessary for attaining personhood.

IV The Child as Social Category

The child as a social category regarding its status as belonging to the private or the public and as a dispenser of status, completes my considerations of relevant angles to conceptualise childhood as it plays out and children as they grow up in Zanzibar.

Children as public goods or private properties?

Finally, children function as social categories in both public and private contexts, whether as transferrable or status-constituting subjects. “A child is not only your child, but also your neighbours’ child. We all raise these children together”, a woman addresses the audience at an old neighbour’s funeral I attended in February 2014. A common discussion when speaking to people about raising children, concerned this matter – the ‘ownership’ or guardianship over children. The perceived differences between community child rearing (*malezi ya jamii*), as it used to be practiced, and ‘modern’ – more individualised and private – upbringing of and caring for children (*malezi ya kisasa*) became a frequent topic of discussion between me and my interlocutors. Bi Muna’s explanation illustrates this well:

In our culture a child used to belong to and was reared by the community (*jamii*) and not only to the family (*familia*). A neighbour’s child would also be considered your own, and supplied with some of their needs like food. If they made a mistake (*amefanya makosa*) outside their family, other people could correct the child’s behaviour (*kumtia adabu/kumrekebisha*). If the child told the parents that some elder (*mzee fulani*) had hit them, they would be hit again by their own father. Nowadays everyone raises only their own child in their family and not in the community. Parents don’t let neighbours help them

anymore. For example, when I am not home, and my neighbour chastens (*anamtia mtoto adabu*) my child, I argue (*nagombana*) with that neighbour.

While formerly, as Last remarked on children in Nigeria, “a child, in a moral sense, belongs to the community” (2000: 378) with all elders entitled to act on parents’ behalf to chastise a child, this approach was said to now have declined. Swahili sayings (*methali*) like *mkono moja haulei mwana* (a single hand cannot raise a child) or *mlimwengu ni mwanawe* (human beings depend on their children) resonate with these earlier approaches to child rearing in Zanzibar as a communal process that involves all members of a community³⁶. Bi Mariamu, a tall and slender woman in her mid-forties and a secondary school teacher at Kilela School, offers her view on the status of community child rearing:

Times have changed. *Malezi ya jamii* doesn’t exist anymore. But I continue with it in my neighbourhood. People know that Anti Mariamu will hit your children if she sees them doing something wrong. This form of raising children was a type of protection, but now parents complain if you touch their child.

The Director of the Zanzibar Teachers’ Union (ZATU) reiterates this: “The old child rearing system (*mfumo wa malezi*) is not there anymore. When I was little everyone in my community (*jamii*) could hit me (*kunichapa*) to put me in my place. Now it is different. ‘My child is my child’ (*mtoto wangu ni wangu*) is what people say.” The disappearance of community child rearing and “the breakdown of the value of the extended family” (Banda 2014: 654) suggests a larger shift from raising children as a public matter to the private combined with a relocation of the responsibility for children to close kin networks only.

This resonates with Banda’s discussion of changing African family values in post-colonial Africa, “in which children were raised by and belonged to the whole

³⁶ The community’s responsibility in assuring children’s adequate behaviour extends even to institutions like the police. I was told of cases when parents took their child to a teacher or a police officer to ask them to chastise them on their behalf, as they felt that their efforts to correct their child’s behaviour had failed.

community” (2014: 654). As this no longer exists, today “each parent is responsible for ensuring the growth and well-being of their children” (ibid.).

Children as markers of status

People’s status, specifically that of women, depends on children. The saying *kukosa watoto kwafanya mtu adharauliwe* (not having children makes a person despised) emphasises this. Being child-less, I was often told, makes you remain under the status of still being a child yourself, and keeps you from being considered a full adult, which includes marriage and parenthood. Therefore, the process of ‘becoming’ involves both parents and children (Toren 1999) and through birth “parents quite literally constituted themselves as such, as your parents, even as you constituted yourself their child” (ibid.: 8). In her essay, Zuhura (16) explains, that “those who don’t have children feel bad, because a house cannot stay without children. A home is blessed when there are children”, underlining the social importance of having children to increase one’s own status in the community. Kauthar, a young woman about my age whom I had lived with previously, is in her late twenties and has been married for ten years. Despite her wish to have children, and unlike her sisters who each have at least four children, she has remained childless until today. A conversation with her and her mother Waridi illustrates the pressures this implies:

“Still no news? It’s been long since you got married, I wonder why it hasn’t worked yet. If it won’t happen in the next years you should also take one of Nassra’s children. She might even have more.” Kauthar seems uncomfortable and ‘shhhs’ her mother, telling her, “Mum, that’s really not what I want”. When I ask her later in private if she has thought about seeing a doctor to confirm her health and physical ability to have a child, she tells me she did: “They said I’m completely fine. Honestly, I don’t think it’s me, I think my husband might have a problem. But he would never get checked. I asked him before and he just says he is fine. I don’t know what to do.”

Reflecting the desire to have children, but also echoing the possibility of moving children along family lines if ‘need be’ to help family members attain full adulthood, is evident here. The status that children assign, particularly to women for they constitute their full adult- and womanhood, is most visible when absent.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I approached the concepts of ‘childhood’ and ‘child’ in Zanzibar through reconstructing the historical, socio-cultural, and global forces that matter concerning their definitions. This made clear the complexity of an attempt to formulate “a single, integrated concept of childhood that encompasses subjectivity, governmentality, and morality” (Fassin 2013: 110). Building on this I conceptualised childhood as a realm of learning defined by vernacular and contemporary institutionalised spaces. Subsequently I focused on what children learn here and considered them as social ‘beings’ and ‘becomings’ who learn sociality to cultivate their morality that will allow them to reach full human personhood. I concluded my exploration with a perspective on the child as a social category. These viewpoints reflect the significance of acknowledging the fluid and non-static character of Zanzibari ideas about children and childhood, their embeddedness and different registers in which the constantly changing conditions of being a child exist. In the following chapter, I look at the two notions that were most significant for moral childhood socialisation in Zanzibar, courtesy/manners (*adabu*) and chastisement/punishment (*adhabu*), and at the significance of the difficulty of separating them within the various discourses that shape children’s lives.

CHAPTER 2

Constructing the Person: The Ontological Relationship of *Adabu* and *Adhabu*



While walking down little-lit Vuga road, a guy about my age follows me on his scooter, asking flirtatiously where I'm going. I refuse to tell him and ask him to drive on but he keeps stopping beside me, demanding more aggressively to know my destination. I still refuse an answer and when he drives on and I think I finally got rid of him, he stops again and waits for me to catch up. Getting uncomfortable with the situation I stop and tell him loud enough for people nearby to hear, "Why do you follow a woman walking by herself around at night? I don't want to talk to you. Please drive on! Huna adabu?" Silence. Staring. My final question – "do you not have manners?" – seems to trigger offense on his face. Finally he drives off and I walk faster

towards home. But when I pass Stone Town Cafe he reappears, now pacing towards me furiously. I realise he took the circular road expecting to catch me off-guard. In an attempt of self-protection, I stand back against a wall. When he reaches me and slows down, he spits right at me, mumbling curses and then disappearing into the dark.

Adabu (manners, courtesy, good behaviour) is one of the central ideas that define Zanzibar's moral universe of 'being'. Acquired during childhood and performed through everyday interactions, a person's manners – the way they carry themselves and their approach to others – are judged by their display. Questioning my follower's *adabu* turned out to be an insult beyond his own persona: something between a critique of his status as an adult and doubt in his parents' ability to having raised him well, because as the saying goes *adabu ya mtoto huwapatia sifa bora wazazi* (a child's good manners give great credit to the parents). I consider *adabu*, or rather *kuwa na adabu* (having manners/discipline), as the partner discourse to *utu* or *kuwa na utu* (having humanity/being moral) (Kresse 2007). The former concerns young people in the process of being 'made into adults' and establishing *utu* through learning and practicing *adabu*, and the latter concerns adults themselves, who ideally already established *utu*.

After exploring the powers that shape childhood in Zanzibar, I now consider that "childhood also involves cultural notions of personhood, morality, and social order and disorder" (Scheper-Hughes and Sargent 1998: 1). I follow Das' claim that a child is "not only an object of commands and manipulation" but also a "civilizational obsession" as "every stage in childhood is marked by ritual that incorporates the child into the society" (1989: 264). In this chapter, I look at how children are and become moral social beings in the network of actors that shape their lives. To unravel formation and socialisation processes, I regard the notion of *adabu* in relation to *adhabu* (chastisement), and *utu* (personhood). Being fully human is grounded in the concept of personhood (Kleinman 2014), and personhood itself "is not a natural quality but needs to be achieved" (Wiredu 1992: 104). I thus explore how Zanzibari children build and are formed to achieve social personhood along the lines of the ideas of courtesy and chastisement, and the moral framework that defines them.

Children's ideas around morality, manners, discipline, and respect, show how *adabu* and *adhabu* are linked and co-constructing in child rearing processes in Zanzibar. Together they imply a productive process of moral person-making. Zanzibari children's socialisation and their disciplining depend on cultural ideas about their 'nature' and how this must be accommodated "for them to be regarded as fully adult persons" (Morton 1996: 70). My discussion of the 'civilising concepts' shows how childhood and children's realities are constructed around society's moral angle-points and ideas about desired child-adult relations and roles (Kavapalu 1993). Understanding the social and moral order children navigate, elicits how children are 'made' into social people and builds the foundation for understanding other influences on children's lives in Zanzibar.

I Children in Formation: Notions of Socialisation in Zanzibar

Mtoto umleavyo
Ndiyo hivyo akuavyo
Wazazi tusiende ovyo
Taifa litapotea.

As you rear a child
 so it will become
 Parents let's not get careless
 or the nation will parish.

Natuwahimize wana
Kupika nako kusoma
Kuwa na tabia njema
Jema baya kutambua.

Let's encourage them
 to cook and read
 To have good manners
 and to tell good from bad.

Tusifanye ubaguzi
Katika yetu malezi
Kwani chote ni kizazi
Usawa cha hitajia.

Let's not discriminate
 in our child care
 Because they are all one generation
 equality is what they need.³⁷

In Zanzibar, poetry is probably the most respected form of art. Doing research with children it also became the most productive means of getting insights into their thoughts about childhood, discipline, punishment, and protection and the tool they chose most confidently as a form of expression they felt comfortable with. Suhaila's (16) poem begins with a well-known Swahili saying³⁸: *mtoto umleavyo ndivyo akuavyo* – as you rear a child, so they will become. Her emphasis on children's

³⁷ As the form of the verses matter to the genre of Swahili poetry, I here reproduce them in the manner they were written by my child interlocutors.

³⁸ Swahili sayings are popular in everyday commentary of social events as they reflect everyday expectations and norms (Farsi 1967; Scheven 1981) and "reinforce common understanding, and act as guidelines for and reminders of proper social behaviour" (Kresse 2007: 140).

‘shaping’ and ‘becoming’, their consideration as ‘being made’ to fit into their respective worlds, stands out. She describes what is also expressed in *mlimwengu ni mwanawe* – human beings’ relation to the world depends on their children. The emphasis on sociality as a condition for people’s worldly existence, or the relationship between a person and their child, defines ideas about children and childhood in this context. Suhaila stresses two central ideas that make this bond: having good manners (*kuwa na tabia njema; adabu*) and becoming able to tell good from bad (*jema baya kutambua*). These ideas of manners and morality, and the means by which they are achieved, are central to my discussion.

Socialisation processes matter to children growing up anywhere in the world, but differ depending on social context. In Zanzibar, children are considered to be formed, built, or, as often expressed by my interlocutors, constructed (*kujengwa*) into full social members of their communities by teaching them *adabu* (manners; good behaviour) – or *tabia njema* (good character/behaviour), as Suhaila called it. Thereby, they ultimately acquire full social personhood (*utu*), and, if necessary, have their behaviour corrected through *adhabu* (chastisement/punishment). Children in formation describes the process of making children civil. As Ariès explained for the sixteenth century European context, the term ‘civil’ “was roughly synonymous with our modern word ‘social’” and “‘civility’ would thus correspond to what we call ‘good manners’”, but meant much more (1962: 381). “Civility was the practical knowledge” one needed to have “to live in society”; it “could not be acquired at school and is synonymous with “etiquette” and its older name ‘courtesy’” (ibid.). This is also relevant to Zanzibar today, for the equal importance of the notion of manners in both educational context and societal life.

Courtesy – *adabu* – is central to the child formation process in Zanzibar. Many informants referred to chastising (*kuadhibu*) to explain its necessity as a disciplinary practice, but ultimately returned to *adabu*, which if absent must be re-established through it. A local child protection worker explains: “I punish a child (*nampa adhabu*) so later they have good manners (*awe na adabu*) and be disciplined. *Adabu* is the result of *adhabu*. *Adhabu* is the tool to build *adabu*. They are linked. To have *adabu*, a person must be given *adhabu*.” Regardless of what one is learning, “the process of outer practice, the creation of habit, and finally a realization of that

process in one's being is precisely the same" (Metcalf 1984: 11). *Adabu* may be considered as a form of inner, or self-discipline, and *adhabu* as external discipline, punishment, or chastisement. This link between internal and external discipline matters to understanding child protection practice in Zanzibar, for the line between them is consistently hard to draw.

Recalling that "the self", and hence everyone, is "a product of interaction within a particular environment" (Moore 2007: 25), children may not be viewed as isolated beings, as "the enculturation process and culturally shaped development happens in interaction with other people", and rather than just the child, we need to examine the interaction with children's peers, teachers, and parents in the social spaces of their communities, schools and homes (Chapin 2014: 178). Doing this, by exploring how "the human is formed" (Mitchell 2014: xxvii) in Zanzibar, we may approach an idea of Zanzibari childhood in the light of the relational civilising concepts of *adabu* and *adhabu*, and *utu*.

"Shape the clay/soil while it is still wet" – *udongo uuwahi ungali maji*, Mwalimu Ali, one of my key interlocutors and Swahili teachers since 2009, expresses his immediate thoughts on child rearing. "You can only form a person while they are young. Once someone becomes an adult there is not much you can do", he explains, echoing Suhaila's thoughts.³⁹ This recalls La Fontaine's suggestion, that "what is being asserted is (...) the control of nature by culture" (Richards 1956: xxxv). His consideration of the girls that undergo the initiation ritual as "material that is shaped, as the pottery models are shaped, by the experts" with the aim being "the transformation of human nature into responsible social beings" (ibid.: xxxvi), aligns with the idea of forming Zanzibari children into the latter kind of persons.

Being well-mannered – the possession and display of *adabu* – implies a state of sophistication that must be cultivated over time. Hendry described this similarly for the context of Japan, where "the inculcation of 'manners' or 'etiquette' (*reigi saho*) into a child" (1986: 75) means "learning the important categories of society" (ibid.: 85) by "putting into the body of a child the arts of living and good manners in order

³⁹ The saying *samaki mkunje angali mbichi akishakauka hakunjiki* (fold the fish while it is raw, when it is dry you can't fold it anymore) reiterates the same logic of person formation during childhood.

to create one grown-up person” (ibid.: 11). The idea that personhood is constructed through learning, and that childhood is an important period of intervention during which a child’s character is most malleable and which is “dedicated to teaching children ‘respect’ and ‘discipline’” (Archambault 2009: 288) is central here, as is the materiality of being taken literally more than figuratively.

The idea of forming a child into a person recalls Elias’ (1939) definition of the “civilizing process”, in which the concept of ‘civilisation’ describes various facts – a type of manners, a certain level of technology, to the type of manners, scientific knowledge development, and also religious custom (ibid.: 5). It can also refer to “the manner in which men and women live together (...) or to the way in which food is prepared” (ibid.). This echoes those building parts of the concept of *adabu* itself. Acknowledging that civilisation describes “the result of a process” and refers to something in constant motion (ibid.: 6), we see that it is through action and performance that a person comes into being, because doing is being.

II The Civilising Concepts: Courtesy, Personhood, and Chastisement

Adabu

Adabu is a concept of morality and manners so fundamental to being-in-the-world that it cannot be translated into just one term. Derived from the Arabic term *adāb* أدب (*customary practice, habit*)⁴⁰, the Swahili term *adabu*, particularly in the context of Islam, refers to “good manners” (Larsen 2008: 158), “good behaviour” (Keshodkar 2013: 173), morals (*maadili*), discipline (*nidhamu*), respect (*heshima*), and humaneness (*utu*). *Adabu* is anchored in Islamic moral philosophy and derives from the original Islamic concept of education (Al-Attas 1980). Here, *adāb* translates into “culture, good breeding, refinement, good manners, humanity, humaneness, morals” (Cowan 1994: 11) and the “instilling of discipline” (Ammar 1954: 126). It implies children’s “proper upbringing” and their good behaviour (Lapidus 1984: 38), describing the development of both an inner and an outer structure (Huda 2004: 462). Perfecting public social and moral conduct through incorporating ethical standards

⁴⁰ See *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*, http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t236/e1008?_hi=1&_pos=2 [Accessed: 22 December 2016]

defines a devout Muslim and is both means and end in itself. *Adabu* is part of the Islamic concept of ethics (*akhlaq*), which in singular form, *khulq*, means character, nature, or disposition and in Swahili is commonly translated as *tabia* (character, behaviour).

Children must learn “proper behaviour (*adabu*) so that she or he can grow being accustomed to (*zoea*) existing rules and etiquette” (Larsen 2008: 51) and incorporate “codes of behaviour and values, and, methods of personal formation” (Metcalf 1984: 2). Types of *adabu* include: rules and manners for eating, praying, speaking, greeting, entering a house, helping the elderly etc. “To respect someone else (*kumheshimu mtu*) in the appropriate way and display this in the form appropriate to one’s own status has been one of the ever-present tasks in Swahili social life” and preparing for this “is one of the earliest tasks of childhood education, where the children are taught *adabu* (good manners)” (Kresse 2007: 143). Accordingly, whether a Zanzibari child acts according to or against the etiquette and their expected role, leads to considering them having manners (*ana adabu*) or not having manners (*hana adabu*). *Adabu* as a concept embedded within ideas of the ethical, shows the intertwinedness of being in the world, being moral, being a person, and eventually being a child.

“The importance Muslim thinkers paid to childhood” and their familiarity with the concept of childhood through instructions on raising a child “to possess appropriate manners, morals, hygiene, and comportment”, already showed in the medieval *adāb* literature of the Middle East (Morrison 2015: 39). Following this, childhood in Zanzibar is not a derivative of a ‘Western’ concept, but similarly grounded in a historical Islamic framework of “moral character formation” (ibid.: 42). While *akhlaq* is “the behaviour of the whole society (*tabia ya kijamii*)”, *adabu* is the “behaviour of every individual person (*tabia ya kila mtu mwenyewe*)”, a *sheikh* explained. Another employee at the Mufti’s office confirms, that “*akhlaq* means behaviour (*tabia*) – the way in which a child lives, has good behaviour, morals, good habit. If parents (*wazazi*) teach children good manners, they will imitate it and be good. Or vice versa.” Instead of the idea of an inwardness of being concealed by manners, or of manners being superficial and morality deep, there is a sense, here, in which being is doing. Teaching someone manners also means teaching them morals. Hence, all relationships are grounded in an emphasis on respect as the name for a

way of negotiating and creating mutuality of being by always allowing for and acknowledging the intact otherness of the other.

Utu

Utu is intertwined with *adabu* and translates to humanity, humaneness (Topan 2008: 89), “how human beings ought to behave” (Kresse 2007: 139) or “doing good (having *utu*)” (ibid.: 143). It describes a person’s good intent and actions towards others (*hali ya mtendea mwenzako insafu*) (BAKIZA 2010) and is the aim that is established during the socialisation process through *adabu*. *Utu* is concerned with people’s sociality in society and its connotation is two-fold: morality and goodness (Kresse 2007: 139). Children’s social roles in society depend on more general views of being human and moral. Mwalimu Mussa, my long-term Swahili teacher, explained: “You measure (*unampima*) a person by their humaneness (*utu wake*) and personhood (*utu*). *Utu* is a person’s state of having good manners (*kuwa na adabu*) and built (*inajengwa*) by doing good things (*kutenda mambo mazuri*).” Accordingly, *utu* also implies *adabu* and hence *tabia* and is a part of *akhlaq*. The concepts’ inseparability shows the difficulty of telling them apart. Personhood concepts are central for human beings’ becoming, for making children into persons, and grounded in relationships (Strathern 1988). The saying *adabu ni ustaarabu* (courtesy is civilisation) reflects the importance of *adabu* for the process of civilisation (*ustaarabu*, lit. being like an Arab) (Decker 2014: 4).

Returning to Zanzibar’s Swahili linguistic reality, I was told that it is semantically impossible to express that a child does not have humaneness (*mtoto hana utu*). A child cannot lack *utu*, as they cannot yet possess it. This, conversely, may be claimed for an adult (*mtu hana utu*) to indicate their poor and not humane/human-like behaviour. A child cannot yet possess *utu*, because it is not yet considered a moral agent⁴¹. Nevertheless, children hold the potential for full personhood simply by their human nature, to which there are no degrees, unlike to the process of becoming a person. Personhood, in Zanzibar, is an inherently dynamic social category, “acquired gradually” and “may be lost or attenuated under certain conditions associated with changes in social interactions and bodily composition” (Conklin and Morgan 1996:

⁴¹ This links to the previous chapter’s discussion of children’s sins not counting in Islam until they reach adolescence, as previously they are not regarded moral agents aware of their own wrong-doing.

658). Not having *utu* can therefore mean losing “the right to be morally respected by others” (Kresse 2007: 150). This differentiation echoes children’s processual state, as their *utu* is still in the process of being established through *adabu* (see Chapter 1).

One interlocutor claimed, “we give children their right to build (*kujenga*) their *utu*”. An adult, on the other hand, can only be considered a full social person (*mtu mzima*), by having, showing, practicing *utu*. The proverbs *asiyejua utu si mtu* (a person who does not know humaneness is not human) and *mtu ni utu* (man is humaneness) reiterate this (Kresse 2007: 139; Bhalo 1979; Harries 1966). As full personhood can only be present or absent with adults and children must acquire it, young Zanzibaris are both beings and becomings⁴². “While we form (*kuwajenga*) small children, adults have already been formed (*wameshajengwa*) in their families”, another informant explained, and added “it’s like building a house that occasionally needs fixing, you build and you have your tools”. *Utu* is achieved through establishing *akhlaq*, which is attained by having and practicing *adabu* and, if absent, re-established through *adhabu*.

Being able to tell good from bad, as Suhaila stressed in her poem, or the ability to navigate the Zanzibari social system according to a certain morality (*maadili*), implies the general necessity to become ethically literate – to be guided by a Muslim moral framework that allows oneself to be a ‘good child’. In Zanzibar, Islam generally defines what is considered ethical. Bi Muna expresses her understanding of the concept:

Ustaarabu means having a structure or a system (*mfumo*) to your life which often results from education. It describes your development (*maendeleo*) as an educated person (*msomi*) that lives an acceptable (*unaokubali*) life. Nowadays it also describes a clean (*msafi*), gentle (*mpole*), and patient (*mvumilivu*) person. A person who is complete (*mtu kamili*). It relates to having personhood (*utu*). The opposite would be a fool (*mjinga*).

⁴² Nevertheless, not thinking of children as fully human beings is familiar to all societies around the world, and reflected in, for example, not being allowed to vote before the age of eighteen. This establishes a parallel between children’s lives in Zanzibar and other societies.

Hence, children work towards being civilised, or reaching a state of *ustaarabu* and *utu* throughout childhood and adolescence, to ultimately become a ‘complete person’ (*mtu mzima*) (Fair 2001). Socialisation is “the process by which individuals become competent adult members of society” (Morton 1996: 7) and eventually means considering a child’s development “from infancy to maturity” similarly to “the development of the human species from savagery to civilization” (Montgomery 2008: 18). Thinking within a Swahili framework, personhood takes on a two-fold notion and consists of *utu* and *ubinadamu* (Rettova 2007). *Ubinadamu* (humane) describes the state (*hali*) in which personhood takes shape. *Utu* and *ubinadamu* are as interdependent as *adabu* and *adhabu*: “humanity depends on personhood/humaneness, and humaneness builds humanity” (*ubinadamu unategemea utu, utu unajenga ubinadamu*), to recall Mwalimu Mussa’s words.

Adhabu

Adhabu, Swahili for punishment, penalty, chastisement, or correction, derives from the Arabic *adhāb* عذاب (punishment) and in an Islamic context refers to God’s anger and torment upon mankind for disobedience⁴³ (*mateso anayopewa kiumbe, mateso ya Mwenyezi Mungu*) (BAKIZA 2010). The principle translation of *adhāb* is into a feeling/an emotion – pain or suffering, and only on secondary association it means punishment or chastisement (Cowan 1994: 701).⁴⁴ Islam, Judaism and Christianity all “place a high value on the welfare and care of children” but “also emphasise the importance of discipline in parenting” (Sidebotham 2015: 390). Following this, in medieval Muslim and other civilisations children’s corporal punishment served “as a common means of moral education” and “a legitimate and indispensable instrument” (Giladi 1992: 78). Today, as in Zanzibar, it remains “an important element in parent – child relations in various Muslim societies” (ibid.: 63). *Adhabu* exists somewhat outside the moral sphere of *adabu* and *utu* and at first impression has little to do with ordinary child rearing practices, but in the Zanzibari child protection context takes an important role.⁴⁵ For both *adabu* and *adhabu* indicate discipline, they are often used

⁴³ عذاب القبر *Adhāb al-Qabr* – the ‘Punishment of the Grave’, as mentioned in the *hadith*.

⁴⁴ The Arabic term *eqab* عقاب (chastise, punish, discipline) is commonly translated as ‘infliction of punishment’.

⁴⁵ I refer to *adhabu* as chastisement, rather than punishment, because when applied, usually, the aim is to chasten the person - that is, to have a moderating or restraining effect on them, rather than to extract from them a penalty or to make them pay a corporal price for possible wrongdoing.

interchangeably and the boundaries between when discipline ends and punishment begins are blurry.

In Zanzibar, the inculcation of manners (*adabu*), or “moral education” (Dooley 1936: 6; Giladi 1992), often takes the form of a disciplinary process, which has been regarded an important “area of socialization” (Parkin 1985: 156). For “discipline ‘makes’ individuals” it is also a “specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise” (Foucault 1977: 170). Foucault theorised discipline as an action, drawing on examples from military, medical and educational situations, and emphasising the practice’s relevance in the contexts of “colonization, slavery and child rearing” (1977: 314, footnote). His claim that “discipline produces subjected and practised bodies, ‘docile’ bodies” (1977: 138) reflects the constitution of childhood and persons in Zanzibar, with physical chastisement regularly serving disciplinary processes. In the next section, I explore this link and overlap between discipline and punishment – *adabu* and *adhabu* – and the various interpretations and meanings of the concepts.

III Socialisation in Practice: Discipline and/or Punishment

While the co-constructing force of *adabu* and *adhabu* culminates in producing *utu*, learning and being taught manners during childhood is the foundation and precondition for acquiring social personhood. As *utu* depends on having manners/discipline (*adabu*), it must be re-established through chastisement (*adhabu*), if absent, Zanzibari children’s formation process is ultimately a question of both disciplining the self and disciplining others.

Adabu: disciplining the self

Adabu as a tool for respect, care, love, and future life

Adabu kitu muhimu
Tena inatulazimu
Kwa wanafunzi dawamu
Hilo jama kutambua

Manners are an important thing
And something we have to do
For the students in the classroom
Society must recognise this

*Hili jama nawambia
Tena nina wahusia
Adabu kitu murua
Kwa mwanafunzi sawia*

People I am telling you
And again I have relevance
Manners are a thing of politeness
for the student at the same time

*Hima tuweni makini
Kwa kuhisi hii bali
Adabu kitu halali
Kwa wanafunzi nawambia*

Let's be careful
To feel this, but
Manners are a legitimate thing
For students I'm telling you

*Walimu nawaambia
Tena nina wahusia
Adhabu kushikilia
Kwa mwanafunzi sawiya*

I'm telling the teachers
And again this has relevance
To hold on to punishment
for the student at the same time.

*Wanafunzi tuwe hima
Wala tusirudi nyuma
Adabu kushika vyema
Hilo jama nawambia*

Students let's be quick
Let us not turn back
And hold on to our good manners
This people, I'm telling you

The young poet Hawaa's (15) emphasis on the desirable presence of *adabu* in students, echoes the concept's importance. Viewing *adabu* as important (*muhimu*), a thing of politeness (*kitu murua*), and a legitimate, or valued thing (*kitu halali*) students must hold on to well (*adabu kushika vyema*) implies its manifold connotations. *Adabu*, an idea of reciprocity, appears in frequent connection to respect (*heshima*) – an important feature “of the social moral code for displaying civilised behavior, *ustaarabu*” (Keshodkar 2013: 139). More broadly than respect, *heshima* means “the maintenance of that position to which respect is due” (Ingrams 1931: 206). The inculcation of *adabu* through *adhabu* describes this maintenance. Alawiyyah's (10) explanation underlines this: “*Adabu* means respecting older people (*kuwaheshimu wakubwa*) and parents, and for older people to respect the young ones (*wadogo*). If they respect each other they will live a good life together.”

Respect (*heshima*) is part of one's *utu* and amongst the values and norms that form “the principal moral foundations of Swahili identity and culture” (Saleh 2004: 145). Mutual respect is a question of manners, as Alawiyyah points out (see also Chapter 1). More than “the act of showing respect to others”, *heshima* also means “earning respect in return” (Decker 2014: 6). In Warda's (16) story a grandfather explains *adabu* to his grandchildren, as meaning “respecting your parents” but also “respecting yourselves (*mujiheshimu wenyewe*)” and expands the scope of inherent

reciprocal respect to self-directed respect (Twum-Danso 2009). Zanzibari children's moral obligations include respecting and obeying "all people with grey hair" and in case of disobedience "must expect to be beaten" (Knappert 1970: 132). Displaying manners shows awareness for others and care about your kin, like a form of social security. Fatma (15) explains:

Adabu is something everyone must do to others (good deeds and paying respect). This includes all people: disabled, poor, and fellow children. Children learn *adabu* at school, home, *madrasa*, neighbourhood and society. They learn good and bad behaviour (*adabu mbaya na mzuri*). Bad behaviour includes theft, robbery, looting. Good behaviour includes respecting elders and peers (*wakubwa na wadogo*), following what your parents, teachers and peers tell you (only good things).

Her emphasis on paying respect to everybody is extended by her clarification of its realms of acquisition. The fact that children learn *adabu* in both formal and informal spaces of education, reveals the idea's nature as larger than society itself and connected to morality. Samira's (13) drawing of a man handing his bag to a child and two children greeting each other enforces this: "Older people (*wakubwa*) must respect younger people (*wadogo*) and the other way around. Greeting each other shows that they care (*wanajali*) and have love (*wana upendo*).” Reciprocity is a quality of *adabu*, reflects care and love for other people and establishes positive relationships. The saying *asiye na adabu hajali wenzake* (a person without manners does not care about others) reiterates the children's views and supports the power of *adabu* to establish and maintain relationships.

Alongside respect, love (*mapenzi/upendo*), or lovability, is connected to *adabu*. This was particularly visible in children's photographs. Malaika's (14) photo of a girl wearing a white headscarf smiling brightly into the camera demonstrates: "This child has good manners (*adabu*) which means this child is always happy. If a child has *adabu* it can be loved (*anaweza kupendwa*) by its parents and included (*kushirikishwa*) in their parents' counselling (*ushauri*).” The apparent benefits of physical chastisement are frequently supported by young Zanzibaris themselves, who, as in Twum-Danso Imoh's work on corporal punishment in Ghana, considered

the practice “part of their training to become members of their societies” (2013: 477) and “‘good’, ‘responsible’ and well-behaved adults” (ibid.: 480), placing physical punishment in a context of parental love and care.

Children conceptualise love, like respect, as relational and dependant on manners. A manual on ‘good behaviour’ by the East African Literature Bureau similarly explains: “Nothing else makes the child be loved like good behaviour/discipline (*adabu njema*). It is our responsibility (*wajibu*) to teach our children that, to build/form them (*kuwajenga*) for their future life. Children need to be taught manners and discipline, so they will have good behaviour in the future (*wakati wa baadaye*)” (1962: 1). ‘Future’ was also emphasised by Zuhaila (10), who subtitled her photograph of a young girl looking into the camera: “Gentleness (*upole*) and manners (*adabu*) are a good foundation for your future life”. The beneficial nature and importance of *adabu* for children’s futures appears in another proverb: *Adabu si adhabu, faida yake yaonekana mtoto akuapo* (manners are not punishment, their profit shows as a child grows).

Adabu as protection

Adabu is also considered a tool for protection, that secures children’s potential as social beings in a fundamentally positive way. The idea of forming (*kujenga*) children, as explained by my Swahili teacher Mwalimu Mussa, links to that:

The right to build the child (*haki ya kumjenga*) leads to the use of discipline (*adabu*) for different things they do. The aim of discipline is to build (*kujenga*) children’s life. When they make a mistake, you correct them immediately to break their bad behaviour (*uvunje tabia mbaya*) and build (*ujenge*) their good character (*tabia*).

Correction enforces children’s proper formation and protects them from lacking ‘good character’ in adulthood. There is protective potential in the process of establishing children’s courtesy through chastisement as it helps a child become a ‘complete human being’ (*binadamu kamili*). According to Mwalimu Mussa, “you must have *utu*”, which is partially established through practicing and displaying *adabu*. He continues: “Discipline (*adabu*) is used to build (*kujenga*)

humanity/personhood (*utu/ubinadamu*). Society raises a child to live on the right path (*njia sahihi*). If they leave that path, discipline or punishment return them to it so they can again have *utu*. *Adabu* aims to return a person to the right path.” Hence, the underlying reason for applying discipline lies in guaranteeing children’s adequate development into adults, or rather into ‘whole’ persons (*watu wazima*). Achieving that end through discipline, reveals the potential for unintended contradiction in the use of these notions. *Adabu* is connotated positively as it “puts children in a state of safety (*usalama*) and of following instructions (*maelekezo*)”, but *adhabu* “puts the child into a state of danger (*hatari*)”, another interlocutor explained.

“Do you think children are not loved (*hawapendwi*) here?”, Bi Moza, Kauthar’s aunt, asks me in a conversation. She continues, “of course, they are loved (*wanapendwa*)! We discipline them to guide them (*kuwaelekeza*). But it must be a certain level (*kiwango*) of hitting, so the child still knows they are loved”. Emphasising the ‘good intentions’ of chastisement as an ‘act of love’ to form a child into a full social person, puts the practice, as I encountered it in Zanzibar, into perspective. It echoes Morton’s observations in Tonga, where “there is no shame associated with hitting children to discipline them because it is believed to be necessary and important” (1996: 201) and it is “positively valued as a form of teaching and an expression of love and concern” (*ibid.*). This suggests what has been called “beating with care”, which is said to occur “within a loving and caring relationship based on emotional involvement from the caregiver” and “is intended to be controlled and moderate” (Frankenberg, Holmqvist and Rubenson 2010: 459). This link between discipline and love for punishment to be effective, proposes in reverse the non-care of not-beating and hence the importance of physical chastisement for ‘responsible’ child care.

My young interlocutors’ conceptualisations of *adabu* in connection to respect, care, love, future life and protection, suggest a notion of manners as a tool for living life well and ethically, that is acquired during childhood. Abdulkadir’s (15) poem, entitled *Nidhamu Shuleni* (Discipline at School), summarises the concepts closely connected to *adabu*. He considers good manners as “the light of every student”, and depicts it as “wealth (*mali*) one uses for a lifetime” (*hutumiwa maishani*). His central message connects to the importance of “living a life of respect” (*heshima*) and the lack of manners leading to “punishment” (*adhabu*).

Adabu as expectation

Alongside a tool for social interaction, *adabu* is also plainly an expectation, especially from children, who must “become ‘muaddab’” (Ammar 1954: 126). The non-display of “the respect of deference one properly formed and trained shows to those who deserve it” (Metcalf 1984: 3) indicates improper training or socialisation. The presence and absence of *adabu* is particularly critically observed in children, as adequate manners should be formed during childhood. “*Huna adabu!*” (You have no manners!) is a frequent expression in parent-child interactions in Zanzibar. While it is common to lament a child’s perceived misbehaviour by criticising their lack of manners, it is less acceptable to say the same to adults. To a child such a comment translates into a reminder or a warning to watch their behaviour with the aim to avoid provoking the need for correction. A child, still in the process of acquiring *adabu*, is considered as learning and being shaped, whereas adults are expected to have passed this stage. Since parents are assigned responsibility for forming young people into disciplined beings, bad parenting is a common reason for explaining a child’s bad character (Archambault 2009: 288). For “*adab* means discipline and training (...) and refinement that results from training (...) a person who behaves badly is ‘without *adab*’” (Metcalf 1984: 3), and hence contested in their status of personhood. A similar critique addressed to an adult becomes infantilising and questions maturity and a person’s parents’ capability of having raised them well. This inherent power in the idea of *adabu* was evident in this chapter’s opening vignette.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the kind of person or character desired in Zanzibar revolves around notions of respect (*heshima*), shame (*haya*), obedience (*utii*), “modesty, humbleness, and self-restraint” (Beckmann 2015: 119) – cultural values connected to children’s processes of becoming. Most children’s drawings and photographs showed children obeying adults’ orders, initiating greetings, or doing chores, emphasising the centrality of *adabu* during childhood. Salia’s (12) drawing and explanation of a child receiving money from an adult, echo this:

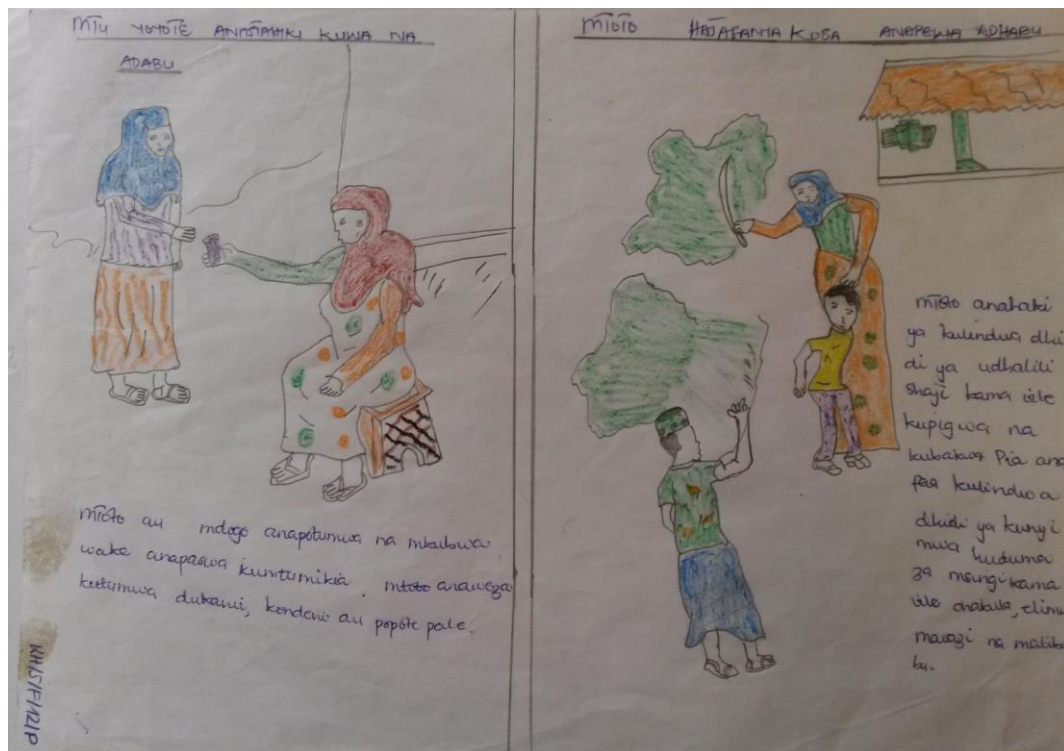


Figure 2.1. “Having manners (*kunwa na adabu*) is when a child or a small person is sent somewhere by an older person then they should follow their order. A child can be sent to the shop, to the field, or elsewhere”.

Despite the inherent reciprocity in *adabu* as a tool for maintaining positive relationships, it is also an expectation of children to fulfil their assigned roles to fit into their communities. The “giving of *adab*’ to children” hence guarantees “the survival of the social structure, with its patrilineal bias and respect relationships” (Ammar 1954: 126). A society’s “shared understanding that a person is compelled to behave in certain characteristic ways in keeping with her or his own inner nature” resonates with this, as in Zanzibar “a child has to learn how to behave, that is, proper behaviour (*adabu*), so that she or he can grow being accustomed to (*kuzoea*) existing rules and etiquette” (Larsen 2008: 51).

Adabu as discipline

“*Adabu* means discipline and assures that a child will be a good person (*mtu mzuri*) in their life”, a high-ranking *sheikh* at the Mufti’s office explained, linking *adabu* to the notion of discipline and chastisement. Considering the verb form of the noun *adabu*, *kuadabisha* (to discipline), this becomes clear. Respectively, ‘teaching someone manners’ holds a more negative connotation than the noun. The verb is usually used to warn children before actual punishment occurs. Interestingly, in early

Islam the verb *addaba* was used to indicate punishment (Stepanjanc 2007: 247), which relates to the use of the term in Zanzibar today. It reflects the importance of the Islamic context as defining for language use and connotation. The *madrasa* officer at the Mufti's office supports this:

When a child made a mistake (*ametenda kosa*), you should explain to them what they did wrong and that therefore you chastise/discipline them (*unamadabisha*). *Adabu* means teaching a person. If you don't have *adabu*, I need to teach you *adabu*, so I will smack you with the cane twice (*nitakuchapa bakora mbili*). This is allowed (*inaruhusiwa*) in Islam.

Adabu was commonly defined as a form of discipline that is realised using the cane and linked to religion. Due to this blurry distinction between a positive and a negative term – good manners and discipline – people often switched between the ways in which they employed it. Despite its primary meaning of good manners and positive self-discipline, *adabu* can also indicate punishment. Several interlocutors illuminated this double meaning. For Shela (13), “*adabu* means beating a person that doesn't have manners i.e. insulting you. They need to be taught manners (*kufundishwa adabu*) or to be strangled (*kunyonga*) by people. A person should be disciplined/punished (*atiwe adabu*) if they lie or have bad behaviour (*tabia mbaya*).” Here, discipline and punishment merge into one in the form of being taught manners, with its positive connotation being lost. *Kutiwa adabu*, being instilled manners, or being chastised, becomes synonymous with being punished. The idea is that discipline, on the one hand, should be practiced in a particular social form or way of being, and on the other hand, to have that practice enforced on your being through chastisement. As my ethnographic material suggests, there is no real distinction between *adabu* and *kutiwa adabu*, but the two are different manifestations of the same thing.

Adabu and *adhabu* are both associated with discipline. While *adabu* should be practiced in certain forms of self-restraint and awareness of others, it also implies having that practice put into your being (*kutiwa*) through chastisement. Its benefit, as Nuru (16) explains, is that “when you punish (*unapomtia adabu*) a student will respect you. Its threat is when you injure the student while beating them. We must

respect our elders, so we will also be respected”. In combination with *kutia* (to put in), the inculcation of manners becomes a punishment, without mentioning the actual Swahili term for punishment (*adhabu*). Huzeifa’s (13) photograph of a young boy hitting a smaller boy on his behind with a reverse broom, reads: “This picture explains *adabu*”, underlining the complex double connotations of the term itself in relation to its potential interchangeability with *adhabu*, which I turn to now.

It may help to recall the translation of the English “discipline” and to think about *adabu* as the positive, and *adhabu* as the negative idea of it. Unlike the inculcation of discipline (*adabu*), “punishment (*adhabu*) doesn’t educate (*haielimishi*)”, a government employee at the Unit for Alternative Forms of Discipline reinforces the positive/negative differentiation. *Adabu* is both end in itself – the manners and discipline to be acquired – and means to establish this end – when a child is taught manners (*kutiwa adabu*). *Kutiwa adabu* literally translates as “to be instilled with manners” but has a similar double connotation as does the English term “discipline”. It may imply both training in accordance to certain rules and stand for the infliction of punishment. Similarly, *kutiwa adabu* incorporates this possible association with *adhabu* and points towards the concepts’ relatedness. There is discursive dissonance when considering that *kutia adabu* may translate as both ‘to punish’ or ‘to teach good manners’ while *kuadhibu*, from *adhabu*, can be translated to mean to punish, as well as to correct, chastise, persecute, torment (TUKI 2001: 2). Caning, similarly, may be translated as *adabu* or *adhabu ya bakora*. We see *adabu* in interchange with *adhabu*, despite their inherent difference in positive and negative connotation.

Adhabu: disciplining others

Adhabu as a tool for correcting mistakes

While *adabu* describes a concept or a state-of-being moral and pious, *adhabu* is the tool to establish and reinforce this in case of insufficiency. It is the means through which *adabu* is administered. For Nassir (13) punishment (*adhabu*) is “an action (*kitendo*) or a lesson (*mafunzo*) given to someone to teach them something” and Naifat (15) writes that it is “what someone experiences when they make a big mistake and the person needs to be punished to learn not to make the mistake again”. Their views align with the saying *kufanya kosa si kosa, kosa kurudia kosa* – making

a mistake is not yet a mistake, but will turn into one should you repeat it. Chastisement was frequently explained to take place when someone makes a mistake (*kufanya kosa*) and a mistake needs to be corrected (*kurekebisha kosa*). *Kurekebisha* (to adjust/correct) a mistake, or more precisely the child as such, contains the idea of ‘fixing’ children to make them return to ‘being good’ by forming them back into desired shape through *adhabu*. *Kukosa* (to miss/make a mistake) has a wide range of referents that reach from making a mistake to the lack or loss of something, from doing another person wrong to criminal wrongdoing like theft. Children in primary and Qur’anic schools are often physically chastised for making mistakes in learning in the classroom, explaining the relevance of the term in the sense of active failure at something. Using the logic of material being, *adhabu* and *kosa* go together – with gradients of force ranging from *kuchapa*, or caning. *Kukosa* is the ‘agent’, and precipitates the action of *adhabu*. Echoing this, Hakeem (17) explains on the backside of his photograph of a crowd of children during school break: “When you are punished (*ukipata adhabu*), you will have respect (*heshima*) for your elder (*mkubwa wako*)”. This underlines the intended effect of chastisement.

“We believe that without chastising a child (*hujamwadabisha*) they will lack discipline, they will be disrespectful (*mtovu wa adabu*). *Adabu* is important, therefore they have to be corrected (*arekebishwe*)”, a director at the Ministry of Empowerment, Social Welfare, Youth, Women and Children (MoESWYWC) explains. ‘Correcting’ was explained as both an action enforced onto a child through an adult (*kurekebisha*) and as a child’s reflexive act of self-correction (*kujirekebisha*), or as “being self-disciplined” (Miller 2013: 87). An employee at the Child Protection Unit specifies: “A child is being disciplined (*anatiwa adabu*) so they will be able to correct themselves (*kujirekebisha*). It is a lesson (*funzo*), a punishment, but not a harsh one. *Adhabu* is harsh. You do everything that might affect the child psychologically and physically. *Adabu* doesn’t do that.” Differentiating between the relative harshness of *adabu* and *adhabu* – discipline and chastisement – she echoes what many of my interlocutors defined as reasonable. For Amina (11), it is “necessary that children are chastised if they have made a mistake i.e. to despise (*kuzarau*) or not respect (*kutowasheshimu*) the teachers, or to steal”. In other words, a lack of manners demands punishment to correct misbehaviour and to re-establish the desired Zanzibari way of being-in-the-world – with and through *adabu*.

Adhabu as caning

“In many African countries, not just Zanzibar, people believe that for a child to grow (*ili akue*), it must grow by the cane (*akue viboko*)”, an MoEVT officer explained. I often encountered this self-imposed notion of caning as an ‘African’ and ‘cultural’ practice. Accordingly, chastisement by the cane (*bakora; mikwaju; viboko; fimbo*) was the most common form of *adhabu* I encountered. In children’s images, the most frequent depiction of correction was thus unsurprisingly the use of the cane. Zeinab’s (13) photograph of a girl walking across the school grounds reads: “Children disrespect their elders and teachers, they roam around and it is necessary that teachers hit them with the cane (*kuwapiga mikwaju*).” The caption of Jibril’s (12) drawing of a male teacher hitting a startled-looking male student on his behind with a stick the length of his own arm reads: “This is a punishment (*adhabu*) which a teacher administers on a student”.



Figure 2.2. Mohamed’s photograph from inside a classroom, 2015.

Mohamed’s (14) photograph, which consists mainly of shadows as it was taken inside a classroom, shows a child caning another child on their behind: “The student is given the punishment of being hit (*adhabu ya kupigwa*)”. Another photograph by Suhaila (12) stands out, as she potentially captured a genuine situation of physical

punishment. Taken inside a Qur'anic school the image shows a teacher swinging his cane back towards a male student's behind:



Figure 2.3. “A child made a mistake (*amekosea*) and is hit (*kupigwa*), (to be given *adabu*).”

Zanzibari students’ depictions of caning as an adequate form of correction align with Archambault’s observations in Kenya, where students resented being recipients of corporal punishment but yet accepted what it stands for and even “perceived the cultivation of discipline and respect as constituting one of their ‘rights’” (2009: 297).

However, while Zanzibari children did not always perceive the infliction of physical pain as totally negative, generally their position on the matter was ambiguous. Some of my young interlocutors also expressed their objections to the ways they were corrected. Sabra’s (14) photo of a boy with his hand raised at a little girl covering her face with one arm, reads: “If you hit the child, it will hate you (*atakuchukia*) and will

not love you as much as other people because you are punishing it”. Her identification of the psychological impact of inappropriate chastisement on children – that is to foster hate – reveals the affective implications of the practice, which children as recipients of punishments experience first-hand. In a photo taken by Yusra (12) a little boy is holding his hands up in the air: “A child is not eligible (*hastahiki*) to get harsh punishment (*adhabu kubwa*) because if you punish them like that he can get angry or even increase his unruliness (*utundu*). Only punish them in eligible ways”. Nevertheless, her support of appropriate punishment also expresses an acceptance of the practice. Zuhura’s (15) poem echoes these children’s laments:

*Adhabu za utotoni
zatupa huzuni
Mateso ya mitaani
vile vile majumbani.*

Punishments during childhood
bring us sadness
Insults in the streets
and at home.

*Majozi mingi jamani
huwatizami machoni
Watoto tushikamaneni
katika hili letu jambo.*

So many tears, my people
but you do not look them in the eyes
Children let us stand together
in this matter of ours.

Her critique of the effect of punishment on children’s lives reflects again, from a young person’s angle, the difficulties that persist regarding the limits of appropriate discipline. These various and often contradicting accounts of what children and adults associate with *adhabu* mirror the breadth of the meaning of the matter and the various levels of violence, including non-violence, which may be indicated through *adhabu*. They show that as differently as punishment is conceptualised in these accounts, the concept of violence must equally be interrogated in multiple ways (see Chapter 4).

The age and gender of caning

Age and gender were attributed different degrees of relevance concerning the use of the cane but certainly influenced correctability, as “to be corrected by force, the child must be a ‘correctable child’” (McGillivray 1997: 219).



Figure 2.4. Canes on a desk in a *madrasa*, 2014.

Bi Muna identified the adequate way of disciplining children for different ages as “the moment when they reach adolescence (*kubaleghe*) between the ages of nine and fifteen. It is the border (*mstari*) for decreasing hitting as by then children already know/understand themselves (*wanajifahamu*). Between five and thirteen their behaviour is difficult (*tabia ni vigumu*), which is why they are hit most during these years. Contradicting this, Bi Zacharia, a young teacher at one of my research schools, claims that “from age five or six you don’t hit children anymore; you only correct them with words”. A local child rights actor supports this, claiming that “the size of the stick accords to the age and increases with age and naughtiness. When children are two years old you start with a *njukuti* (which is like the *chelewa*) – very small sticks – to threaten the child while making sure they are not hurt much. As they get older the stick gets longer, bigger, and thicker.” Like Raum observed in mainland Tanzania considering chastisement “a well-thought-out pedagogics of punishment” (1940: 228), in Zanzibar punitive practices were said to be adapted to children’s age.

A local MoEVT employee specifies that “children should be hit on the buttocks (*makalio*) or on the hands (*mikononi*), but girls (*mtoto wa kike*) should usually be hit on the hands,” pointing out the parts of a female child’s body considered appropriate for chastisement. Faiza’s (12) viewpoint on appropriate discipline regarding age, reflects the many interpretations that different people have of the matter:

Before children are six years old you cannot hit them. They need to understand why they are hit (*anapigwa*). You couldn't hit a small child like my daughter, who is only two years. According to the law it shouldn't be more than ten strokes, or until the child says, "forgive me, I won't do it again". Older children are punished (*wanaadhibiwa*) more than younger ones, because they get hurt quicker. Girls are hit very little, maybe one stroke, but boys two to three strokes, because they listen less than girls.

This gendered explanation echoes a local child protection officer's view, that "boys are beaten more than girls because of their higher level of activity and temperament. From puberty on they are hit more strongly and frequently at school". In Chapter 7 I discuss the gender roles intertwined with these patterns of chastisement in detail.

The (religious) discipline of disciplining

In Zanzibar, the use of the cane is commonly explained in reference to religion, even though there is no singular stance on its appropriate use (see Chapter 4). I was frequently referred to the Qur'an, the *hadith*, and to a set of regulations published by the MoEVT - *The Concept of the Discipline of the Cane for Students in Islam*⁴⁶. Sheikh Mubarak, the author of the paper and one of the central religious authorities involved in establishing the Zanzibari child protection system in collaboration with Save the Children, explained that in the Qur'an⁴⁷ "punishment is only mentioned for adults, or more specifically for women, but this can be equally applied to children"⁴⁸ (see Chapter 7). For further reference and more precise commands, religious authorities pointed me to the appropriate administration of punishment on children in the *hadith* (Sahih by al-Albani in *al-Irwa'* 247). In there, parents are advised: "Command your children to pray from the age of seven, and hit them from the age of ten"⁴⁹ (Mswagala 2014: 30). On correcting (*kumrekebisha*) a child upon making a mistake (*anapokosea*), "parent should not immediately hit, but (...) first explain to them their mistake gently"⁵⁰, echoing what many of my young informants' accounts

⁴⁶ *Dhana ya Adabu ya Bakora kwa Wanafunzi katika Uislamu.*

⁴⁷ Sura ya An'Nisa 4, aya 34.

⁴⁸ He pointed me to sura 4, verse 34-35, and sura 24, verses 2 and 4. I discuss the connection between women's and children's discipline in Chapter 7.

⁴⁹ *Waamrisheni watoto wetu kuswali wakiwa na umri wa miaka saba, na wapigeni wakizembea kuswali wakiwa na umri wa miaka kumi.*

⁵⁰ *Mzazi asianze kupiga kwanza, bali mtoto anapokosea amweleze hilo kosa lake kwa upole.*

expressed concerning the importance of first warning a child and explaining to them that their behaviour is not considered appropriate. However, the *hadith* proceeds, “if the child is resistant/shows ‘chronic’ behaviour (*atakuwa sugu*)” and “all these ways do not work/are not sufficient, the parent shall use the stick to hit like the teacher”⁵¹ (ibid: 28). Another *sheikh* at the Mufti’s office emphasised this conduct, echoing the formative effect the correction of children’s ‘bad behaviour’ has for the formation of their personhood: “From seven years you teach them about religion, and when they are ten, they may be disciplined (*kutiwa adabu*), hit (*kupigwa*), but not to break their bones (*kumvunja mifupa*). *Adabu* is discipline and helps them become a good person (*mtu mzuri*). Children are taught in their families, and *madrassa* and school teachers help to raise them.”

According to Sheikh Mubarak, the prescriptions of the *hadith* were the most common justification for *adhabu* and usually taken literally. For him, excessive and violent chastisement presented “a misinterpretation” of the actual purpose of *adabu*. There is an order (*taratibu*) to the proper chastisement of children, as a local employee at the Child Protection Unit explains:

To discipline a child you start by telling them: ‘This is not good, it’s a bad manner, you have to change’. If the child does not listen, you take the stick and tell them ‘I will smack you, if you do it again!’. So first you talk, then you correct them (*unamrekebishia*). Correcting them is necessary (*inafaa*). It is not punishment (*adhabu*), but discipline (*adabu*). You don’t hit them without telling (*kimya kimya*, lit. silent silent). You give them a warning (*onyo*) so they will remember. If they don’t change, you can hit them, and they will understand (*ataelewa*). They will know that you haven’t abused them (*hajanionea*), because you already explained to them, and they didn’t change. This is how you correct them (*kumrekebishia*). If you discipline you build a relationship (*unajenga uhusiano*). Disciplining is not punishing (*kuadabisha siyo kuadhibu*). Discipline has its order/procedures (*taratibu yake*). If you punish it destroys (*inabomoa*) your relationship with the child.

⁵¹ *Njia zote hizo hazikufaa ndipo atapotumia kiboko kumpiga kama mwalimu.*

Instead of an immediate use of the cane as a means of discipline, my interlocutors kept recounting the procedures adults need to adhere to. “Only if you have tried everything like being polite and disciplining them, then you can shift to another stage. The head teacher at Kisamaki primary school agreed that even though hitting is allowed for religious people, it must always follow certain procedures and only if no other way is left “it may be the final solution (*suluhisho la mwisho*), but without bringing harm (*madhara*)”. This establishes corporal punishment as a conflict resolution mechanism at the level of the school, where children must pay compensation for their wrong-doing by enduring physical chastisement to re-establish their position within the system. Paying retribution for misbehaviour through *adhabu* re-established *adabu*.

Violent forms of adhabu

Children are not only hit with canes but with various tools that can inflict different levels of pain on them. A Mufti’s office employee’s childhood memory recalled being hit by his mother “with the wire of the iron (*wire la pasi*) – it became her cane (*bakora yake*).” Echoing this particularly violent experience of *adhabu*, many of my young informants’ visual accounts depicted violent situations. Manal (10) drew a person on the floor being hit with a stick, and another person being hung: “Punishment means being hung (*kunyongwa*) or beaten (*kupigwa*)”. And Sabra (13) wrote, that “*adhabu* is to punish a person who tells lies or insults people badly, or he should be hung (*anyonge*) or caned (*apige bakora*) until he behaves well again (*mpaka akae sawa*)”. Omar’s (12) drawing shows people with sticks, stones and hoes running after someone. One stone hits that person’s head: “A thief gets punished (*anapata adhabu*) when he steals.” Further down it shows a person behind bars with armed men standing outside, reading “When a person rapes someone they are put in jail.” Rukia’s (10) explanation of *adhabu* is equally drastic, stating “if a person steals he will be killed (*atauliwa*) through the punishment of slaughter (*kwa adhabu ya kuchinjwa*) in front of the people or the whole neighbourhood, or by being hung, or being cut off his hand.” These drastic and particularly violent interpretations of *adhabu*, and children’s familiarity with them, suggest the common utilisation of the concept in community contexts outside the school.

IV Making Moral Muslims through Discipline or Punishment? – Discursive Intersections and Conceptual Collisions

My discussion of the multi-layered descriptions of *utu*, *adabu* and *adhabu* and their “productive misunderstandings” (Livingston 2007) visualised how intertwined, partially overlapping, and often contradictory these central Zanzibari child rearing ideas are. Nevertheless, all three ideas cannot be separated from Islamic philosophy and theology as good behaviour and compensation of wrong-doing through penance are considered key to living a “successful Islamic life” of which “good moral behaviour” is the basis (Nazri et al. 2011: 250). Halima’s (15) poem summarises the matter’s complexity:

*Tunapopewa adhabu
yatupasa tufahamu
tunafundishwa adabu
tuendeleze heshima
popote tunapokuwa*

When we are punished
we have to understand
that we are taught manners
so we shall develop respect
Wherever we shall be.

*Adhabu ziendelezwe
kwa wasiojua adabu
heshima isipuuzwe
ufanywe ustarabu.*

Punishments shall be continued
for those who have no manners
Respect shall not be ignored
You shall be civilised.

The initial lines unite the very ideas of teaching good manners (*adabu*) and developing respect (*heshima*) through chastisement (*adhabu*). Regardless, particularly the final line recalls the wider idea that encompasses all former notions – the process of socialisation, or ‘civilisation’ (*ustaarabu*), that leads to the acquisition of humaneness, or personhood (*utu*). More than a method of punishment, physical chastisement “is tied to wider philosophies of socialization and ideas about the correct relationship between people” (Morton 1996: 161) and to ideas about children’s “nature, the expectations placed on them, and their role in the community” (ibid.: 179). Concluding her poem by returning to the endeavour of making children ‘social’/‘civil’ in society as the goal of teaching and learning *adabu*, and re-establishing it in case of absence through *adhabu*, emphasises the ultimate aim of producing morality that is central to all these processes. In reverse, it expresses the issue this thesis focuses on: the possibility of undermining Zanzibari morality that is

reproduced through people's inculcation of manners, through a ban on physical chastisement.

Zanzibari adults consider children to “require disciplining in order to become human” (Last 2000: 374). Their socialisation revolves around both disciplining the self and being disciplined by others to achieve the status of moral Muslim persons. Their social becoming “is intertwined with the coming into being of a young human body” (Conklin and Morgan 1996: 658). “To study the Muslim concept of man's being” – which includes children's being – “we must begin where Muslims begin – with the Qur'an” (Lapidus 1984: 40f). Islam remains the key reference point for Zanzibari Muslim children's⁵² physical, social and moral becoming, as for being a good Muslim one must “exercise self-control” and “direct one's state of mind in pious ways” (McIntosh 2009: 19) and those who fulfil Islam “are most fully human” (Metcalf 1984: 2). Islam is therefore the indispensable framework to understand processes of childhood socialisation in Zanzibar. “The conviction that Islam alone defines what humans ought to be” (Metcalf 1984: 2), makes *adabu*, as derived from *adab* – the Islamic ideal of character and morality development, central to Muslim Zanzibari children's upbringing.

As “not the home but the school” is the most important site “for the disciplining of Muslim children” (Last 2000: 375), courtesy and chastisement play particularly central roles in Zanzibari schools and *madrasas*. The Islamic education framework helps to understand the inculcation of *adabu* in the context of learning social conduct and morality during childhood (see also Chapter 1). The goal of Islamic education, amongst other things, is learning “the basic rules of proper behavior (Arab. *adab*, *akhlaq*)” (Loimeier 2013: 104). This aims at producing a “good Muslim as well as a gentleman, a person aware of good manners (*adabu*), good moral conduct and self-restraint (*heshima*), with ‘sound judgement’ (*akili*) based on his knowledge of the Qur'an” (Loimeier 2009: 248). Zanzibari children grow into ‘complete adults’ through both *adabu* and *adhabu*.

⁵² Despite most Zanzibari children being born into Muslim families, there are children who belong to other denominations i.e. Christianity, Hinduism etc. As all children who participated in my research were Muslim, I can only speak about them and therefore do not include other religious views.

Even though discipline and punishment are considered necessary educational tools, Zanzibaris struggle to determine acceptable from excessive punishment, which was already criticised in Islamic essays on the Middle Ages (Giladi 1992: 63). *Adabu* and *adhabu* are frequently used interchangeably and a clear line between where acceptable discipline ends and harmful punishment begins remains frequently debated and considered problematic by my informants. Mwalimu Mussa explains:

The use (*utumiaji*) of the cane is the problem. Teachers forget themselves (*wanajisahau*) and forget that one to three strokes are enough. People don't know the right time to discipline a child, which causes problems, for example hitting children for coming late. There is no agreement (*makubaliano*) about a child's discipline (*adabu ya watoto*) and the level (*kiwango*) of discipline. But anger is harmful (*hasira hasara*).

The difficulty of adhering to a single acceptable standard of what is considered necessary and sufficient regarding the correction of children's behaviour is evident. Furthermore, it suggests the dangers of individual interpretations and appropriations of standards or guidelines according to the respective teacher's assessment of situations that demand chastisement, and stresses the hazard of the chastiser's state of mind. An officer at the Department of Women and Children reiterates this difficulty of adhering to procedures considered as adequate for disciplinary practices, and of drawing the boundaries to when discipline turns into punishment:

Adabu means disciplining (*kuadabisha*), is part of giving direction and supposed to guide a person (*imwelekeze mtu*). But *adhabu* means that you don't care about the level of discipline. The limit is three cane strokes (*bakora tatu*), hitting more than that is a problem. We fail (*tunashindwa*) to observe the boundary (*mipaka*) between *adabu* and *adhabu* and people "struggle (*tumeshindwa*) to differentiate between the two.

While "teaching children right from wrong is part of childrearing" (Frankenberg, Holmqvist and Rubenson 2010: 455) and probably everyone would agree that children should be well-mannered, it matters whether caregivers use discipline or chastisement to achieve this fundamental building part of personhood. While the

necessity to turn children into moral beings prevails, the acceptable techniques by which this is achieved remain in question. The fact that concepts do not have sharp boundaries precisely because they are grounded in specific forms of life, is evident when moral issues are at stake (Das 2015a). Connecting this to the mutually constituting nature of place and personhood (Retsikas 2007), this view fits the dilemma of drawing a sharp line between what is understood as *adabu*, and what is considered *adhabu* in Zanzibar. Since both concepts are primarily grounded in and arise out of Muslim life, they intersect and collide when considered separately from different points of view.

While *adabu* remains the original concept of relevance to child socialisation, *adhabu* is a term of secondary importance. Mzee Issa, an elderly lecturer at the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA), remembers “no one spoke of *adhabu* when we were punished as children. The only term our parents used was *adabu*.” Referring to *adabu* was sufficient without directly referring to punishment. While *adabu* implies both courtesy and chastisement – internal and external discipline, *adhabu* is exclusively negatively connotated as punishment. Therefore, *adabu* – which is central to a Zanzibari child rearing philosophy – incorporates both the potential for establishing ‘etiquette’ (Mahmood 2005: 201), “discipline and good manners” (Miller 2013: 105) and operating chastisement (*adhabu*). Nowadays, as visible from children’s definitions of the concepts, the claim for the irrelevance of *adhabu* no longer holds, as punishments are both referred to as *adabu* and *adhabu* and described through actions ranging from harmless verbal warnings to violent torture. As a part of children’s ‘moral training’ before they become untrainable adults (Goldstein 1998: 412), discipline is interwoven with physical punishment (Lijembe 1967: 15). Due to the terms’ practical and theoretical overlaps, the line between them is undeterminable.

Adabu and *adhabu* together imply a productive process of moral person-making. While *adabu* is used as a religious justification for physical chastisement, *adhabu* is a tool for chastisement. Even though discipline and punishment frequently overlap, both ideas guarantee that children become ‘good adults’. Without “the external shaping of a child”, or “discipline imposed from outside and internalised” a child is considered “scarcely human, and certainly not a proper Muslim” (Last 2000: 376). Humaneness and religiosity are essential qualities for Zanzibari children’s

upbringing. *Adabu* as a tool for instilling discipline and *adhabu* as the infliction of pain differ, but operate side by side and neither can replace the other. Hence, what is taught as good behaviour through chastisement – manners, respect, and obedience – are simultaneously cultural and religious values (see Chapter 3). Being a ‘good’ person and a good Muslim are questions of morality, and for the importance of Islam in Zanzibar, children’s moral personhood cannot be separated from it (Rajabi-Ardeshiri 2011). As cultural morals and religiosity mutually constitute each other, *adabu* remains central to children’s worldly and religious socialisation. Relating this to the linguistic ambiguity of the terms and the etymological vagueness, elicits the non-existence of a clear position on what exactly indicates adequate chastisement for children and shows how educators may continue to use physical chastisement without consequent and consistent reprimand (Miller 2013: 50).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I reproduced the central concepts that socialise children into Zanzibari society and ultimately form a child into a person – *adabu* (manners) and *adhabu* (chastisement), and *utu* (personhood). By depicting the multiple meanings of each of these ideas, I showed how they are inevitably interlinked and further tie into notions of being young. The insights into these many meanings illuminated the concepts’ complexity and the difficulties that arise when trying to define them within clear boundaries. Having shown why telling an adult person in Zanzibar, that they have no manners (*Huna adabu!*) is a powerful insult, helps understand the relevance of the idea to all engagement with Zanzibari Muslim children’s realities in the archipelago. In the following chapter, I move on from ideas of courtesy, chastisement, and personhood to the notion of protection, as these concepts frequently appear alongside and contest each other in Zanzibari child protection spaces. Acknowledging the various discursive domains in which protection is defined and understood, shows the difference between the sphere that *adabu* and *adhabu* stem from and those within which protection exists.

CHAPTER 3

Unravelling ‘Protection’:

Islam, Swahili-ness, and Aid as Modes of Knowing



“Who is a child in Zanzibar?”, I ask Bi Nuna at her office at the Child Protection Unit (CPU). She looks at me as if this is not going to be an easy answer. “Well”, she begins, “according to the government (serikali) and the international political (kisiisa) definition, everybody below the age of eighteen is a child. But according to religion (dini), being a child also

depends on your state of maturity (kubaleghe) and being able to tell right from wrong (kuamua nini vizuri nini vibaya). If I answer in a cultural way (kitamaduni), I would have to say that everyone remains a child until they get married (mpaka anapooa/anapoolewa). You see, I can give you three answers to your question: a political, a religious, and a cultural one. Unifying them in a single response is difficult.” (5 August 2014, Stone Town)

After exploring the manifold conceptualisations of the co-constructing notions of *adabu* and *adhabu* as central to Zanzibari children’s socialisation, I gradually approach the question of why ‘child protection’ interventions in the archipelago are contested and shift the focus to the notion of ‘protection’ itself. Nothing about child care and protection is natural or universal. “Parents exert control over children from the moment they are born” by deciding what they eat, how their bodies are cared for, and what rituals they undergo (Montgomery 2015: 34). In this chapter, I explore what child care and protection mean in Zanzibar by unravelling the concepts’ various meanings and the friction between them in the discursive spheres that define them.

The three-fold discursive domain evident in the opening vignette is central to the production of the Zanzibari-Swahili social universe I experienced. In Zanzibar’s Muslim-majority society, the Qur’an and the *hadith* were my interlocutors’ primary sources of reference when discussing protection with me. Secondly, but often simultaneously, explanations were framed in a Zanzibari-Swahili ‘cultural’ or ‘traditional’ logic. I focus specifically on the spiritual foundations of child protection and child rearing decisions in Zanzibar, as a focus on the impact of religion on children’s lives has frequently been side-lined and the link between early childhood and spirituality considered irrelevant (Gottlieb 2004: 79).

Despite largely neglected in children’s and adults’ ideas about protection in everyday life, the inseparable realm of national and international development politics produced further ways of making sense of what protecting children can imply. This child protection discourse comes from a completely different place and occupies a different discursive domain from the discourses on courtesy (*adabu*) and chastisement (*adhabu*) (Chapter 2). Building on the established interdependence of these ideas grounded in Islamic moral theory and Swahili philosophy, I approach the universalised rights-centred domain the concept of protection stems from. Existing plural perspectives of protection and development require negotiation between them, rather than imposition by one group on another. While aid workers and the government try to impose their views on communities in alliance, within communities

themselves adults impose their practices on children. Structured by power and knowledge, in both cases people do not get the chance to openly contest received wisdom.

Considering the “‘creolized’ nature of Swahili culture” (Stiles and Thompson 2015: 9), the three lenses on life I discuss must be understood in relation to each other before investigating the dissonances that prevailed regarding children’s safety and well-being. To understand Zanzibaris’ complex logics of lived experiences, I take as a starting point “the inherent ambiguity of people’s lives” (Schielke 2010: 3) and locate children’s and adults’ worldviews in both their local contexts of action and within wider global connections. Since ‘cultures’ are “marked intersections of multiple discourses”, I explore the circulation and articulation of diverse discourses at local levels, acknowledging that “the conjunction of any particular set of discourses is precisely a localized phenomenon” (Lambek 1995: 273). Recognising the different shapes of protection within each of these discursive spheres, enables a critical reflection on current child protection interventions in Zanzibar, which cannot be adequately understood, or possibly reconceptualised, without acknowledging these modes of knowing.

I Modes of Knowing: Mapping the Discursive Terrain

Categories to think with

Bi Nuna, the child protection officer at the CPU, was the first person to explicitly address the existence of diverse sources of knowledge in Zanzibar. Her explanations showed the interplay between the various lines of reasoning commonly drawn on in search for answers. As she emphasised, these different ethical conceptualisations embody the potential of colliding and contesting each other’s legitimacy, constantly redrawing the boundaries between their very domains. Framing this chapter in response to these modes of knowing, helps represent what many of my research participants did when they chose different words and actions. Nevertheless, the Zanzibari reality I temporarily inhabited was, of course, more complex than any categories with clearly drawn boundaries may represent.

What I refer to as ‘Swahili-/Zanzibari-ness’, was never a ‘traditional’ domain, entirely separable from religious or political influence. Neither was Islam ever detachable from cultural practice, despite this frequently being frowned upon. Instead of purely ‘Western’ politics at play, other forces like national political agendas were similarly prominent but less locatable in some kind of ‘West’. Recalling the sense-making categories Mazrui established in *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* (1986) – “Africanity, Islam, and Westernization”, I surpass them for their static and binary conceptualisation of Africa versus the ‘West’, indigeneity versus modernisation, and Islam versus Christianity. Considering his argument,

that “indigenous Africa” is at war with “the forces of Western civilisation” (ibid: 12), too simple a stance, allows me to build a more subtle and complex representation of reality and to show contradictions within my interlocutors’ thoughts and practices.⁵³

In Zanzibar, three main sources of knowledge form a discursive symbiosis that defines how concepts are understood and lived: *kidini* (religion/Islam), *kitamaduni/kiyenyeji* (culture/tradition/Swahiliness), *kiinternational/kisiasa/kiserikali*⁵⁴ (aid/politics/government). Following Lévi-Strauss’ (1966) emphasis on the equal validity of the categories of science and magic, I consider these categories to think with as equally important. However, the *kidini* and *kitamaduni* discourses – religion and ‘culture’ – are often too interwoven to be considered separately. Their interwovenness partially reflects in language, as “the Swahili language originates in Africa” and “the religion of the Swahili people derives from Arabia” (Frankl 1990: 269). I interrogate this “marriage between an African language and a Semitic religion” (ibid.) from a socio-cultural and religious angle. While religion and culture do not oppose, they inform one another and are practically distinguishable but mutually defining at once. While religion may be considered part of culture, I here follow my interlocutors’ categorisations. They stressed the importance of both discourses existing independently as separate systems of thought, while also mixing them in explanations and practices. Occasionally the combination of religious and cultural reasoning formed a counter-discourse to ideas within the *kisiasa* mode of thought, while at other times they complemented each other without friction.

Terms to think through: to ‘prevent’ or to ‘protect’?

Within each mode of knowing, various terms describe ‘protection’. Most frequently used were *kukinga* (to guard/protect/defend/ward off), *kulinda* (to protect/defend), and *kuhifadhi* (to preserve/protect/conserve). In everyday conversation about children’s safety and well-being people commonly used *kukinga*. Within the political aid sphere, protection was spoken of mostly as *ulinzi*, or less frequently as *uhifadhi* or *usalama* (safety) – the nouns of *kulinda* and *kuhifadhi*. A Child Protection Unit officer explains: “*Uhifadhi* is the umbrella term and more comprehensive. *Usalama* and *ulinzi* fall under it. They all mean protection. But *kinga* is prevention.” Even though equally used to discuss questions of children’s protection *kukinga* and *kulinda* – to prevent and to protect – have different connotations. Nevertheless, *usalama* was frequently associated with road safety (*usalama barabarani*), and *ulinzi* was

⁵³ To avoid a static argument that draws of yet more essentialising categories as already exist of life in Zanzibar, I tease out the complexity inherent in each of the categories I am discussing here to reproduce their multidimensionality that is often inherently contradicting but yet unavoidable.

⁵⁴ Throughout the text I refer to *kisiasa* only for reasons of simplification, nevertheless, always keeping the other terms in mind.

often seen as too strong or forceful a term indicating the protection of someone from another person. “*Ulinzi* sounds like a ‘military term’”, one interlocutor claimed; as if “people with weapons are fighting for the protection of children”. This was echoed by an officer at the MoEVT who claimed that “before these programmes started, *ulinzi* would be associated with a soldier (*askari*) who stands downstairs with a weapon (*bunduki*)”.

The proverb *kinga ni bora kuliko tiba* (prevention is better than cure) exemplifies the use of *kinga* in colloquial Swahili, and positions it in opposition to *tiba* (cure/treatment), or rather above it regarding importance. For Sheikh Mubarak *kukinga* is the action “when a danger (*hatari*) is not yet visible. Then you prevent the child from getting that problem”. And for an employee at the NCPU, “*kinga* is prevention”, while child protection must be referred to as any of the previous terms. In religious and ‘cultural’ discourse *kinga* was associated with medical or magical practice and prevention from potential harms through *kombe* (Qur’anic medicine). *Kukinga* therefore aligns with an idea of sheltering or preventing someone from possible harm, while *kulinda* suggests guarding or defending someone against a threat or an attack. The distinction matters regarding the connotations the terms carry and the oppositions to child protection discourse they imply. A possible implication of *kulinda*, and of framing child protection as *ulinzi*, is its identification of teachers and parents as threats to children – which may be perceived as insulting and hence disagreed with.

These categories of thought and the terms used in them serve as a framework for thinking about children’s protection from a Swahili point of view first. The order in which I lay out the following domains of protection builds on the importance Zanzibari children and adults attributed to them: religion – *Islam* – holding most significance, ‘culture’ – *Swahiliness* – considered as subordinate to religion but inseparably intertwined with it, and international and national political actions – *aid* – that were omnipresent but commonly valued less regarding their constituting power.

II Religious and Vernacular Approaches to Protection

Bi Nuna’s approach to making sense of protection processes through different discursive domains allows us to understand the plurality inherent in the idea of protection. This plural nature reaches beyond universalised conceptualisations that employ the term in a specific policy-related manner without questioning underlying ideological assumptions. Learning about my interlocutors’ associations with protection, without prioritising definitions from the child protection policy field, revealed the concept’s multidimensionality beyond standardised understandings. Thinking about protection, punishment and personhood by drawing on the

knowledge of each discursive lens, helps us to grasp the multi-layered reality within which protection and chastisement take place in Zanzibar. Therefore, I attribute priority to adults' and children's associations with protection in a *kidini* and *kitamaduni* way of knowing and consider them in their own right and relatedness.

Islam(s)

Thinking religiously (*kidini*) – in Muslim terms – was the lens on life that outdid all others regarding relevance. “Swahili culture is an Islamic culture”: while it is not necessary to be born in the region or to identify with a specific ethnicity, “one does have to be a Muslim to be truly Swahili” (Knappert 2005: 182). Following this, Zanzibari religious leaders hold undefeated “moral authority”. Despite Islam being the dominant religion in the archipelago, framing it as a unifying ever-similar phenomenon is difficult for its “discursive tradition” takes specific shape in this Swahili-Zanzibari context (Anjum 2007). “Islam is a religion of great diversity” and what being a ‘good Muslim’ means, “takes particular local forms, based on locally grounded and morally imbued interpretations of the Islamic tradition” (Inhorn and Sargent 2006: 5). This is equally true for Islam in Zanzibar.

The variety of African countries' historical encounters with Islam, makes it hard “to support the notion of a single, African Islam” (Loimeier 2013:11), as predominantly its form “is shaped by a history of constant debate and linked to power struggles in the region” (Kresse 2007: 81). East African ‘Islams’ vary with people and their ideas that interpret and translate them into their realities. Respectively, speaking about Islamic practice or Muslim thinking around questions of protection in Zanzibar, cannot be generalised to the whole of ‘Muslim East Africa’. While they certainly identify some important markers that re-appear in various forms in this geographic region, one must remember the extent to which this specific context shaped the form that religion takes here (Asad 2009). As a local development actor put it: “In Zanzibar, even religion has been culture-ised. It is difficult to say where religion ends and where culture begins. It has blended in. If something is a religious issue, we also take it as a cultural issue”.

Protection as establishing morality

“‘Child protection’ means teaching children morals (*maadili*). This is to protect (*kumlinda*) the child, and to build their (*kumtengeneza*) life now and for later. Thereby they can tell good (*zuri*) from bad (*baya*). If they can do that, you already protected them”, a *sheikh* at the Mufti's Office explains. Religious leaders and teachers at Islamic institutions frequently interpreted protection as a moral shield that guides you through life (see also Chapter 2). Punishments that correct children's lack of moral behaviour, serve as protection by assuring

they stay on the ‘right’ path. An Islamic authority at the Mufti’s Office offered a broad definition: “Child protection means protecting children from possible harm (*madhara*). When children grow up, you educate them, discipline them, and teach them morals, but you haven’t protected them yet. You have to make sure the child lives a safe life (*maisha salama*), is free (*huru*), self-aware (*anajielewa*), and happy (*ana furaha*).” Enabling a child to live safely and protected from harm, here too, includes the inculcation of morality, but is expanded by the call for guaranteeing their freedom, happiness and general well-being. Thus, the protection of children’s moral development was a central and frequently repeated idea in discussions on how to assure that children are safe.

Protection rites for children

According to the saying *kinga huliwa tumboni* (protection begins in the womb⁵⁵), the protection of children already begins during pregnancy. Actions that aim to contribute to children’s safety are some of the first things children experience after being born. In Zanzibar, the day of a child’s birth, the seventh day and the fortieth day, with customs appertaining to each day, are particularly important for children (Ingrams 1931: 196). A booklet from a Stone Town book shop, *Mambo ya Kufanyiwa Mtoto Anapozaliwa*⁵⁶ (Shaaban, no year), summarises what according to Islam is considered necessary to be done to children for their well-being after birth. It lists several things, which I was told all contribute to the safety, well-being, or protection of a newborn child: The first protective action towards the child is to read the *Adhan*⁵⁷ into their right ear and the *Ikama* into their left ear (*kuadhiniwa mtoto akizaliwa*) (ibid.: 4). Reading the sura *Yasini* is used for protective matters regarding both child and mother (Ingrams 1931: 228). This, it follows, should be done so “the child will not be affected (*hatohudhuriwa*) by Ummu Subyaani, a *Jinni* that follows and harms (*kuwadhuru*) children” (Shaaban n.y.: 5).

Furthermore, the first words a child hears should be the words of God, which is also the call unto Islam (ibid.: 6). As a second step, a child should be fed something sweet (*kumlambisha kitu kitamu*) like a date or honey, the *tahnik*, as the Prophet did himself. Thirdly, on the seventh day after birth, a child’s hair should be shaved (*kumnyoa nywele*); this hair (*nywele za ujusi*) should be measured against money/silver and buried in the ground (Ingrams 1931: 197). Discussing this with Bi Muna she adds: “We believe this hair is not good. The weather/atmosphere (*hali ya hewa*) is different outside the womb in the worldly life (*maisha ya dunia*) so it needs to go and grow anew”. On the first, third, or seventh day after birth, the

⁵⁵ Lit. Protection is usually eaten in the womb.

⁵⁶ Lit. “Things a Child Needs to Undergo upon Birth”.

⁵⁷ The Muslim call for prayer.

child should be named (*kumwita jina*) (Shaaban n.y.: 7). And finally, also on the seventh day, there needs to be the *Akika*, consisting of the slaughter of two goats for a male child and one goat for a female child (*akika kwa ajili yake*) (ibid.: 8). “If you don’t have money”, Bi Muna adds, “you can slaughter them later, but it must be done before the child reaches puberty (*kufika baleghe*). You do this as an offering and to give thanks to God for giving you a child. Men get two goats because they carry more responsibility than women.”⁵⁸ These early Islamic childhood rites⁵⁹ serve “to incorporate the child into the human society as a whole and particularly into the Muslim community” (Giladi 1992: 35). The rituals’ symbolic purpose is “intended to ensure that matters of religion shall always have first call to the child”. These procedures emphasise the authority of Islam as the defining discourse to everyday life and reflect one approach to assuring children’s protection, or well-being, from early on.

The Qur’an, too, is considered to have medical and protective power. “The whole Qur’an is medicine (*dawa*)”, Sheikh Mubarak emphasises, and explains its specific application. Qur’anic medicine (*kombe*) is usually practiced by religious authorities and consists of writing sura from the Qur’an with saffron colour onto a plate, dissolving the writing in rose water, and then either washing oneself with the liquid or drinking it. It may also consist of sura written on a piece of paper, enclosed into a piece of cloth and worn on the body as a talisman or protective charm (*hirizi*). In urban Zanzibar, but much more in the villages, I observed children wearing such necklaces with small wallets that contain sura. Equally they were hung up on strings to ceilings or doors in several of my interlocutors’ houses to, as they explained, ward off “the evil” (Ingrams 1931: 462).

In these practices the *kidini* and *kitamaduni* domains of Islam and ‘culture’, or what could also be called ‘magical’ protection, overlap and often collide. *Hirizi*⁶⁰ (protective charms) utilise Qur’anic verses’ protective power and are considered to lie between religion (*dini*) and ‘tradition’ (*mila*). The opposition of these two categories is problematic, as “at the conceptual level it artificially isolates what occurs together or is intermingled in real life” (Middleton 1992: 162). Nevertheless, in everyday life the concepts rather “overlap and complement each other to the extent that they are actually intertwined” (Loimeier and Seesemann 2006: 9) and “describe a continuum” (ibid.: 10). Therefore, and despite my

⁵⁸ For Muslim Zanzibari mothers, child birth is followed by the *arobaini* - a period of forty days of seclusion of the mother and the new-born.

⁵⁹ *Adhan* and *iqama* recitation into the newborn’s ear, the rubbing of an infant’s palate with a date (*tahnik*), name giving (*tasmiya*), the first haircut, the slaughter of a sheep or a goat (*aqiqa*) and male circumcision (*khitan*).

⁶⁰ As worn by a baby in the chapter’s title image.

interlocutors' frequent suggestions, "the traditions referred to as *mila* do not necessarily stand in opposition to *dini*" (2006: 9).

While Qur'anic medicine is widely accepted, the preparation and use of *hirizi* is contested. Despite the use of Qur'anic sura, it is considered 'cultural' and hence anti-religious. Asking my neighbour Salma about this, she explains:

Waganga and not *sheikhs* make *hirizi* for children. Here in town there are only few. It doesn't agree with religion (*haiendi na dini*). If you want to protect (*kumlinda*) a child with spirits (*majini*), then what are you worshipping (*unaabudu nini*)? Allah? Or someone else? That's why it's inappropriate (*haifai*) and town people don't like it. In the villages (*shambani*) you find it a lot. Here in town there are no *waganga* who deal with those matters.

Her discontent over mixing religious and cultural practice exposes the tension that exists regarding the compatibility of Islam with Zanzibari-Swahili cultural practices. Even though *hirizi* contain sura which are believed to have protective and curative powers, their use through charms to protect children from evil spirits, is often considered blasphemy. Nevertheless, as I have shown, precisely this was also suggested in the booklet that mentions the power of reading the *Adhan* into children's ears for protection from bad spirits. This contradiction between Muslims in agreement with and those opposing the application of 'religious magic' echoed in a conversation with Sheikh Sharifu: "The two most important things for the protection of children (*kinga za watoto*) are safety (*usalama*) and health (*afya*). To protect children from diseases caused by spirits (*majini*) we use *hirizi*. Some people say using *hirizi* is against Islam and blasphemy, but this is a lack of knowledge and not true." His emphasis on health and safety as central to understanding how children are best protected in Zanzibar summarises well the direction of protective thinking, through the examples I have shown in the realm of religion.

Swahili-ness

Even though 'culture' is impossible to be defined as bounded or static, it was precisely the terms 'cultural' (*kitamaduni*) and 'indigenous' (*kienyeji*) that my interlocutors frequently used. As shown above, these actions and narratives were seldom separable from the omni-defining force of religion. Zanzibari-Swahili culture and religion are so interwoven that depictions of the boundaries between them vary greatly between people. Its publicly contested compatibility with Islam was visibly undermined by my research participants' lived realities that formed close-knit combinations of both.

Religious protection rituals align with ‘cultural’ rites of protection and similarly centre around children’s health and safety. All protective rituals I encountered were actions on children’s bodies. Asking my research participants what they did to protect their children or whom they turned to with questions regarding children’s well-being before universalised child protection policies and programmes were introduced in Zanzibar, I was given several options. Most commonly I encountered a medical approach and health thinking. For medical practice aims to prevent and cure diseases, “rites of children’s medicine, in other words, are rites of passage” (Argenti 2011: 289). For children in need of treatment, I was advised to speak to people with special knowledge of ‘local’ medicine (*dawa ya kienyeji*) who focused on children’s health. These were mostly older female healers (*bibi anaye dawa ya watoto*), traditional midwives (*wakunga wa jadi*), or to a lesser extent ‘traditional’ healers (*waganga*). Lastly, echoing ideas of ‘safety’ or ‘safeguarding’, community child rearing (*malezi ya jamii*) (see Chapter 1) was regarded Zanzibar’s ‘original child protection system’.

Protective health practices

To learn more about children’s medicine and protective ritual I visited *Saleh Madawa* (lit. Saleh’s Medicines) – a ‘pharmacy’ for alternative medicine with an owner of the same name, hidden in Stone Town’s narrow streets near *Darajani* market. While serving his customers, Saleh explains:

We take the child as a human being (*binadamu*) just like every adult (*mtu mzima*), because they feel pain the same way (*anaumwa sawasawa*). It is all about health (*afya*). Anything can be prepared as protection (*kinga*, lit. prevention) for children. We use *jimbo*, *mvuje*, and *hirizi*. *Jimbo*⁶¹ is protection for a baby to have good health (*afya nzuri*), gain weight (*anenepe*), and become active and lively (*achangaamke*). It also protects from evil spirits (*mashetani*), enemies (*maadui*) and jealousy (*husda*). You can fumigate (*unamfukiza*) children with fumigation (*mafusho*) made of mixed leaves to chase away bad spirits (*shetani wabaya*). You can also protect with *mvuje*⁶², which is like a tree, and garlic (*kitunguu thomu*) in a black cloth (*kitambaa cheusi*) tied to a child’s arm. Children wear *mvuje* like a watch (*kama saa*) as a protection. Children are also clothed (*kuvishwa*) with *hirizi* to protect them (*kumlinda*) from bad spirits. *Hirizi* consist of a piece of paper with a sura from the Qur’an bound into a special tin (*kibati maalum*) or into a piece of cloth. The child wears it like a bracelet (*kidani*). All this is protection.

⁶¹ *Jimbo* consists of particular leaves (*majani*) and roots (*mizizi*) and water in which the child has to be bathed (*kumkosha*) twice every day in the first week after birth.

⁶² The *mvuje* mix consists of wheat flour (*unga wa ngano*), *mvuje*, and gum arabicum.

This understanding of children's protection and safety, grounded in Islamic belief and medical understandings of safeguarding children, echoed through conversations with research participants of various ages and gender. Accordingly, Bi Muna, my long-term Swahili teacher, emphasised the importance of using medicinal herbs (*dawa za mitishamba*) to keep children safe and so guarantee their physical well-being and bodily integrity.

You wash children with *jimbo* so their bodies become strong. As protection from the devil, you also put kohl (*wanja*) on their eyes, both for boys and girls. It must be a special, soft *wanja* without sand in it. You use soot (*masinzi*) with ghee (*samli*) or fat (*mafuta*). This *wanja la kombe* (religious magical kohl) is also called *hasadi*. You can continue doing that even after the *arobaini*⁶³, to protect them (*kumkinga*) from jealousy (*husda*).

Both Saleh's and Bi Muna's insights conceptualise protection through notions of the body and health. Primarily, protection was understood as a form of preventing disease, treating pain, and protecting children from supernatural harm, as "illness in children is often believed to have been caused by the evil eye" (Boswell 2011: 105). Treatments like *mvuje*, *jimbo* or *wanja* therefore serve as "a protection from harm" (Boswell 2011: 127). In line with using markings and charms that draw on the power of the Qur'an, Gearhart (2013) conceptualises the Swahili society of Lamu, Kenya as revolving "around protecting their children from spiritual and physical harm, providing them with religious and secular education, and preparing them for their future" (2013: 19). Particularly her emphasis on the connection between protection and education, both secular and religious, reiterates the link between manners (*adabu*) and morality as formative for children and their future lives.

In Argenti's examination of the rites of children's medicinal care in Cameroon, he describes childcare rituals as revealing the tension inherent in the stage of childhood and "children themselves as targets of struggles between local and exogenous forces" (2011: 285). Considering the many protective practices that occur during Zanzibari childhood, which is specifically prone to potential harm, this equally holds true. To learn more about children's protection from supernatural harm or treatment of inexplicable illness, Bi Muna advised me to speak with 'healers' (*waganga*):

If a child has a problem, you go to a healer (*mganga*) that specialises in treating (*kutibu*) childhood illnesses (*maradhi ya kitoto*). Even though nowadays children are first brought to the hospital, people believe more in demons/the devil (*shetani*) than

⁶³ *Arobaini* is the period of forty days that a mother and a new-born remain inside after birth.

in science (*sayansi*). That's why they use *hirizi*. It's better to first go to the hospital and then try alternative treatment (*matibabu mbadala*). Some problems (*matatizo*) are not treatable at the hospital. The biggest harm for children is the devil (*shetani*). Children must be protected (*alindwe*) so they won't be changed by it. When the mother goes to the bathroom, someone should look after the child so the devil cannot change it. That's also why at the *magharibi* prayer children must come inside, as during that time demons (*mashetani*) roam about (*wanaranda*). Staying inside is a good protection (*kinga*). In Islam we believe that children's bodies may be entered by demons who will make them do abnormal things (*siyo vya kawaida*) while the child is still healthy (*mzima*).

Children's vulnerability to supernatural harm and need for protection from it emphasises the fragile state of childhood and the attention it needs to assure their well-being. Even though Zanzibari children are considered "pure", they are also regarded "vulnerable to evil and pollution" (Boswell 2011: 105). Nevertheless, while demons or spirits may cause children harm, they may also protect them. Bi Muna elaborates:

After having a child, it is entrusted (*anakabidhiwa*) to a family member's demon (*shetani*) who receives the child. If it's a good demon (*shetani mzuri*) they protect it (*anamlinda*). In Arabic *shetani* is always something bad. But in Swahili we have both: good and bad demons/spirits. A *jini* is a type of *shetani*, but also a 'bigger issue', much bigger than a *shetani*.

Several of my interlocutors pointed me to Bi Mwajuma, a *bibi anaye dawa ya watoto*. Her understanding of protection in connection to healing childhood illnesses and preventing supernatural harm offers another perspective on the protective spectrum:

You can call everyone a *mganga* who helps other persons recover from something (*kupata nafuu*) or brings them a solution (*ufumbuzi*) to their illness. It's like being a doctor (*daktari*). Some healers only do *kombe* or herbal treatments. I do a bit of everything. I predict (*kutabiri*) demons' strength with a board and sand, massage people (*ninamkanda*) and examine their children. Demons (*mashetani*) show themselves through illness or causing things like falling (*kuanguka*). When the hospital's treatment doesn't work, it's usually a demon. Then people come to me. I use roots like ginger (*tangawizi*), or black seed oil (*haba soda*). The Prophet said it treats all illnesses except death.



Figure 3.1. Bi Mwajuma's set of medicinal roots, herbs and leaves.

The many ways of protecting children in society according to Swahili-Zanzibari 'cultural' practice – whether tying a *hirizi* to a child's body, applying kohl to their face, bathing or fumigating newborns in herbal concoctions, assigning them demons, or even using physical chastisement – all function through actions upon or through children's bodies to guarantee their cure or well-being. Childhood rites "highlight anxieties not only regarding birth and the health risks associated with early life", but also underline "anxieties regarding dangers that are inherent and enduring to the social fabric" of the place (Argenti 2011: 287). The variations and conflicts in people's differing opinions about these methods emphasise the non-existence of one coherent view of what exclusively constitutes 'cultural' or religious practice even among Zanzibaris. Before considering how the international community, the government and its policies impact on definitions of protection, recognising the nuances within these two knowledge sources alone mirrors the complexity of the full picture of protection as it exists in Zanzibar.

Protection as safety and care

Children's safety and well-being connect to ideas of caring for, or looking after children, emphasise adults' responsibility in safeguarding approaches, and locate protection in the most intimate space – the family. "There is protection in the family, because it brings up (*inalea*) their child. Families care for (*inatunza*) their child, before any policy (*sera*) and before any law (*sheria*)", a Child Protection Unit employee claims. The fundamental idea of 'care' was frequently related to ways of assuring children's safety that were not formally institutionalised or based on child rights policies. A high-level person at the MoEVT describes the original protection system in Zanzibar's communities: "Back then, elders knew

that all adults had responsibility to care for (*kuwahifadhi*) their children, like protecting them (*kuwalinda*) from harm”. And a student at ZU echoes this, stressing that “child protection really depends on culture. It used to be the whole community’s social responsibility, but now this has decreased (*imepunguza*) and people just raise alone (*peke yao tu*)”.

This reiteration of community child rearing (*malezi ya jamii*) was considered an ‘original’ protection mechanism to assure children’s safety in Zanzibar. An officer at the MoESWYWC specifies this protection form, the students located in a community’s responsibility:

Children belonged to society (*jamii*) and were protected (*walilindwa*) by everyone. Everyone could correct their behaviour (*kumrudi*) to guide them (*kumwelekeza*). This has changed. Now, if you hit someone’s child, the parents will complain (*watalalamika*) and may go to the police. There is no more respect (*heshima*). Back then no parent would sue you, even if children cried.

The officer’s link between community protection and the right to chastise, reiterates the protective potential inherent in physical chastisement. Bi Mananga, a traditional midwife in her nineties, confirms: “If children lack good behaviour (*adabu*) they must be corrected. When you correct a child (*ukimrudi mtoto*), this is part of protecting them (*kumlinda*). Three strokes with the cane (*mikwaju tatu*) and their soul will be cleaned (*roho itasafika*)”. Her concept of achieving protection through chastisement echoes Zanzibaris’ identification of community child rearing (*malezi ya jamii*) as a general tool for assuring children’s safety (see Chapter 1).

Children’s Accounts of Protection

Depending on the discursive lens applied, protection meant many things to my young interlocutors. Recognising the Swahili linguistic multidimensionality of protection, I asked them to express their ideas of protection (*ulinzi*), safety/security (*usalama*), as well as ‘being safe’ (*kuwa na usalama*).⁶⁴ Much like adults’ concepts in the *kidini* and *kitamaduni* spheres, recurring conceptualisation of protection included ‘health’, ‘care’, and ‘safety’. Nevertheless, children’s ideas also differed from adults’ concepts regarding the details they prioritised.

⁶⁴ This offered a wider realm for association than asking them to reflect on one term only.

Protection as ‘health’ and ‘bodily integrity’

“It is children’s right – to give them what is indeed – good health – is truly what they need”⁶⁵, thirteen-year-old Rukia’s poem states, of which every verse ends with: “I’m calling out to you – hygiene is truly a shield”. Ideas of health (*afya*) and bodily integrity recurred in children’s depictions of protection, drawing on the right to a healthy life as key to protection and safety. Rukia’s notion of health’s protective function, is echoed by Hakeem’s (10) explanation, that “at school (*shule*) they teach us about cleaning the environment, our bodies and clothes, science education, geography, maths; at *chuo* we are taught reading and writing, cleaning the environment, about the body and clothes, praying, history, discipline (good manners) (*nidhamu [adabu nzuri]*) etc.”, reiterating the relevance of hygiene and health as central subjects of education.



Figure 3.2. Naifat’s image of children’s safety.

Naifat’s (14) image of three girls playing or dancing in a circle explains that “children’s safety (*usalama wa mtoto*) means that they are happy (*wanafurahi*) and play nicely (*wanacheza vizuri*)”. Its message is echoed in Khadija’s (10) explanation that “safety (*usalama*) means being healthy (*kuwa mzima*) and living a good life (*maisha mazuri*), being happy, peaceful and loving each other, playing with our friends and not fighting or hitting”. Her general idea about the ‘good’ life can be paired with twelve-year-old Amina’s definition of health, for whom “protection is important for children because it makes the child grow in

⁶⁵ *Watoto ni haki yao – kuwapa yaliyo ndiyo – afya njema ndo hiyo – hasa wanahitaji.*

good health (*kiafya*), mind (*kiakili*), and physically (*kimwili*)”. The possibility to develop healthy, both physically and psychologically, here considered the need of being protected. The explanation to Zuhura’s (13) drawing of a women’s toilet and a girl by a sink washing her hands reiterates the multiple layers that define protection and also emphasises health:

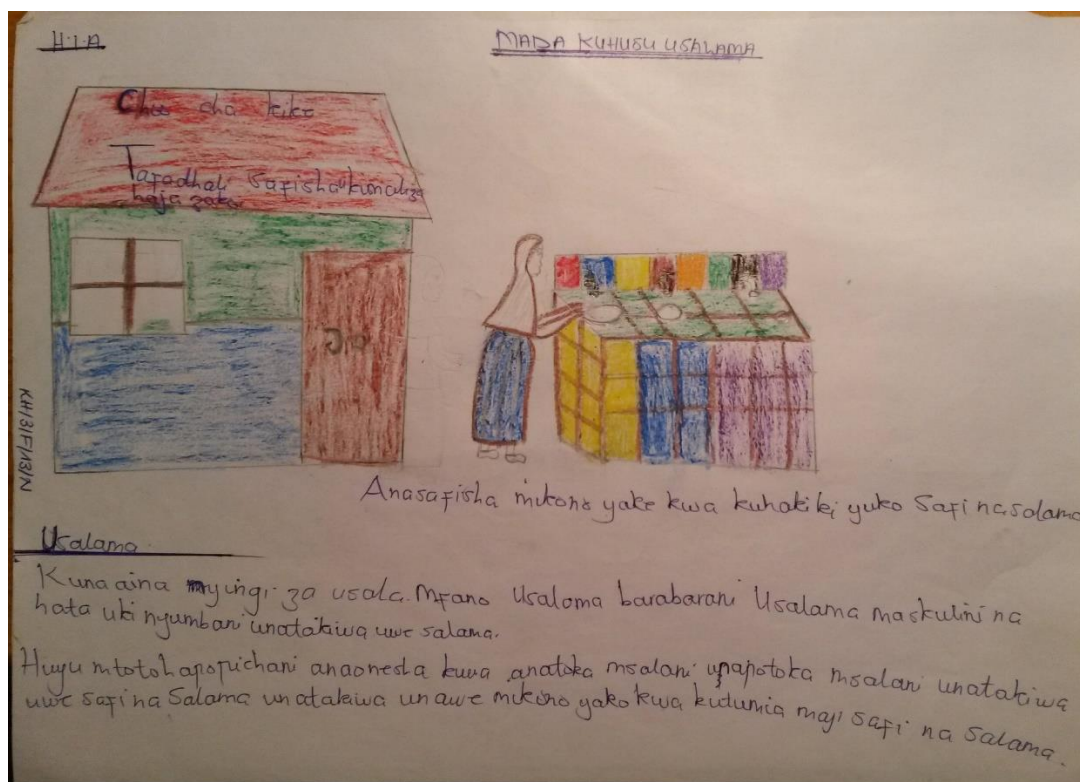


Figure 3.3. “There are different types of safety (*usalama*): street safety, safety at school, and even at home. This child shows that when you come from the toilet you must be clean and safe (*uwe safi na salama*) and wash your hands with clean water”.

Protection as parental ‘responsibility’ and ‘care’

Frequently, my young interlocutors located the responsibility for children’s safety with parents. “Parents and guardians know this is their responsibility. Therefore, they try to give the child good instructions on how to progress well (in terms of having respect [*heshima*] and good manners [*adabu nzuri*] towards other people) because giving children food to eat, clothes and a bed is not enough”, Khadija’s previous explanation continues. Amina adds, that children’s “protection (*ulinzi*) and safety (*usalama*) is assured through parents, guardians, and society as a whole. I advise parents, guardians and the community to cooperate (*wawe na ushirikiano*) with children”. This notion of realising children’s protection through adequate education and beyond the right to basic livelihoods provision, together with the call for ‘cooperation’ between adults and children, extends parental responsibility to protect to other actors in the community. Children also identified the need to prevent child neglect.

The emphasis on the general need to be cared for is equally visible in Maimuna's (13) image of a house with a laundry line outside: "This is when a child is given safety (*usalama*) and not left to roam around because nowadays children get stolen (*wanaibiwa*).” Amal (14) directly relates care and safety to each other in her text: "Children should grow up in good care (*malezi bora*) and we shall neither punish them (*tusiwape adhabu*) nor give them ineligible punishments (*adhabu isiyostahiki*). We should put children in a state of safety (*usalama*) and peace (*amani*)". Rayan's (14) photograph of a girl wearing a black headscarf and a blue dress, a smaller girl without headscarf and a boy, all holding toys, sitting on a plastic mat in front of a fridge, reflects a similar idea of the importance of safety and echoes adult's demand for children to stay indoors as a mechanism to prevent harm: "This picture is about children's safety and shows them inside while they are playing. This helps them to be safe. When they go outside a dangerous donkey may come or a dog might cause them problems, so it is safer when they stay inside." Being protected by avoiding exposure to potential harms underlines an emphasis on prevention rather than protection as a response.

Protection as safety from poverty and violence

"Small Zanzibari children's life resembles that of other children (*kama ya watoto wengine*), but also differs from others for reasons of their life situation (*hali zao za kimaisha*)", sixteen-year-old Suleikha begins her essay on childhood, and continues:

Some have a good life and are healthy, but others are poor and their parents aren't wealthy enough to support them with accommodation and food. Therefore, small children engage with hard work even though society and the government forbid it. Children sell food like peanuts or collect bottles. That's why many children are not able to study. They can't go to school without food. It's a problem for children having to think about how to find money for school. That's why parents let their children work when they should be in school.

Pointing out the need for contextualising life situations, but at the same time acknowledging similarities, Suleikha stresses what is possibly, as in many societies, most critical for how children experience childhood – poverty and social inequality. The impact of poverty on my young interlocutors' lives was repeatedly depicted in their photographs. One of Abdulkarim's (12) photos shows a narrow street leading through concrete houses with a scooter in front one house and a laundry line in front another: "The *madrasas* are old and there are too many students. We hope that someone will repair them." Poor infrastructure and large class sizes further influence children's everyday experiences, and depend on

structural poverty as the underlying cause. Nassra (14) photographed a scene inside a house yard:



Figure 3.4. “This picture shows the hard work children do. A small child fetches water with a canister that is not their size. He should first reach the age when he can carry this much water. For now this amount is too big”.

The immediate experiences children chose to explain protection offer insights into childhood experiences constrained by poverty. The notion of ‘safety’ was another common approach to how children explained their own protection. In Rukia’s (16) essay she voiced her hope to be safe and protected from abuse:

Safety is when there is no violence in a place. The child will be safe and able to do things with confidence (*kujiamini*) because she won’t have anything to worry about. Safety is important for a child to prevent (*unamkinga*) her from bad things (*mabaya*). If we don’t make places safer (*tusipoweka usalama*), violence will continue every day in homes, schools, and *madrasas*.

While Ahmed (11) simply summarises safety as “a state of having peace (*kuwa na amani*)”, Najat (15) argues that “children are safest at home and at school, less so in the neighbourhood, where you can be raped or assaulted by men and women”. And Laila (13) describes this similarly through her photograph of a sandy path through bushes:



Figure 3.5. “This is a place where children get deprived of their happiness (*bunyima watoto furaha*) because people might sit there who take the opportunity to do a bad thing (*kitendo kibaya*) like raping you (*kukubaka*) or taking your things away (*kukupokonya*) like your phone, bag or money.”

The children I spoke to have a clear idea of what protection means to them, and are also clear about who is obliged to provide it. Their framing of protection as an assurance of well-being through adequate health and care, as well as violence and poverty prevention, adds to the adult understandings of protection I explored in the religious and cultural discursive spheres, which largely focus on and serve children’s socialisation. Children’s understandings of protection as having a safe environment provided by caring and respectful adults, demonstrates an awareness of a range of abuses, like some of the threats adults identified, for example the possibility of being raped. This frames the need for protection in the broadest possible way such as ‘caring for’ (*kutunza*; *kujali*) instead of *kulinda* (to protect) or *kukinga* (to prevent).

III A Universalised Approach to Protection

Finally, it is the *kisiasa* (political), or *kiserikali* (governmental) definitions of protection and their relationship to the previous knowledge sources as expressed by both Zanzibari children and adults, that allow us to better understand the Zanzibari discursive universe of protection. Internationally initiated and nationally adopted development programmes by non-state actors like Save the Children and UNICEF play a significant role in conceptualising child protection. From this aid perspective, protection is framed through dominant political ideas

around the policy field of child protection more broadly. Even though often taken for granted for the dominance and power through which they operate on a global scale, these CRC-based “travelling rationalities” (Mosse 2011: 3) on the protection of children, are as culturally constructed as Islamic and Zanzibari-Swahili ways of knowing. Despite also being adopted and employed by ‘majority world’ development workers, the interpretations of protection in this context remain shaped and interpreted primarily by aid professionals from ‘minority world’ contexts, and frequently depart from, or are unrelated to, the two previous approaches to the matter.

Protection as a systematic approach to ‘violence’ prevention

“In Zanzibar, child protection is about both response (i.e. counselling) and prevention (i.e. advocacy work with parents) mechanisms, coordination and resources on national, district and community levels to protect children from abuse, violence, neglect, and exploitation”, a local child rights actor explains. His colleague specifies:

Child protection is a multi-sector approach. You need to look at children’s holistic needs and the functions and structures that facilitate protection. Social welfare services are the backbone of child protection services. Police, legal, health, alternative care. That’s why we are building the capacity of national authorities to identify, report, assess, refer, and respond to cases of children in need of care and protection.

Reiterating those definitions that have recently become enshrined in corresponding policies, they underline the existing approach’s complexity in a political sphere. Until 2008 ‘child protection’ as a policy field was not ‘on the map’ in Zanzibar and officially only became a focus area of Zanzibari social welfare services through the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) with the passing of the Zanzibar Children’s Act in 2011. This locally developed comprehensive child rights law acknowledges the need for protective intervention and paved the way for protection programmes in and outside of Zanzibar’s schools. Through the government’s collaboration with international child rights organisations, Zanzibar’s child protection system aims to bring together the necessary key sectors to better protect children and ensure the adequacy and existence of laws, policies and services (UNICEF 2011). To guarantee a systematic approach to child protection, and because protection never means only one thing, Save the Children Zanzibar work with an “11 keys approach⁶⁶” which

⁶⁶ National strategy, legal framework, coordinating agency, local prevention and response services, child-friendly justice system, child participation, an aware and supportive public, committed and

addresses critical cooperation partners⁶⁷ in society and entry points to establish a comprehensive programme. While Save the Children officially rejects a single-issue approach through their systematic child protection strategy, some interventions, as I will show in the following chapters, artificially separate entry points in society and fragment a child protection response (Wulczyn et al. 2010).

Institutional responsibility for child protection matters lies with the Ministry of Empowerment, Social Welfare, Youth, Women and Children (MoESWYWC)⁶⁸ and the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) who deal with and coordinate all matters concerning the children's protection. The MoEVT holds responsibility for dealing with matters that concern children in primary schools and *madrasas*, including the Unit for Alternative Forms of Discipline. In cooperation with Save the Children, who fully finance the Unit, it is responsible for implementing the Positive Discipline approach (*adabu mbadala*) that promotes what are considered non-violent forms of discipline. Thereby, international child rights organisations in collaboration with the Zanzibari government hope to contribute to an improved protection of children in educational settings in Zanzibar.

Protection as prevention of corporal punishment in schools

In a development way of thinking protection is framed as a systematic approach to violence prevention. For Save the Children schools are key intervention sites in which this protection approach is applied. After identifying corporal punishment as the most common form of violence that children encounter on a daily basis in Zanzibar (UNICEF 2011), a programme to eradicate the practice in and outside of schools became central to the organisations' child protection agenda. "Save the Children's approach looks at violence in schools in terms of corporal punishment, but also in terms of schools as places where children learn life skills and to protect themselves. Schools also have a role as referral institutions", a child protection development worker explains the relevance of educational institutions as entry points for protection programmes. Protection work in schools has included teacher training workshops in Positive Discipline techniques, and the establishment of Children's Councils to promote

skilled workforces, adequate resources, standards, regulation, monitoring and oversight, data collection system.

⁶⁷ These include the police, where a Gender and Children Desk for reporting abuse cases was established, and Mnazi Mmoja Hospital, where a One Stop Centre (now *Mkono kwa Mkono* Centre) for first aid treatment of and referrals for abuse cases operates. Furthermore, a children's court section was established at Zanzibar's High Court to respond to cases of child victims and perpetrators in a child-friendly manner. Additionally, a Diploma in Child Protection was established at Zanzibar University to train the future work force in charge of the national protection system.

⁶⁸ Under the MoESWYWC falls the Department of Social Welfare (DSW), which operates the Child Protection Unit (CPU), that responds to violence against children cases. Subordinated to this ministry is the Department of Women and Children (DWC). It coordinates violence prevention and operates the National Children's Advisory Board (NCAB), Children's Councils and Parental Groups.

knowledge about children's rights, like those to safety and participation (see Chapters 5, and 7). In Chapters 8 and 9, this comparison of values and ideologies influenced by Islam and Swahiliness, will be completed with child protection workers' and policy makers' own conceptions of protection.

IV Discursive Dissonance and the Instability of Concepts

The various meanings of protection according to religious, 'cultural', and policy-political sense-making, show how one idea is constituted in relation to completely different points of reference, and how a concept like 'child protection' is far from imaginable in one way only. Similarly to my adult interlocutors' understandings of protection through the discursive *kidini* (religious) and *kitamaduni* ('cultural') realms, young Zanzibaris' ideas of protection emphasised physical health, care and well-being. Nevertheless, they also differed from them by thinking beyond the aims of socialisation, as adults did mostly, and instead focussing on integrity through social personhood, safety from violence and poverty, and fear of neglect. Complementing their ideas with the government's and development institutions' (*kisiya*) systematised protection thinking, showed the different realms of thought that influence the concept. This three-way contrasting of what 'protection' is understood as in Zanzibar helps to imagine the friction between and within each of these spheres, which I will illustrate with concrete examples.

The linguistic reality that frames protection discourses, visualised the different applicability of the ideas to prevent (*kukinga*) and to protect (*kulinda*). Explanations of what protection is and what it does in relation to the sources of knowledge of Islam and Swahiliness align with 'prevention' (*kinga*), while the realm of global discourses on protection is dominantly framed through 'protection' (*ulinzi*). Put differently, while the protection of children in a non-policy way of thinking is commonly interpreted as preventing children from potential risk, child protection in policy terms suggests the need for protection from existing harm. Following this logic, prevention indirectly identifies harm as coming from a specific direction or person, as is the case when thinking about protecting someone from a certain threat.

The most explicit contradiction in definitions of protection lies in my interlocutors' conceptualisations of corporal punishment. As physical chastisement is legal in Zanzibar, attempts to regulate it remain vague suggestions left to individual interpretation. Despite continuous efforts, protection services are fragmented and criticised by teachers and parents for their lack of consistency and reach across and beyond the school environment (see

Chapter 5). In contrast to its problematisation through child rights-based protection programmes, appropriate chastisement is often perceived neither as a problem nor as violence, but as a form of protection itself, that shapes the unformed child into the socially integrated person they must become. In both religious and ‘cultural’ discourse physical chastisement is considered a correction tool that prevents children from failing to become good Muslims and social and morally responsible community members. According to a universalised understanding of protection, the practice remains a threat that children must be protected from.

Scheper-Hughes contested the idea of the natural “nurturance and protection” (1992: 411) of children and emphasised alternative ways of conceptualising protection. She found that child protection on the Alto do Cruzeiro, frequently occurs in the form of child theft. While considering radical interventions to save children’s lives as justified, she criticised their unpredictability as attacking “women at the core of their fragile existence” and increasing “their feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness” (ibid.: 244). Relating her findings to my research reflects a similar logic. Whereas corporal punishment is understood to make sense and be a protective and productive practice in the context of Muslim moral person making, child protection interventions intend to ban it and face opposition for being understood as replacing Zanzibari morality. Ultimately, “the idea that children have rights, especially in relation to protection from their parents, is a relatively recent one” (Morton 1996: 179) and resonates with difficulties child protection interventions face in Zanzibar.

This latter notion of corporal punishment emphasises the threat that teachers and parents who hit pose to children, while the former stresses their guarding and guiding role in this process. Put differently, ‘protection’, as conceptualised on a policy level, emphasises the negative notion of ‘harm’. A focus on more positive ideas of ‘health’, ‘care’, and ‘well-being’, as emphasised by children and adults in the other two discursive spheres, remains neglected. Acknowledging the negative and positive connotations of a preventative and protective framing of what child protection is, shows how these concepts collide due to the accusations they produce, instead of building on their positive and productive force. Only non-polarised approaches may acknowledge parents and teachers as protectors, as they “intend to ensure that the child will be firmly grounded in the polity and protected” (Argenti 2011: 287). This prevents portraying them exclusively as sources of harm and closing opportunities for genuinely improving children’s life situations. Therefore, the framework of prevention (*kinga*), as frequently utilised in place of protection by my research participants, opposes the notion of protection (*ulinzi*), that policy-based child protection interventions build on.

Paying attention to vernacular protection and care practices for children is important for attempts to assure their safety and well-being. As Thairu and Peltó (2008) claimed for programmes to reduce neonatal mortality in Pemba, programmes to reduce potential harm from corporal punishment “need to identify and address the cultural rationales that underlie negative practices, as well as reinforce and protect the beliefs that support positive practices” (2008: 194). This aligns with my approach to child protection interventions from a position that pays attention to both respectively. Otherwise – as Fuglesang (1997) emphasised in the context of public scepticism and resistance towards sexuality education programmes and contraceptive services in Tanzania which were believed to cause promiscuity among the young – Zanzibari child protection programmes will face similar scepticism for being understood as contributing to children’s unruliness and loss of discipline.

Conclusion

In this first part of the thesis, I explored the instability and non-static conditions of the concepts that structure the Zanzibari child protection reality: childhood, courtesy and chastisement, and protection. All carry multiple shapes and meanings in relation to Islam, Swahili-ness, and (inter)national development. International approaches to child protection build on the assumption that children are insufficiently protected in their communities. This chapter’s consideration of children’s and adults’ many understandings of protection showed that this assumption does not fully agree with Zanzibari ideas about assuring children’s safety. These concepts reveal that children are understood to be protected all the time – only in ways that fall outside of one specific conceptualisation and language of the matter. Therefore, a sole focus on one dominant discourse – in this case the political one – does not allow for understanding what protection, punishment and personhood mean to people outside standardised policy language spheres. It runs the danger of dismissing ideas that matter to communities, but are neglected by universalised development projects. The indefinite borders of the concept of protection, that takes new forms according to who says what to whom, is key to understanding tensions inherent in the implementation of child protection programmes. Bringing together the three main ‘cultures of protection’, reconstructing the domains around them, and contrasting them with the connotations they carry according to the children who are to be protected, contributes to a more inclusive picture of the meanings ascribed to protection. In the next chapter, this takes us to the creative misunderstandings that are central to existing conflicts around questions of child rearing and discipline, and emphasises the need to recognise these misunderstandings when thinking through protection.

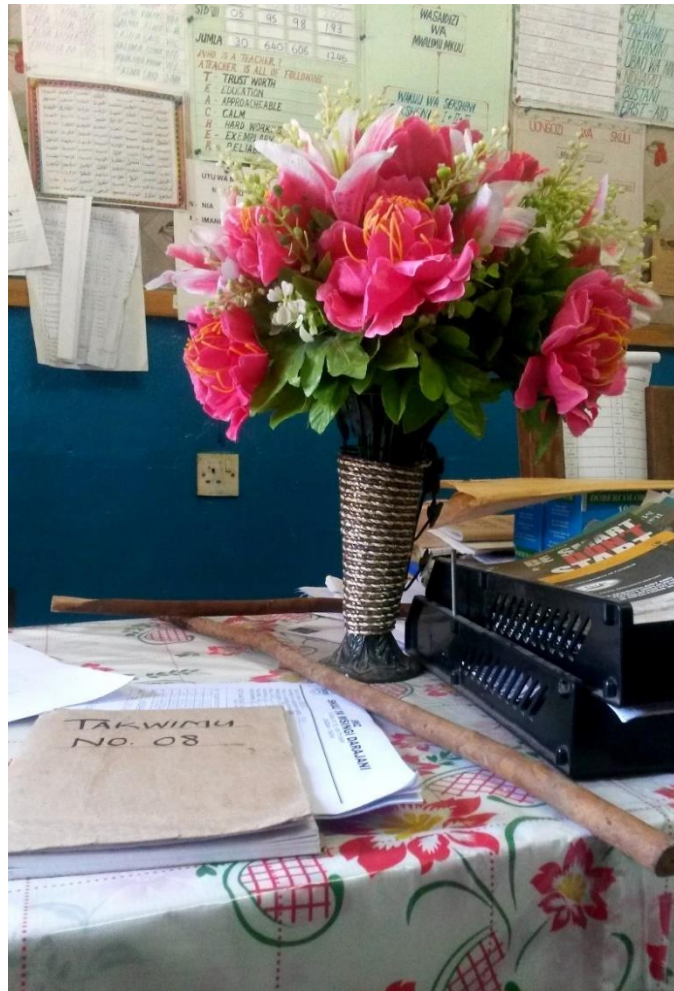
PART II

PLURALISMS OF PROTECTION

CHAPTER 4

Bending Bodies:

***Kuchapa* is Not Violence**



When I arrive at Kisamaki primary school on a hot noon in May 2015, a group of children are lined up in the courtyard. “How are you guys?”, I greet them. Their reply, “badly (mbaya)”, let’s me guess what must await them. “Badly? Why?”, I ask. “Because – the cane (mikwaju)”. After entering the main building I wait in the entrance area next to the top of the students’ queue. A moment later I am led to the head teacher who seems distressed and tells me to wait inside the

staff office. I propose, "I can also wait here." Seeing him shake his head I add jokingly, "but probably I shouldn't sit where the children are being hit (wanapopigwa), right?" Laughing nervously, he responds: "No, no, in our school children are not hit (watoto hawapigwi). Just wait in the office." Now the children walk off one by one after 'collecting' three cane strokes. The head teacher takes every student forward and facing the wall and pushes their hands up high against it before hitting them on their behind with elaborate swings and a cane the size of a walking stick. All take it differently: some visibly in pain, some jumping away playfully holding their bottoms, some giggling or laughing.

Children's corporal punishment in Zanzibari schools is a normative form of "everyday violence" (Scheper-Hughes 1992) and a "dimension of living" (Nordstrom 1995: 9) engrained "in the minutiae of 'normal' social practices" (Scheper-Hughes 2002: 34). Children's experiences of physical discipline in schools are not interruptions of ordinary life, but rather a part of it (Das 2007). Despite normalised hitting, "the line between legitimate corporal punishment and child abuse is, at best, fuzzy" (Freeman 1994: 21). Regardless, corporal punishment cannot simply be deemed abuse but must be considered a habitus of child rearing that carries distinct meaning (Bourdieu 1990). With the possibility that teachers and parents are not fully aware of what they are doing, their actions have more meaning than they realise (Bourdieu 1977: 175f).

Physically chastising children at school, and not submitting to not-hitting children as promoted through the official child protection agenda, suggests there is more to the practice than immediately visible. Child protection practitioners, who aim to improve children's safety in Zanzibari schools, need to understand this meaning. Personhood is embodied and deeply phenomenological, "because experience is always lived in bodily ways" (Strathern and Stewart 2011: 396). Understanding physical chastisement in the classroom shows how children are imagined to be formed into social people through their bodies, and what child protection interventions against the practice cause by interfering with the body's role "in the making of the self" (Mahmood 2001: 214).

What constitutes corporal punishment is subject to interpretation. In Zanzibari schools, ‘hitting’/‘beating’ (*kupiga*) and ‘smacking’ (*kuchapa*) are frequently differentiated. While *kuchapa* is not considered violent, *kupiga* is potentially violent, and other forms of *kupiga* are always violence. Watching children being caned while being told this was not ‘hitting’, as in the chapter’s opening vignette, revealed the subtle nuances that matter when a concept’s borders, like violence, become fuzzy. Using the cane on children’s bodies as a means of discipline in schools is commonly regarded as correcting (*kurekebisha*) and considered smacking instead of hitting. In this chapter, I examine the notions of *kupiga* and *kuchapa* by bringing into dialogue children’s and adults’ definitions of the similarities and differences between them. This helps to grasp how caning children’s bodies – the loci of both discipline and protection – is conceptualised as violence, or not. Paying attention to “the multifaceted interactions between flesh and society” (Conklin and Morgan 1996: 663), I interrogate the intimate and inseparable interwovenness of sociality, the body, and the person.

While smacking and hitting are the same for some people, for others they are not. The distinction happens only at particular levels: while child rights activists cast the practices as one, locally, Zanzibari children and adults differentiate between them regarding the degree of pain caused. Child protection practitioners in Zanzibar tend to overlook these nuances of vernacular notions of violence, which leads to some harsh, visible practices being banned while others, that are invisible, continue. This chapter offers an example of the practical misunderstandings that influence the rejection of child protection interventions. With a specific focus on how the body is “both naturally and culturally produced” (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987: 7), I look through a lens of ‘health thinking’ to engage alternative approaches to conceptualising processes of punishment and protection.

I Understanding ‘Hitting’ and ‘Smacking’

An individual’s body is the most immediate “terrain where social truths and social contradictions are played out, as well as a locus of personal and social resistance, creativity, and struggle” (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987: 31). Therefore, this discussion of corporal punishment and the protection from it takes the child’s body

as a means to think with. Discussions around physical chastisement in Swahili involve both terms to hit (*kupiga*) and to smack (*kuchapa*). I consider how they are employed, differ and overlap. In Zanzibar, as Last (2000) similarly observed in Nigeria, nuances between beating and striking are linked to “a belief that discipline is necessary to mould a young child’s character” (Perry 2009: 50). The fine line between normalised physical punishment and unacceptable chastisement is best explored through Zanzibari children’s own experiences and definitions⁶⁹ of the concepts (Saunders and Goddard 2009), as well as those of adults. They mirror the differences between the two ideas as they appear in chastisement discourses. Most children differentiated sharply between hitting and smacking, explaining in detail how to tell them apart:

Children’s understandings of the concepts

Kupiga: “We are hit because we don’t have manners”

Children explained that hitting (*kupiga*) and being hit (*kupigwa*) means “to be given a harsh punishment (*adhabu kali*)” (m 12), “which causes the child strong physical pain (*maumivu makali ya kimwili*)” (m 14). Hitting happens “when someone is upset (*anapokasirika*) or angry (*kuwa na hasira*)” (m 14) and “annoyed (*akikereka*)” (f 12). People hit you “with palms (*makofi*) or sticks (*fimbo*)” (f 12), “until you are injured (*ukaumia*)” (f 13), or “until there is a mark (*alama*), blood (*damu*), or a tear (*kuchanika*), with a cane, belt, wire, the water hose (*mpira wa maji*)” (f 13), or with “a dangerous thing (*kitu cha hatari*) like a stone (*jiwe*) or an iron (*chuma*)” (m 13). Hitting “can hurt more than smacking” and make you “feel pain (*maumivu*)” (m 12).

They elaborated being hit “when you make mistakes” (f 12), or “when you repeat a mistake (*ukirejea kosa*) after having been told it is wrong” (f 13). Hitting happens “when you don’t want to go to school or *madrasa*” (m 14), when “someone has stolen (*kuiba*) something” (m 13), “when a child insults (*kutukana*) someone” (f 14), or when “people commit adultery (*kuzini*)” (m 13). People are hit when they “didn’t show respect towards their elders, their friends’ parents, their teachers, or anyone” (f

⁶⁹ While group discussions or direct interrogation situations proved complicated with my young research participants, simply for the sensitivity of the matter and their fear of the consequences their responses might have, I asked them to write down their views on the two actions.

12), generally when they “don’t have manners” (f 11) or have “dirty manners (*tabia chafu*) like a thief” (m 17). Emphasising that there are many kinds of hitting, like “to hit a child when they make a mistake, to hit an animal when it is disobedient (*anapokuwa hataki*), and sometimes you can even hit adults (*watu wazima*)” (f 15). You can hit “a person or an animal like a donkey or a cow” (m 17). You are hit “to correct yourself (*kujirekebisha*)” and “usually when children just see a cane (*mkwaju*⁷⁰) they already learn and understand” (f 12). When people are hit “they are judged/convicted/sentenced (*amehukumiwa*)” (f 10). Some children mentioned that “it can cause harm when a person is hit a lot” (f 13) and that being “hit with a big cane (*bakora kubwa*) can affect you psychologically (*kukuathiri kisaikolojia*) or give you diseases (*maradhi*) which hurt or even break your bones” (f 13).

Kuchapa: “To be smacked means to be hit a little”

My young interlocutors considered smacking (*kuchapa*) as “being given a small punishment (*adhabu ndogo*)” (m 12) which “doesn’t cause serious harm (*madhara makubwa*)” (m 14). It is like “being hit a little (*kupigwa kidogo*)” and “like smacking jokingly (*kwa utani*)” (f 12). They claimed that “smacking is not hitting” but instead “it is mocking (*kumtania*) a child to make them understand what they shouldn’t do” (f 13). You can smack “with hands or a coconut palm leaf (*njukuti*)” (f 12), or “with a cane” (m 13). When people smack “with wet clothes (*nguo mbichi*) or wet hands (*makofi ikiwa yana maji*) it hurts more” (f 14). They explained that “you will be smacked a little when you make a mistake for the first time, so you won’t repeat it again” (f 13). Smacking happens “when children don’t go to *madrassa*, are sent somewhere but don’t want to go, or are late for school. Smacking and hitting are different. Even adults are smacked for small mistakes. From age eighteen, you are only told as you will know yourself (*utajijua*), but for big mistakes you will be hit” (m 13).

Furthermore, children explained that “you smack children so they have good manners (*kuwa na adabu*), both your own or the children of close neighbours when they fail to respect their elders” (m 15). Accordingly, it is “an action to instil manners (*kumtia adabu*) into a student or a child when they lack respect (*akikosa heshima*) for their elders. For example, when you don’t do the work the teacher gives you, or

⁷⁰ Lit. ‘a tamarind tree branch’

when you are sent somewhere and don't go, you will be caned a little (*huchapwa bakora chache chache*) but not like being beaten (*kupigwa*)" (m 17). "Someone without manners (*adabu*) must be smacked until their manners are fine again (*adabu yake ikae sawasawa*) then they shall be left to go (*aachiwe*) and forgiven (*asamehewe*)" (f 11). Smacking "doesn't cause the child strong pain" (m 14) and means "you don't injure someone" (f 13). It is "being hit a little without it hurting a lot (*haiumi sana*) like with a *njukuti*" (f 13). Smacking "can't affect you psychologically and cannot give you big illnesses like when you are beaten, like hurting the bones" (f 13).

The same: "To hit is to smack, and to smack is to hit"

Nevertheless, a few children considered both actions as the same thing and not possible to tell apart. "There is no difference between smacking (*kuchapa*) and hitting (*kupiga*) because smacking is hitting. They are two things that are similar (*vinavyofanana*)" (m 13). They said that between hitting and smacking "there is no difference because hitting a person is the same as smacking them" (m 13) and that being hit or smacked "has the same meaning (*maana moja*) because when a child does a bad thing it must be hit (*lazima apigwe*)" (f 9). One boy argued, "to hit is to smack, and to smack is to hit. There is no difference" (m 12). I was told "there isn't a big difference between the two" (f 14) and that "it is the same" because "when you make a mistake (*ulipokosea*) you will be punished" (f 10). Children said that "being smacked is what we get at home and at school. It means being hit with the cane (*bakora*) and being punished" (m 14) and further that "being smacked (*kuchapwa*) is like being hit (*kupigwa*) but for little children by using *njukuti*" (f 12).

Implications of children's concepts of hitting and smacking

Children's definitions for the notions of hitting and smacking create a map of meanings, themes and ideas directly related to the concepts – manners, mistakes, pain, punishment, and respect. These demand exploration. For most young interlocutors hitting and smacking – *kupiga* and *kuchapa* – were clearly distinguishable. For them, *kupiga* directly relates to the causation of pain or injury, is connected to negative emotions like anger, and practiced with dangerous objects like canes or stones. *Kuchapa*, on the other hand, is emphasised to not cause serious physical harm or injury, considered as not having strong psychological effects and is

conducted with less dangerous objects like sticks or palm tree branches. Respectively, *kupiga* is more explicitly ‘violent’, while *kuchapa* remains outside the sphere of violence.

For a smaller number of my young respondents the concepts could not be told apart, but described one and the same action. This does not change the fact that they are distinct at other levels. Their equation underlines the concepts’ fuzziness, their overlaps and the according actions, which as applied in both contexts, are often the same. That some children regarded hitting and smacking as one practice with different names, tells us also of the underlying aim of both actions – correcting or re-establishing someone’s manners (*adabu*) upon misbehaving or making a mistake. The eventual goal of making and being a ‘good’ person, which, if in jeopardy, may be confirmed like that. Regardless, *kuchapa* and *kupiga* remain distinguishable by severity, intention, and consequent harm.

Adults’ views: not hitting but smacking children’s bodies

Young people’s conceptualisations of hitting and smacking and adults’ definitions of the terms are connected. The majority of my adult interlocutors differentiated between hitting and smacking. Bi Salma, who teaches standard 6, claimed, “if necessary, we smack (*tunachapa*). In class we don’t have canes. We stroke them only once, that is the procedure (*taratibu*). It’s not hitting (*siyo kupiga*), hitting is harmful. Smacking means directing (*kuelekeza*).” This frequent adult view resembles Bi Amina’s, a Women and Children’s Coordinator: “There is a difference between hitting (*kupiga*) and smacking (*kuchapa*). Beating happens in anger, but through the programmes it decreased a bit. Smacking corrects a child (*kumrudisha mtoto*). It’s fine and can continue.” As if illustrating her explanation, but rather unconsciously than intentional, during our conversation she continuously tells off her youngest daughter Mariam for doing things that bother her – “*Acha we! Nitakuchapa!* (Leave it! I will smack you!).” The threat of hitting begins when a child is very young and is immediately verbalised in response to the slightest disturbance older people feel coming from younger persons. Thereby, hitting and its threat is “not simply a violent backlash” but instead a strategic move “orchestrated to send a message to youths” and a warning to those “who might consider acting out of line” (Perry 2009: 51).

Usually this instilling of fear has the desired anticipatory effect of violence in children so that disciplining is, eventually, about anticipating the future.

For a local development worker, the difference between *kupiga* and *kuchapa* was particularly in the tool used to chastise: “*Kuchapa* would be with the hand (*mkono*) and without using a lot of strength. For *kupiga* you use a stick (*fimbo*, *mikwaju*) and more force.” The Head of the Child Protection Unit echoed this distinction between tools, explaining that even though the terms resembled (*zinafanana*), “*kuchapa* means using a stick (*fimbo*) because you can’t smack someone with your palms (*huwezi kumchapa mtu makofi*). But *kupiga* can be both with a stick or with the hands.” While many of my interlocutors differentiated whether a cane was used or not, often it was simply the size of the cane that seemed relevant. The head teacher at one of my schools identified the difference of the concepts to consist in *kuchapa* meaning the “use of a cane the size of a toothbrush”, and *kupiga* as “hitting with a big cane”.

Few adults regarded *kupiga* and *kuchapa* as the same. An MoEVT officer claimed the terms are the same and used interchangeably: “*Kuchapa* means to hit a little with a small cane (*bakora ndogo*) without hurting the child. *Kupiga* means to hit a lot. But they have the same meaning (*maana moja*).” Mwalimu Mussa, was one of the few who argued, that “the difference between *kupiga* and *kuchapa* is only terminology (*istilahi*), but really it is one thing (*kitu kimoja*). See what children say – only adults differentiate between the concepts (*dhana*) because they apply them.” His explanation applies to the minority of children saying exactly this. Regardless, his emphasis on the relevance of terminology – of language as employed to mobilise and manipulate – echoes the need for critical translation and interpretation, as it also applies to the differences between *adabu* and *adhabu* (Chapter 2), or *kulinda* and *kukinga* (Chapter 3).

Zanzibari-Islamic perspectives: appropriate chastisement as guidance

In Zanzibar, there is no unifying stance on the acceptability of physical chastisement. However, there is a tendency to depict light caning as a non-violent and acceptable form of discipline. While many religious authorities supported using the cane and reasoned for it with Islam, others also supported the limitation of excessive

chastisement, which was usually deemed unacceptable if administered without adhering to religiously prescribed procedures (*taratibu*). Let us return to Sheikh Mubarak's paper, *The Concept of the Discipline of the Cane for Students in Islam*, which includes religious understandings in support of protecting children and limiting the use of the cane:

Caning as a disciplinary form (*adabu ya bakora*) makes a student or a child build hostility (*kujenga uhasama*) and enmity (*uadui*) towards their parent or elder. Therefore, this disciplinary measure (*adabu hiyo*) may remove the love/friendship between them and their teachers and affect their relationship. Hence, Islam does not provide the opportunity (*haukutoa nafasi*) for caning as a form of discipline (*kutumika adabu ya bakora*). Islam raises children from childhood (*hali ya udogo*) up to adulthood (*utu-uzima*) providing them with all fundamental rights (*haki za msingi*) like health, education and parental love.

The document concludes with a recommendation of limiting physical discipline, stating that “hitting (*kupiga*) as a form of disciplining a student before teaching them (*kabla ya kumfunza*) does not exist in Islam” and that “it is better to find alternative forms of discipline (*adabu mbadala*) which will make the student understand and learn”. The paper emphasises the importance of adult-child relationships without fear that build on teaching and understanding and that prioritises ‘teaching’ and explanation, before hitting may be considered as a final resort. Nevertheless, the fundamental option to resort to the cane, if explanation should not suffice, remains and opposes it.

Of course, Sheikh Mubarak's view, which was used representatively by the MoEVT and received much attention in child protection policy and practitioner circles, is only partially representative of Zanzibari Islam more generally and was frequently contested. After one of his anti-caning speeches at a Save the Children Positive Discipline workshop for teachers, this became very clear. After repeating his document's central points – that the cane causes hostility (*bakora inaleta uadui*) and that parent-child relationships should not be destroyed through beating – he adds that the cane (*bakora*) is an improper tool to teach with (*hafahamishi vizuri*). He calls on

teachers to use more acceptable ways of teaching (*njia ya makubaliano*) to not contest religious morality (*maadili ya dini*) and encourages religious leaders to give educational speeches (*mawaidha*) to help change people's behaviour (*tabia ibadilike*). After he finished, the school's assistant head teacher looked much in disagreement: "That the cane is not there in religion is not true. It is there. Not to cause pain (*maumivu*), but to be applied according to its procedures (*taratibu yake*)." Sheikh Mubarak's strong position against caning, had the school teacher understand this as a form of denial, if not blasphemy, or at least as an unacceptable interpretation of Islam. For him, physical discipline as such could not be contested, for being depicted in the Qur'an and the *hadith*. Solely the procedures used, or the technique of hitting, are possible to question, but not the practice itself.

For Munir Kadhar Munir from the Zanzibar Muslim Academy⁷¹, another religious authority involved in shaping Zanzibari child protection and punishment narratives, not corporal punishment itself, but rather its procedures, were put into question.

There are conditions (*masharti*) for hitting. Not like hitting a donkey. The cane is the last option (*la mwisho*). It should be soft (*laini*) and you should only hit in relevant places (*pahala husika*), two to three strokes, without leaving marks (*alama*). Some teachers take off children's clothes (*wanawavua nguo*) so the cane 'enters' (*iingie*) better. But children need explanations (*maelezo*) instead of caning (*bakora*). Many say, "without hitting, children's minds don't become active (*akili haichangaamki*)", but I disagree. Method matters. If the cane is your first option, you have no method at all. You don't have human emotions (*hisia za kibinadamu*). People say, "the Prophet told us to use the cane (*mtume kasema mikwaju*)", but really there is no hitting. Consider the *hadith* carefully and just deny them presents.

His progressive understanding of the need for a broad rather than a literal interpretation of the *hadith* that instructs parents to hit (see Chapter 2) favours children's well-being but simultaneously reflects the difficulty of agreeing on one 'Islamic view' on chastisement. An officer at the Mufti's office echoes this, stressing that "God alone can punish (*kuadhibu*). People can only chastise/discipline

⁷¹ The island's Teacher Training College (*Chuo cha Kiislamu*).

(*kuadabisha*) or teach someone. Others use the cane, some take away the child's food (*wanamnyima chakula*). Everybody has their own way (*namna yake*).” As the accounts show, there is no unified Muslim stance on supporting or condemning caning, but only individual positions and general tendencies that, considering the sources they refer to, all become their own translations.

II Multiple Constructions of ‘the Body’ and ‘Violence’

Children’s bodies as sites of (play-)learning and discipline

Anthropological conceptualisations of violence are unthinkable without the body – a “privileged site for the inscription of signs of power” (Barnard and Spencer 2002: 840), like the signs of chastisement on children’s skin. A child, like every person, is “a being of flesh, nerves, and senses (...), a ‘suffering’ being (...) who partakes of the universe that makes him, and that he in turn contributes to making, with every fibre of his body and his heart” (Wacquant 2004: vii). Following this, Zanzibari children’s bodies are the “principal character” (Foucault 1977: 103) and targets of physical chastisement, child protection programmes that aim to eliminate it, and of ethical and moral debates.

In this multi-layered context, the body itself “provides the primary index of the certain and the local” (Lambek 1995: 275). Like adults, children feel with and through their bodies, and while being shaped by the Zanzibar social universe, they shape it in return. Their bodies are texts that reveal their communities’ ethics, aesthetics, norms and values and are their “material anchoring in the world” (Merleau-Ponty 1962) that represents a “microcosm of society” (Douglas 1973: 101). As Zanzibari children’s bodies cannot be defined directly, we must instead focus on “what leaves a dynamic trajectory by which we learn to register and become sensitive to what the world is made of” and what “the body has become aware of” (Latour 2004: 206) – in the Zanzibar school context that is the pain caused by chastisement.

With the mind located in it and its material existence in the world, the body is the seat of both learning and discipline. Thus, Zanzibari children learn to understand other people through their bodies, and perceive the world through them (Merleau-

Ponty 1962: 186; Jackson 1996). Children also make each other's bodies sites of learning from an early age on (Latour 2004). Through play, they embody societal conduct by imitating and reproducing acts they experience in their everyday formation as people. With play children are "doing reality" (Strandell 1997). In Zanzibari children's play, physical punishment occurred as an embodied act in a game, but not as actual violence. Observations at a *madrasa* in July 2014 illustrate this:

"*Tuanzeni kusoma sura zetu* (let's begin to read our sura)", the *ustadh* at *madrasa* Dar Nur announces and all children start reading to themselves from their booklets, each at their own pace. Two maybe five-year-old boys sitting across from each other have picked up small and thin sticks that lay scattered across the ground. While one of them starts reciting, the other continuously hits him with his miniature cane. It's a game. They switch between teacher and student roles, laughing while the reader is 'punished' for recitation mistakes. Hitting each other on shoulders and legs they also grab each other's heads to bend them over to the front to hit them on the back, repeating with strict voices – "*Nitakusomesha!* (I will teach you)". Noticing the noise of the children's game, the *ustadh* suddenly approaches them with a finger-thick cane about 50 cm long. Each of the chatting children receives one stroke on their back – resembling the boys' game.

Play shows how culture is embodied. In Zanzibar, children's play consists of aspects of resourcefulness and creativity, and "influences from tradition, culture and poverty" (Berinstein and Magalhaes 2009: 89). It offers insights into their worlds by enabling the child "to take the voice of the other" (Schwartzman 1978: 280) and allowing an observer to learn about the 'other' through another 'other'. This playful performance of the student-teacher relationship is "culture as it has been played" (ibid.: 2) and suggests how engrained physical chastisement is in the archipelago. Aside from imitating and learning, the boys used their game to negotiate power among themselves. Outside schools, too, both boys and girls⁷² often played at 'hitting' each other in the streets, after school or *madrasa*, imitating their adult environment by smacking each other with smaller versions of the canes their teachers use to

⁷² There was no gendered pattern in the use of this game between boys and girls.

physically correct them in class. This cultivation of the body is part of person formation, and children's bodies as non-discursive forces in social life can tell us about it (see also Chapter 2).

Chastising and protecting children's bodies

Children's bodies are sites where relationships are constituted through actions onto them and where society's ideas about how to treat people are negotiated and made visible. The material body of the child is "at once the wellspring of existence and the site of experience" and embodiment is "our fundamental existential condition, our corporeality or bodiliness in relation to the world and other people" (Csordas 2011: 137). This shows how universalised categories like children's rights are projected onto them but contested when cultural constructions of bodies outweigh their conceptualisations as universal things. Rights treaties like the CRC demand that children are "protected from all forms of violence" (Article 19), including corporal punishment. But not all forms of physical chastisement are considered violent and condemned in Zanzibar, when such "forms of intervention on the bodies of children" (Nieuwenhuys 2008: 5) may think they do.

As it is impossible to divorce "body from person, embodiment from relationship, relationship from history and environment in ethnographic work" (Boddy 1998: 272), actions on children's bodies inevitably contribute to constitute their personhood. If the body is a locus of personhood, acceptable chastisement of children's bodies reiterates their pre-personhood status. How we think about the body indicates how we think about people, and reveals multiple viewpoints on children's ability to cope with physical chastisement and its effect on their becoming of fully social persons. Considering children able to 'grow out of' the experience and effects of physical abuse for 'only' being children, reflects how their existence as young people is not considered equal to the status of adults with full understanding and consciousness.

The physical process of punishment thus becomes part of shaping a child into what will eventually be a full person (Conklin and Morgan 1996). It becomes the type of violence that is not considered "deviant but is seen to be fulfilling political or societal goals" (Waterhouse and McGee 2015: 11). More than a punishing act, physical discipline is "part of a larger social model of human development" (Archambault

2009: 288). The inscription of “tutorial messages on the bodies of the young” (ibid.: 365) is inseparable from the cultivation of power positions and imbalances. As cultural groups provide “social scripts for the domestication of the individual body in conformity to the needs of the social and political order” (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987: 26), chastisement in Zanzibar serves a larger societal order. Thereby, the body in pain “simultaneously produces and is produced by culture” (Jackson 2011: 372). Adult motives of and childhood needs for correction define “boundaries of touch” (McGillivray 1997: 195) that underlie the execution of and reasoning for violence.

The body is “the primary site on which the imprint of power is stamped” and ultimately political for it “bears witness to power” (Fassin 2012: 112). This echoes Foucault’s (1977) argument in *Discipline and Punish*, that punishing a prisoner’s body with an audience serves to re-establish the king’s power and authority. Corporal punishment in Zanzibari schools has a similar effect. Children’s public chastisement, as in the opening vignette, especially with students witnessing each other’s pain, re-establishes teachers’ authority and power. Even if punishment is “situated in a certain ‘political economy’ of the body” – and this may only concern the use of ‘lenient’ methods such as correction – at stake are always “the body and its forces, their utility and their docility, their distribution and their submission” (Foucault 1977: 25). In Chapter 6, I expand this discussion on power regarding the idea of participation.

Children’s bodies in pain

The study of pain can give more concrete shape to the abstract category of violence and help to explore the “sociality of bodily surfaces” (Ahmed 2004: 31) of children. Considering “both the larger possibilities of phenomena and the singularity of lives” – the structural shape of violence against children in Zanzibar and individuals’ experiences of violence through pain – elicits “the slippery relation between the collective and the individual” (Das 2007: 1). Violence as “deliberate inflicting of physical pain” (Barnard and Spencer 2010: 708) and use of physical power or force, has a high likelihood to result “in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation” (Krug et al. 2002: 5). By obeying rules, being part of culture, and fulfilling certain social functions, it is “pre-eminently collective rather than individual, social rather than asocial or anti-social, usually culturally structured and always culturally interpreted” (Barnard and Spencer 2010: 707).

Pain as “a universal feature of the human condition” (DelVecchio Good et al. 1994: 1) marks moral boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable actions and was a familiar phenomenon to all Zanzibari children I worked with. Das suggests that “in the register of the imaginary, the pain of the other not only asks for a home in language but also seeks a home in the body” (1996: 88). Her emphasis on the body as the seat of pain as an emotion, fits with some observations from February 2015:

After finishing *madrassa* in the afternoon, Samira (11) and Amna (13) come to visit. They called the day before to ask if they could, and I told them it would be fine if their parents agreed. After picking them up in Mkunazini we go to my flat and they take off their *buibuis*⁷³ and headscarves. Samira continues taking off several layers of clothing. I count two T-shirts and four leggings. Asking her why she is wearing so many things on such a hot day, she explains: “These are just enough. Otherwise it hurts too much when they hit us in *madrassa*. They hit us even when we don’t make mistakes.”

Aware that the human experience of pain is universal, but that the cultural modes of its experience vary, I address it as “an intimate feature of lived experience of individuals in the context of their local social world and historical epoch” (DelVecchio Good et al. 1994: 2). While, of course, Samira’s pain is private and uninvestigable to some degree, for “only I can know whether I am really in pain; another person can only surmise it” (Wittgenstein 2009: 95), protecting her body through several layers of clothes suggests that the physical chastisement at *madrassa* causes her an unpleasant sensation. Samira developed her own techniques to cope with this infliction of pain, but the casual manner in which she explained why she wore several layers also indicates her routine of dressing like that and the usualness of corporal punishment at school.

In light of the contingency of pain, Ahmed suggests it “is not simply reducible to sensation: how we experience pain involves the attribution of meaning through experience, as well as associations between different kinds of negative or aversive feelings” (2004: 23). Following this, I consider what the feeling of pain does, rather than how it is determined. The sociality inherent in pain structures Samira’s

⁷³ Long black overdress.

relationship with her teachers and other children at school, who either become her allies or superiors through the fear that the threat of the practice causes. Thereby, pain “attaches us to others” (ibid.: 28) and attaches Zanzibari children to their communities. This attachment to others as well as any kind of pain – whether physical or psychological – caused by physical chastisement is evident in Zuhura’s (15) poem:

*Mbadala tutumieni
tuwape watoto nyumbani
tuwache kuwapingini
viboko vingi pembeni*

Let us use alternatives
And give the children a home
Let’s stop hitting them
So many canes by the side

*vaumiza kwa ndani
ni hasara kuu nchini
watoto tushikamaneni
katika hili letu jambo.*

They injure on the inside
It is a great harm in the country
Children let’s hold together
In this matter of ours.

Her depiction of caning as harm to the body and the mind offers another perspective on children’s conceptualisations of pain as associated with punishment. Calling on her peers to ‘hold together in this matter’, the collective experience of pain invites young people to take a stance on the matter, echoing Ahmed’s suggestion.

However, other children like Masoudi (13) claimed that “pain (*maumivu*) is an important part of punishment (*adhabu*). You need to feel pain to understand you made a mistake and you shouldn’t do it again”. And Nadra (12) added, that “without pain children cannot understand, be calm (*utulivu*) and reasonable (*busara*)” but “will repeat the same mistake again”. Twum-Danso Imoh’s research on corporal punishment in Ghana reflects these views, as she reports that the majority of her young interlocutors “reported that physical punishment was an important part of the socialization process” and further, that 76.6 % of respondents disagreed “with the statement that ‘physical punishment within the home/family should be made illegal’” (2013: 478). Despite chastisement causing pain and shame, many of her research participants, much like mine, “saw that it had benefits in the long term – when they become ‘good’, ‘responsible’ and well-behaved adults who contribute to their communities and national societies” (ibid.: 479). Similarly, Zanzibari children consider physical correction part of their training to become members of their society.

In *The Body in Pain*, Scarry claimed, that hearing “about another person’s physical pain (...) has no reality because it has not yet manifested itself on the visible surface of the earth” (1985: 3). Hearing about Samira’s pain – and many other children’s pain who participated in my research – certainly felt ‘remote’ as it did not affect me through my own body. On the contrary, hearing young individuals’ experiences of pain created a visible and ‘real’ geography of suffering as many similar cases fit in with this one example. I disagree with Scarry’s claim, that “whatever pain achieves, it achieves in part through its unsharability, and it ensures this unsharability through its resistance to language” (ibid.: 4). Instead it was this sharability of children’s suffering, that made its ordinary presence and accepted character so unsettling. While suffering cannot be a fact, as “each person’s pain has for him or her a degree of reality that the pain of others can surely never approach” (Farmer 2003: 29), my child interlocutors created a language for pain in their own terms – through poetry, photographs, drawings, or stories. While I reiterate what they expressed, the experiences remain their own.

Adults I spoke to, like Bi Haba, a mother of five in her early forties, argued that “pain is necessary to correct the child (*kumrekebishia mtoto*). Punishment without pain has no effect (*haina athari*). If it doesn’t affect (*haimathiri*) children, it is not discipline”. The experience of pain is considered an important part of learning, understanding, and memorising correct behaviour and “is not limited to passive suffering, but also enables certain ways of inhabiting the world” (Mahmood 2001: 217). Schools train both minds and bodies through discipline – “a practice of which the body is at once the seat, the instrument, and the target” (Wacquant 2004: 16). In Zanzibar, as in mainland Tanzania, pain plays a similar role in learning and building personhood, as children are believed to learn what is wrong “most effectively through the experience of pain” (Archambault 2009: 290). Causing children physical pain links to understanding and learning, and to helping them become adults (ibid.: 291). Pain is the embodied tool for learning and poses a motivation to avoid situations that may cause it in the future.

As complex as the notion itself, so were people’s takes on it. Some of my child informants also opposed their peers’ views, like thirteen-year-old Mariam, who argues that “punishment without pain is enough, because if you are given work as an

alternative form of discipline it is like being in pain (*kuwa na maumivu*) and you won't repeat your mistake". This resonates with Ali (14), who said that "children can understand without pain as when they are upset (*wakikasirika*) about having to clean the toilets, they understand"; or Nassir (11), who agrees that "even without pain you can understand, you don't need to feel pain to not repeat the same mistake".

A child protection development worker put it critically: "People think that if you don't feel pain you won't remember. The idea of inflicting pain is that you are disciplined. Communities use it as a form of instilling fear. But often children are not disciplined, they are just afraid and therefore refrain." Her link of pain to the notion of fear, reiterates the importance of displaying and possessing good manners (*adabu*) and respect (*heshima*). Finally, she doubts the effect of instilling pain to discipline and claims, that "hitting doesn't make children more resilient. It just makes them resilient to the sticks." The ambiguous role of pain in the context of discipline, with its various conceptualisations by young and older Zanzibaris, consistently structured discussions.

III Violence, 'Health Thinking' and Development

Is caning violence?

My interlocutors' multiple constructions of the body, pain and violence raise the question to what degree corporal punishment falls into the category of violence in Zanzibar, and of its implications for international child protection interventions. While answering this question in one unifying way remains impossible, my research participants tended to conceptualise caning outside the sphere of violence. When the teacher from this chapter's opening story explained, that children were not hit, or beaten (*'hawapigwi'*), while being caned in front of me, the multiple dimensions that define the idea of violence showed. While child rights activists consider caning as violence against children, the category is more complex in Zanzibar. The distinction between *kupiga* and *kuchapa* is only one aspect that shows the concept's fragmentation and does not align with universalised definitions that structure aid discourses. While *kupiga* is classified as violence, *kuchapa* remains a person making tool and a separate aspect that cannot be subsumed as one notion of 'corporal punishment' or 'violence'.

To expand understandings of child protection to encompass broader definitions of violence and more holistic responses (Morrow 2014; Bourdillon and Myers 2012b), approaches in Zanzibar should recognise differences like those between hitting and smacking, and discipline and punishment. The reasons for these nuances, which in Zanzibar link to understandings of personhood and childhood, are equally important. Unlike Scarry's (1985) claims, that inflicting physical pain leads to destruction and an unmaking of the human world, and that cultural activity leads to its making, Zanzibari children face a more complex and opposing reality. As visible from their understandings of hitting, smacking and pain, the infliction of pain is often considered part of 'cultural' becoming to create, or make, their moral worlds. That simultaneously children also dislike school for being hit, reflects the various connotations inherent in the practice which determine multiple positions towards it.

While many interlocutors agreed on the need to limit hitting (*kupiga*) – with a cane or stick – for being considered to hurt more (*kuumiza zaidi*) than smacking, my research participants generally argued for the need to continue smacking (*kuchapa*) – with an open hand or stick – which was usually framed as 'softer' (*pole zaidi*) than hitting with objects. It was considered as having a correcting effect, but not regarded violent. As with discipline and punishment, even with "the worst of murderers, there is one thing, at least, to be respected when one punishes: his 'humanity'" (Foucault 1977: 74), this also held true for Zanzibari children's chastisement as understood from adults and young peoples' perspectives. During smacking, which is considered acceptable for merely being regarded a disciplinary action and not punishment, children's humanity (*utu*), the state of reaching full social personhood they work towards through the acquisition and display of *adabu*, stays intact.

"Defining physical punishment is challenging" and words associated with physical punishment create confusion (Saunders and Goddard 2010: 2). While *kupiga* was considered potentially violent, harmful and hurtful, *kuchapa* was viewed as an act of discipline and training rather than physical or psychological harm. It was understood as a corrective act with a focus on redirection and formation, rather than intentionally causing pain or suffering. Hitting and smacking describe degrees to which the formation process impacts on the body. An officer at the Child Protection Unit explained, "if you punish, you intend to injure (*unakusudia kumwumiza*) a child,

because punishment hurts the body. Discipline (*adabu*) rarely includes pain (*maumivu*).” While *adabu* is considered to only cause small pain (*maumivu ndogo*), similar to *kuchapa*, *adhabu* implies properly hurting someone (*kuumiza kabisa*), as is the case with *kupiga* (see also Chapter 2).

Viewing child chastisement through a medical lens, it helps to consider that for biomedical research, “pain is the result of change in ‘material’ structures” (DelVecchio Good et al. 1994: 9). Such change in the child’s body is intended with smacking (*kuchapa*), its aim including the correction, training, education, and formation of the person the child is to become. In opposition to hitting, limited pain caused through smacking is intended and understood not as damaging, but as part of socialisation into a Swahili-Zanzibari adult world order. Whereas in the medical field, pain is considered an experience caused by potentially damaging stimuli, it must also be understood to achieve an end, as a tool for person-making, and as instituting memory of the pain once it passes and a feeling of humiliation to remind the chastised child of the intention. Simultaneously presenting a memory, experience and anticipation, disciplining should be understood partly through its temporal dimensions.

Recalling my young research participant’s common definition of hitting, as leading to “feeling physical pain, injury, marks, blood, tears and affecting you psychologically” or “causing illness”, hitting with its visible or affective consequences is clearly understood as a form of violence. Following this, in Zanzibar, there is a difference between violence and corporal punishment, which is usually conceptualised outside of this sphere. A perpetrator’s intention “to either injure or discipline” (Miller 2013: 17) determines this difference. A European child protection aid worker considered corporal punishment a violent act in relation to social norms:

In Zanzibar, there is a social norm whereby violence against children is considered an appropriate tool of discipline or social control. It isn’t only used for disciplinary reasons. If you fail an exam, you also get beaten. That’s quite different to the idea of discipline or control. Nevertheless, there seems to be an understanding that there is a limit to the violence you should use against children. There should not be unlimited physical punishment, but

rather a socially acceptable level that can be used for control purposes. But trying to define what that level of acceptability is remains open to serious interpretation.

While physical chastisement serves as a control mechanism, the difficulty of drawing boundaries between what is considered acceptable remains. The potential of acceptable violence turning unacceptable was underlined by the development worker's claim that despite this blurry boundary, people in Zanzibar try to draw it. Even if it remains subject to individual interpretation and "ambiguous legal definitions" (Miller 2013: 80), there is no official position on whether an act of discipline constitutes violence or not. In Zanzibar, as equally in the UK, "the conceptual difficulties of defining child abuse and the legal ambiguity" (Rajabi-Ardeshiri 2011: 697) makes it difficult for child protection policy makers and implementers to address children's maltreatment at schools (see Chapters 7 and 8).

Whether caning should be considered violence is difficult to determine because of the multiple conceptions of the practice. Mohammed Fathi Ahmed, a religious scholar at the Zanzibar Muslim Academy, emphasised the complexity and potential danger of differentiating between *kupiga* and *kuchapa*:

When teachers or parents hit (*wanapopiga*), they say they just smack (*anachapa tu*). But even smacking is dangerous. When I taught, I intended to smack only, but then I hit someone's eye (*napiga jicho*), and we had a case. Let's not smack (*tusichape*), let's not hit (*tusipige*). In Pemba, a teacher had already hit the child, but the other teacher still had 'his' strokes left to administer (*zako zimebaki*). The other teacher said, 'hit until you think it's enough'. The child died. This is the danger of the cane. Hitting (*kupiga*) is not like treating them with medicine (*kumfanyia dawa*).

Unlike most teachers, parents, and children I spoke to, Mohammed stresses the impossibility of telling the practices apart, of claiming that smacking is not hitting, and hence not violence. According to this, even acts that cause some form of pain but are said to not be intended as damaging – as in children's and adults' explanations of *kuchapa* – may become violence if they have an injurious effect. Mohammed's

comparison of hitting and medicine offers an analogy my interlocutors used frequently, as the correcting effect of physical discipline is often said to work similarly to taking medicine in case of illness, and curing deviant behaviour. He suggests that much like when surpassing the proper dose of medicine, caning too – whether *kuchapa* or *kupiga* – may cause damage rather than relief.

Child protection from what?

To some degree violence in Zanzibar must be considered “culturally normative” (Wells 2014: 263), as corporal punishment was largely problematised as violence through globalised protection discourses⁷⁴. This depiction of physical chastisement as an unacceptable act draws on policy language and terms exclusively used within this realm, instead of also including other modes of making sense of protection and chastisement. That Zanzibari children’s physical punishment is predominantly not conceptualised as violence, collides with child protection activists’ aims to ban practices considered ‘violence against children’. The fact that corporal punishment has become frequently estranged to the “enlightened Western eye” (de Certeau 1984: 61) drives child protection interventions. That the practice may be far from strange to the ‘local’ eye in Zanzibar and hence not thought of when speaking of ‘violence’, affects how attempts to better protect children in Zanzibari schools translate into this context.

“The boundaries of good and bad touch, permissible and impermissible contacts between child and adult body, are porous” (McGillivray 1997: 195) and, like children’s ability to cope with certain degrees of pain, are determined by those administering physical chastisement (Lancy 2017: 103). The indistinct borders between hitting and smacking influence the amount of pain considered bearable and necessary for chastisement, following adults’ definitions of acceptable impact on children’s bodies. A local employee at an international child rights organisation considered:

⁷⁴ Save the Children’s child protection programmes officially speak of physical and humiliating punishment (PHP) instead of corporal punishment, because the latter is often misunderstood to not include non-physical forms of violence.

There is no differentiation between *kupiga* and *kuchapa* at the international level, but at schools *kuchapa* is fine, as it is not considered violence. We need a clear policy from the MoEVT. There are regulations on the use of corporal punishment in the Education Act but most teachers don't know it or disregard it. It's not part of their training. This needs to be updated.

The non-existence of the differentiation between the concepts on a global child rights level – where both approaches are considered violence – reveals the prevailing tension when both spheres operate in the same realm.

Health thinking, case management and shame

Just as conceptions of the body “influence ways in which health care is planned and delivered” (Scheper-Hughes and Lock 1987: 6), interventions against corporal punishment are health interventions themselves. Development practitioners, like doctors, are trained to ‘heal’ certain ‘ills’, but not to consider the whole person and their social existence which particular ills are part of. By treating people as parts of groups instead of individuals with specific needs, aid workers neglect relationships between people and groups and unintentionally cause havoc. Development agencies conceptualise violence as the problem and protection as the solution to deal with it. These simplistic divisions tend to overlook the relational aspects of the practice, that embed it in a dominant Zanzibari child rearing philosophy and go beyond the infliction of pain between two individuals. Following this, government structures in the context of child protection discourses do not fit into people's actual practices and the intentions that drive them. This is partly due to being influenced by a rights perspective that emphasises individuals' rights rather than a socio-political perspective.

In development, like in health care, actions and interventions are justified by evoking simplified versions of reality instead of building on the complexities of social situations. Regarding violence in her *shehia*, Bi Amina identified difficulties: “For things to change, people must be educated. Right now, violence cases are just not followed up properly. Even when perpetrators are reported, in the end they are left without appropriate punishment.” Her frustration with case management echoes through many institutions that were put into place to respond to and prevent violence.

Accompanying some NGO workers to the newly established child-friendly court in Stone Town, a social worker reinforces this, explaining that “corruption is still the biggest problem and rooted in relationships. People’s relations define how cases are dealt with. Particularly family relations keep people from reporting cases because they are scared to put those relationships at stake. But most abuse cases are caused by family members or people close to the children”.

Such a lack of education and insufficient and inadequate response to violence cases further complicates and reflects the limited impact of institutions established to deal with abuse. This, too, is conditioned by shame. As mentioned in the Introduction, in 2015 alone there was not a single report of corporal punishment at the Child Protection Unit as staff said only ‘severe’ cases were followed up. This echoes the non-violent understanding of physical chastisement. Not only considering official reporting but also the home, this holds true, as Morton noted for children in Tonga, who “do not usually report punishment received at school to their parents, who would be likely to punish them again for their misbehaviour” (1996: 192). This fits the Zanzibar context and the power with which shame affects how violent experiences are dealt with.

Drawing on Ahmed’s concept of ‘emotional politics’, Warner illustrates how politics and emotions operate together in the field of child protection. Emphasising particularly the emotion of ‘shame’ about child abuse as a reason for non-reporting, she regards it as “not only personally and subjectively felt” but also as “generated and experienced collectively” (Warner 2015: 1). As pain is an embodied experience (Mascia-Lees 2011), and emotions are “the driving force behind policy and practice as currently constituted”, emotions have “the potential to generate political action” (Warner 2015: 6). This perspective on the seldom reporting of caning allows us to imagine how conceptualisations of disciplinary practices as ‘violence’ through the international child rights regime are contested for the negative claims and accusations they carry. While Zanzibari parents and teachers often frame physical chastisement positively as part of children’s socialisation process, child rights organisations regard physical discipline as violence. This accuses Zanzibari adults of child abuse and underlines that for disciplinary practices to be reconsidered in the archipelago, a negative valuation of the practice is inevitably counter-productive.

That cases are often exclusively dealt with by civil society in Islamic communities, instead of by official authorities, links to “the shame it might bring to the community, possibly putting victims at further risk” (Hutchinson et al. 2015: 403). Thus, not reporting offenders may even “be considered as protective if the matter is sufficiently dealt with by the family and local community because it would prevent the child from being blamed for bringing shame to the community and/or his family” (ibid.). Additionally, specifically in Muslim communities, “the traditional respect accorded to religious institutions (...) may prevent the standard measures of protection being taken by parents and by child protection agencies” (Rajabi-Ardheshiri 2011: 697). That young people’s attempts to report cases of children getting smacked may be turned down by their families, who tell them to “be quiet” (ibid.: 699), reiterates that “how shame over child abuse is felt or not felt and by whom, and how it is attributed to others as being shameful or shameless” (Warner 2015: 13). How silence instead of speaking may therefore be a protective tool itself is further discussed in Chapter 7.

Despite existing protection infrastructure, many Zanzibaris do not report abuse cases. If harmful situations or the intentional infliction of pain occur, this is commonly resolved privately – regardless of it being a case of corporal punishment or rape. Shame also affects both children’s and adults’ reporting of sexual violence (see also Chapter 7). “Often there is no evidence (*ushahidi*) because the child already cleaned themselves (*ameshajisafisha*) or hides themselves (*anajificha*) and there is no more sperm to use as evidence”, a *sheikh* explains. When cases of violence against children do come to light and are dealt with, he explains various approaches on the local level:

Some handle rape cases (*kesi za kubakwa*) in court (*mahakamani*), others in community ways (*kijamii*) by ‘resolving’ (*wanasuluhishana*). This means marriage, paying compensation ⁷⁵ (*fidia*), forgiving (*kumsamehe*) the perpetrator, or taking them to court. Usually it is marriage. Since you already deflowered the child’s virginity and destroyed them (*umeshamharibu*), you must marry them (*umwoe*). It is forced marriage (*ndoa za kukamatiwa*). The parents themselves decide this. Often the police request a compensation. When cases are taken to court, it becomes difficult. Things take a long time

⁷⁵ According to him a compensation fine (*fidia*) would amount to 500,000 *shillings* (GBP 170.00).

and in the end, you lose (*utashindwa*). That's why people think it's better to take the compensation as a mitigation (*kupunguza makali*).

Regarding 'appropriate' ways of dealing with corporal punishment, he adds: "If you injure a child with the cane, you must finance the cost of their treatment, until they recover (*mpaka apoe*). This is the first solution (*suluhisho*)." These ways of responding to child abuse cases evolve around the notion of compensation (*fidia*), or retribution, achieved through direct financial transaction or the prevention of future financial hardship through marriage. They express mistrust in institutional paths of dealing with such matters, and might have one end up without any compensation at all. According to Sheikh Mubarak, *fidia* is "the compensation for hurting someone. Whether intentional (*kusudi*) or not"⁷⁶. It is measured by the *kadhi* (Islamic judge) and depends on how much you injure someone. If you hit your wife and she has to go to the hospital, you have to pay compensation (*utoe fidia*)." This financial compensation (*diya*) that applies in case of someone accidentally, or semi-accidentally, causing a person's death or bodily harm (Peters 2005: 49), is an inevitable part of retribution also in regard to case of excessive physical punishment of children.

An MoESWYWC officer calls rape and sexual harassment "big challenges in *madrasas* but rarely reported. People hide it because teachers are respected and feared. They make these issues confidential." The same idea that keeps communities from reporting abuse, relates to the power inherent in religion as the omnipresent authority. "We keep hiding the truth (*kuficha ukweli*)", a Director at the MoESWYWC emphasises, "parents think that at *chuo* nothing bad (*chafu*, lit. dirty) can happen. This doesn't allow children to say anything. Parents tell them, 'No, don't say something like that!', instead of taking action (*kuchukua hatua*). They stop children from reporting, and like that children don't have places to turn to." This impossibility to contest religious authority for fear of consequences, complicates case management.

My central focus is on children's physical punishment in schools and how aid organisations attempt to positively influence supposedly harmful situations through

⁷⁶ Qur'an verse 92, sura 4, An'Nisa.

protection programmes that aim to decrease this harm. However, these examples give a broader impression of how different forms of violence are dealt with structurally and within Zanzibari society. Patterns of “parents overlooking maltreatment of children at mosque schools” (Rajabi-Ardeshiri 2011: 702) are critical in societies where children and adults may not report maltreatment for lacking faith in its potential to change situations and possibly being considered as community betrayal (ibid.). Despite aid workers’ attempts to ‘treat’ (societal) ‘ills’ like violence by creating prevention structures and tools, a straight forward uptake or prescribed application cannot be guaranteed.

Shifting between forms of violence?

What are the implications of existing differentiations between hitting and smacking for child protection programmes in Zanzibar? Prevailing assumptions over what constitutes violence and what necessitates pain disagree with universalised protection approaches to eliminate all forms of physical chastisement. While hitting (*kupiga*), or the infliction of strong pain, is increasingly rejected by Zanzibari citizens, smacking (*kuchapa*), or the infliction of less pain, remains tolerated. The existing nuances of children’s physical chastisement show, that while child protection programmes aim to ban violence against children, they may unintentionally fail to address all forms of physical discipline and potentially harm children. By failing to explicitly address different degrees of hitting, protection programmes may unintentionally contribute to shift violence against children from more to less visible forms.

Many Zanzibaris reject excessive violence against children – like *kupiga*. However, less harmful, painful and visible disciplinary actions on children’s bodies – like *kuchapa* – remain outside a discussion of necessary restrictions and hence continue without contestation. As only particularly painful forms of chastisement are recognised as harmful and in need of limitation, child protection programmes may fail to address the complex spectrum of violence against children as it exists in the archipelago. This reinforces the prevalence of corporal punishment as a form of ‘symbolic violence’ that “is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 272). Thereby physical chastisement remains “both more present and more hidden” (ibid.) in society and continues to exist outside the universal child rights discourse that attempts to improve children’s protection.

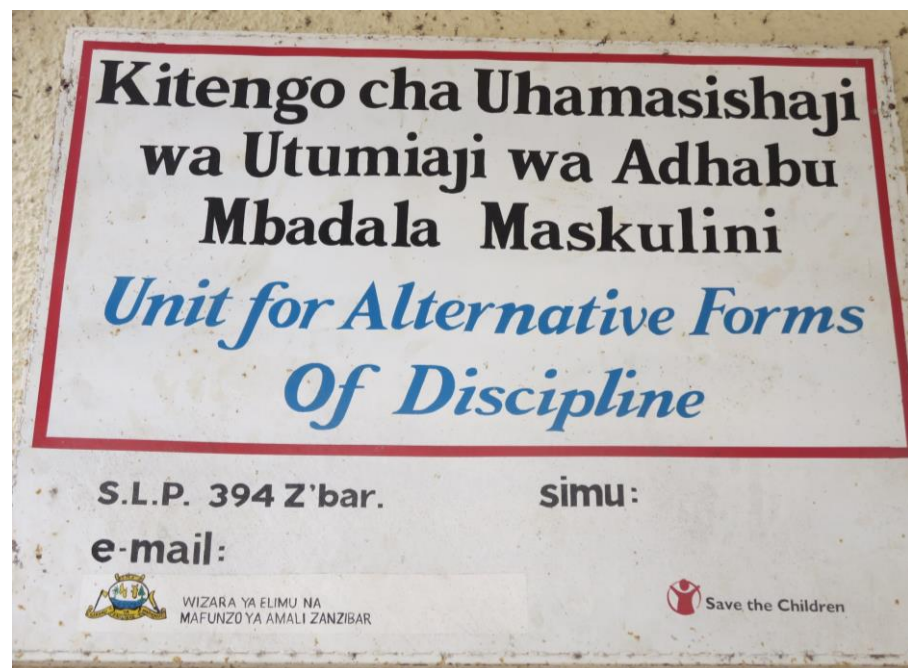
Ultimately, by only addressing some forms of hitting as violence against children, child protection actors inadvertently contribute to sustaining oppressive structures and hierarchies in Zanzibari society (Bourdieu 1977: 191).

Conclusion

Drawing on children's and adults' definitions of the similarities and differences between hitting (*kupiga*) and smacking (*kuchapa*) revealed how different forms of hitting may be viewed as violence. By reconstructing the Zanzibari discussion of what implies violence and pain, and to what degree children's bodies as material realities are involved in this, this chapter opened the discussion of the practical mistranslations of child protection interventions in Zanzibar. Their aim to improve children's safety often fails, as they overlook nuances like the differentiation between degrees of violence, that are essential to intervening in such a sensitive field. This chapter's exploration of Zanzibari ideas about violence and chastisement, builds the foundation for understanding the consequences of discipline and punishment as applied and contested locally and on a global scale. In the next chapter, I consider how alternatives to corporal punishment, as suggested through protection programmes, may turn into equally 'violent' forms of punishment themselves and may have 'painful' implications for children's lives.

CHAPTER 5

‘Positive Discipline’ or ‘Alternative Punishment’: Children’s and Teachers’ Perceptions



On a sunny morning in February 2014 I’m standing outside one of Zanzibar’s central child protection institutions. Looking at the sign that reads “Kitengo cha Uhamasishaji wa Utumiaji wa Adhabu Mbadala Maskulini – Unit for Alternative Forms of Discipline”, I play the Swahili and English terms back and forth in my head and keep stumbling over the translation of adhabu (punishment) as ‘discipline’. After finishing my interview with Khalid, the Unit’s coordinator, I ask why the Swahili name of the Unit promotes adhabu mbadala – ‘alternative punishment’, while the English translation underneath translates into ‘alternative discipline’. Aware that Save the Children officially refer to their Positive Discipline programme as adabu mbadala, I am curious to find out if this different terminology –

the use of adhabu instead of adabu – was intended. “It’s a mistake”, Khalid responds, “but we haven’t corrected it yet. When the name was agreed, we couldn’t decide whether to use adabu or adhabu, and only later realised we should have used adabu, because that’s what Save the Children use and it’s more positive than adhabu.”⁷⁷

The translation of development indicators and goals between languages is typically considered “an unproblematic and straightforward task in international human rights and development contexts” (Merry and Wood 2015: 10). In this chapter I show that this, in Zanzibar, is far from true. Here the mistranslation of language becomes a metaphor for mistranslation of cultural practices, which lead to mutations. While the Swahili words on the Unit’s sign promotes ‘alternative punishment’, its English translation speaks of ‘alternative discipline’ – two different ideas in questionable correspondence. This variation in translation and the interrelation of the notions of discipline and punishment are my starting points to explore the complex social reality of the two approaches to punishment.

After considering the different degrees of violence that exist within physical chastisement, I explore how alternative forms of discipline, as promoted by child protection organisations, may themselves turn into potentially harmful practices. For this purpose, I draw on children’s feedback collected through ‘Suggestion Boxes’ over two years’ time in ten primary schools that piloted Save the Children’s Positive Discipline programme (*adabu mbadala*) during my research. These show how a child protection programme – a force that seeks “to shape the conduct of individuals and populations in order to effect certain ends” (Inda et al. 2005: 17) by promoting alternative forms of (non-violent) discipline – unintentionally practically translates into promoting alternative forms of (harmful) punishment.

The chapter reveals that regardless of which translation one adheres to, in Zanzibar there is consensus on the need for the availability of a variety of penalties to maintain order and to facilitate learning in the classroom. A local UNICEF employee summarised the crux of this: “The problem is how children are made to be

⁷⁷ Just before I left the field in July 2015, the sign was still unchanged and advertised a government-led donor-funded Unit that promotes alternative forms of punishment in schools in Zanzibar.

disciplined. Through a friendly or a forceful way?” Following this, I examine what sort of aversive experience is considered best – one of physical pain or one of social, or monetary cost? As in Zanzibar the point at which corporal punishment “stops being ‘discipline’ and becomes ‘abuse’ is subjective” (Miller 2013: 157), I illustrate how individual actors, children and adults, make their own interpretations and choices in a complex and contradicting field shaped by ‘culture’, religion, and aid (Chapin 2014).

As the aim of children’s socialisation is achieving social personhood, and this itself is considered a form of protection, I explore how anti-corporal punishment programmes finally jeopardise its acquisition. Alternative forms of discipline cannot equally substitute the meaning of discipline in Zanzibar and ultimately replace violence with violence. Building my discussion on children’s and teachers’ objections to and support for alternative discipline, unravels disagreements that underlie the complex practical application and de-contextualisation of discipline and punishment, and how child rights organisations use them in practice. Recognising that children’s own protection concerns do not fit easily into aid agendas (Crewe 2007), contributes to understanding why child protection interventions face opposition by teachers and students in Zanzibari schools and how they contribute to “rendering technical” (Li 2007: 123) children’s realities.

I ‘Positive Discipline’: Understanding Approaches to a Child Protection Concept

An institutionalised understanding of Positive Discipline (adabu mbadala)

Development programmes frequently aim to improve children’s safety in schools by limiting or eliminating the use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary tool. Many work with approaches based on ‘Positive Discipline’ (*adabu mbadala*). Amongst them is Save the Children’s child protection programme in Zanzibar, that focuses on limiting violence against children (*ukatili dhidi ya watoto*) through the elimination of physical chastisement. Working to eliminate both physical and humiliating punishments – the punishment of the body (*adhabu ya kimwili*), and verbal offenses that cause psychological pain – humiliation (*udhalilishaji*), the programme intends to limit Zanzibari children’s violent experiences at school.

The Positive Discipline approach promotes understanding how children think and feel and strengthening parent-child relationships. It is based on a fundamental differentiation between discipline and punishment. Discipline is considered a positive and desirable trait with constructive effects on children, in line with ideas of learning and guidance without harm. Punishment, on the contrary, is regarded as lacking positive attributes and having an exclusively negative and harmful impact. Corporal punishment is viewed as damaging to children's development and to their relationships with adults. While punishment is understood as the instilling of fear and physical and/or psychological pain, non-violent discipline is valued positively, as a practice of care and respect towards others and oneself.

Through this lens, physical chastisement implies punishment and not discipline, as certain components, like respectful understanding and learning without fear, are not accomplished. Causing children's good behaviour through instilling fear, suggests that children only avoid punishment, but are not genuinely understanding or respectful. In the context of institutional discourse in Zanzibar, punishment and discipline were differentiated. The Guide for Alternative Discipline⁷⁸ by the Zanzibari government and Save the Children explains, that "punishment (*adhabu*) is an action done to a person when they break the law or for ethically unacceptable behaviour. Discipline (*adabu*) is the action of teaching a person to obey the law or moral values for a short or long time"⁷⁹ (Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar and Save the Children 2013: 25, my translation). Following this, Save the Children's Positive Discipline programme works through teacher trainings and Children's Councils, that train teachers in alternative disciplinary forms to caning and hopes to enable children to speak about abuse and violence experienced in the classroom.

Creating a Swahili terminology for non-violent ways of disciplining children aligned with the English language concept of Positive Discipline proved complicated. While literally discipline translates to *nidhamu*, *adabu* (manners/good behaviour/self-discipline) is used similarly to describe the means and end to be achieved. Punishment, *adhabu*, in its original meaning is closer to a concept of torture or the

⁷⁸ *Muongozo wa Mafunzo ya Adabu Mbadala na Kumkinga Mtoto.*

⁷⁹ *Adhabu ni kitendo ambayo anapewa mtu kwa kuvunja sharia au kwa kufanya maadili yasiyokubalika, (...) adabu ni kitendo cha kuelimisha kumfunza mtu kutii sharia au maadili ya kitabia kwa muda mfupi au mrefu.*

‘punishment of God’, but also used interchangeably with *adabu* (see Chapter 2). As evident in the confusion over the name for the Unit for Alternative Discipline in the opening vignette, in Zanzibar there is no singular understanding over the most suitable terminology to use. An MoEVT employee underlined this, explaining “it was a confusion. The correct name is *adabu mbadala*. We know there is not supposed to be punishment, but rather disciplining (*kuadabisha*) a child through a different system (*mbinu nyingine*) than the one we are used to (*tumeizoea*).”

Simultaneously, there was disagreement with other child rights actors, as another local protection worker at the NCPU, claimed the opposite, emphasising that the institution was correctly entitled Unit for Alternative Forms of Punishment, as all alternative forms of discipline still needed to be punishments, and hence *adhabu*. This shows that when child protection actors put their rhetoric into practice, they do not necessarily all think the same way. This must be acknowledged to see the various positions that may exist even within assumed to be ‘homogenous’ groups like aid workers. From different points of view both *adabu* (manners/discipline) and *adhabu* (punishment) are considered as fitting well to refer to the same approach. Despite their different connotations and meanings, what is visible above all, is that there is no singular understanding within Zanzibari society and the child protection field, regarding the best translation for alternative discipline.

Young people’s practical understandings of Positive Discipline

My young interlocutors offered insights into what alternative forms of discipline looked like in their schools. Their definitions of Positive Discipline (*adabu/adhabu mbadala*) referred to *adabu mbadala* (alternative discipline) and *adhabu mbadala* (alternative punishment) interchangeably, and illustrated the non-existent agreement over using only one term. Echoing children’s definitions of *kuchapa* (to smack) in the previous chapter, according to my young research participants, “*adhabu mbadala* is amongst those punishments that do not hurt children much. The government has forbidden to beat students because some teachers don’t know how to hit (*hawajui kupiga*) and injure them (*wanawaumiza*)” (Nayla 16). Mohammad (15) explained, that “it is a punishment that doesn’t harm someone’s body and mind (*haitomuathiri kimwili na kiakili*). If a child doesn’t understand in class, instead of beating them you

should teach them with seriousness (*kwa bidii*) so they can understand and learn with care (*kwa makini*)”.



Figure 5.1. One of the ‘wealthier’ public primary schools in Stone Town, 2015.

My young informants further describe that for *adabu mbadala* “instead of using the cane, another punishment is used to make someone not repeat their mistake again (*asirudie tena kosa*), like cleaning a big area, fetching water etc.”. It is “an action done to someone to teach them something without harm (*bila ya kuleta athari*) for the one administering the punishment or the receiver. Often this type of punishment is used in schools, *madrasas* and homes to educate society” (Fadil 13). At primary schools ‘alternative punishments’ (*adhabu mbadala*), as children usually referred to them, included “watering and planting in the school garden (*kupanda bustani*), slashing leaves (*kuyeka majani*), picking up papers, cleaning toilets, or picking up one thousand seeds of *ubuyu* kernels⁸⁰ when coming late” (Muna 15).

At *madrasa*, Suhaila (15) explains, “if I come half an hour late, I have to stay half an hour longer when the others leave. If I cause chaos (*ghasia*) by chatting to my friends,

⁸⁰ Fruit of the Baobab/*Mbuyu* tree.

the teacher (*ustadhi*) makes me sit alone”. And Amal (12) writes “when I make a mistake (*ninapokosea*) I am denied a present or money to use in school or I am punished with having to clean the whole house.” Hemedi (10) explains that “another way of *adhabu mbadala* is to reduce children’s freedom by isolating them from their friends for some time or giving them small work during their play time”. And according to Eshe (15), children should be given *adabu mbadala* when they refuse to help their parents with cooking or washing the dishes. Their views show their understanding of alternative forms of punishment as intending to correct their behaviour as much as physical chastisement, only in a non-physically violent way.

Teachers’ (mis)appropriations of Positive Discipline: the ‘buy-a-broom’ example

Teachers’ explanations of Positive Discipline forms they introduced included “sweeping classrooms, watering the school garden, and cleaning the toilets”. The substitute punishment for caning I encountered most frequently was making students buy brooms for their respective schools. However, this infliction of a monetary compensation, instead of enduring pain as a means of retribution, was prone with conflict. It illustrates how Positive Discipline practically translates into alternative punishment, and leaves students facing equally difficult situations in place of physical chastisement. My young research participants’ accounts underline this appropriation of the approach.

In fifteen-year-old Malkia’s drawing, a school girl sweeps the floor: “Alternative punishments (*adhabu mbadala*) include sweeping, or bringing school utensils (*vifaa*) like brooms (*fyagio*), dasta etc”. Further down it shows a male teacher caning a female student on her behind: “A teacher is beating the student for the mistake of coming late (*kwa kosa la kucheleva*).” Pointing directly to the practice of making children buy school utensils as a compensation for wrong-doing, her image indicates the continuing presence of the cane, and mirrors the prevalence of corporal punishment despite the introduction of Positive Discipline:

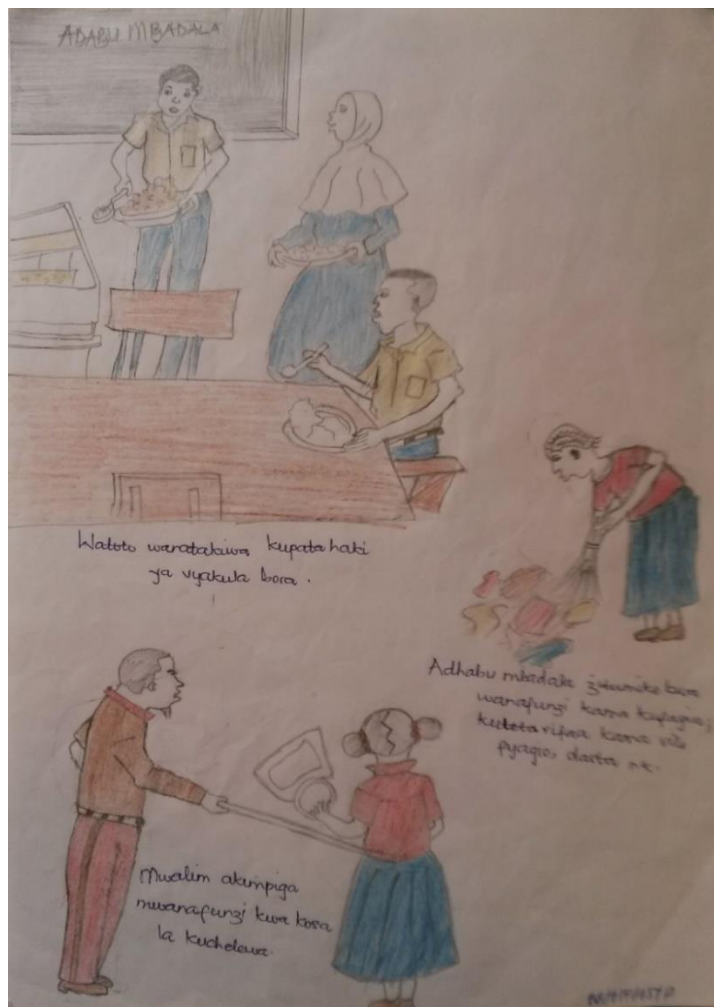


Figure 5.2. Malkia's (15) drawing depicting her understanding of Positive Discipline.

Arkam's (13) story reiterates this: A teacher warns, that "every student who will come late tomorrow must bring a broom (*aje na fagio*) to school. If he doesn't, their parents must come. Otherwise the student will have to stop coming to school (*asimamishe skuli*).” The explicit implication of the consequences a child faces in case of being unable to ‘fulfil’ the punishment’s demand, underlines the complications inherent in this appropriation of supposedly ‘positive’ discipline.

Positive Discipline or alternative punishment?

The Positive Discipline approach was called into question and there was no agreement regarding its use during my fieldwork. Some teachers used it and some did not, some supported it and some opposed it, with the latter outnumbering the former. Echoing the disagreement over its application, Rukia (15) estimates that “30 % agree with it, and 70 % continue to use the stick (*mikwaju/viboko*)”, suggesting a

general tendency to reject alternative forms of discipline as they translate in practice. Jamila (16) illustrates this, insisting that “a student should receive punishments like sweeping (*kufagia*) or cleaning (*kusafisha*) that are important for their health, or carrying water to the toilets. But many teachers use the cane to correct them.”

Making children supply school utensils like brooms was the example many of my child and adult informants considered most representative of the Positive Discipline programme’s unintended consequences. As Bourdillon pointed out:

Protective measures can interfere with relations between children and the communities on whom they depend; and when interventions do disturb relationships, they can sometimes adversely affect the physical security and the psycho-social state of the children concerned to the extent of being more harmful than the particular hazard from which these children were to be protected (2014: 499).

Following his critical assessment of interventions that aim to protect but unintentionally cause new difficulties, the ‘broom-example’ represents exactly this. If care and protection systems disregard “children’s perspectives and a lack of accountability for children’s care”, as Cooper notes for the situation in Kenya, children may be directly “put at additional risk”, which naturally leads to an increase in the distrust of a state care and protection system (2012: 487). Interestingly not only children suffered from these misappropriations and considered them problematic, but also their teachers and local child protection actors responsible for their implementation. Bi Kheirat, an assistant head teacher, explains:

Positive Discipline is not a form of correction. It is a burden for us teachers. But we have the ministry’s order to use it, so we do it. Our teachers don’t know any alternative forms of discipline, so now we just make the children pay 500 *shillings* (GBP 0.15) or make them buy and bring a broom to school as a punishment instead of hitting them. But children struggle to pay money. We teachers suggested to the ministry that children should only bring 100 *shillings* (GBP 0.03), but they didn’t agree.

Students and teachers equally stressed that alternative forms of discipline were not sufficient to correct children, as they did not affect children directly, but instead extended punishments to parents. Primary school teacher Bi Zuhaila explains:

If children must bring brooms as alternative discipline, the child's mistake extends and the punishment returns to the parent (*itarudi kwa mzazi*). Cane them once or twice and the punishment is already finished (*adhabu ishamaliza*). This thing [Positive Discipline] was brought to us (*tunaletewa kitu*). We did not decide this path. That there are no schools that have stopped using the cane completely shows that Positive Discipline does not work.

Even though replacing physical chastisement with monetary punishments was not directly intended through the implementation of Positive Discipline programmes, the programme practically translated into it. Following this, it was widely perceived as inappropriate and imposed. A director at the MoEVT, which organises the programme on a governmental scale, shares their critical view:

I don't encourage making children buy brooms. It means sending them to bring that amount of money and in town they cost 500 *shillings* (GBP 0.20). Here we don't have trees from which to cut branches for brooms, so children have to buy them. But that is expensive and they won't be able to. Positive Discipline also depends on the environment. One day we caught a child stealing eggs to sell them, so he could get money to buy a broom. You can see its harm (*athari yake*). We say we build/form (*tunawatengeneza*) our children, but then we turn them into thieves. That's why I oppose the programme. The teachers haven't understood Positive Discipline yet, otherwise they wouldn't do such things.

Her assessment suggests it is less a rejection of the programme, but rather a rejection of the ministry's policy interpretation, reflecting the dissent that exists within each discursive sphere in which child protection knowledge is produced. Turning to a local Child Protection Unit employee's explanation, the possibility of this misinterpretation of an alternative form of discipline being non-violent or not painful for a child, shows:

When you hit a child, they get hurt even if you don't see a mark (*alama*), because when you hit with the cane, or even just a pen (*kalamu*), they will get pain (*maumivu anayapata*). The child will develop hate and chronic behaviour. Corporal punishment doesn't only mean hitting – even words can be corporal punishment. Everything that causes pain, internally, psychologically, even if it doesn't show, affects the child's mind (*anaathirika kiakili*).

Even though child protection programmes intend to eradicate both physical and humiliating punishment, now the alternatives to corporal punishment often replace more obviously violent disciplining techniques. The restriction of the cane and the promotion of other forms of discipline have increased the use of humiliating forms of punishment, for appearing more acceptable due to their lower visibility. Thus, visible violence is replaced with less visible forms of violence, that often further complicate children's already complex lives. While the use of the cane may decrease by limiting it, less obvious forms of violence against children may continue.

Buying brooms or other school utensils as an alternative form of discipline creates new burdens for children that in poor countries may be more complicated to deal with than being caned. Parents have limited and insufficient financial means to 'pay extra' to compensate for their children's punishments at school. Thereby students' support for caning in certain circumstances, which spares them from this financial burden, becomes understandable. It is an example of the contradictions people encounter and must navigate when development programmes affect their lives. The case of monetary penalties replacing physical chastisement, as well as other misappropriations of Positive Discipline and challenges students face, became even more visible through a feedback mechanism that was established at the schools to gain insights into how changes in chastisement were received.

II Suggestion Boxes: Students' Lived Experiences of "Positive Discipline"

"Where is the Suggestion Box?", Nadia, a local Save the Children employee, asks as we enter the head teacher's office at Miembe Mitatu school in March 2014. Mwalimu Rashid points to the corner of the room where we can see a

small wooden box with a slit top, a stack of papers sitting on it. He opens it and inside are hundreds of small folded notes. Nadia takes one, blows the dust of, and briefly reads over it. “We haven’t opened the box since it was put here in 2012, but we put it outside almost every day so students can put their notes inside. The person who was in charge before Nadia never came back to check on them, I think they work somewhere else now”, Mwalimu Rashid explains.



Figure 5.3. A ‘Suggestion Box’ filled with other school utensils.

In 2012, with the beginning of the Positive Discipline programme, ‘Suggestion Boxes’ were installed at the programme’s pilot schools in the urban district of Zanzibar. They were intended to serve as a feedback mechanism for children to express their opinions on the alternative forms of discipline their teachers were starting to use. Upon starting fieldwork in early 2014 these boxes had largely been forgotten and over the course of the two years no one had returned to the schools to collect and read through the numerous notes students had put inside. In agreement with Save the Children, I collected a total of 1342 little letters from seven of the ten

pilot schools and read what children had wanted to communicate.⁸¹ I here include selected notes, all anonymously, from two of the seven Suggestion Boxes I reviewed. The Suggestion Box from Hewanzuri primary school contained 138 notes, and that from Kisamaki school held 329 letters. The issues repeated most frequently in these letters included students' critique of the continuation of caning, but also of the disciplinary measures their teachers had started using to replace it. Hewanzuri school students' notes stated:

"Students should not be hit because it hurts."

"We want caning (*mikwaju*) to be reduced because some students are ill, and please don't hit us on our heads."

"When a teacher is annoyed by one student, he should not insult (*kuwahamikia*) all students, because some just want to study."

"My question is, has *adhabu mbadala* started? If that means that we students should not be hit, why are we being hit today?"

"If the cane worked, then a donkey would be professor (*punda angekua profesa*), because donkeys get hit all the time. Elders and teachers should not use the cane to develop good education (*kuendeleza elimu kuwa bora*)."

Students from Kisamaki added to this:

"There should be less caning for late-comers because many live far away."

"The cane should be decreased (*zipunguwe*) and there should be more books."

"Don't teach us in anger (*kwa hasira*). If you do, we don't understand at all, and don't hit us with the cane (*mikwaju*) so much."

"We want our teachers to not hit us on the head. They should hit us on the waist (*kiuno*). We hope you agree with our opinion."

"Please decrease the use of the cane and give us alternative punishments (*adhabu mbadala*)."

"We should only be hit when we make big mistakes (*makosa makubwa*)."

"The cane is still used at our school, so we are asking that teachers shouldn't hit us. We are tired (*tumechoka*)!"

⁸¹ Each Suggestion Box content ranged between twenty and 520 letters.

Other students commented more generally on the teaching styles they encounter:

“Teachers should be close to students in their studies so they can learn well.”

“Teachers shouldn’t be so strict (*wakali*) because the students fear them.”

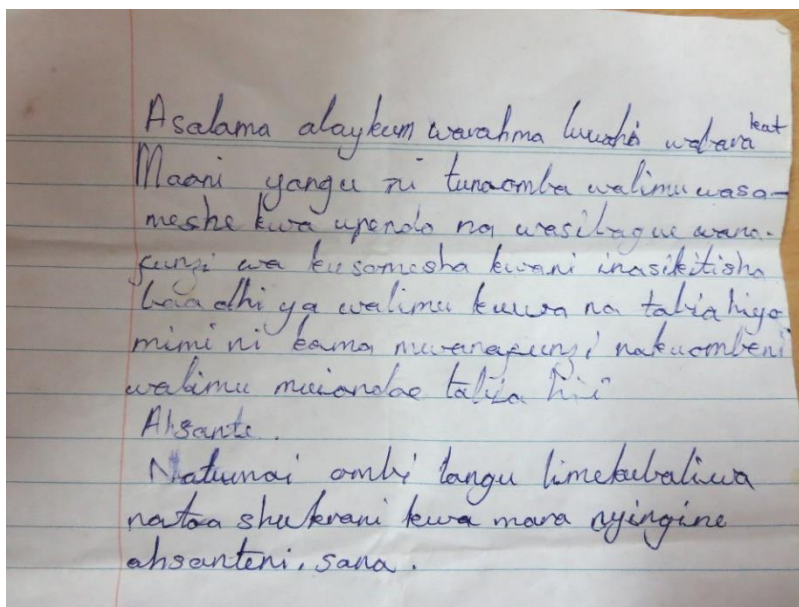


Figure 5.4. “We would like the teachers to teach with kindness/love (*upendo*) and to not discriminate (*wasibague*) against some students. It makes us sad that some of the teachers have this behaviour. I, as a student, ask that teachers stop this behaviour (*tabia*).”

Students’ objection towards being physically chastised, the way this is done and the pain it causes is evident. They question the Positive Discipline programme, as it seems to not have improved their situation. Particularly their concern over the actual effectiveness of the programme regarding ongoing physical punishment is mirrored in further notes from Hewanzuri school students, who discuss the new ‘alternatives’:

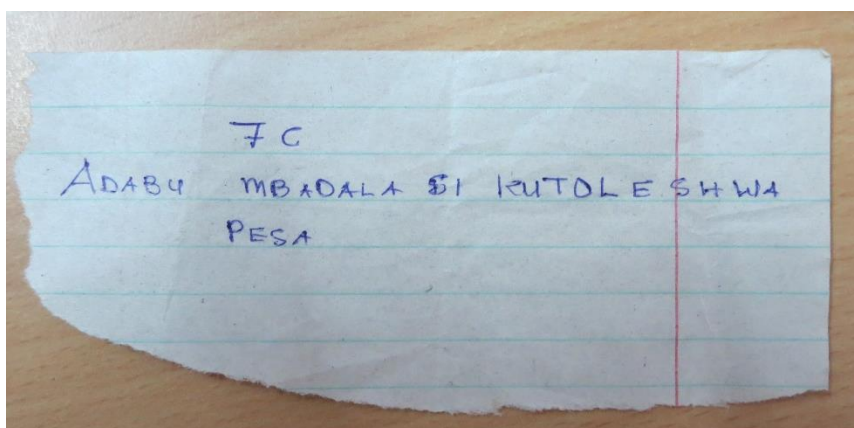


Figure 5.5. “*Adabu mbadala* does not mean having your money taken away.”

“We inform you that teachers don’t give us the punishment you intended. They take our money every day. Is this *adhabu mbadala* or a payment?”

“The teachers take from us what our parents give us. This is *adhabu mbadala*.”

“This is not a real school. They take away the money our parents give us.”

The ‘Positive Discipline’ children experience – referred to as both *adabu* and *adhabu mbadala* – is an appropriation of the original concept, on the grounds of which teachers started taking children’s money, as a replacement for caning them. Students’ outrage regarding this concerning shift is further clarified considering their comments on the popular ‘alternative punishment’ of making children buy brooms:

“Don’t make us bring brooms – we don’t have money.”

“Please dismiss (*ondosha*) the broom punishment (*adhabu ya mafyagio*). Our parents don’t have money and we depend on them.”

“There are some teachers who force students to buy things for them, and if you haven’t bought it they hit you.”

“Those who live far away should not have to bring brooms or money.”

Notes from Kisamaki school students shed further light on the broom-punishment:

“Please decrease the brooms (*mafagio yapungue*). When students are late just hit them three or two times.”

“Let’s not beat those who live far and let’s not make them bring brooms. The conductors (*makonda*) are the problem; they only take you if you have 200 *shillings*. Others live far away.”

“There should be a lot of caning (*mikwaju kwa wingi*), more than having to bring brooms (*kutolesha mifyagio*).”

“I have a question: If a student doesn’t have the means (*hana uwezo*) to buy two brooms but the teacher will cane him/her, does that mean that you, the teacher, have done well (*umefanya vyema*)?”

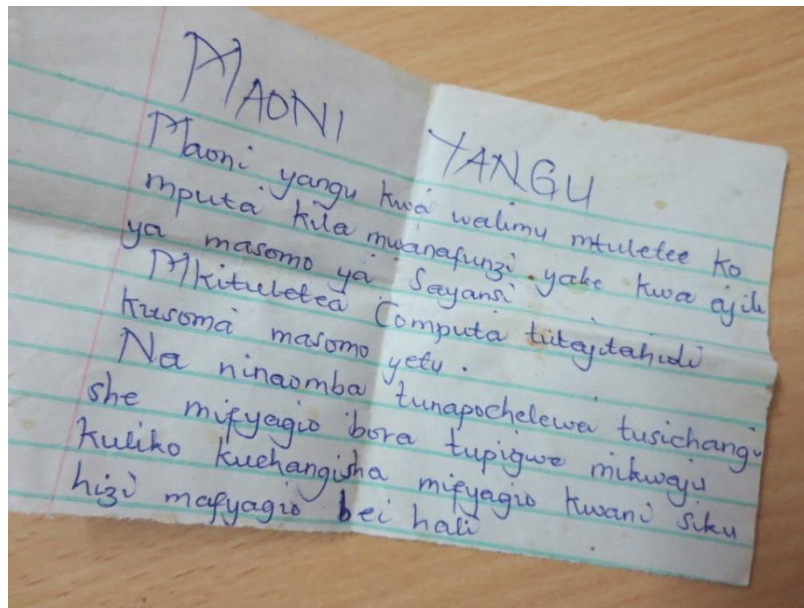


Figure 5.6. “When we are late, don’t make us bring brooms. It is better for us to be hit (*bora tupigwe mikwaju*) because brooms have become expensive.”

As discussed in the previous section, making children buy and bring school utensils is a monetary compensation for mistakes like coming late or missing homework. This causes new difficulties in comparison to the way these cases used to be handled before – through physical chastisement. In line with this, Kisumaki school students also expressed their ambivalent position towards the use of corporal punishment. Instead of condemning it, many favoured its continuation, probably in correspondence with the negative experiences made through the implemented ‘alternatives’:

“We should continue being hit because students don’t have enough good discipline (*nidhamu*).”

“We want late-comers or absentees (*watoro*) to be punished harshly (*wapewe adhabu kali*) because we come early.”

“The cane should continue because students lack discipline (*nidhamu*) like those who come late, make noise (*mazogo*) in class and don’t do their work.”

“Without the cane, students will cross the boundaries (*wataruka mipaka*), so the cane should continue (*viboko viendeleo*) when students make mistakes.”

“Being hit is better for us. If we are not hit (*tusipopigwa*) we will come late, won’t write, won’t respect our teachers, won’t go when our teachers send us somewhere, won’t have manners and will do things that are not allowed at school.”

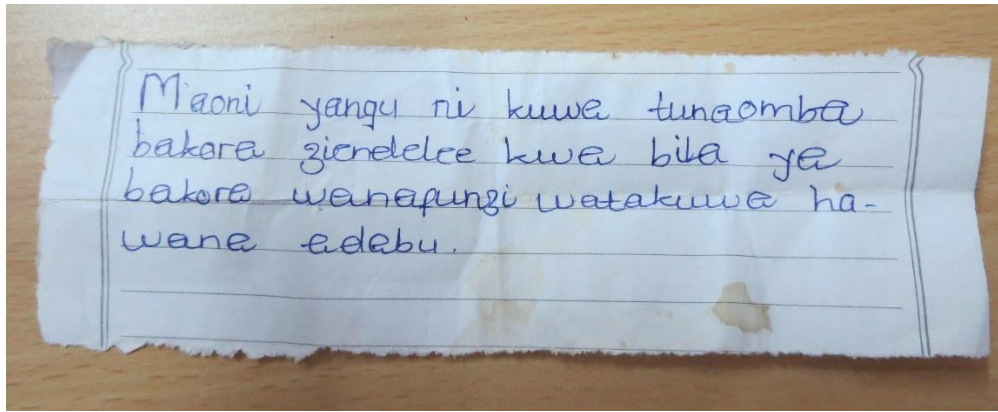


Figure 5.7. “In my opinion, the cane should remain (*bakora ziendelee*) because without the cane the students will not have manners (*adabu*).”

“I want the cane to be used appropriately (*ipasavyo*) because if we are not hit we will think, ah, they don’t hit us, well then we can do whatever we want (*ninafanya ninayotaka*) like coming late to school or being disrespectful.”

Students’ simultaneous rejection of excessive caning and the infliction of pain and their support for the continuation of corporal punishment indicate the Positive Discipline programme’s unintended consequences. Their contradictory and conflicting perspectives reflect how they “are caught in tension between aspirations of the global model of childhood and youth imagined in neo-liberal policies, and local experiences and environments” (Morrow 2013: 267). While this protection programme in Zanzibar theoretically aimed to improve children’s life situations, it practically failed to do so. Students’ letters show the tensions caused through this specific child protection approach, and offer concrete examples of its misappropriations. Instead of implementing genuinely positive alternatives, the application of alternative punishments causes students similar and new difficulties, and may even increase their risk of physical punishment at home for demanding financial compensations, that parents might additionally chastise them for.

In Zanzibar, like Humphrey observed in Botswana, most students “were not against corporal punishment per se but against its abuse” (2007: 532). The majority of students at the pilot schools rejected the appropriation of supposedly ‘better’ alternatives into worse ones, with some opposing hitting completely. While with corporal punishment students could navigate school problems independently, the alternatives interfered with their agency to manage situations without involving their families. Within the international child rights discourse, out of which the concept of

Positive Discipline stems, making mistakes is part of learning and represents a collaborative process in which teacher and student work together to correct mistakes and are brought closer by this shared responsibility. The hitting approach, viewed through the Zanzibari-Swahili and Islamic cultural and religious lens, suggests the opposite – that mistakes push teachers and pupils apart, with students alone being responsible for correcting their wrong-doing. The Positive Discipline programme as it was appropriated at these Zanzibari schools interfered with children’s ability to be responsible young people.

III ‘Positive Discipline should be there, but the cane should be there too’: Teachers’ Reflections on Discipline and Punishment

The Suggestion Box letters reflect the aspirations for the community held and expressed by its youngest members. Contrasting them with teachers’ perceptions of Positive Discipline completes a community impression of the programme’s reception. Disillusioned with what Positive Discipline practically turned into, most of my interlocutors supported a combination of both alternative forms of discipline (*adabu mbadala*) and regular modes of punishment (*adhabu/bakora*). Young people like Abduli (14) explained, that it was “not that *adhabu mbadala* should not be there, but that the cane should also be there”. Equally important to students’ opinions, are teachers’ views on the approaches to discipline and the changes occurring within this realm. Some teachers were dedicated supporters of the cane, and some were not. Nevertheless, none of them supported only one approach of discipline, but perspectives ranged across a spectrum of reasoning and logic, sometimes contradicting in themselves, sometimes with a clearer preference for one practice or the other. While many informants found positive aspects about alternative forms of discipline, those outweighed the effect the cane is considered to have on young people’s discipline.

“There should be two systems (*mifumo miwili*): Positive Discipline should be there, and the cane should be there too”, teachers at the pilot schools often explained. As a religious representative at the Mufti’s office emphasised: “We need *adabu mbadala* and the cane. We are not ready to follow only one system (*mfumo moja*).” And another head teacher argued: “Both systems should be there. Corporal punishment

shouldn't be abolished immediately. Only using words in classes of eighty students is not enough. You have to use the cane if necessary (*inapobidi*). Not to injure the child, but to correct them (*kumrekebisha*) and their behaviour (*tabia*).” For Positive Discipline techniques and the cane to exist alongside each other in schools was frequently considered necessary by both children and adults, as alternative forms of discipline were no satisfactory replacement for the cane's perceived effectivity. Teachers' reasons for favouring or opposing the cane elicit their positions:

Teachers more in favour of the cane

While many teachers acknowledge the positive effect of alternative forms of discipline to improve teacher-student relationships, they also consider it impossible to chastise students without caning, at least for certain mistakes and in a 'controlled' manner. Bi Latifa, who teaches at Barani school since 2007, explained that “the cane corresponds with the weight of the mistake, like if you hit your fellow student. Or if you have told the student before and they still despise you (*anakudharau*). Then you need to use the cane”. Echoing this, Bi Shinuna, a young English teacher, elaborates:

We stopped hitting when students come late. The ministry doesn't like it – they want *adabu mbadala*. Now we make them bring brooms (*kuleta fagio*) or pick up trash (*kuokota taka*). Only bringing brooms is not enough to correct a child (*kumrekebisha mtoto*). The cane is better. Hitting hurts (*itamwuma*) students and corrects their behaviour (*itarekebisha tabia yake*) as they will be afraid (*hofu*). Only three strokes, don't hit them like donkeys. It should not harm them (*isimathiri*). For big problems, you take them to the head teacher. Parents are part of the problem, they set us back (*wanaturejesha nyuma*). When a child is hit, they come to school furious. Now there is hatred (*chuki*) between parents and teachers. When I was in school, my parents just agreed with what the teachers did. That's why the ministry now makes us use *adabu mbadala*. Globalisation (*utandawazi*) affects our children and this goes against Zanzibari morals (*kinyume ya maadili ya kizanzibari*).

Bi Shinuna feels 'being made to use' alternative forms of discipline, a decision implemented by the MoEVT. Her emphasis on the lack of communication between teachers and parents identifies an important link in the implementation of protection

approaches. “Parents come here furious (*wanakasirika*). ‘This thing you started – get rid of it now (*ondosheni*)!’”. They come because at home children aren’t listening to them anymore because at school they stopped hitting. Many parents don’t want this programme”, head teacher Bi Lulu underlines the disconnection between school and home and its importance for child protection interventions. The monetisation of punishment, as in the broom example, causes tensions as the penalty is transferred from the pupil’s body to their time, in the form of labour, or to the household, through a relocation of financial contributions. Thereby, physical chastisement is not eliminated, but shifted from the educational context to the home, where students continue to be or are hit even more.

According to Mwalimu Ahmed, “it depends on how children are raised at home”. If at home children are physically punished for mistakes, eliminating the practice at school will not immediately reach the home context. On the contrary, exclusively banning caning at school was considered to negatively affect children’s home situations, as how they must adjust their behaviour neither applies to both contexts equally, nor to both children and adults. Sumaya, a child protection activist with an international NGO, put it bluntly:

There is a gap between home and school. Children in the programme are not hit at school but are hit at home. When they come to school and there is no punishment, they think they can misbehave without consequences. The day after Miembe Miwili became a child-friendly school, only 10 % of children came on time. Previously late-coming was punished, but now no one cares. Students don’t have the responsibility to be on time. They come early because of the canes and to avoid being hit. We need to achieve that children are not hit at school *and* at home. Otherwise they get confused.

Physical punishment is used to keep order in large classes, to create responsibility within students to be punctual, and to make students learn. It is a tool for achieving a certain order. Eliminating it disturbs the previously established ruling order, and collides with its presence in other spaces children dwell in. Especially the lack of explaining to parents that such changes were implemented, emphasises the need for direct communication, that goes beyond children having to be passive conveyors of

demands for brooms or money. As one teacher explains: “To fulfil the aim of the *adabu mbadala* programme, we need the cooperation (*mashirikiano*) of the whole society (*jamii*) – parents, teachers, and students must work together.” An integrated approach that considers all spaces of child presence, both school and home, is considered necessary to prevent the rejection of the Positive Discipline programme.

Mwalimu Zubeid’s explanation further illustrates this: “We lack parents’ cooperation (*ushirikiano ya wazazi*). Elders don’t cooperate at all (*hawana mashirikiano kabisa*)”, adding that “parents complain about us not using the cane anymore. They claim it is the way religion (*namna ya dini*) tells us to raise a child”. Not approving this simplified stance, he underlines, “but they don’t acknowledge that even in religion there are certain procedures (*taratibu*). We try to use alternative forms of discipline but we also continue using the cane if these methods don’t work. Four strokes are the maximum. We have stopped beating (*kupiga tumeacha*), but we still smack (*kuchapa tunaendelea*)”. Recalling the nuances between hitting and smacking (see Chapter 4), the support of continuing caning as a disciplinary tool must be put into perspective regarding its consideration as a non-violent practice.

Bi Halima, who teaches standard 7 at Hewanzuri since 2003, explains, “I don’t use the cane (*viboko*) when students make mistakes. Only when they lack discipline. The cane confuses them (*itamchanganya*)”. Reiterating an in-between stance on the matter, and differentiating between the purpose the use of the cane may have, for her it is only justified, if it re-builds *adabu* but not to correct immediate mistakes. Further clarifying this, she argues that “alternatives like fetching water are not enough for them to correct themselves (*kujirekebisha*)”, as the intention for children to correct their own behaviour in the long run thus cannot be fulfilled. Bi Kheirat’s explanation is equally contradictory, claiming it is “not enough to only use Positive Discipline – the cane still needs to be there a little bit” and that “the Prophet himself was hit a lot, so without being disciplined, children cannot be educated.” Despite acknowledging the potentially harmful effects of caning, she rejects the idea of learning and growing up without physical chastisement.

While teachers generally support a limitation of caning, an adequate presence of respect and piety are only thought possible if caning prevails. Similar reasoning was

found in the context of an anti-chastisement programme in Saudi Arabian schools, that faced comparable hesitations as the programme in Zanzibar. Here teachers argued that “banning corporal punishment in public schools will be a big threat to teachers” as students would not “pay attention” and disrespect their teachers.⁸² As Saudi Arabia and Tanzania are amongst the few countries that have not officially banned corporal punishment, these findings reflect the fragile grounds such programmes are built on and that easily offer space for contestation to opponents.

After his lesson, I speak to Mw Mahamudu, a blind teacher of vocational studies (*elimu amali*) for standard 5 at Kisamaki since 2010. He explains:

Don't be too strict (*mkali*). But when children are not scared of teachers they don't respect them. I hit them (*nawagomba*) because occasionally they disrespect me. *Adabu mbadala* is good (*inafaa*) for mistakes like making noise (*kipiga kilele*). But the children are so many and teachers are just human beings (*binadamu*). First you forbid them (*unamkataza*), but then you hit them (*halafu umpige*), but carefully (*kwa taratibu*). Hurting (*kuumiza*) is not intended (*si lengo lake*), only teaching them manners (*kumtia adabu*).

His logic echoes the potential of Positive Discipline to build friendly teaching environments, but that measured strictness is also critical. This underlines the challenge of extremely large class sizes and the familiar trope, that hitting is not intended to injure, but only to correct behaviour. The extent of this issue, and its repeated connection to religion and culture as further rationalising forces, is stressed by Mwalimu Ali, a standard 6 History, Arabic, and Religion teacher at Kisamaki:

Participatory (*njia shirikishi*) teaching is important. Not only teachers should talk in class. But a roll of seventy to a hundred children in each class affects the lesson. There is no cane on my desk, but when a child crosses the boundaries (*anapozidi mipaka*), we can correct them (*kumrekebisha*). They are troublemakers (*wakorofi*). We follow our Prophet's (*mtume wetu*) orders

⁸² <http://www.arabnews.com/news/450963> [Accessed: 15 January 2017]

and smack them (*wachape*) from the age of ten if they refuse to pray. It's just *sunna*.

In connection to this, Mw Rama, the assistant head teacher at Hewanzuri, explains:

For *adabu mbadala* ten students have to buy one broom for 500 *shillings*. Or we make them write: "Teacher, I have stopped (*nishakoma*), I won't do it again (*sirejee tena*)", or pick up 200 *ubuyu* kernels. A challenge is that for students not to be hit means being free (*kuwa huru*). Parents complain (*kulaumu*) that our tradition (*mila*) and custom (*desturi*) says a child must be smacked (*achapwe*). Some parents approve of not hitting, because they love them a lot (*wanawapenda sana*) or because it was their own parents' behaviour. If the cane is removed immediately (*moja kwa moja*), there will be no discipline.

The fear of losing what is considered Zanzibari 'tradition' is another aspect that is inherent in the rejection of new ways to discipline children in class.

Teachers less in favour of the cane

Other teachers were more disapproving of caning, but only few completely rejected its use. Bi Fatuma, a teacher at Barani for seventeen years, explained: "If you are close to the children, they will love learning (*watapenda kusoma*) and participate in the lesson. Making them laugh is important. We want them to come to class." Bi Mariyasa, a popular sports teacher, adds: "I don't like the stick (*fimbo*). Hitting (*kupiga*) hurts the child (*inamwumiza*). If they bring brooms, the case is settled already (*kesi imemaliza*). I am happy about the programme (*mradi*)."

Their support for Positive Discipline and rejection of the cane is supported by Bi Mariam from Hewanzuri: "*Adabu mbadala* is good because children lose their mind (*anailoose mind yake*) if they are always beaten and it makes their behaviour chronic (*inamtia usugu*)". Nevertheless, she also adds that, "in the end, every teacher decides themselves whether to use the cane for up to three strokes or to use *adabu mbadala*", echoing the freedom of interpretation the application of corporal punishment is prone to, due to non-existent legal prohibitions.

Mw Abdalhasan, who teaches Arabic and Islamic studies in standard 7 at Kisumaki, a class of more than seventy-five students, prefers using lectures (*mawaidha*) or explanations over the cane, because “it hurts (*inamwumiza*) the child”. Yet, “if you told them two or three times already and they still don’t listen, then you need it. *Adabu mbadala* teaches children but it is not always enough (*haitoshi*).” Two central reasons for individually deciding to occasionally use the cane, despite disagreeing with its normalised use in the classroom, included habit – being used to raising and being raised with the cane – and fear – a necessary emotion to establish authority and respect between students and teachers. Regarding “the notion that learning, or at least concentration is effectively maintained through pain or the threat of pain”, implies that “a tap on the head or back is not necessarily meant as punishment” (Last 2000: 377). Bi Warda, who teaches standard 7, indicates the role that habit plays for students’ self-discipline and disciplining others:

Since the start of the *adabu mbadala* programme there is no more smacking (*kuchapa*). Sometimes this works but sometimes it doesn’t. African children (*watoto wa Afrika*) don’t understand if you tell them, ‘Don’t do this!’ (*Usifanye!*). Instead of punishing I explain to them but they still don’t listen. We are already used to it (*tumeshazoea*). Now, we must get used to not doing it anymore (*lazima kuzoea kuacha*).

Her reflection on having to break with the habit of caning, of de-normalising its ordinary use, is reiterated by Mwalimu Abdoulghafur, a standard 6 teacher of English and History in a class of sixty-five students, who underlines more structural difficulties in the process like children’s learning environments and living circumstances:

The environment (*mazingira*) is not nice. The neighbourhood children (*watoto wa mtaani*) throw urine (*mkojo*) and stones into the classes. There are books only for standards 1 to 4, but none for standards 5 to 7. Many students are absent and some don’t come at all, except for exams. Fridays are like holidays and many stay away. We send letters to their parents, make them water the garden, arrange the stones, but they see it as fun and it doesn’t bother them. For African countries *adabu mbadala* has no use (*haifai*).

Children don't care and don't see it as punishment. Teachers and parents must cooperate. The cane doesn't raise anyone/anything (*hailei kitu*), it just increases chronicity (*usugu*). If you hit them they won't come to school at all. But when a child insults a teacher, there is no other way.

Bi Mariam, an English and Civic teacher for twenty years, supports this: "We come from the cane (*tunatokea bakora*), so we use the cane (*tunatumia bakora*). People inherit (*wanarithi*). If I was hit during my upbringing (*nilipolelewa*), I will also hit. *Adabu mbadala* is good because it is about collaboration and friendliness. But for naughty children (*watukutu*) discipline (*nidhamu*) continues to drop. If necessary, we use the cane, for example, when they insult someone." And the head teacher at Barani insists, "the environment isn't easy. It is how we were raised (*tulivyolelewa*) and where we come from (*tunapotokea*). African children (*watoto wa kiafrika*) are unruly (*wakaidi*)." And he adds that "they are already used to being hit (*wameshazoea kuchapwa*) – it is normal (*kawaida*) for them. That's why alternative discipline does not work. If you give them a task, they simply don't do it". These self-imposed generalisations to explain the difficulties of letting go of a practice that has been engrained over decades, as well as for accepting alternative forms of discipline on the receiving end, mirror teachers' complex positions.

According to many of my interlocutors, a perceived contestation of vernacular child rearing and disciplining values influences their rejection of Positive Discipline. The head teacher's explanation emphasises this link:

Students' late-coming (*uchelewaji*) has increased. They misbehave because they know they won't be hit. Parents complain (*kulaumu*) – 'our tradition (*mila*) says we have to smack (*kuchapa*) our children if they lack manners (*adabu*)'. Immediately eliminating the cane destroys students' discipline (*nidhamu*). Parents even demand (*wanadai*) that we hit their children. When we explain to them, they disagree, and refer to the Prophet (*mtume*).

The perception that alternative discipline increases children's unruliness, prevails amongst Zanzibari teachers. Therefore, to effectively reduce caning in Zanzibari schools, it is necessary "to change the belief that removing corporal punishment

equates to removing all discipline from the classroom” (Feinstein and Mwahombela 2010: 408). This may improve teachers’ understanding of the approach and assure it does not practically translate into the perceived threat that less punishment increases disorderliness.

This assemblage of teachers’ views reflects the diverse opinions regarding the establishment of a teaching and learning intimacy that would not demand forcefully re-establishing order, as would be possible with smaller student numbers in class. Regarding corporal punishment in Zanzibari schools, Hassan and Bali (2013) observed similarly, that while teachers claimed a decrease in physical chastisement, a combination of corporal punishment and alternative forms of discipline remained common. Furthermore, teachers’ perceptions on the “effectiveness in enhancing pupils’ academic performance and discipline” differed widely (ibid.: 10f). They found, that teachers’ overwhelming support of both corporal punishment and alternative forms of discipline shows that Zanzibari society is not yet ready to legally abolish corporal punishment (ibid.: 11). While my findings reflect this claim, I want to go further and suggest that the question should not be whether a society is ‘ready’ for legally abolishing a harmful practice – as such a point in time is hardly possible to determine. Instead it should be considered *how* attempts aim to prepare Zanzibaris to legally ban corporal punishment and replace it with alternative forms of discipline. Approaching it through Positive Discipline programmes embodies corresponding aims, but may fail to reach them due to the programme’s divergent practical implementation that results in equally, rather than less, harmful forms of punishment.

Considering this difficulty, the measured deployment of fear turns into the institutional variety of the individualised chastisement (*adhabu*) that is part of childrearing. Simultaneously, its threat is a way of compensating for insufficient education infrastructure, like a lack of books and learning materials that may help keeping students engaged in their own learning. This mirrors observations from mainland Tanzanian schools, where teachers “believed time, limited resources and large class size contributed to resorting to a swift means of managing students” (Feinstein and Mwahombela 2010: 405), and from Indian schools, where “many punishments were linked to the poor conditions for teaching and learning in schools” (Morrow and Singh 2015: 72). With more, and more enriching, teaching materials,

smaller classes, and more support for teachers from Zanzibar's MoEVT, decreasing and eventually eliminating caning and raising approval for Positive Discipline programmes, would become easier.

IV 'Alternative Punishment': Child Protection in Question

What is initiated as Positive Discipline in Zanzibar, locally translates into 'alternative punishment'. This was visible in children's perceptions of their teachers' appropriations of supposedly 'positive' forms of discipline, and in teachers' own explanations for supporting a combination of both Positive Discipline and corporal punishment. Regarding child protection aspirations, these accounts show that in Zanzibari schools, different moral compasses collide on Zanzibari children's bodies (Gottlieb 2004: 305), as concepts of discipline and chastisement have different ends and intentions. As discussed in Chapter 2, *adabu* and *adhabu* – discipline/manners and punishment – frequently overlap and intersect, and this also applies for the concepts of *adabu mbadala* and *adhabu mbadala* (alternative discipline and alternative punishment). While the former concept originates in the international child protection sphere, the latter is what this concept practically translated into.

The rejection of a programme built on inconsequent translation – as visible in the opening vignette – does not surprise (Merry and Wood 2015). Differentiations between discipline and punishment, that matter to complex concepts like Positive Discipline, are blurred and fall through when supposedly positive forms of child rearing fail to replace forms of punishment that are considered unacceptable. Instead they replace them with other punishments that may be equally harmful or negatively affect children. This blurring was visible in the confusion over the name of the Unit for Alternative Forms of Discipline, which in Swahili advertised a Unit for Alternative Punishment. The choice of words – *adhabu* instead of *adabu* – simply indicated the repackaging of an old option into a new model.

Oppositions to a full substitution of one system of discipline with another become meaningful when reflected against the deeper meanings of *adabu* and *adhabu* and in relation to personhood, as explored in previous chapters. Only few interlocutors agreed that it was possible to fully replace *adhabu* with *adabu*. And recalling the

interchangeability of the ideas, I suggest that there is *adabu* within *adhabu*. As in magical thought, where there are no substitutes or alternatives for the essentials that must be used as the idea itself is in the thing, my respondents could not imagine replacing one concept with another. For child protection actors, the challenge is to create such an essence through policy in a living world in Zanzibar, without suggesting the substitution of a moral code of making and becoming a person.

Hesitations towards development approaches that plainly suggest changing social norms make sense regarding the fluidity between concepts and their meanings connected to the idea of child protection. While what is considered ‘protection’ suggests alternatives to *adabu* (in terms of discipline), this very *adabu* (in terms of courtesy/good behaviour) must be in place for children to develop towards achieving full social personhood (*utu*). Particularly in connection to the relevance of ‘pain’ regarding discipline and punishment (see Chapter 4), the conflicting relationship between people’s rejection of Positive Discipline, and its promotion on international levels, is visible. Unlike the Positive Discipline approach, that condemns hitting and beating as an infliction of harmful pain, many Zanzibaris considered a physical sensation necessary for children to understand mistakes. Despite reframing certain actions as discipline, the negative aspects underlying the notion of punishment remain considered important and hence applied. This left the intended to be protective Positive Discipline programme having little to do with child rights activists’ initial visions and definitions of the approach. Instead of working with positive forms of discipline that promote violence-free learning environments and oppose ‘punishment’, Zanzibari teachers ultimately used alternative punishments, that had equally complicated effects to corporal punishment.

Adabu mbadala as alternative harm

Instead of condemning current child protection activities, many interlocutors stressed that a discussion about protection in schools should not focus on if people continued to use the cane, but rather on how they were using it. However, simply replacing corporal punishment with alternative forms of discipline (*adabu mbadala*) was considered unthinkable. There were neither widely accepted appropriate alternatives, considered able to carry the same meaning and to have the same effect as

establishing *adabu* through *adhabu*, nor a sufficient legal framework, that demanded a change in people's behaviour. In Zanzibari schools, much like in mainland Tanzania, most teachers supported the continuation of physical chastisement but believed in moderation (Feinstein and Mwahombela 2010: 405). Regulating the practice more strictly re-appeared as the only acceptable option for change. Even though alternative forms of discipline were partially introduced in schools, physical chastisement remained a frequently relied on disciplinary tool, echoing a *sheikh's* statement from the Mufti's office, that "*adabu mbadala* is good, if it is agreed on (*itakubalika*) by everybody in society". In Zanzibar, this state has not yet been reached.

Despite the Positive Discipline programme's intention to make Zanzibari schools safer for children, the approach created a parallel system of discipline instead of replacing or improving the one depicted as flawed. Finally, Positive Discipline endangered children and rendered them vulnerable in other ways. The intended protective mechanisms, as which methods like buying brooms instead of being caned were introduced, were equally complicated for students to handle, who were supposed to benefit from them. Above all, children's agency to deal with their own mistakes was restricted by involving their wider family networks in solving issues, which they previously dealt with independently.

Positive Discipline turned into a 'buzzword' and became a 'fuzzword' (Cornwall 2007) that, for its lack of adjustment to the Zanzibar context, did not carry the intended content nor caused the envisioned change. Such practice might satisfy donor organisations that promote universalised approaches, but is insufficient for students, teachers and parents, who must deal with the methods and their consequences daily. Teachers largely applied *adabu mbadala* because it was a ministry order but also considered it a burden and themselves to lack the skills to use it 'correctly' and to "cope effectively with difficult situations without resorting to violence" (Khoury-Kassabri and Ben-Harush 2012: 273). Thus, the approach was ultimately harmful. Its practical mistranslation in Zanzibari schools suggests the need to reconsider whether teacher trainings in alternative discipline techniques provided at universities or teacher training colleges meet Zanzibari teachers' classroom management skills and needs (Bali and Hassan 2013: 11).

Conclusion

This chapter's focus on students' and teachers' perspectives of Positive Discipline in Zanzibari schools, visualised the incoherence and tension inherent in the use and definition of this child protection concept. Drawing on the confusion over the name on the sign of the Unit for Alternative Discipline – which promoted *adhabu* (punishment) instead of *adabu* (discipline) – this disagreement runs through educational and government institutions, as well as private individuals' understandings. I unveiled the misappropriation of the approach through teachers, by drawing on students' laments over the difficult side-effects of Positive Discipline under consideration of teachers' views of the necessity to use corporal punishment and alternatives to it simultaneously. This underlined the tensions children face as targets of interventions that theoretically aim to protect them but practically fail to do so. In the next chapter, I consider this fictitious approach to children as a separate group in society through programmes that emphasise their entitlement to participate. This presents another level on which protective programmes create misunderstandings and are caught in collisions of what children are imagined to be and how they are protected best.

CHAPTER 6

Participation and Reflections on Protection: Narratives of Children's and Adults' Worlds



On a humid morning in March 2014 I join a group of local aid workers and government staff at a child rights meeting. When we arrive in Mkokotoni about forty minutes late, most children are already waiting. Asking the organisers why the participants aren't in school this morning I learn that they will attend afternoon sessions and would make it back in time. When the seminar ends two hours later and still behind schedule, we know that none of the participants

will make it back to school on public transport in time. In the car back to Stone Town I ask whether the children will be punished for coming late? “Of course they will. Teachers don’t care why children come late, it is really bad”, a team member explains. Asking why the meeting was not held on the weekend instead of a week day, where children are studying, I am told, “yes, we often do meetings on weekends, but this time the Women’s and Children’s Coordinator wasn’t available and decided on a Monday instead”. Increasingly startled I ask if it wasn’t contradictory to teach students about rights like to violence-free education and protection from harm, while putting them into a situation, that was likely to contest these rights by provoking their punishment in schools? “Yes, it’s really not fair”, several of the organisers agree, nodding their heads. Silently we drive back to town.

Participation and protection have a high potential for incompatibility. Through children’s participation in the meeting described above, organisers intended to improve their situations in their communities. Such ‘empowerment’, it was assumed, would be possible, by informing them of what they could and should demand from adults, and how to handle situations of abuse or maltreatment. However, as their supposed enablement occurred within a larger framework that did not accommodate the same views, it constrained their agency and put them into a situation that created a contrary state to the one intended. Despite failing to sensitise school teachers regarding children’s extra-curricular activities, and regardless of the passivity of their presence and not being actively engaged in processing information they received, children’s attendance of the meeting was considered ‘child participation’. However, instead of improving children’s protection, this form of participation put them into conflict by creating a situation that provoked what the meeting set out to shield them from – physical harm.

In this chapter, I continue exploring the pluralisms I argue exist in the concept of protection, by means of the notion of ‘participation’. Through critically examining the practical reality of CRC Article 12, I question the meaningfulness of participatory child protection approaches (Tisdall 2015b). Building on the previous chapter’s

outline of how child protection programmes unintentionally endanger children, I show how this also happens through participatory approaches. I investigate how an idealisation of child participation is contested in Zanzibar and can lead to power struggles between children and adults. The possibility that participation may contest children's protection, shows how children are stuck in adult-centric worlds that define how they participate in and are protected by society. Considering "children's rights as a 'living practice' shaped by children's everyday concerns" (Hanson and Nieuwenhuys 2012: 8), I explore "what happens with rights in the encounter of children's and other actors' perspectives" (ibid.: 16) by the example of the relationships between their rights to participation and protection.

As "rights frameworks cannot be applied in the same way in different countries" (Axelby and Crewe 2013: 117), I examine the conditions under which children participate in child protection activities in Zanzibar and to what extent this is influenced by social relationship networks. This challenges the assumption that children's participation in such activities is always in their best interest (Rogers et al. 2016). Considering notions of responsibility and respectfulness, helps investigate the different grades to which children's protection is possible in relation to international imaginations about how children ought to part-take and practice agency. In Zanzibar this is essential, as "children's responsibilities towards parents significantly distinguishes Islamic conceptions on the rights of the child" (Rajabi-Ardeshiri 2009: 482). The interdependence of children and adults and the importance of their relationships elicits contested ideas about children as rights-bearing individuals considered free from responsibility (Wyness 2012: 430). The existing tension between protection and participation further contributes to grasping the complexity of hesitations toward child protection programmes in Zanzibari schools.

I Protection and Participation: Reinforcing or Opposing Rights?

Based on the CRC-enshrined rights to protection and participation, childhood researchers and aid workers alike emphasise ideas of children's agency (James and Prout 1997; Morrow 2008) and consider children's perspectives central to the research field (Wyness 2012: 429). Save the Children Zanzibar's protection programme operates through such participatory approaches that include children as

stakeholders in activities and aim to support their capacity to make their voices heard in society. Their approach builds on children's perceptions of lacking "opportunities to participate in decisions that affect them in their home or in the community" and "feel powerless to change the situations they are in" (2009: 6). The side-by-side appearance of both concepts in the CRC, suggests that children's participation and protection are inevitably intertwined. Nevertheless, there is potential for the two concepts to collide rather than to reinforce each other, as "human rights may sometimes be abridged not only because there are circumstances where rights conflict and we must choose between them" (Appiah 2005: 261).

Children's rights to protection and participation

Participation and protection are both enshrined in the CRC – "one of the most globalised political values of our times" (Wilson 1997: 1). 'Participation' has increasingly turned into "the word, concept and discourse to engage with when researching or working with children and young people in the context of development" (Skelton 2007: 165). Children's right to participation is defined in CRC Article 12⁸³ and Article 13⁸⁴ and considered "not only a right in itself but also a vital means to the realisation of children's other rights" (Hart 2008: 1). Therefore, it should be considered in relation to them. Additionally, the CRC is the first treaty to directly address children's protection from violence (Freeman 2010: 219) in Article 19⁸⁵ and Article 3⁸⁶.

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) is another rights supplement that exist alongside the CRC. Here children's rights are conceptualised less in a 'rights-holders only' way, but also by considering children equal bearers of duties alongside the adults in their communities, by specifically

⁸³ State parties are called to "assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity".

⁸⁴ This article mentions that "the child shall have the right to freedom of expression", and adds that "the exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions" such as "for respect of the rights or reputations of others, or for the protection of (...) public order, public health or morals".

⁸⁵ State parties must have proper laws in place to prohibit violence as well as measures to protect children from all forms of violence, both physical and mental.

⁸⁶ This article adds that "in all actions concerning children (...) the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration" and that the child shall be ensured "such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being", guaranteeing in particular their safety and health by assuring that "the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities".

spelling out their responsibilities. Echoing the critique of a Eurocentric model of childhood inscribed in the CRC, in reverse it implies that considering children as bearers of rights “is often viewed as a challenge to ‘non-Western’ conceptions of childhood (Ansell 2017: 34). In Zanzibar, both adults and children are considered duty-bearers and demanded to fulfil societal responsibilities. In ACRWC Article 12⁸⁷, participation, as a relevant concept to children in society, is limited to a space defined as ‘cultural’ and as serving ‘recreation’. This suggests a space for children’s participation separate to everyday life in the community, in ways that culture is often conceived of in development discourse – as a separable part of everyday processes.

ACRWC Article 31⁸⁸ depicts what is completely missing from the CRC, but is a critical addition: the “Responsibility of the Child”. Unlike a child’s right to participation, there is direct mention of family, society, state and community at large, where children are expected to contribute through fulfilling certain responsibilities towards others⁸⁹. Particularly the responsibilities to be respectful and act in regard of a general moral well-being, are relevant to the discussion of the relationship between the rights to protection and participation. If participation is conceptualised only based on universalised rights standards that neglect children’s responsibilities, it comes to contest the aim of keeping children safe.

Narrowing the discussion down from international agreements to ‘African’ supplements, and context-specific ideas, it remains to consider Zanzibar-specific legal guidelines on participation and protection. On the local level, the legal framework that guarantees children’s protection is rather weak (see Chapter 3). With little and only general mention of and guidelines on how to protect children, there are equally few official agreements on their participation in society. Despite the

⁸⁷ “States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts”. This is amplified by the addition that “States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to fully participate in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity”.

⁸⁸ Specified here is every child’s “responsibilities towards his family and society, the State and other legally recognized communities and the international community”.

⁸⁹ Such duties, which “the child, subject to his age and ability” is to amount to, include, amongst others, the responsibility “to work for the cohesion of the family, to respect his parents, superiors and elders at all times and to assist them in case of need” as well as “to preserve and strengthen African cultural values in his relations with other members of the society, in the spirit of tolerance, dialogue and consultation and to contribute to the moral well-being of society”.

reiteration of the CRC's call for children's right to participation in the Zanzibar Children's Act of 2011⁹⁰, it is precisely the reference to concepts of children's 'age' and 'maturity' (Chapter 1), on which participation is said to depend, that in Zanzibar differ from those on the international level. While children might be old enough to voice their views on matters that concern them, they may not be considered sufficiently mature to do so.

II Participation in Development: Protecting Children as a Category

"Children say the two things they need is having their voices heard in court – someone who stands up for them – and counselling", an international child protection actor at a leading child rights organisation in Zanzibar explained. To strengthen children's voices and create ears that listen to them, participatory approaches have long been key strategies for development programmes. As in Zanzibar, participation turned into a frequently used 'technique' of child rights approaches in development. Aid interventions that aim at working with children gained much attention and support in recent years. Nevertheless, they remain seldom interrogated concerning the specific ways in which children are included in their activities. Much as with the notion of 'child protection', 'child participation' as a concept has largely remained outside a discussion of effectiveness and meaningfulness, for its taken-for-granted will-to-improve approach is considered beyond the need for reconsideration.

The paradigm-shift away from children as passive recipients to engaged actors, had child-centred research methods⁹¹ gain popularity with academics researching children's lives. Similarly, within the international development field of children's rights, programmes increasingly started involving children in activities. Participatory approaches to working with children have the potential to give room to children's voices and to improve marginalised positions, and participatory methods are often adopted for apparently maximising children's agency in research processes (Ansell 2009: 193). However, promoting children's participation has become so common, that the meaningfulness of such approaches has equally come to be at stake.

⁹⁰ "Every child that is of such an age, maturity and stage of development as to be able to participate in any matter concerning him, will have the right to participate in an appropriate way and views expressed by the child will be given due consideration" (2011: 9).

⁹¹ Also 'child-led', 'child-focused', 'child-friendly' research methods.

Participatory rights-based development approaches that build solely on universal rights treaties to authorise their actions have been critiqued widely (Mosse 2005: 239; Li 2007: 216; Green 2014: 116). Children's rights have been regarded "an imperfect compromise negotiated at a certain moment in time and in specific contexts by individuals representing different local and organizational interests and possessing different kinds of knowledge, skills and power" (Hanson and Nieuwenhuys 2012: 10). This critique of a set of norms that ignores contextual specificities, supports the claims that working exclusively within a CRC framework "takes individuals out of their social and historical context" (Crewe 2010: 44) and ignores complex versions of socio-political reality (Axelby and Crewe 2013). Put differently, the assumption that any one set of norms and concepts can truly be rational in itself, denies rationality and value to other systems of morality and makes the application of one set of universalised standards in different places difficult (Ennew 2002: 349).

Following such critiques, and considering development an apparatus that aims to realise children's rights to protection and participation, power relations, tensions and linkages between those two rights need to be examined (see also Chapter 8). While participatory protection programmes in Zanzibar should by no means be dismissed on a whole, they should be questioned regarding what they call participation and how this interacts with the protection they aim to achieve and guarantee for young people. Particularly a categorisation of 'children' as a homogenous group in society that can be involved in activities and, following that, also be protected, needs critical rethinking.

Children as a separable constituency

In the CRC, childhood is portrayed and imagined as a space, that is separate and protected from adulthood, "in which children are entitled to special protection, provision, and rights of participation" (Montgomery 2008: 6). Children are depicted as a homogenous constituency in society, separable from other people and processes around them. While "childhood is a political issue", it tends to be separated off from politics as a space of existence, and conceptually children are proposed to "operate in an a-political space" (Mayall 2011: 430f). Considering children as outside the polity is problematic (ibid.: 432) in the practical contexts of participatory development programmes, because "both children and adults adhere to strong ethical norms that

are sources of tensions and negotiations in their dealings with NGOs” (Hanson and Nieuwenhuys 2012: 14).

In Zanzibar, a prominent way of involving children in protection interventions, is through so-called ‘Children’s Councils’⁹² and a ‘National Children’s Advisory Board’ (NCAB). Even though the child participation (*ushirikishwaji wa mtoto*) approaches I observed were always intended as meaningful (*wenye uleta maana*), this did not always apply. Frequently, envisioned as ‘empowering’ participatory measures, caused unexpected harm or created situations that seemed more like performances of what participation was supposed to do, instead of genuinely affecting positive change through including marginalised groups. This side-effect interlinked with the consideration of children as an integrated social group with common interests, needs and entitlements (White 1996).

During fieldwork, a total of 162 Children’s Councils⁹³ were formed in the whole of Zanzibar, but only sixty-one Parental Groups⁹⁴ were formed simultaneously. Initially, Children’s Councils and Parental Groups were intended to operate side by side, fostering the communication between both children and adults involved in child rights and child protection programmes. As visible from the numbers, such a symbiosis was not achieved and finally led to an official halt being placed on the formation of new councils, unless started together with Parental Groups for the potentially harmful rather than supporting effect on children’s well-being (Ljungman et al. 2014: 27). Working with children without involving adults in discussions of their rights and protection, contributed to the child rights discourse being perceived as a ‘corrupting Western concept’ and to decreasing children’s safety.⁹⁵ Creating and supporting voices without simultaneously creating ears to hear them, turned participation ‘inside out’. This showed that asymmetrical power relations between

⁹² According to a group of young NCAB members, it was difficult to encourage existing councils to meet and new councils to form. Children in the *shehias* were not interested in joining Children’s Councils if no incentives were involved. Additionally, parents were hesitant to allow their children to join the councils because they considered them politicised.

⁹³ Eighty-nine in Unguja and seventy-three in Pemba.

⁹⁴ Forty-one in Unguja and twenty in Pemba.

⁹⁵ Children’s Council members often considered themselves as part of Save the Children, but not of a government structure. Even though councils were intended to be ‘owned’ by government partners, often council meetings only took place when they were organised and financed by Save the Children, leaving the lead with them. The government ministries which were appointed leadership on Children’s Councils matters did not set aside a specific budget for their activities.

children and teachers, community figures and parents – those presumed to play impactful roles in their lives – are considered “a major inhibiting factor to their participation and, consequently, the progressive realisation of their rights” (Hart 2008: 412).

Within participatory programmes there is a tendency to assume that children are physically and emotionally separable from their wider environments (Hart 2012). Regardless, such a separation of childhood and adulthood is a “Western mythologizing of ‘the child’” (James 2007: 265) and not reflective of children’s realities in the majority world. As my discussion shows, approaches that aim to raise children’s voices tend to depoliticise and decontextualise children’s local realities that may be constituted differently from ‘Western’ imaginaries these universal standards build on (Ferguson 1990; Boyden 1997). Approaching children as a generalised type of constituency by clustering them together in Children’s Councils or other comparable groups to help them gain more influence and visibility as community members, neglected the social ties that connect children to their wider communities beyond such networks. Supposedly participatory approaches thereby denied the influence of social networks that define children’s lives and consequently disregard the implications of the settings children live in.

Both local and international protection workers repeatedly emphasised to me the need to shift the focus of child protection activities away from children to also include adults. At the MoSWEYWC I was told, “the focus should be on parents (*wazazi*) and guardians (*walezi*), and the home (*nyumbani*). That is where children start to see what they are supposed to see – good upbringing (*malezi mazuri*), good manners (*adabu nzuri*), good conduct (*utaratibu nzuri*), good language (*lugha nzuri*).” This government employee’s realisation that addressing children in isolation from adults causes difficulties beyond a fictional sphere in which children participate, underlined the need to involve both young and old people in initiatives that aim to improve children’s safety.

As I observed in Zanzibar, transnational participatory child protection practice conflicted with vernacular ideas attached to childhood and protection. A European protection worker pointed out, that “local and international development actors

acknowledge the importance of having individual programmes with adults and children but also that you link the two, so teachers are aware of children's expectations and children are aware of the ways they are expected to behave". Much remains to be done to realise this. Child protection implementers were aware of the neglect of working with adults in the context of programmes that aim to improve children's safety. One leading child protection activist acknowledged this:

We made a big mistake in our work on child participation by neglecting to work sufficiently with adults. There is a discrepancy and there is no point investing in young people unless we do the same work around children's needs and rights with adults. This needs to be in an extremely culturally sensitive way so it is not perceived as a Western idea, which the CRC is often accused to be.

In Zanzibar, this perception echoed throughout various protection institutions. Khalid from the Unit for Alternative Discipline claimed, "it's a problem that they haven't done any work with the elders (*wazee*) yet. They work with teachers at the schools while at home children are still hit (*wanapigwa*).” We need to beware focusing on just children's lived experiences and instead focus on wider global contexts to really understand the broader situation in which children's lives are lived (Ansell 2009). The pairing of the concepts of participation and protection proved complicated and often failed to go beyond theoretical compatibility.

The inseparability of children's and adults' lifeworlds remains ignored by "spatialised approaches" (Hart 2012: 474) to child protection and an "islanding of children" (ibid.: 476). This artificially created idea of children's physical, cognitive and emotional separability from their wider environments causes the inverted effect participatory protection approaches intended. Thereby, 'protective' interventions disrupt children's family and community relations (Bourdillon 2014: 500) and disregard families' central roles in child socialisation and rearing for effective CRC implementation (Twum-Danso 2009b: 415). These critiques of approaches that fail to contextualise interventions and portray children as homogeneous entities separable from their child and adult counterparts and networks without fully grasping children's wider social lives, relate to my observations in Zanzibar. The importance

of better contextualising globally-defined protection approaches is apparent (Hart 2012: 483), as children's and adults' realms of experience cannot be fully separated.

Children as individuals embedded in specific contexts

Unlike one separable and generalisable entity in society, children live as individuals in various life situations which demand critical understandings of childhood within wider contexts of interdependence (Meloni, Vanthuyne and Rousseau 2015). Children are social and connected, live in relation to other children and adults, and depend on these relations for their protection. Viewing these relationships in the context of CRC-based approaches shows why child protection programmes are accepted or rejected (Tobin 2017). In September 2014, the head teacher at one of my schools tells me: "There is no awareness (*muamko*) at home. It's a big difference between the school and the home. The Ministers (*waziri*) don't go to the homes." Munir Kadhar Munir from the Zanzibar Muslim Academy echoes this:

There are three relevant infrastructures (*miundombinu*): the school, the *madrasa*, and the home. If they don't work with the same system, that's a problem. At *madrasa*, there is a lot of caning (*mikwaju kwelikweli*). I'm happy they started with the seminars. Everyone in the community needs the same education. They need to be given their dose (*dosi*) all at the same time.

His explanation underlines the fragmentation of institutional contexts that child protection interventions should consider. The school, the *madrasa*, and the home – spaces in which children and adults interact and which define children's experiences – matter when trying to work with consistent approaches that do not artificially separate one space of children's daily lives from others.

This relates to children's concerns during preparations for another Save the Children workshop to train children as child researchers for an internal research study. Their main fears of participating in the project included: "missing school/*madrasa*; not being able to fulfil commitments/chores in the family; not being taken seriously/believed in by the community". While echoing the relevance of the contexts of their everyday lives, they also point towards what children fear to miss in the context of participating in development activities: fulfilling their responsibilities

elsewhere. Recognising their fear to not be able to be responsible young people as expected of them in their communities, affects child protection planning and implementation. This is practically difficult to consider as protection programmes remain constructed and applied within adult-made structures that assign little time for considering children's experiences of them. Rather than an independent category of their own in society, it is critical to regard how children's responsibilities in their communities may be contested through participatory approaches.

Participation, meaningfulness and civil society

As exemplified in the chapter's opening vignette, the meaningfulness of participatory approaches was frequently debated amongst local and foreign child protection actors. An international aid worker expressed his concern regarding protection processes as consisting of "how to ensure that it's actually meaningful rather than just ticking a box, and how to mainstream child participation so it results in dialogue between children and adults." His emphasis on child participation resulting in communication that will help change behaviour patterns in society and improve children's safety, reflects what remains to be achieved. This critique of the practical application of participatory activities was echoed by another leading protection activist: "How child participation happens is so tokenistic. Every time you see kids performing a play or reading from the Qur'an it has nothing to do with child participation in an ethical and meaningful way. It just reflects how people see children." The dissatisfaction with how participatory approaches translate locally, shows the conflict inherent in how child participation is imagined within and perceived outside universalised child rights discourses.

Questioning a concept's meaningfulness implies questioning the extent to which it can be understood. This, as the child protection actor continues to explain, is the case in Zanzibar, as "there is a complete lack of understanding regarding adults' understandings of child participation." A director at the MoESWYWC supports this, arguing that "first, people need to understand why children are supposed to participate. We just see the things children have to do, but they also have the responsibility (*wajibu*) of knowing why." This assessment elucidates the perceived frustrations on the international development side, with participatory approaches not

being successfully implemented. The need for clarifying intentions of concepts like participation, which have different traditions in certain contexts, is evident.

III Fragile Agency: Identifying Varieties of Participation and Voice

In regard to protection aspirations, ideas of participation and agency are fragile. Children's agency relates to the environments they move in and to how these, and other people within them, shape their views. There are varieties of participation and agency as they occur in their respective contexts. This applies particularly to protection, as "children's rights cannot be limited to codifications in international or state law, nor to interpretations produced by development agencies" but "must include the ways in which children practice their rights" (Hanson and Nieuwenhuys 2012: 10). Acknowledging these varieties allows us to see why and how international interventions that aim to better protect children by increasing their participation remain constrained and often without intended consequences.

Power relations are fundamental to the implementation of a child protection system through an international organisation that aims to change people's behaviour. Nevertheless, in many supposedly 'participatory' programmes conflict is common as programmes that help "the voiceless gain a voice (...) challenge power relations, both within any individual project and in wider society" (White 1996: 14f). In Zanzibar, above all, the concept was understood as a re-constitution of prevailing power structures. Attributing children with agency undermines the social control that parents or teachers hold over children (Gallagher 2008). The participatory protection approach contested societal hierarchies through increasing children's participation and agency. A change in power as a relational concept negotiated between children and adults depicted children as full rights-bearing citizens instead of excluding them from decision-making processes. Since "the powerful would find it easier if those below them lacked rights" (Hart 2011: 336), this inevitably created tension and power inequalities remained naturalised.

Citizen participation in decision making processes implies a "redistribution of power" (Arnstein 1969: 216) that enables those excluded from political and economic processes. The difference between "going through the empty ritual of participation

and having the real power needed to affect the outcome of the process” (ibid.), recalls the young Zanzibaris’ participatory experience in the child rights meeting. Thus, participatory development activities as they took place in the context of child protection in Zanzibar may be considered to facilitate a form of “tyranny”, through “the illegitimate and/or unjust exercise of power” (Cooke and Kothari 2001, 4), and to enforce a promising, but not very meaningful framework upon children. Ideas of independent agency and participation, as implied by and crucial for using this method, contradicted the expectation of children’s passive position at the bottom of Zanzibari society’s hierarchy.

Agency through contestation

Participatory approaches suggest an increase in the possibility to exercise agency. Nevertheless, the assumption that children’s agency increases with an increase in participation, is often false. As my examples show, the agency that is constructed through development interventions in Zanzibar is fragile. The difficult interrelatedness of protection and participation makes this obvious. In fact, “children’s lives involve both the exercise of agency as well as coping with its constraints due to certain social, cultural, political, legal, physical, or economic structures” and children are themselves capable to exercise power despite facing situations of being less powerful (Evers, Notermans and Ommering 2011: 12). It frequently seemed to be the process of enduring physical punishment that allowed children more room for agency and for understanding themselves as subjects, than was possible within the spaces in which their participation was allowed. Out of the many incidents of physical chastisement I observed, children often used their own agency to contest the cane, as in these observations at a *madrasa* in August 2014:

Shortly after arriving at the *madrasa*, a boy of twelve or thirteen arrives late and is immediately caned on his bottom. He sits down slightly distressed but seems familiar with the practice. An older boy is next to be hit by a younger female teacher. As she hits him, he briefly grabs her cane to interrupt her action. After receiving his strokes, he smiles and looks little disturbed. The teacher walks around with her cane held over the children’s heads, seemingly reminding them of its power. She stops and hits a girl. She, too, grabs the cane while it flings towards her, even giggling a bit. Then the older boy

receives the teacher's cane and takes over her role, walking amidst the groups of children, now in charge himself, imitating her manner.

At the primary schools where I conducted research I observed similar scenes. Children grabbed the canes or tried holding on to them while being hit, often without consequences or further strokes for the objection. Here, children's individual power to attach meaning to their own acts of abuse as "conflict stakeholders" (McIntyre 2005: 229), and the extent to which it was accepted, was particularly visible. Zanzibari children used their own agency and power to contest the power they had to submit to by reacting in ways they deemed sensible.

Participation as compliance

Nevertheless, such agency is fragile and consequences concerning children's protection are hardly predictable. This implies that even more than individual social agents, children act within networks of sociality that are influenced by the expectations parents, teachers, and development workers have of them and the roles they are assigned. Another example widens the perspective on the agency and how it is acted out in the context of participation:

On a morning in Nungwi in March 2015 we are waiting for the arrival of the participants of a combined Children's Councils and Parental Groups workshop. "Not everyone is here yet, but I'm sure they will all come. They know they are getting paid", Fatma, a young Zanzibari Save the Children employee, whispers in my ear. Only towards the end of the workshop, when all participants receive a 'per diem' of 30,000 *shillings* (GBP 10.00) for their participation, I understand properly.

Assuring participation through payments for engagement and contributions, is another variety of participation I witnessed in the context of child protection programmes. People's genuine motivation and care for the matter of the workshop themes is cast into question when sums, higher than many people's daily salaries, are paid for their attendance. Despite this, there is still a degree of agency within such seemingly manipulative contexts of participation. It is not surprising that children are keen on taking part in participatory development activities, as it enables them to

improve their families' economic conditions by contributing to their households what they 'earn' as participants. After all, they chose to do this and used their agency for their own purpose, rather than for the intentions of aid practitioners. Nevertheless, through a development lens, participation is used as a means "to produce compliant subjects of the state", because activities and processes "run in parallel with those of adults rather than as an integrated part of local, let alone, national processes of governance" (Hart 2008: 6). International aid organisations' initiation and operation of child protection activities in Zanzibar represents such as parallel system, that exist as an addition to, instead of a revision of, existing structures.

Participation and voice as a threat

Voice is not identical to speech and not always immediately heard (Das 2007). While listening to children's voices gained popularity in development, frequently "those voices are silenced by images of childhood that cling to the more traditional, developmental discourse of children's incompetence, rather than competence, as social actors" (James 2007: 266). Across all spheres of engagement, participation in the form of supporting children's voices was considered a threat to Zanzibar's social order. Zubeid, a local child protection worker, explains: "People see child participation as over-empowering children. They believe that children in Europe are over-empowered. They can do anything and say anything to parents, which is not good. Zanzibari adults want to maintain their situation whereby parents are the top of the family and children can't challenge this." In line with his depiction of perceiving child participation as destabilising to social hierarchies, 'voice' is directly implied and promoted by 'participation' – and faces equal opposition. What matters here is that "the nature of the 'voice' with which children are attributed (...) both shapes and reflects the ways in which childhood is understood" (James 2007: 266). An officer at the MoEVT explains:

Back in the day, a child could not sit with an adult. It was never discussed (*haijadili*). There was no child participation. A child was just a child. But now children are being included (*wakashirikishwa*). They share their views, they speak (*wanasema*), and things are slowly starting to change. In the beginning, elders said this is misbehaving – a child cannot sit with adults. It's not normal.

Especially the emphasis on the uncommon situation of children's presence in adult discussions and potential expression of their views, suggests the disruptive potential inherent in participatory approaches that interfere with what is regarded acceptable behaviour. A local child protection worker agrees, that "working with child participation is new, and as with anything new, people are not very comfortable", and hence might conceive of a break with a certain order as dangerous. She concludes, "when you empower children to speak up of course adults will not be happy. It is outside the norm of being quiet when adults speak. Even if you disagree, you don't say it in front of adults, because an older person does not make mistakes/is never wrong (*mkubwa hakosei*). Like this, also in Zanzibar, "silence is protection" because "whoever says nothing has nothing to fear" (Scheper-Hughes 1992: 505). Regarding the demand of Zanzibari children to be silent and obedient, what may seem like "deplorable passivity and docility from a progressivist point of view, may very well be a form of agency" (Mahmood 2001: 212).

Creating opportunities for children to speak up and use their voice within the boundaries of spaces assigned to this kind of participation does not sufficiently ensure children's voices and views are heard. Giving voice to children is not simply or only about letting children speak (James 2007: 262). Hearing children speak out or stand up for themselves without being asked to do so, remains rare in Zanzibar and largely discouraged by society. Silence as a cultural norm – especially for Zanzibari girls and women, but to a lesser degree also for boys and men – produces the desired type of person, and makes young people outside of this category appear as a threat to the ruling order. To draw on the words of another local child rights activist:

This culture of children not speaking up, of having to be silent, at a certain age when they are teens or adults they don't have the confidence to speak up. If you ask them something they just keep quiet. They might know the answer but they are so afraid to speak up and share their views and ideas. It creates a kind of inferiority complex which has an impact when they are adults.

Supporting children's voices through participatory approaches and creating 'voice-exercising' persons creates fear, because hierarchies as they prevail, are destabilised. Therefore, and "despite representations of the voices of children, children themselves

may, nonetheless, continue to find their voices silenced, suppressed, or ignored in their everyday lives” (James 2007: 261). An officer of the Department of Women and Children reiterates this, explaining that “‘traditional’ means, that people must obey parents and grandparents. ‘Modern’ means, that children are given education about their rights and responsibilities and have changed their behaviour”. Therefore, participatory approaches like engaging children in Children’s Councils are considered ‘modern’ and in opposition to what used to exist before. As “cultural values and beliefs permeate all discussions on children’s position in society, including the rights to which they are entitled” (Twum-Danso 2009a: 380), Zanzibari children’s right to participation inevitably links to their roles and relations with others in their communities.

Acknowledging the existing varieties of children’s individual agency in the contexts where participatory approaches are applied, reveals further nuances in a discussion about how to protect children best. Depending on the contexts in which children participate – whether they directly contest being hit, withhold information, or choose participation as a form of employment – different degrees of agency and participation are possible in those spaces and in relation to the adults that children encounter within them, and on which children’s protection ultimately depends.

Participation as a decline of respect

In Zanzibar, children’s participation and rights education was frequently considered a threat to the well-being of the community, and not, as intended by development actors, as contributing to young people’s protection. A supposed decline in children’s respect (*heshima*) as a dangerous effect of participatory interventions was a common explanation for this. Zanzibari academic Amour Haji Hassan explains: “American children aren’t hit. They give them rights (*wanatoa haki*) until they sue their parents (*wanawashtaki wazee*) in court. But that’s a big mistake (*kosa kubwa*)”. His idea about the empowering effect of rights leading to children destroying their family’s respectability and reputation, is one example of the common narrative I encountered. Bi Muna argued similarly, that “if a father is brought to the police station by his own child, he has no more respect (*hana heshima*). Then what kind of nation are we building (*tunajenga taifa gani*)?” She emphasises the perceived harm inherent in children’s ability to claim their rights. Her despair over what kind of nation this leads

to, if children are given that much power that they may destroy their parents' honour in their communities, reflects concerns about the community's general well-being, which are important in small places like Zanzibar.

Child participation was often understood as disrespectful, because "as a child you don't have a voice to speak with (*huna sauti ya kusema*). To be respectful you just listen, and there is nothing like disapproving (*kukataa*) what is decided for you. Answering (*kujibu*) is disrespectful," a local child protection worker emphasised. Like this, children's rights promotion in Zanzibar even came to be considered as harmful to children, for interfering with adults' ability to be 'good parents' (who teach proper behaviour through disciplining) and neglecting children's responsibilities in society (Wessels et al. 2013). This mirrors existing societal hierarchies, particularly in regard to the contestation of someone's 'honour'.

IV Rethinking Children as 'Responsible People': Protection Despite Participation?

The previous reflections on protection through the lens of participation show that participation is indeed possible – but within the necessities of collective modes of being, and that agency, too, can exist in respectfulness and silence (Mahmood 2001; Abu-Lughod 2002). Considering children's agency "in the context of the discourses and structures of subordination that create the conditions of its enactment" (Mahmood 2001: 212), showed that qualities like obedience and silence may imply an active constitution of self-protection. Thus, there need to be ways for children to practice agency that align with "Islamic standards of reserve, restraint and modesty required of pious Muslim" children (ibid.: 213). Therefore, Zanzibari Muslim children's empowerment should be constituted in ways that fit their realities and acknowledge their responsibilities in society, which many informants considered disregarded by CRC-based protection programmes. Unlike alternative child rights discourses like the ACRWC, they neglect children's responsibilities completely.

Rights and responsibilities

The above views emphasise children's responsibilities, enshrined in ACRWC Article 31, and concerns over children not fulfilling them to be respectful to other people and

thereby strengthening their communities' social cohesion. This recalls the central expectations of young Zanzibaris: to have and display manners/discipline (*adabu*) (see Chapter 2). Children's valued obedience and voicelessness in the public sphere may initially be perceived as antithetical to the agency that participatory approaches intend to support. An emphasis on children's respect and obedience implies a limitation of children's ability to express their views, "which is one of the underlying principles of the CRC" (Twum-Danso 2009b: 421). In Zanzibar, however, it ultimately aligns with it, as within obedience and silence – in displaying *adabu* – there too is a degree of agency.

In his work on children's physical and emotional well-being in UK Mosque schools, Rajabi-Ardeshiri observed that "the image of an ideal childhood in the West does not meet Muslim parents' expectations and aspirations regarding their children" because "the increasingly predominant Western discourse on the democratisation of child-adult relationships threatens the image of ideal child-adult relations within Muslim families" (2011: 691). His analysis reflects the Zanzibar context, where particularly this democratisation of children's voice and participation through protection interventions faces rejection. While the "Western discourse on issues of childhood concentrates on children's rights, the Islamic discourse on the rights of the child puts equal emphasis on children's responsibilities" (ibid.). Child protection approaches in Zanzibar should therefore acknowledge the importance of not discarding this responsibility, but instead include it as a central focus point. Otherwise, any child protection activity will, despite unintentionally, contest "the ultimate destination for a child within the Islamic context (...) to become a virtuous adult" (ibid.), which happens through protection programmes in Zanzibari schools.

In Zanzibar, people's ideas about rights, responsibilities and respect depict the moral category of the 'good child', which is primarily dictated by children's social networks. Social conventions that define adult-child relationships, and the importance of children to have and show *adabu* and *heshima*, cannot be contested within artificial spaces like workshops or meetings because 'cultural' and religious social conventions outweigh them. I was often told that the concept of 'rights' was misunderstood. Khalid at the Unit for Alternative Discipline said, that "normal people (*watu wa kawaida*) think children do not have rights (*haki*). They don't know

that children's rights (*haki za watoto*) go beyond eating and going to school. For them, children's rights destroy morality (*zinavunja maadili*) and give children the right to sue them (*kuwashtaki*). In Zanzibar, the legal system's increasing willingness "to side with children against parents" puts the status of the 'good child' at stake, implies changes in how parents treat their children, and shifts understandings "about the nature of childhood, and the changing duties and responsibilities that adults and children have toward each other" (Montgomery 2008: 159).

Similarly to how participation is regarded as a threat to adults' positions in society, the idea of rights as a tool for children's empowerment was considered harmful. A local UNICEF employee stressed: "It is misunderstood what rights are. That's why in the African Charter we now have the responsibilities which are not mentioned in the CRC. In Zanzibar, children's rights are always referred to by people as *haki* (rights) and *wajibu* (responsibilities). Even the child rights manual we wrote had to be renamed to '*haki na wajibu ya watoto*' (children's rights and responsibilities)". Rights and responsibilities were considered inseparable when asking my interlocutors about child protection and participation. To emphasise the link between the two the Head Officer at the Child Protection Unit explained: "Rights are the left hand (*mkono wa kushoto*), and responsibilities are the right hand (*mkono wa kulia*)".

Children's own considerations of their rights – with several of their responsibilities often categorised under – link to their responsibilities. In their stories and drawings they frequently named "studying at school (*skuli*) and *madrasa*" (m 12) and "being brought to school and to study (*kupelekwa skuli na kusoma*)" (m 14), "a good upbringing (*malezi bora*) and safety (*usalama*)" (f 12), as well as "food, play, housing, clothing, and health/hygiene" (f 15) as among their rights. Nafisa's (12) photo captured the back view of a boy wearing *kanzu* and *kofia*⁹⁶ walking down a sandy path past houses, most likely, for his dress indicates so, heading to *madrasa*:

⁹⁶ Traditional Muslim dress (*kanzu*) and cap (*kofia*) for men.



Figure 6.1. “This picture explains the right to learn at school, *madrassa* and tuition. Children can learn wherever they consider to be an eligible place, and they should be given the opportunity.”

Other images of children walking around their school premises or sitting in their classrooms read “a child should be given time to play with friends” (Halima 13) or “children need to celebrate” (Khalida 12), expressing children’s desire to, alongside learning, feel joy and have time to relax while studying, and the importance of a balanced curriculum. Children’s own perceptions of their rights reiterate many things enshrined in the CRC, but also underline the responsibilities and roles they ought to fulfil in different contexts.

All my interlocutors struggled to speak about children’s rights (*haki za watoto*) without mentioning their responsibilities (*wajibu*). This emphasises that in Muslim-majority communities like Zanzibar, “children’s responsibilities are as important as their rights and consequently Muslim children are required to respect their parents and obey them (...) (the Quran, 24: 58-9)” (Rajabi-Ardeshiri 2009: 479). It stresses the need to recognise that the majority of the world’s children “actively contribute to household economies, fulfil community tasks, and take on responsibilities that – in the ‘West’ – would be considered inappropriate or problematic or anathema to human rights” (Evers, Notermans and Ommering 2011: 5).

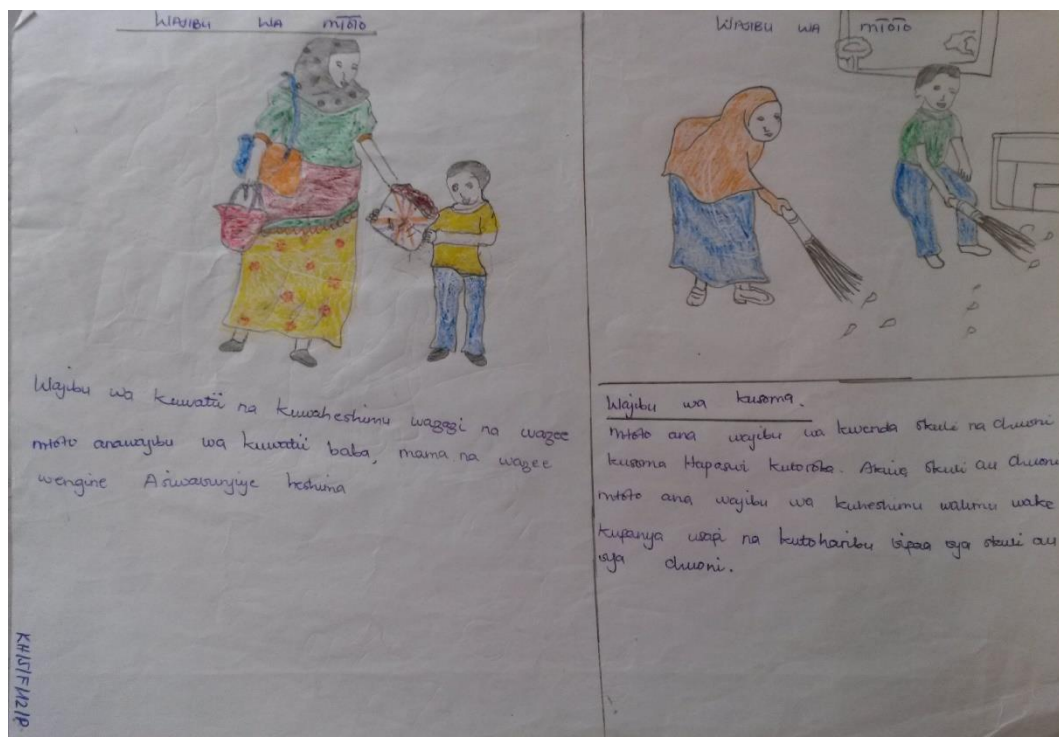


Figure 6.2. Suhaila's drawing of "children's responsibility".

In Suhaila's (12) drawing, entitled "A Child's Responsibility" (*wajibu wa mtoto*), a woman in colourful clothes and headscarf carries bags and hands one to a boy nearby. She added an explanation: "The responsibility to obey (*kuwatii*) and to respect (*kuwaheshimu*) parents and elders. A child has the responsibility to obey their father, mother and other elders to not destroy their respectability (*asiwavunjiye heshima*)."

In the same drawing, we see a boy and a girl sweeping a floor: "A child has the responsibility to go to school and *madrassa* to study. They should not be absent. While at school or *madrassa* the child has the responsibility to respect their teachers, to clean, and to not destroy school or *madrassa* supplies." Her emphasis on the responsibilities that children hold, as in the other children's accounts, suggests children's own idea of themselves as responsible people with duties in their communities. An idea spelled out in the ACRWC, but missing from the CRC. Their own awareness of their responsibilities to their peers, families, and the wider community, depicts the notion as a critical part of their general rights concept.

Thus, notions of children's responsibilities link to conceptualisations of them as people. "Children are people (*watu*) because they help (*wanasaidia*) in society", Ukdi Zeinab explains when we speak about children's status in their communities.

Her description echoes what childhood is heavily defined by in Zanzibar – children’s sociality and their relationships. This represents a stark contrast to the individualism of rights in the CRC. Children are regarded as people because they help, and if they fulfil the responsibilities they carry. The concept of responsibility has remained neglected in a child rights discourse based on the CRC that exclusively focuses on children as rights-holders and adults as duty-bearers. Nevertheless, as stressed in the African Charter, children’s responsibilities and duties are considered equally important for their communities. Therefore, rejecting universalised rights frameworks as harmful, a threat, or even as ‘Western impositions’, links to the neglect of children’s contributions, and expectation to contribute, within their social networks.

Personhood despite participation?

Agency is ambiguous in its “redefinition of the political and civil status of children and young people in society” (Bordonaro and Payne 2012: 369). I therefore ask, “what kind of agency is deemed appropriate for children” (Bordonaro 2012: 423) instead of whether children’s agency is acknowledged at all. In Zanzibar, human rights advocates who work to improve the lives of “those not yet considered to be full human beings or social persons, such as children (...) need better information on how traditional societies ascribe and how individuals achieve human dignity, full social adulthood, and community membership” (Ennew 2002: 327). Responsibilities and respect are interlinked with *utu* and ‘appropriate’ agency for Zanzibari children should not interfere with their acquisition of *utu* (personhood) through *adabu* (courtesy) (see Chapter 2). Finally, what being ‘human’ means for different people affects children’s rights promotion. Therefore, taking seriously “information about the ways children actually live in their communities, as well as local beliefs about childhood” (Ennew 2002: 350), may benefit child protection planners and implementers.

Unlike ‘Western’ rights approaches that consider children devoid of purpose or duty and take responsibilities as somehow opposed to rights, this departs from the ideas I encountered. More aligned with the idea of becoming a person through meeting one’s responsibilities (Wiredu 1998), this supports my argument, that in Zanzibar full social personhood is eventually achieved through fulfilling responsibilities. This

recalls the fundamental notion of children as both beings and people-in-the-making – an understanding that is interfered by rights agendas that dismiss children as responsible agentive beings and categorise them as vulnerable, passive and homogenous groups of young people without duties and contextual constraints.

Children should not be imagined as separately approachable homogenous groups in contexts where they are deeply interwoven social persons. Detaching Zanzibari children from their perceived responsibilities and their need to practice and display *adabu* (manners) and *heshima* (respect) can lead to “catapulting oneself out of the moral sphere” (Kresse 2007: 150). Such a conflict regarding the sociality of the participants in the opening vignette may have arisen had they complained about being late for school and possibly facing chastisement for it. This could imply the consequence that “someone, through their own actions, may no longer have humanity (*hana utu tena*) and thus may lose the right to be morally respected by others” (ibid.). As Zanzibari children cannot technically possess *utu* before reaching adulthood, and the display of *adabu* is the equivalent for this life-stage (see Chapter 2), children’s sociality and their agency to act on their own behalf can be destroyed through the loss of *utu* – respectively *adabu* – by not adhering to *kuwa na adabu*.

Children as citizens inside the polity

Critically examining these modes of participation in relation to aspirations to better protect children through supposedly child-friendly approaches, diversifies the understanding of why protective interventions are frequently contested. Child participation is also about citizenship and democracy (Freeman and Saunders 2014: 698). Ultimately, engaging children in participatory projects depicts them as people whose views can be taken seriously differently to how they are commonly viewed in Zanzibar, where children’s opinions remain largely side-lined in everyday life and rarely prioritised in the public sphere. Reshaping notions of childhood concerning their citizenship “raises questions about the nature of childhood and extent to which children can be accorded with status as ‘citizens’ now” (Bacon and Frankel 2014: 22), and therefore should be considered by child rights practitioners. Otherwise, discourses of “the child as a rights-bearing citizen” and “the obedient and respectful child” will portray “customs and traditions in a contradictory manner” (Wilinski 2012: 150).

By considering children as rights-bearing citizens they are granted the same protection rights as adults (Montgomery 2008: 158). However, considering children as rights-holders and active participants is based “on particular western notions of childhood and child protection” (Twum Danso Imoh 2013: 473). Therefore, ideas about their personhood change in regard to their possibilities to participate. The way in which participatory programmes, like those of Save the Children, frame children as ‘equal citizens’ to adults in their societies, caused conflict. Personhood in ‘Western’ thought usually implies a person’s possession of rights and duties and creates the idea of the rights-bearing citizen. The effects of applying this political idea to children in Zanzibar resonates with a conception of children as not-yet ‘full’ social people, as their lack of *utu* implies the impossibility of being considered a citizen equal to an adult.

In Zanzibar, participatory approaches created tension and shifted power relations associated with child and adult roles in societies (Abebe and Bessell 2014). Participatory projects with children should be contextualised, specifically in relation to specific social and cultural values that matter for understanding adult-child interactions and may otherwise interfere with an effective application of participatory approaches (Twum-Danso 2009a: 388). The problem with, for example, the establishment of Children’s Councils is more the attempted creation of children as a generalised class or category with interests opposed to other categories of person, and in this regard a form of consciousness for themselves. This is perceived by Zanzibari adults to threaten the existing social order, especially for being initiated from ‘outside’. As insisting on listening to children “does not always sit easily with relational understandings of the subject” (Holloway 2014: 382), the importance for understanding children “not as individualized subjects, but in relational terms” (Ansell 2009: 205) prevails. Therefore, the attempt to support their participation and voices through Children’s Councils differed from the necessity adults felt about consulting children and rather endangered their safety in their learning environments.

In development work as well as in Zanzibari society, children’s opinions remain seldom prioritised regarding matters concerning their own life situations. Supporting children’s agency and participation as knowledge producers conflicted with the restrained and obedient, less agency centred role, commonly expected of them. In

Zanzibar, participation became what Hart generalised across different countries and situations as “a means of co-opting and silencing” (2008: 410) and as opposed to promoting citizenship that could challenge power inequalities. It showed that children’s protection and their ‘empowerment’ through increasing their participation cannot be realised separately. Confining children’s activism to certain acceptable spaces – like development activities – has limited effects, as “real political change is unlikely to be achieved in the spaces conceded for children’s participation” (Ansell 2009: 205).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I considered approaches to Zanzibari children’s protection through the lens of participation, and how promoting children’s right to participation ultimately contests their right to protection. Child protection implementers’ shortcoming to acknowledge children’s responsibilities – missing from the CRC but outlined in the ACRWC – leads to participatory child protection interventions being regarded ‘Western’ impositions that result in moral decay and loss of respect. Therefore, participatory approaches should be viewed in relation to children’s social embeddedness and their existence in relational terms, and including notions of responsibility and respect, which also contain degrees of agency. Discussing the disadvantages of approaching children as a separately approachable category in society that exists outside of political, religious and cultural discourses, revealed how supposedly protective programming may render protection policies and concepts irrelevant to children’s lives and end up disrupting and decontextualising children’s routines rather than improving their safety. Recognising the various levels on which protection as a category and a right collides and intersects with the notion of participation, this chapter concludes the second part of this thesis, that explored the pluralisms of how protection practically plays out in Zanzibar. In the following section, I turn to possible re-approaches to child protection as a category and expand the discussion of participation, voice and agency as means for protecting young people, by exploring how belief and gender influence what makes protection possible, inside and beyond the classroom.

PART III

RE-APPROACHING ‘CHILD PROTECTION’

CHAPTER 7

Critical Connections:

Boyhood Affliction and Girlhood Woes



I am at one of Stone Town's many small bookshops which largely seem to specialise in selling beautiful Qur'ans, Islamic life guides, Islamic medical books, and a wide variety of guidebooks on how 'good' Muslim women, wives, and mothers ought to be. Curious I request a selection to view from the shop attendant. Reading over the covers, I notice that all books are written by male authors and ask if

he also has some written by female writers. He looks at me slightly startled and laughs: “No, I don’t have any written by women. But these are good! I am sure you know that we highly respect women in our religion, but these books need to be written by men. Women don’t understand enough because they don’t study”. (February 2015, Stone Town)

“Ideologies of normative sexuality and gender” (Stiles and Thompson 2015: 2) influence everyday life in Zanzibar and equally define child protection practices and corporal punishment. Building on the previous chapter’s discussion of children’s voice and participation in relation to their protection, I now turn to the impact that gender notions have on what experiencing abuse, speaking about it and participating in society mean regarding potentially compromising one’s safety (Abu-Lughod 2002). Considering the broader necessary conditions for concepts like participation to be protective – when often silence poses the ‘safer’ option of existing – allows us to further reassess protection attempts to abolish caning. My exploration extends from discipline as a threat to children’s well-being inside the classroom, to consider related hazards Zanzibari children face in everyday life, like sexual abuse, that is witnessed but silenced. Widening my main focus on corporal punishment in the school space to include a consideration of sexual abuse, helps to view disciplinary practices at school in the context of related practices in society at large. Zanzibar’s gendered protection reality is specifically defined by the higher prevalence of sexual abuse for boys than girls, and the asymmetric protection response to this fact. While boys tend to be disregarded by child protection programmes, girls are overprotected.

To understand the imbalance in the prevalence of violence cases and responses to it, I explore Zanzibari Islamic norms that depict corporal punishment as a gendered practice. As children’s and adults’ masculine and feminine roles are socially constructed as “a kind of a doing” in relation to others (Butler 2004: 1), they assign certain roles to people. These contribute to the gender gap in children’s violence and protection experiences. Considering the link between feminism and Islam (Mahmood 2001), I interrogate existing ideas about men and women through the lens of children’s and women’s rights – whose needs are distinct but who historically share “a common experience of marginalization” (Todres 2017: 21). Considering

prevailing norms of violence against women and boys' physical abuse, shows how these societal taboos link into complex protection issues. Zanzibari child protection programmes that aim to ban excessive caning or sexual abuse should also address gender-based violence and general gender norms around acceptable behaviour by and towards men and women. As corporal punishment is "a gendered practice and inseparable from issues concerning gendered institutional identities" (Humphreys 2008: 538), taking seriously Zanzibari-Muslim imaginaries of femininity and masculinity impacts on children's protection and chastisement (Khuri 2001).

I Gendering Protection Practice: Shielding Girls, Neglecting Boys?

In Zanzibar, child protection practice and children's experiences of it are defined by a gender imbalance. While girls are perceived as sufficiently protected, or even 'overprotected', abuse cases of boys slip through the net and their equal need for protection is neglected. While UNICEF's (2011) survey on Violence against Children (VAC) in Tanzania did not only identify corporal punishment as the most common form of abuse that both male and female children experience on an everyday basis⁹⁷, it also stated that Zanzibari boys reported higher levels of sexual violence than girls. Only one in 20 females, but one in 10 males reported experiencing sexual violence during childhood (ibid.: 107). "Among 13 to 17 year olds, 2.3 % of females and 3.7 % of males reported that they had experienced at least one form of sexual violence in the past year" (ibid.: 93). Accordingly, the number of male (7 in 10) adolescents experiencing physical violence prior to the age of eighteen was higher than that of female young persons (6 in 10) (ibid.: 107). Despite these findings, staff at the Child Protection Unit stressed that most reported cases are by women and girls. Instead of this undermining UNICEF's findings, it instead suggests a common translation of protection matters as relevant to girls only, and a silencing of abuse of male children.

Placing children's corporal punishment in the context of more general abuses shows that these forms of mistreatment are linked. Students at Zanzibar University support this by identifying those articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child they

⁹⁷ 44.1 % of girls and 43 % of boys between the ages of 13 to 24 reported experiencing physical violence by a teacher (UNICEF 2011: 99).

considered as realised the least in Zanzibar. The order of their prioritisation elicits the connection: “Art. 19 – harsh punishment, Art. 34 – sexual abuse, Art. 28 – primary education, (no article) – early marriage, Art. 13 – freedom of expression, Art. 9 – poverty”. Considering punishment and sexual abuse in direct connection as central and insufficiently resolved issues in society, underlines the link between physical chastisement and sexual violence. Additionally, identifying a lack of freedom of expression, reiterates the difficulty of speaking about certain acts, particularly for children (see Chapter 6). In a context where other abuses may demand action more forcefully, the relevance of caning as a pressing priority is put into perspective.

“Child protection is for girls”: women’s rights discourse and girls’ protection

In August 2014, I attended a Save the Children child rights awareness raising meeting. Most participants were delayed by having to wait for public transport. Upon arrival, I noticed there were no boys amongst the young people. Questioning this I was told, that the village coordinator decided that due to the delays only girls should get on the bus. The boys’ participation was not considered as important since child rights and child abuse were largely girls’ issues. Regarding rights violations and protection needs as relevant exclusively to girls is common in Zanzibar. Thinking “related to violence against girls is influenced by women’s rights activism rather than by attention to children’s human rights – boys (and men) are simply understood as perpetrators of violence, not potential victims” (Morrow and Singh 2014: 18). This opposes UNICEF’s (2011) findings of a higher prevalence of boys’ sexual abuse. Regardless, during the time of research, girls remained the main target group considered in need of protection as reflected in the prioritisation of their involvement in the meeting. This fostered an exclusive image of child protection as a women’s rights, instead of a human rights matter.

Certain individuals’ rights are connected to the rights of others. In this way, children’s rights and women’s rights are linked (Todres 2017: 21). In Zanzibar, this specifically shows through children’s and women’s shared status of relative powerlessness in relation to others, and in terms of being victims of violence, albeit in different ways. Even though “the relationship between women and children and their rights is relatively neglected” (Freeman 2011: 3), it is relevant considering both

‘women’ and ‘children’ as separable groups being assigned specific rights within the larger human rights context. Conceptualising children’s rights in unification with human rights more generally, and in specific relation to how other groups of humans, like homosexual people, are regarded in this sense, is important (Quennerstedt’s 2010: 630).

Rights frameworks are not simply realised out of existing entitlements and protections, but are commonly, and continue to be, fought for; “this is the case for children’s rights similar as it has been and still is in most places of the world for women’s rights” (Freeman 2011: 9). A local child rights actor assesses similarly: “Child rights has the same effect as women’s rights. People feel that talking of children’s rights means that children can do whatever they want. The same when we talk of women’s rights – men think women can now do whatever they want. They think it just means freedom”. Her identification of the inherent tension in the implementation of rights agendas for marginalised groups have in Zanzibar, is intertwined with implications of gender. Thereby, childhood activism and feminism run in parallel for their demand to regard children as social actors, to extend their identity to full rights-bearing citizens (Hart 2008), and to improve their position in society (Alanen 1992; Mayall 2002).



Figure 7.1. Girls sitting separately from boys in one of my *madrassa* fieldsites, 2015.

“There is more protection for girls than for boys”, a local child protection worker explained, elaborating that “boys can loiter around and play everywhere. But if a girl goes missing for ten seconds – ‘Where is this person?!’ Boys can stay out even after the bell at 6.30 pm, no one cares. Some people even say they put boys at risk because no one follows up. Boys are just assumed to be strong and girls are immediately sheltered”. Girls receive a higher amount of attention in daily life in Zanzibar, and are perceived as ‘naturally’ calmer and more obedient than boys. A *sheikh* at the Mufti’s office claimed, that “usually girls are good children, not like boys. Boys stay with these groups and get all these things (*mambo mengi*), but girls don’t mingle with them, that’s why they are quieter/more restrained (*mtulivu*)”. Conceptualising male and female children by reproducing cultural stereotypes of desired ‘male’ and ‘female’ behaviour, amplifies a perceived need of girls’ protection due to higher vulnerability. As visible throughout the thesis, but especially in this chapter, protection is important not only to female children. The intersections of gender and violence, varying in form and degree, pertain to all children.

In April 2014, I discussed with a group of Children’s Council members the changes they envisioned and the hopes they had for the future regarding Zanzibar’s child protection situation. Boys wanted to have “chaperones that escort girls to meetings, to build schools with fences to monitor children going in and out, not having toilets build far away from schools as abuse often occurs there, and to completely ban the cane from schools”. Regarding the same matter, girls hoped for “proper prosecution of rapists as they are usually sent to the police for too short, stopping bribes which are often accepted to keep cases silent, punishing those who bribe and receive bribes, not having children walk alone, and that parents make sure their children dress properly so their clothes don’t provoke abuse”.⁹⁸ The boys’ responses directly identified girls as central to my question’s concern, speaking only about how the protection situation needed to change for girls, but not including themselves in the

⁹⁸ Resonating the case management discussion in Chapter 4, the girls’ fears proved relevant in two abuse cases I came to know of. In the first incident in September 2014 a girl of maybe eight years had been raped and was taken to the Save the Children office by her mother on two consecutive days, for no doctors were available at the OSC, which was officially responsible for attending to rape cases. In the second case I encountered, a fifteen-year-old girl had been raped by a fisherman on the beach and suffered from both anal and vaginal tears. A social worker friend of mine took her to the OSC, but similarly, no medical staff was available to attend to her. The perpetrator, as we found out later, was eventually caught, beaten and put in jail.

matter, echoing the perceived secondary relevance of their own protection. The girls' answers reflect the lack of social infrastructure in dealing with abuse cases, their insufficient trust in existing responsible structures, and, most importantly, the locus of blame of situations of abuse being girls, or women themselves, if dressing inappropriately.

Neglecting the physical abuse of boys

While girls receive considerable amounts of attention in Zanzibari society, they also do so in the child protection discourse. Unlike girls, boys' protection needs remain overlooked. "Most child abuse in Zanzibar is gender-based violence. There is no distinction between the two of them. This is typical for countries with a violent background, like Cambodia, South Africa, Vietnam", an international child protection advocate claims. "Most of our perpetrators are under the age of eighteen. Not girls abuse girls. Boys do this. And why are they doing this? Because most of them were sexually abused themselves by a relative." As much as feminism is about both women and men, gender-based violence may not be considered as only applicable to women.



Figure 7.2. Boys walking through Stone Town on their way home from *madrassa*, 2014.

Through women's rights law, direct benefits for girls and indirect benefits for all children can be secured (Todres 2017: 21f). Nevertheless, over-relying on the link between women and 'children' as a generalised constituency, indirectly neglects the fact that children live gendered lives and creates disadvantages for certain groups – in Zanzibar specifically for boys. For an international child protection actor, the heightened abuse of Zanzibari boys resonates with their personal experience of working in the context of child protection in the Middle East, and hence Zanzibar's contested status of belonging (see Chapter 1):

Zanzibar is different to many countries in East or Southern Africa. My experience from this region doesn't help me here. It's rather my experience from the Middle East and countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen. There are specific forms of abuse in these regions. In West Africa, it would be trafficking and child labour. In Zanzibar, it would be within the family – incestuous relationships – which is often not even considered child abuse. This is the same in Middle Eastern and Arab countries but would not be the case in Kenya or Tanzania mainland, Uganda, Zimbabwe, or Zambia. Here sexual relations with an older male relative would not be regarded normal. The whole thing of abuse of boys is very specific for Zanzibar. Without the knowledge to understand that this is not the norm, whether with a girl or a boy, you wouldn't raise it because it becomes a revenge and you can be ostracised and stigmatised in this culture. Exactly as in the Middle East.

This link between Zanzibar and Middle Eastern countries emphasises the need to culturally and historically contextualise abuse and protection as well as interventions that aim to respond to critical situations in this context.

Boys' and young men's high visibility and availability in the Zanzibari public sphere contrasts with that of girls and young women. While "men have complete freedom of movement, women have not" (Knappert 1970: 131). While boys are free to leave the house and roam the streets, unmarried girls are restrained to staying indoors or to leave the house with family, friends or a chaperone only (ibid.). Inversely, boys' higher public presence presents its own difficulties. "Those who are destroyed

(*wanaoharibu*) are our boys (*watoto wetu wa kiume*). They are more vulnerable in society because they are always outside. Male children are considered as if they don't need protection (*kama hahitaji ulinzi*) because men are supposed to be strong", Bi Khadija, an authority at the MoESWYWC, emphasised in a meeting with Save the Children. "Out of the two children shelters in Zanzibar, there are none for boys at all. They are only for women and girls. Boys don't have a place to go", she adds in frustration. Her lament reflects local protection actors' recognition of the existing gender gap that defines children's experiences of protection and abuse. It also visualises how ideas about normative sexuality and gender identity influence the higher attention paid to girls' perceived protection needs over those of boys and responses created respectively.

"Men who abuse boys are gay": homosexuality and sexual abuse of boys

In Zanzibar, speaking about the abuse of boys was made more complicated by its common equation with homosexuality, as "the production of a normalized and naturalized compulsory heterosexuality is (...) crucial to successful gendering processes" (Osella and Osella 2006: 2). In the Islamic tradition, "hadith reports and fiqh decisions, stigmatize homosexuals and criminalize their relationship" (Kugle 2010: 2f). Accordingly, homosexuality is publicly frowned upon. Discussing the matter with Nuru, a SUZA lecturer in her forties, she explains:

Homosexuality (*ubaradhuli*) for men (*mabaradhuli*) and women (*wasagaji*) was long considered impossible (*haiwezekani*). The question of sexual intercourse (*kuingiliana*) of the same sex (*ya jinsia moja*) is unpopular. Yes, they always existed, but the topic is not popular, especially not doing that to children. Society has let children gain more freedom, but now even boys are raped. These practices (*vitendo*) are part of homosexuality. After hearing about these things through the internet and TV, they want to try it and do that on children. In the past, we didn't hear of these things. Children must protect themselves (*kujikinga*) from those homosexual people (*watu wabaradhuli*)⁹⁹.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Someone who had sex with a homosexual person is called *hanithi* (impotent), and also referred to as *wanawake-wanaume* (woman-man).

¹⁰⁰ She added, that "you can even sue your own husband and demand divorce if he asks for anal sex (*kinyume cha maumbile*, lit. the opposite of nature). It's not allowed in Islam."

Her concern over children's sexual abuse links to her disapproval of homosexuality, portraying perpetrators as inevitably having a sexual preference for the same sex. Explaining sexual child abuse cases as part of male homosexual practice distorts reality and confines incidents to a realm of double sensitivity for combining two considered as unacceptable scenarios. While pederasty is the "statistically most prevalent form in Muslim societies" (Murray 1997: 41), "the will not to know" (ibid.: 14) about male homosexuality in places like Zanzibar, means that it is a common but silenced practice. This reflects the findings of higher numbers of sexual abuse of Zanzibari boys than girls, and lower numbers of officially reported incidents. The fact that premarital sex and sex outside of wedlock are sinful and hardly available, creates "discrete homosexual behaviour", as "admitting to having been sodomised disturbs social relations and disturbs someone's reputation" (ibid.: 17). This underlines religion's critical role in protection attempts against all forms of violence against children.

In a *Guardian* article by Gohir (2010)¹⁰¹ on *The Hypocrisy of Child Abuse in Many Muslim Countries*, this issue is discussed with reference to men who force boys into sexual slavery and prostitution in Afghanistan. Echoing Foucault's (1977) claim that the body is a primary focus of power relations, Gohir calls this practice a "moral hypocrisy" for a country "where homosexuality is not only strictly forbidden but savagely punished, even between two consenting adults. However, men who sodomise young boys are not considered homosexuals or paedophiles". For Gohir the blame lies with the "repression of sexuality and extreme gender apartheid" in countries of the Middle East, such as Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Criticising a "false adherence to Islamic principles", when, for example, child marriage is justified with the prophet Muhammad's marriage to Aisha, the author's claim aligns with my argument, that children's gender conditions their experiences of abuse and protection in Muslim-majority contexts like Zanzibar. A "too-passive attitude in dealing with child abuse" in Muslim communities, may therefore enforce "children to suffer in silence".

¹⁰¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/apr/25/middle-east-child-abuse-pederasty>
[Accessed: 5 May 2017]

Considering Islam as a framework for defining acceptable (sexual) practices, mirrors the complex intertwinedness that Zanzibari children, particularly boys, must navigate when thinking about reporting incidents of sexual abuse. In Zanzibar, the equation of male sexual abuse with homosexuality¹⁰², and the rejection of it by Islam, impact the likeliness of both boys and girls to report. A *madrassa* officer at the Mufti's office stresses, that "there is a lot of abuse (*udhalilishaji*) of girl children. Cases of them being sodomised (*kuingiliwa kinyume cha maumbile*). For boys I only know of one case, at least at *madrassa*." His awareness of more female child abuse cases resonates with the low rate of officially reported cases by male victims, probably made more complicated by the stigma and demands connected to the religiosity of the context. While girls who are sodomised must deal with the boundary that religion creates to report such abuses, boys must face a double-stigma of their abuse being considered as both homosexuality and anti-Islamic. Hence, boys, and men, may not report cases of sexual violence, because the possibility for such things taking place does not exist in people's minds. Additionally, the fact that the majority of child protection officers in local, government and development structures are women, further contributes to decreasing the likeliness of men or boys reporting. An aid worker explains:

The VAC survey's surprising result in terms of the higher levels of reported prevalence of sexual violence of boys goes against all regional patterns and global trends. The number of reported cases are still overwhelmingly female. So there are questions around females reporting, comfort, the integrity of statistics. Does that mean that boys will never report to national services?

Not only silently witnessing, but also addressing these cases, especially for boys and men, is only possible when the fear of being disbelieved is eliminated. If speaking out about violent experiences is stigmatised through gender-imaginaries, such as what may be considered 'feminine' or 'weak' and hence not acceptable for boys or men who are supposed to be 'strong' and not vulnerable, male cases of abuse will remain silenced.

¹⁰² A newspaper article echoes this equation, quoting the deputy PS of Zanzibar to have said that "the abuse of male children was on the increase" which implied "a risk of having many homosexual cases in future". <http://allafrica.com/stories/201601270854.html> [Accessed: 19 June 2017].

The disparities in how child protection and physical violence apply to and are experienced by Zanzibari boys and girls are critically connected to how corporal punishment itself is gendered too. Only by understanding gender and religious norms that define the appropriate application of physical chastisement, is it possible to understand more general conditions that cause other forms of violence and the gender imbalance through which they are experienced. Building on Mahmood's argument, that "particular systems of gender inequality enact [violence] on women" (2005: 188), I propose that they may also, as in Zanzibar, enact violence on men. Such forms of violence are fostered in both 'everyday' practices like physical chastisement and less 'ordinary' maltreatment like sexual abuse. Both are conditioned by gender inequality in society. Thinking beyond Mahmood's claim, I follow the assumption that in societies that are largely built on male imaginaries of what women ought to be, not only women's interests will be neglected and suppressed but also those of children. In Zanzibar, this specifically applies to boys' needs, who remain largely neglected.

II The Gender of Chastisement in Muslim Zanzibar

To imagine how child protection against physical violence can be re-approached in Zanzibar, we must consider how corporal punishment is depicted as a gendered practice through Islam. Islam as the most powerful defining force in the archipelago provides a critical context for understanding gender relations in connection to child rearing. In Zanzibar, chastisement is assigned the productive purpose of forming a person. Children's and women's chastisement is therefore commonly conceptualised as care and guidance instead of violence, as it is considered to create moral Muslim people. While social personhood is the aim of this formation process and "attributes associated to humanity (*utu*) are not gendered" (Larsen 2008: 109), corporal punishment itself is defined by gender. Following that "research on child abuse and neglect cannot be divorced from the position of women" (Montgomery 2015: 18), as violence against children links to violence against women and their roles in society, the social acceptability of physical chastisement is a form of discipline inevitably intertwined with other forms of gender-based violence against women and boys.

Of hitting women and hitting children

“Where in the Qur’an can I read about the use of the cane?”, I ask Sheikh Mubarak and place the beautifully decorated Qur’an he gave me as a present on the table in his office at the ministry. He points at sura 4, verse 34-35 – “You have to look at the sura that explains how to treat your wife. This you can also apply to children.” He recounts the procedures that apply before turning to physical correction: first warn her, then let her sleep alone, and only at last, resort to hitting her, but do not cause her pain (*usimpe maumivu*), as the Prophet (saw) has forbidden (*akakataza*) pain. “Even though this sura speaks of hitting women, the procedures also apply to children? Does that mean that women and children are considered as the same?”, I ask. “No”, he responds, “women and children are not the same. A child can’t decide (*kuamua*) for themselves, but a woman can. In our culture (*utamaduni*) it is necessary to hit children – spare the rod and spoil the child.” (March 2015, Stone Town)

The conflict in Sheikh Mubarak’s actions and explanation is interesting. Despite considering women and children as different, he regards precisely the Qur’anic guidelines for husbands to chastise their wives as also applicable to the chastisement of children. This suggests a partial equation of women and children, at least according to status, and how they ought to be formed and guided in society.

As explored in Chapter 4, there is no unifying Islamic stance on the appropriate application of physical chastisement in Zanzibar. The sources that express a stance on it and are often quoted for rationalising the practice, are summarised in Sheikh Mubarak’s document *The Concept of the Discipline of the Cane for Students in Islam* (see also Chapter 2). Echoing my conversation with him, it emphasises that hitting is not prescribed in Islamic child rearing, but appears in connection to the treatment of women, or more specifically, of wives:

In the Qur’an being hit with a cane (*kupigwa bakora*) appears regarding a wife’s disobedience towards her husband (*mke aliyemuasi kwa mumewe*). ‘Men are the guardians (*wasimamizi*) of the women to be sponsored

(*kufadhiliwa*) by God and to manage their wealth (*mali yao*)'. It is testified: 'Righteous women are devoutly obedient (*wenye kutii*) and guard themselves in the husband's absence (*wanaojilinda*) as Allah has commanded them to. As to those women on whose part you see ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (next) refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly, if it is useful); but if they obey you, seek not against them means (of annoyance)',¹⁰³ (Sura ya An'Nisa 4, aya 34). In this verse (*aya*) the discipline of hitting (*adabu ya kupiga*) is mentioned but the Prophet (saw) has interpreted (*ameifasiri*) this disciplinary measure to be a blow (*pigo*) without harm (*lisilo na madhara*). The scholars (*wanazuoni*) said that the stick for hitting (*fimbo ya kupigia*) shall not exceed the size of a toothbrush (*urefu wa msuwaki*) so it cannot hurt/injure (*hauwezi kuumiza*). This is the blow (*pigo*) that exists in Islamic law.

Sheikh Mubarak's document presents an Islam that despite commanding husbands to physically chastise their wives if need be, and parents to do the same with their children, underlines the need for a moderation of the practice. The call for the physical chastisement of women and children in Islam is not refuted but softened and regulated by favouring a non-harmful interpretation of the practice and delaying the cane as an option. Repeated in the document is the criteria that makes a 'good woman' and men's role as women's guardians, which entitles them to correct their wives' behaviour in case of disobedience and insufficient self-restraint. Nevertheless, it also stresses that 'hitting' (*kupiga*) must be understood in a 'non-harmful' way.

In another Save the Children workshop I observed in May 2015, several religious leaders discussed procedures for involving Islamic approaches into the Positive Discipline programme. Sheikh Mubarak referred to what he told me previously:

In my paper, the cane is not there for children (*fimbo haipo kwa watoto*). I apologise to the women (*samahani wanawake*), but the stick is expected (*inatarajiwa*) for women, but according to its own procedures (*ina taratibu*

¹⁰³ Na ambao mnachelea kutoka katika utifu wanasihini, muwahame katika malazi na wapigini. Wakikutiini msiwatafutie njia ya kuwaudhi bure.

yake). This is part of the formation of the woman (*malezi ya mke*) and the man being her guardian (*mlezi*).

Claiming both the necessity of physical chastisement for disobedient children according to those ‘guidelines’ in place for women, as well as that, more generally, children should not be hit, reinforces a partial equalisation of women and children as particular people. Sheikh Mubarak’s apologetic reference to women’s formation, education, or ‘rearing’ relates to religious justifications for a connection between the categories of woman and child.

Another religious authority at the Mufti’s office reiterates this: “Even though women are hit, it is a certain type of hitting (*namna ya kupiga*). Not to injure them (*umwumize*), but just to make them know you are angry (*umekasirika*)”. Expressing anger, or discontent over a person’s behaviour through physical force to get them to readjust their actions to those desired by the inflictor of chastisement, echoes the notion of disciplining (*kuadabisha*) we encountered previously. According to these explanations, both women and children must be ‘formed’ through *adabu*, or as commonly (mis)interpreted through *adhabu*. Taking influence on a woman’s *tabia* (character/behaviour) and a child’s *adabu* (manners/courtesy) are the moments where the approaches to physical discipline connect.

Many female interlocutors reinforced these views on the treatment of women as much as the men I encountered. Bi Nuru, pious woman and mother of five, explained:

If a woman doesn’t pray, her husband should warn her (*amwonye*), then make her not sleep in their bed (*amhamie kitanda*), and finally smack her (*amchape*) with a toothbrush (*mswaki*). He should not injure her (*asimwumize*), and he may not hit her in the face, and neither hit in anger (*kwa hasira*) but instead with calmness (*kwa upole*). But if you really love your wife, you cannot hit her with a big cane (*bakora kubwa*).

Referring to the Qur’an she describes the same procedures as the religious leaders, but her final addition adds a different aftertaste. Stressing that if a man really loves his wife, he cannot possibly hurt her, puts her claim into perspective. Upon inquiring

whether it is possible to assume that women and children may be considered equals, she disagrees: “Women and children are not the same. A child does not have judgement (*hukumu*) in religion; a child has no liability (*dhima*). For a child it is not necessary to follow religious law (*Sharia*) like fasting (*kufunga*). There is a big difference”. Despite the variety of opinions on the connection between gender and chastisement in Islam, a reference to a man’s use of the cane to correct a woman’s behaviour runs through all accounts. I now turn to the implications this association carries regarding development organisations’ attempts to better protect children by banning their teachers from using the cane as a means of discipline.

My interlocutors’ accounts indicate a link between how women and children ought to behave and how they ought to be treated respectively. This evolved largely around the notion of how their potentially deviant behaviour should be corrected. A situation I faced with a friend, exemplified a male stance to that:

Sitting in a restaurant with my friend Ruwaida, waiting to order, a drunk woman in a mini-skirt and a T-shirt without headscarf, stumbles past our table and grabs a beer bottle from the table next to us. A waiter goes right after her, yelling at and insulting her, and rips the bottle out of her hands. Losing balance, she falls over but gets back up. Then he slaps her in the face. Now I’m yelling too, at him, grab my friend’s hand, and tell him we will not eat in a place where women are hit. Ruwaida remains silent in discomfort, him looking at me both irritated and amused: “But look at her, she is a drunk, and she took their bottle. What do you expect me to do?” (April 2015, Zanzibar)

The confidence and righteousness with which the waiter chastised the woman suggests expectations of how ‘good’ women ought to behave and what is acceptable for them to do and to be done to them in case of breaking with these standards. For the waiter to resort to physical chastisement, as is done with children, appeared to be his choice of option to restore ‘order’. The link between appropriately forming and correcting women and children, echoes the question whether women and children are considered equals in Zanzibar, and more broadly, in Islam. The refusal “to disaggregate women and children as groups (...) continues the association between

women and children as minors in need of protection, which is a necessary correlate of male power” (Ennew 1986: 57). This resonates with my consideration of the perceived need of both sexes requiring physical chastisement.

Montgomery’s claim, that decreasing the tolerance for hitting adults results in an increased problematisation of hitting children (2008: 158), holds true in its reverse and echoes a correlation between violence against women and violence against children (UNICEF 2007): as long as hitting women remains justified and tolerated, so does the physical chastisement of children. The fact that “the exposure of child abuse is so closely linked conceptually with feminism” also calls into question “how closely women and children can be linked ideologically” (Montgomery 2001: 156). The multiple views that exist on this in Zanzibar, suggest that the position of women in Zanzibari society inevitably affects how children are treated too.

Fe/Male imaginaries in Zanzibar

The Islamic norms that depict corporal punishment as a specifically gendered practice also assign particular roles to men and women which reinforce the gendered gap in how Zanzibari children experience protection and punishment. In Islamic societies like Zanzibar, the body plays a crucial role in everyday life and particularly the female body is subject of much attention (Khuri 2001). While bodies are never neutral, they are constituted and separated by ideas about masculinity and femininity (Moore 2007). Following the Swahili Coast’s Islamic history, social and cultural distinctions are consistently gendered (Decker 2015: 35). From an early age, male and female bodies are separated both in the public and the private sphere and “girls and boys socialize in predominantly single-sex groups” (Blackwood 2006: 419). Segregating boys and girls like this “enculturates and reinforces ideas about sex difference” (ibid.). Despite this separation, they are highly interrelated and constitute the other through the separation from it. The strict Islamic division into feminine and masculine spaces, makes the body a tool to communicate attitudes and values through unspoken language (Khuri 2001). That Zanzibari children are defined “as female (*ya kike*) or male (*ya kiume*), a discrimination that again makes a difference with respect to people’s notions about self-control, emotion and reason, illness inflicted through and on the body, and questions of sexuality” (Larsen 2008: 109), also affects their chastisement and protection.

As visible in the Islamic guidelines to physical punishment, women, like children, are considered to need guidance and formation, unlike men, who hold the guardian roles. Having established physical chastisement as a necessary practice to ‘raise’ children (see Chapter 2) and ‘guide’ women, raises questions about the connection between children’s and women’s rights to protection from harm, the role of men and boys regarding this role distribution, and the connection between corporal punishment, gender-based violence, and sexual abuse. Both boys’ and girls’ bodies are targets of physical discipline. Nevertheless, there are gender-specific nuances in the application of the practice and other related forms. Considering Zanzibari ideas about masculinity and femininity, helps to understand why girls and boys experience protection from everyday hazards they face differently, and why it is possible to speak of sexual violence against girls but not of that against boys.

Women in formation

In Zanzibar, the notion of the ‘good’ woman was omnipresent, constantly pursued, contested and in question. “Respectable” women would not engage in public dispute or expose private family matters (Decker 2014: 153), but instead cultivate their “shyness, respect and passivity” for these characteristics are “ideal female features and make for *tabia nzuri* (good character)” (Beckmann 2015: 119). Booklets and guides as those I was handed in this chapter’s opening vignette with titles like *Four Signs of a Good Woman* or *How to be a Good Muslim Wife* were numerous in Stone Town’s bookshops. Reflecting moral ideas like the fundamental needs for women to be ‘good’ and pious, and to be taught how to do this, resonate discussions of the ethical formation and inculcation of *adabu* in young people to make them become ‘good Muslim children’ (see Chapters 1 and 2). This echoes Mahmood’s (2002) exploration of this process, particularly concerning Muslim women, interpreting *adab* as a disciplinary practice through which women’s pious dispositions are cultivated.

Mundhir Liongo, the Head of Fatwa and Research at the Mufti’s office, enforces the perceived relevance and demand of such guide books: “A child starts being made/formed (*anachungwa*) even before the marriage (*ndoa*), when you have to find a good mother (*mama mwema*). Four types of women are suitable for having children: beautiful (*nzuri kwa sura*), wealthy (*mwenye mali*), or pious (*mwenye dini*) women”.

Despite mentioning only three of four classifications, men's need to choose women wisely, and not vice versa or together, suggests an imbalance and a singularly directed power relationship, in which women must adhere to standards decided by men. I did not find instructions or manuals for how to achieve a similar status or 'good' behaviour for men, which suggests their superfluousness.

As a Zanzibari woman one is desired to "always being balanced, calm and in control of one's emotions and actions" (Beckmann 2010: 620f). This ideal image of what should constitute a woman's behaviour is echoed in well-known Zanzibari poet Haji Gora Haji's (1994: 40) poem *Sifa ya Mke* (A Wife's Praise), in which he elaborates on the expectations towards a Zanzibari wife's manners. Repeatedly stressing that "a wife's praise is her character/behaviour (*tabiya*)", he also mentions complacency (*ukinaifu*), shame (*haya*), obedience (*utiifu*), sympathy (*huruma*), being calm (*awe mtulivu*), and not 'one that goes with other men' (*asiwe kiruka njiya*) as important traits. As with children where *adabu* (manners) is key to their moral training, women's behaviour (*tabia*) is similarly positioned above other characteristics and resonates with what 'good' children also ought to be.



Figure 7.3. A group of women dancing at a wedding celebration, 2015.

Zanzibari women and the female body are not only hypervisible, but also conceived of as potentially dangerous. Imaginaries of the woman as 'temptress' – both local

and foreign – are projected onto women’s bodies that make female sexuality an issue. Women’s desires and passion for “earthly pleasures” are viewed as stronger than those of men and women must therefore “be protected against themselves” and “must obey men” (Knappert 1970: 131). Considering sexuality as concerned with “the social rules, economic structures, political battles and religious ideologies that surround physical expressions of intimacy and the relationships within which such intimacy takes place” (Cornwall, Correa and Jolly 2008: 5), in Zanzibar this was a sensitive matter.

Men as guardians

While women occupy the forefront of discussions on behaviour and the body, and hence also of correcting the former through the latter, men remain rather ‘invisible’ in them. In opposition to women and their bodies, men and male behaviour are seldom topics of debate over morality or conduct. Rather than subjects of critique, they are first and foremost considered women’s guardians or custodians because Zanzibari women’s basic character “is regarded as less emotionally stable and controlled” (Beckmann 2015: 119). “Uwalia, wilaya¹⁰⁴” describes guardianship over children, which includes looking after their welfare and providing for them, but may equally be attributed to women as “the care of one who cannot look after himself properly, because of age, lunacy or illness” (Knappert 1970: 344).

Discussing the childhood practice of *akika* – the slaughter of two goats at the birth of a boy and one goat for a girl – with one of my Swahili teachers, he explains his view of the purpose of this earliest distinction between male and female children: “Men get more than women, because we are women’s supervisors/disciplinarians (*wasimamizi*). A woman’s wealth is managed (*inasimamiwa*) by her husband”. The leading position that Zanzibari men attribute to themselves in the context of the family and marriage has been justified with men being “considered to have more intelligence (*akili*) than women” and therefore taking all the decisions (Knappert 1970: 131). My teacher’s explanation locates this role ascription as taking place as early as in the context of this rite shortly after birth. Bi Muna reinforced this conception:

¹⁰⁴ Derived from the Arabic term, men serve as the “custodians (*auliya*’; singular: *wali*) of female kin in Islam” (Mahmood 2005: 184).

For Muslims the final decision maker (*muamuzi wa mwisho*) is the father. He decides about marriage (*ndoa*) and he is the *walii* (decision maker). A man is the family's guardian (*mlezi*) and hereditary leader (*kiongozi wa kurithi*). He builds (*anajenga*) the family and learns his work from his father. His responsibilities include procuring food and important requirements (*mahitaji*) and he does physical labour, i.e. on the field or to build a house.

The roles men are assigned in Zanzibari society become even more clear, when I ask her whether women, too, have the right to correct their husband's behaviour or to demand divorce:

Correcting (*kurekebisha*) men is more difficult. Hitting them is not easy. They are strong. But, for example, if he doesn't pray, you complain to his parents. If that doesn't help, you go to a religious judge (*kadhi*), and then you can demand divorce (*kudai talaka*). In Islam, fathers must provide the food and it's a mistake according to *Sharia* law if they fail to do that. Then the woman can go to a *kadhi* and he can demand him to provide. If you don't have the means to provide for a family, don't get married – it will bring you sin (*utapata dhambi*).

Islam and its according laws structure people's roles and behaviour, largely in relation to gender (Stockreiter 2015). Such laws have been argued as proof for the "inequality of men and women. A man may have four wives, a woman can have only one husband, often shared with others. The wife must obey her husband, especially in sexual matters, but the husband owes his wife no obedience" (Knappert 1970: 345). Similarly considering women's education, they are "encouraged to study the Koran, the Holy tradition, and the law, and some women are known to have been scholars and even saints", but it is also "accepted that men have a better grasp of these things, and so men have the last word" (ibid.: 131). Another poem by Haji Gora Haji (1994: 12) – *Usimpige Mkeo*¹⁰⁵ (Do Not Hit/Strike your Wife) – sheds further light on Zanzibari men's social roles and on how they ought to treat women from a vernacular perspective. Amongst other things, it declares that "a wife is not to

¹⁰⁵ The song "*Mke hapigwi kwa fimbo*" (A wife is not hit with a stick) by the Zanzibar Culture Music Club, is based on this poem.

be hit with a stick, neither is she to be kicked”¹⁰⁶ as “that behaviour is bad”¹⁰⁷ and reminds men, that “there is no good in striking, live with her peacefully”¹⁰⁸. The poem is a valuable addition to what is prescribed in the Qur’an and propagated by Islamic authorities, as it condemns the use of physical force on a wife as much as it disagrees with an impingement on her freedom. A message to married men, it reflects the existing nuances within interpretations of Islam amongst different pious people in Zanzibar.

These Zanzibari imaginaries of male and female personhood, show how chastisement is rationalised through Islam and according gender roles. Rationales presented as grounded in Islam influence the treatment of and care for both children and adults. Taking these roles seriously allows one to see why corporal punishment specifically applies to women and children – for their need of formation and guidance, and less so to men – who occupy the active positions as guardians. It also shows why girls are apparently ‘overprotected’ both in society and through child protection interventions, as their perceived naturalised status as ‘vulnerable’ and in need of protection and guidance conditions this, while failing to acknowledge boys’ needs for protection too. These specific ideas of men, and boys, as ‘strong’, ‘providers’, and ‘guardians’ of women and children, render them more vulnerable to physical abuse than girls, as discussed in this chapter’s first section. That their imagined gender identities do not accommodate perceived ‘weaknesses’, locates them outside a potential spectrum of abuse. Therefore, a reconsideration of child protection interventions in Zanzibar, should recognise the defining power of gender imaginaries and their impact on the prevalence of certain forms of abuse in society.

III Re-approaching Child Protection: Connecting Corporal Punishment and Gender-Based Violence

The gender imbalance in child protection and child abuse in Zanzibar – which boys suffer from the most, and how chastisement and normalised violence are influenced by Zanzibari-Muslim ideas about male and female roles that reinforce boys’

¹⁰⁶ *Mke hapigwi kwa fimbo, wala hapigwi mateke.*

¹⁰⁷ *Tabia hiyo ni mbaya.*

¹⁰⁸ *Kupiga piga si kwema, kaa nae kwa salama.*

vulnerability to abuse, leads me to consider how child protection in Zanzibar may be re-approached. To address the gender gap in child protection programmes that leaves boys' needs unattended to and finally excluded from the protection discourse due to Zanzibari imaginations of masculinity and femininity, I rethink protection interventions to more broadly deal with gender-based violence. Both physical chastisement and sexual abuse constitute an unapproved intrusion into another person's physical reality. This link as well as the implications of sexual abuse show how separately addressing corporal punishment as a societal ill, fails to account for the blurred boundaries between the practice and other forms of abuse. The connection between corporal punishment and gender-based violence underlines the necessity to prevent this intrusion and emphasises that conquering child abuse is not possible without outlawing physical punishment (Freeman and Saunders 2014: 702). The misleading equation of women and children, and hence of children with girls, determines the unintentional exclusion of boys and men as both victims and perpetrators – always as agents – in the violence discourse.

“You can't legislate against corporal punishment alone, you have to address the social norm around violence”, an international child protection actor explained, because “there is a major link between what's considered acceptable physical violence for corporal punishment and extreme cases of physical and sexual violence. It always comes down to the idea of what is acceptable.” Corporal punishment is structured around wider social hierarchies of gender. As children's bodies are unfortunately “the canvases for these hierarchies” and “sites for the inscription, expression, and enactment of power” (Proctor 2015: 18), how they are imagined and what is projected onto them must also be recognised in child protection programme planning.

While girls' physical well-being receives a lot of attention in protection programming, the care for boys' bodies and minds is insufficient and should be paid specific attention to in future programming. The “failure to engage men and the concentration on work with women” (Scourfield and Coffey 2002: 320), specifically in the context of child protection practices, results in overlooking a “substantial dimension of violence in girls' as well as boys' lives” (Morrow and Singh 2014: 18). It reinforces “gender stereotypes of girls (and women) as the inevitable victims of

male aggression and violence” (ibid.), while boys remain outside of a consideration as that.

Nevertheless, development concepts of ‘child protection’ and ‘child rights’ are highly feminised and frequently understood as exclusively relevant to girls, to protecting girlhood and to dealing with harms girls face. A development actor with a leading child rights organisation laments the particularly high focus on girls’ empowerment that tends to neglect boys’ roles within it:

People keep demanding ‘Girls Clubs’. This is typical for countries with male domination. Bangladesh, Pakistan, etc., they keep talking about engaging girls. But who do you see out in society – 75 % are boys. So who are the children that are abused? The boys! I’m not saying girls are not abused, because they are, but we have to modify how we look at child abuse and engage boys.

Following that “the process of child socialisation cannot be separated from broader social processes” (Morton 1996: 251), child protection interventions should take seriously societal gender norms and how they determine children’s bodily being and condition their potential sexual abuse. Corporal punishment and gender-based violence, like sexual abuse, are intimately linked. Interventions that aim to decrease the prevalence of corporal punishment should therefore also address gender specific violence on a more general level. To do this it is necessary to consider the gendered reality around practices beyond caning.

As one intention of feminism is the demand for gender equality, and an even valuation of men and women, child protection approaches should be viewed in the light of women’s rights. This intersects with the quest for de-objectifying children and recognising them as subjects in their own rights. Without falling “into polarisations that place feminism on the side of the West” (Abu-Lughod 2002: 778), a feminist approach to child protection is inevitable to improve the rights-situations of marginalised groups, like women or children. Stressing the equality of all human beings, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or social class, underlies any rights discourse. Ideas around child protection and feminism are closely intertwined,

because if women's positions in society do not improve, neither will those of children and vice versa. Violence against women and violence against children – both boys and girls – are two sides of the same coin. Nevertheless, while questions of protecting children are side-lined as women's and girls' issues, they falsely assume a one-directional occurrence of abusive acts toward children.

Corporal punishment and sexuality have frequently been linked, but “caning has more usually been interpreted and contested within ‘gender-neutral’ discourses of culture (including religion) or human rights” (Humphreys 2008: 528). As “a statement of power, status, and hierarchy”, physical chastisement is only considered abusive when “applied in an inappropriate context, or by someone who does not have the authority to do so” (Montgomery 2008: 173). The fact that physical punishment is particularly prevalent in societies with “a culture of violence” that normalises wife beating and harsh punishment for criminals (Ember and Ember 2005: 613), links Zanzibari children's chastisement to norms of physically disciplining women (Strauss 1983; GIECP 2016). This normalisation of corporal punishment trivialises other forms of violence (Humphreys 2008: 537) and the clear differentiation between who chastises – men – and who is to be corrected – women and children – makes the recognition and addressing of violence against boys and men particularly difficult.

Recognising the broader gendered conditions that enable speaking about sensitive topics and participation in society without compromising one's safety, visualises how speaking instead of silencing may become a form of protection too. Regarding the stigma connected to the abuse of boys in Zanzibar, the silence regarding it is not surprising and reflects the taboo of speaking about male experiences of rape and sexual abuse. To make it possible for boys and men to report cases of abuse and for protection workers to shift their focus from girls' needs only to also consider those of boys, it is critical to change how young men view their own and young women's societal roles, and how women construct their own images and those of masculinity, by working with both men and women, boys and girls, to decrease cases of abuse.

Understanding abuse requires understanding power and “sexual abuse of children – and some corporal punishment is unquestionably sexual abuse – is largely male abuse of power” (Freeman and Saunders 2014: 695). It is therefore necessary to

emphasise men's vital role in the care for and protection of children, if child care is not to remain considered 'women's work' only (Naguib 2015; Rutman 1996) and child protection not to benefit girls exclusively. "A more nuanced view of men, their relation to sexuality and parenthood as well as interaction with women" can help uplift "men to the role of responsible partners" (Fuglesang 1997: 1252) and equally to the role of responsible parents.

Working exclusively with girls and women to improve their situation is counterproductive towards the aim to improve all children's safety. It separates protection from violence and harm from the rest of society, or more specifically, from the men and boys who need to play critical roles in improving women's and girls' safety, and vice versa. Bi Khadija from the MoESWYWC underlines this:

We need a focus on fathers (*akina baba*) and young men (*wanaume vijana*), because in Islam they are the guardians (*walezi*), the representatives (*wasimamizi*), the leaders (*waongozaji*) of the family. Unfortunately, they also discard all this. They don't raise the children (*hawalei*), they don't care for them (*hawawatunzi*). We have many cases where men don't take up their responsibility (*kutotimiza wajibu*). They must be targeted so they will be ambassadors (*mabalozi*) for their fellows.

Prioritising girls' needs in child protection programming should not mean neglecting boys' requirements for safe environments and men's responsibilities in contributing to realising these. Protecting only girls puts boys at risk and might reinforce the silencing of boys' abuses and growing difficulties for people to address these matters. Understanding child protection as girls' protection, excludes boys from the discourse and discards the possibility of imagining the existence of their abuse. This increases the silencing and the continuation of violent acts against male children.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I opened the discussion of children's chastisement, their voice and participation by considering the impact of gender, religion, and the body on violent realities. After considering how specifically Zanzibari boys suffer from sexual abuse but remain largely excluded from child protection discourse and practice, I moved to

an exploration of how corporal punishment itself is gendered from a Zanzibari-Muslim perspective and how more general ideas about the gendered body and social roles of men and women are linked to that. This discussion of women's and children's chastisement as according to Islam, led me to establish the critical link between protecting male and female children and adults. This visualised the necessity to approach both physical chastisement and gender-based violence through protection interventions to eventually also better protect male children. Concluding with the acknowledgement of the link between physical chastisement and gender-based violence that is important to consider in attempts to decrease either form of violence, I now move on to viewing these themes on the broadest scheme of things, in the context of global discourses of power, secularisation, health and well-being.

CHAPTER 8

Decolonising an Apparatus: Re-arranging Hierarchies of Protection Knowledge



On my first day at Zanzibar University (ZU) in late January 2014, a staff member shows me the campus and introduces me to everyone. Upon repeating my brief self-explanatory summary – something along the lines of ‘I do research on child protection and punishment in schools’ – a lecturer at the Faculty of Law looks displeased. He responds defensively, “well, there is not just one way of protecting children for all countries”. I assure him that I agree and that this is the approach I support myself. Not seeming to listen, he adds, “you (leaving me to assume whom he might think of as ‘us’) do not protect your children better, you just spoil them”. I resist further clarification attempts, smile, and continue my round.

Not what the lecturer and I said to each other, but rather what we did not say, led to miscommunication. His objection reflects widespread hesitations towards child-rights based activities to improve children's well-being in Zanzibar. Instead of responding to what I said, he reacted to what he associated with me saying this: a European-looking woman using the term 'child protection' could only be interested in finding yet another way to prove that what 'they' are doing could not possibly be right. His immediate defence where there had not been an attack, was based on a feeling of moral devaluation that was there well before me. Embodied in the image of me as a 'Western' woman, he suspected the respective discourse and an ethical undertaking. This is what he contested, when he stressed the importance of acknowledging multiple ways of protecting children in different contexts, unknowingly reiterating the point of departure of this research.

In this chapter, I consider the larger structures and discourses in which protection practices are viewed and entangled. Building on the discursive categories that influence child protection reality in Zanzibar (Chapter 3) – Islam, Zanzibari-Swahili 'culture', and aid/government – I explore the hierarchies that structure what I call a 'regime' of protection and how these inevitably link to colonial history (Foucault 1981). Revisiting the 'child protection apparatus' from the perspectives of development workers and government employees, allows us to see where structures collide or function in parallel spheres, and where means of dealing with protection, prevention and response need improvement.

I consider this regime in the context of legal pluralism, with law being a key tool utilised to contest its claim to authority (Foucault 1991). Interrogating the legal frameworks of secular and religious law that child protection moves between in Zanzibar (Abrahams 1941), reflects inherent contradictions and reveals the fragility of the grounds on which protection interventions stand. By recognising Islam's defining power to facilitate change in people's behaviour towards safeguarding children in the archipelago, I consider the rejection of protection programmes as "a distinction from the West" (Twum-Danso Imoh 2012), in regard to religious fundamentalism, 'modernity', and secularisation. This shows that in Zanzibar, child protection programmes are not contested because people disagree that children should not be subjected to violence, but rather because they are inherently seen as

‘owned’ by the ‘West’. This includes a perception as exclusive of ‘non-Western’ cultural and religious values that are crucial for Zanzibari ideas around personhood and morality.

Following Ngugi wa Thiong’o’s (1987) conceptualisation of decolonisation as a form of liberation from ideas enforced upon people to create feelings of inferiority, I consider re-arranging the discursive hierarchies of protection knowledge according to the relevance that protection practitioners attribute to them in Zanzibar. As a different path to ‘liberation’, a decolonisation of current forms of child protection under consideration of more inclusive notions of ‘modernity’ and Islam beyond an identification with secularism or Islamism only, may allow more balanced and less hegemonic interventions (Asad 2003; Abu Lughod 2016 and 2002).

I A Regime of Protection: Identifying Hierarchies of Knowledge

This chapter builds on the assumption that child protection programmes in Zanzibar operate through and are ultimately rejected for the neo-colonial and anti-Islamic connotation they are perceived to carry. Much like “colonialism was about the management of difference – the ‘civilized’ ruling the ‘uncivilized’” (Rao and Pierce 2006: 208), and the history of colonialism being “an inherently corporeal enterprise” (Boddy 2011: 119), child protection interventions are concerned with managing the ways children are chastised and protected. This ‘management’, as initiated through international organisations and implemented in collaboration with local governments, builds on universalised rights frameworks and functions through mechanisms of domination and power that are inherent in the discourses about childhood and protection that it authorises (Foucault 1981).

Instead of being politically neutral, universalisms “were deeply implicated in the establishment of European colonial power” (Tsing 2005: 9). Applying universalised ideas like the CRC in countries of the ‘Global South’ is therefore questionable. Universal reason “was best articulated by the colonizers” in the “matrix of colonialism” and turned into “the mark of temporally dynamic and spatially expansive forms of knowledge and power” (ibid.). The colonised, on the other hand, “were characterized by particularistic cultures” – the particular being “that which

cannot grow” and the universal considered truth- and life-improving for humanity (ibid.). This distinction reflects the knowledge spheres in which child protection negotiations occur in Zanzibar. The hierarchies of knowledge, or ‘regimes of truth’ (Foucault 1977), inherent in child protection politics, function as technologies of control that aim at “administering and producing subjects, citizens” (Augé and Colleyn 2006: 53) that suit to fulfil their policies. If these policies belong to universalised regimes of power and hence to foreign governments, protection attempts become mere undertakings to render children and adults governable by external powers (Foucault 1991).

Abu-Lughod (2002) famously asked whether Muslim women need saving and emphasised the problems inherent in the construction of Afghani women as that. As ‘saving someone’ also implies saving them from ‘something’ (ibid.: 788) and reinforces “a sense of superiority by Westerners”, it must be challenged (ibid.: 789). We should reconsider whether we can only protect Zanzibari children “to be like us”, or whether we need to recognise that “they might want different things than we would want for them” (ibid.: 787). This chapter’s considerations are guided by Abu-Lughod’s emphasis on acknowledging differences and being “respectful of other paths toward social change” that might allow children better lives (ibid.: 788). Central to the discussion is the possibility of such a ‘liberation’ being Islamic (ibid.). In line with Said’s (1978) emphasis on the patronising attitude of the ‘West’ towards African societies, based largely on the assumption that the former is ‘developed’ and rational, I explore the patronising qualities inherent in the rhetoric of ‘saving’, or protecting, children in Zanzibar, and the extent to which this approach requires decolonisation.

Discursive hierarchies

In Zanzibar, child protection is structured by a discursive hierarchy. “The universal reign of the normality” is based on the omnipresence of “judges of normality”, like “the ‘social worker’-judge” or the “teacher-judge” (Foucault 1977: 304). As child protection actors do in Zanzibari society, they prescribe the social laws to be adhered to. A director at the MoESWYWM makes this clear by emphasising the conception of child rights and child protection rhetoric as an external imposition:

First, let's agree that those matters of not hitting children (*kutokupiga watoto*) are European (*ni Ulaya*). And even there it was a process until you reached today's state. Any ideology goes through a process. First, people must understand, agree, be educated about the harms (*athari*) of hitting, and then they can implement (*watekeleze*). Now, we already agreed by ratifying the CRC. We tried to domesticate this in our law. But still the law is yet to be acknowledged and understood at the grassroots level.

Their general support for banning corporal punishment, identified as visible in Tanzania's ratification of the CRC, contrasts with the notion of child protection as an imposition. While the ratification of universal conventions like the CRC by Islamic states is important, "such developments will not necessarily provide more care and protection for children, unless the necessary judicial amendments are made" (Rajabi-Ardeshiri 2009: 488). Particularly in Islamic contexts like Zanzibar, 'successful' child rights promotion requires "amendments to sections of Shariah law which are seen as contradictory to children's rights or that justify privileges for boys over girls" (ibid.). A protection worker at the MoEVT reiterates this, saying that "implementing the programme has been difficult, because our society does not agree with it (*jamii haikubali*)" and echoing that community education must precede programme implementation. Societal approval is important for any programme to be carried out and accepted. "Community members' participation is the foundation (*kitu cha msingi*)", the Head of the Child Protection Unit underlines this. Another MoEVT employee's experience relates to this considering the mistrust and rejection she faces:

In Pemba they even chased me away (*walinifukuza*). 'Go away with your programme! We will hit our children – there is no changing (*hamna kubadilika*). Children are like goats, so we need to hit them.' I was disappointed, but I returned. People in the villages look at me like 'Eh, you! You received money (*ushakula pesa*¹⁰⁹) from the *wazungu* and now you betray us (*unatudanganya*). When there is a *sheikh*, people listen more.

Implementing a programme without civil society support poses a dilemma, and links into the question of ownership. This idea remains with the implementers of such

¹⁰⁹ Lit. 'you have eaten their money'.

activities instead of linking into what local communities identify as important. If this applies, community members might engage in activities solely for the inherent profit, but less for their genuine support of the matter.

Despite my interlocutors' frequent repetition of the dichotomy of 'Western' versus 'Zanzibari' values, there were differences and disagreements within those realms themselves. Local child protection government and aid workers are often perceived as 'Western', for promoting non-vernacular ideas that are considered to lead to decay, or as fraudsters who only work in this field for personal profit. A local activist recalls a school visit: "A child was held over a table by four boys and the teacher was hitting. We could hear the skin going '*ts-ts-ts*' (making a sharp sound with her tongue). When we checked they told us, 'we don't like nosy people, go mind your own people'." A 'they' can equally apply to people of one's own culture or religion, simply for their engagement in other discourses too. A head teacher describes, that "the people of the programme who go to the villages face many challenges, because they say that a child may not be hit (*asipigwe*) at all. But for a person who is used to doing this (*aliyezoea*), they feel those people destroy their tradition (*mila*) and custom (*desturi*)." In Zanzibar, these lie at the intersection of Islam and Zanzibari-Swahili culture (see Chapter 3), in which, too, the notions of *adabu* and *adhabu* exist.

Moral hierarchies

As much as the globalised protection discourse is equated with 'Western' modes of child rearing values, it is also viewed as causing the decay of Zanzibari-Swahili approaches to keep children safe. In Zanzibar, as in other sub-Saharan African countries, the CRC framework is frequently considered an imposition of 'Western' norms and values. Child protection and alternative forms of discipline were often regarded as 'Westernisation' and as resulting in "declining moral standards" that "pose a significant threat especially to the younger generations of the Muslim world" (Mazrui 1986: 19). A director at the MoESWYWC clarifies:

Back in the day it was better, because people just raised their children (*wamelea tu*). Now, we have to teach people how to raise their children, when then they were already doing it. We use our resources to take them back

(*kuwarudisha*) to where they came from. And why? Because globalisation (*utandawazi*) already destroyed (*imeshaporomoka*) our morals (*maadili*).

Zanzibari child rearing and protection ethics are put into question by externally initiated models and programmes that conceptualise childhood and protection based on other places' and people's values. Ahearne recorded similar notions in his work on development (*maendeleo*) and progress in mainland Tanzania, recounting elderly people's views "that the conditions of everyday life have 'gone backwards' (*-rudi nyuma*)" (2016: 78f). This mirrors that the child protection discourse does not face rejection because my interlocutors support violence against children, but instead because it is perceived as defined by the 'West', and not sufficiently inclusive of vernacular cultural and religious norms that define Zanzibari personhood. A visit to Bi Asha, a retired teacher in her early sixties who opened her own nursery, confirms this. After teaching at Zanzibar International School, she decided to open her own institution with lower fees for and in her own neighbourhood:

Discipline is challenging. I try not to use *bakora*. I try the corner, I try shouting. I tell the children to apologise. If that doesn't work, we call the parents. Then they tell us: 'Please use the cane, my child is used to it, they won't understand otherwise'. When I explain that I don't use it at all, people say I raise in a European way (*ninalea kizungu*). They look at me like I am a *mzungu*. But most children are beaten at home and come with marks on their faces. The *madrassa* next door is a lot of trouble. The *ustadh* locks children in the toilet or inside with him to hit them. When I hear them crying I go over and let them out. Now the *ustadh* complains to the community, that if they let me do that, they won't need him as *ustadh* anymore. One girl told me, that when she is hit on her behind she has to pee and can't have other children see that. It is so humiliating. The hitting will go away, but I don't know when.

Bi Asha's use of alternative forms of discipline is associated with a 'Western' or 'European' way of child rearing and rejected respectively. This echoes the objection to other ways of caring for and keeping children safe for their perception as externally imposed. In this regard, ongoing political change and people's behaviour towards children are intertwined, not least concerning an essentialist

conceptualisation of ‘tradition’ in which “change is equated with loss” (Morton 1996: 264). Political changes around rights frameworks and legislation are viewed as a loss of ‘culture’ and ‘morality’ for a simplified perception of ‘Western’ rights standards that contest Islamic values. ‘Western’ style, CRC-oriented socialisation, as criticised by the lawyer at ZU, is “held as a model of the opposite values and practices” (ibid.: 265).

Hierarchies of Belief

The discursive and moral hierarchies that define child protection in Zanzibar are intertwined with a perceived devaluation of Islam. “In the *madrasas* people don’t like to apply the policy and planning for the protection of children. They only refer to the Qur’an to say what applies, even though that might be different to the policy”, an officer at the Department of Women and Children explains. Attempting to elicit this rejection of non-religious policies, a lawyer at the Mufti’s office explains:

The reason is that there is no teacher training college for *madrasa* teachers. We need to introduce minimum teaching qualifications. Teachers play a critical part in the matter of child abuse (*udhalilishaji ya watoto*). In many reported cases, the perpetrators are young teachers (*walimu vijana*), not those with great wisdom (*busara kubwa*). We want them to sit an exam before starting teaching.

For the non-existence of a structural integration of Islam into child protection programming, and into local structures of teacher-training, another *sheikh* echoes, that “*madrasa* teachers have no measure (*kigezo*) of knowing when they hurt (*namwumiza*) the child or not. They don’t get any training.” This lack of teacher training in alternative forms of discipline, and didactics more generally, suggests the potential inherent in focusing on this area.

As in Zanzibar, Muslims often challenge “the legitimacy of modern human rights discourse” by arguing “that human rights are a Western invention and based on a Western discourse” that neglects “cultural specificity of the Muslim world or non-Western cultures in general” (Peters 2005: 174). Nevertheless, that most Muslim states today are signatories to human rights conventions, also reflects their partial

acceptance of universal human rights standards (ibid.). Implementing Positive Discipline without integrating it in teacher trainings or governmental provision of guidelines that explain child discipline, complicates achieving an integrated protection approach. Discussing this with the MoEVT Programme Coordinator for alternative forms of discipline in schools, they explain the ‘best’ ways to implement child protection policy:

In my trainings I bring together *madrassa* and state school teachers with the aim to eliminate (*kuondosha*) corporal punishment. But we don’t call the programme ‘Positive Discipline’ anymore, we call it ‘Islamic Way of Nurturing Children (*malezi kwa njia ya uislamu*)’. Of course, this is still Positive Discipline, but we have turned it around (*tumeigeuza*). We don’t put it open anymore, because people don’t like it (*hawaipendi*), but we use the same technique. Sheikh Mubarak tells people the dangers of beating (*kuwapiga*) children and that people should not punish them (*wasiwaadhibu*). We trained many *madrassa* teachers already. Sheikh Munir from the Teacher Training College also teaches those friendly ways of teaching.

Asking whether renaming the programme took place in cooperation with Save the Children, who together with UNICEF initiated the approach in Zanzibar, she explains:

No, this is all under my department (*idara*), not under Save the Children. The difference between the programmes (*miradi*) is that we don’t like saying things directly. If you say things too directly, like telling a teacher he may not hit, then he won’t agree. Instead we lead them through religion (*tunawazungusha kwenye dini*), we tell them that Muslims are supposed to raise like this and that, and therefore shouldn’t punish their children.

By contextualising globalised approaches to better fit the contexts in which they operate, the possibility of double-structures developing – especially regarding different belief and value systems – is inevitable. It may even increase the difficulties with managing already sensitive approaches in a political field that makes use of them in various ways. In Egypt, Morrison suggested, childhood reforms came largely

“from a resistance to imperialism, specifically the colonial gaze” (2015: 24). Her critique of colonial impositions on parents that dictated “what steps adults need to take to raise a civilized child” (ibid.: 38) aligns with my interlocutors’ discontent with being told how to best care for and protect their children. Considering how the imperial gaze deemed “parents as incapable of raising civilized children” (ibid.: 39) mirrors Zanzibari teachers’ and parents’ rejections of international standards, for the underlying accusation as incapable of protecting children without ‘Western’ instruction of what this should look like. The valuation of perceived “progress and civilization” links to “morals in children’s education so they can become full social adults” (ibid.: 41), which in Zanzibar is determined through acquisition, display and application of *adabu* and *adhabu* (see Chapter 2).

Financial hierarchies

Alongside hierarchical structures of discourse, morality, and belief, my interlocutors emphasised the financial powers that drive protection initiatives in Zanzibar. While child rights organisations were often considered as ‘leading’ protection programmes by participants and collaborators, confusion and disagreement recurred on the side of government actors over the financial responsibility to provide and realise child rights and protection activities. An employee at the Unit for Alternative Discipline underlined this dilemma:

I don’t have any means of transport to reach the schools. This office building (*jengo*) belongs to the government (*serikali*). But all equipment belongs to Save the Children. So, should it be Save the Children or the government who supply transport? The government could do it, but because they already saw that someone [Save the Children] is providing help (*anasaidia*), they won’t.

The dissatisfaction over not being supplied with means to travel to the pilot schools, reflects uncertainties over who is in charge financially. While the government provides structure and space, Save the Children provide input, the programme, including the largest financial portion, and are regarded in the leading role by the government. This also determines whether child protection activities take place at all. The National Children’s Advisory Board (NCAB), for example, “has been looked upon as Save the Children’s advisory board for years”, an employee of the

organisation explains, emphasising the difficulty of creating ownership within the government when activities remain fully financed by parallel structures. “It’s tricky, because if we don’t do it, then there is nothing. But then the kids expect us to carry it and do it,” the aid worker elaborates, suggesting the underlying need to reconsider the extent to which an interest in realising certain agendas even exists.

This financial imbalance is problematic, as relationships between international and local organisations commonly considered as ‘partnerships’ are riven with hierarchy (Hart 2015: 61). While “the former hold the funds, (...) the latter are commonly obliged to operate in line with the plans and wishes coming from above in the manner of a subcontractor rather than a genuine partner” (ibid.). The financial reality of Zanzibari child protection reflects this, and eventually functions in “quasi-colonial terms of engagement” (ibid.). An approach that aims to achieve a decolonisation of international protection systems is therefore necessary.

Ownership and financial power are closely intertwined. In the context of Zanzibar’s child protection programme, international child rights organisations pay 80 to 90 % of the ministries’ budget. Such a financial dependency makes it difficult to identify real motivations of government institutions for collaborating with organisations on matters like child protection and questions what drives such cooperation. “It’s about money, it’s dollar-driven, people are very greedy. They don’t start from within (*hawaanzia ndani*), so they are not serious,” a former teacher at the Zanzibar Teachers’ Union (ZATU) reflects on what he considers the true factors that drive protection initiatives in the archipelago. He continues:

The problem is that the project is not demand driven. It is donor driven. It is not us, the people of Zanzibar, who drive it. Someone from outside (*mtu wa nje*) came with money and the ministers all agreed. But this is not ok because it doesn’t address our most crucial issues. We have other problems – not that of the cane (*siyo ya bakora*). We can do that too, but it must include (*ihusishwe*) everyone. Children themselves don’t appreciate *adabu mbadala*. Noone is ready for it, but the teachers are forced to use it.

His analysis supports the question whether programmes that work on matters possibly not prioritised by local governments, can meet communities' demands for issues considered pressing in a place. The question of ownership also reflects how other components of the activities, that are part of building a national child protection system, are received. An officer at the MoESWYWC, who has done advocacy on child protection since 2005, sees the financial situation similarly, complaining that other ministry departments "don't see the reason for putting aside a budget for children's matters". "In 2011", she remembers, "they tried it with the implementation of the Children's Act, but they didn't reach anywhere (*hawakufikia popote*) because it wasn't costed." Here, the difficulties connected to the disagreement between international non-governmental and national governmental structures regarding financing responsibilities are obvious.

In Zanzibar, child protection functioned as a regime that established hierarchies of knowledge through moral valuation and financial power which were frequently contested according to notions of 'Westernisation', 'modernisation', and secularisation. This occurred even on small-scale levels, like with the example of buying brooms as a form of financial punishment (see Chapter 5). It caused conflict between the aim to implement protection programmes, and how people involved in them perceived these undertakings. Additionally, as outlined in the next section, Zanzibar's legal pluralism complicates this situation.

II An Apparatus between Secular and Religious Law

The legal situation that legitimises both corporal punishment and child protection interventions in Zanzibar contributes to complexities such programmes deal with and objections they face. Zanzibar, like most Islamic countries, has a dual system of law that combines religious and secular legal systems. While secular codes regulate most legal matters, Islamic law is commonly referred to for matters of the "family, marriage, divorce, inheritance and custody" (Hessini 2007: 78). In Islam "morality and the law are strongly intertwined" and "shari'a is best understood as a total discourse informed by religious, legal, moral, economic, and political discourses, all of which shape it reciprocally" (Stockreiter 2015: 2). Unlike uniform and unequivocal formulations of common law or civil law systems, Islamic law "is a

scholarly discourse consisting of the opinions of religious scholars, who argue, on the basis of the text of the Koran, the Prophetic *hadith* and the consensus of the first generations of Muslim scholars, what the law should be” (Peters 2005: 1). *Sharia* law also concerns the care and rights of children¹¹⁰, drawing on the Qur’an as its central source (Rajabi-Ardeshiri 2009: 477). McGillivray put it well: “Law provides an atlas of the child’s body, carving its intimate geography into licit and illicit zones of touch, a ‘narrow girdle’. Like the boundaries of states, the boundaries of the body shift as law’s atlas is revised” (1997: 194). Respectively, law depends on the interpretations applied to the text by Islamic scholars that lead to different opinions on legal matters (see Chapter 7).

The neo-colonial hierarchies that structure Zanzibar’s child protection situation are made more complicated by the legal reality that legitimises protection practices. While the aid discourse is attributed authorising power in the archipelago’s official child protection sphere through international legal frameworks, Zanzibar’s legal system combines “both Islamic law and British common law” (Stiles and Thompson 2015: 7f). The exclusively child rights-based legitimisation of the protection apparatus creates difficulties for implementing protection programmes. They cause contestation for suggesting behaviour that is contrary to and neglects other existing social laws and norms applicable to Zanzibar’s Islamic context. Bi Nuna’s example makes this clear:

We have two sets of law (*sheria*)¹¹¹ – religion and the government – that often contradict (*vinapingana*). It is impossible to adjust them and this is a challenge. Imagine a child wants to get married, but she is only sixteen years old. According to the international definition she is still a child and this marriage would be considered ‘early marriage’. But on another level, she already started menstruating (*ameshavunja ungo*), which means she is of marriageable age. With child rights you can only underline the bad effects of

¹¹⁰ Rajabi-Ardeshiri’s (2009) review of the main Islamic documents that emerged as supplements to the UN Declaration of Human Rights point to the *Declaration on the Rights and Care of the Child in Islam* (Casablanca, 1994) as well as the *Rabat Declaration on Child’s Issues* (2005).

¹¹¹ Whereas legally the age of consented marriage is eighteen, girls can get married at the age of fifteen with their parents’ consent. According to Islamic law, marriage is possible from the age of nine.

child marriage but in the end it is her decision if she gets married and no one can be sued for it.

Child protection actors build their interventions on universalised rights frameworks, without sufficiently considering the complex legal reality that rules in Zanzibar. Despite the intended universal applicability of legal frames like the CRC, everyday reality in Zanzibar is defined by legal pluralism that combines common, *Sharia* law and other social norms, for “law is whatever people identify and treat through their social practices as ‘law’” (Tamanaha 2000: 313). Institutional operations to regulate children’s protection are conditioned by this multiplicity of norms. Regarding this complexity, a “post-colonial critique” of human rights has been deemed necessary, for example through a “re-reading of human rights in post-colonial Africa by observing how ordinary people import, recast and produce ideas of human rights in their life worlds” (Akoth 2014: 94). This suggestion aligns with my consideration to critique rights-based approaches in post-colonial states from ‘within’ the system where they are applied. The accusation, that “the human rights discourse is one of power, the aim of which is the control and manipulation of knowledge and, ultimately, society” (ibid.: 101) echoes the concerns many research participants expressed. The demand for “multiple vocality in the documenting and reading of human rights” (ibid.: 103) would equally support the decolonisation of child protection interventions in Zanzibar.

My research participants identified tension in the fact that child protection programmes intend to replace the use of corporal punishment, while at the same time there is no legal ban of the practice in Zanzibar. The teacher at ZATU expressed his discontent with the Positive Discipline programme, claiming: “The project is hypocritical (*unafiki*). If the ministry truly intends to stop corporal punishment, why have they not changed the regulations (*kufuta kanuni hii*)? The Heads of the ministry themselves want the cane/corporal punishment to continue (*bakora inedelee*).” Sheikh Mundhir at the Mufti’s office emphasises similarly, that “laws have to change (*sheria zibadilike*), be enforced (*isimamiwe*) and implemented (*itekelezwe*), and teachers and parents must be ready to embrace these changes (*kupokea mabadiliko*)”. Echoing this call for adults to take responsibility, another rights activist stresses, “we can’t be role models, if we beat our own children in our homes”. As much as my

interlocutors supported limiting corporal punishment and agreed on the primary need for the law to change, they underlined that simply changing legislation is insufficient to change people's behaviour. For practices to change, people must adhere to regulations and laws and stop finding ways around them that enable a continuation of the practice.

Child protection programmes that try to ban a practice that officially is not illegal, inevitably face challenges. According to Peters, "Sharia criminal law as applied today is in conflict with human rights standards" regarding, amongst other areas, "the ban on cruel, degrading or inhuman punishment", "the principle that all persons are equal before the law", as well as children's basic right "not to be subjected to the death penalty, life imprisonment and cruel, degrading or inhuman punishment" (2005: 174f). Regarding that "the prevailing interpretation of cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment is that it includes all forms of corporal punishment" (ibid.: 175f), suggests that "corporal punishment is inconsistent with the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment or punishment" (ibid.). Islamic guidelines on the appropriate use of physical chastisement therefore oppose CRC-based conceptions (see also Chapter 7).

"In the beginning, there was neither a law (*sheria*), nor a policy (*sera*), nor any guidelines (*mwongozo*). We started from zero, until we came to where we are today", an MoESWYWC staff reflects. The Children's Act of 2011 was the first legal amendment in the direction of decreasing violence against children. While it does not forbid the use of corporal punishment, it includes a reasonable chastisement clause, that forbids the infliction of cruel, inhumane or degrading punishment on a child, while allowing chastisement for disciplinary purposes at a 'reasonable' level. The lack of an explicit law against caning and missing official criteria for determining what reasonable chastisement is, influences attempts to regulate caning through parallel structures like international development. As early as during the drafting process of the Children's Act, this impact showed. A non-Zanzibari development worker explains:

We started with a zero-draft. Across the board, corporal punishment was a red flag issue. So we decided to not address it head on through a ban. This would

have potentially compromised the whole piece of work: laying a legislative framework for the establishment of a national system to respond to children in need of care and protection.

This view on the non-existence of a definite law to ban physical chastisement in Zanzibar is based on experiences from elsewhere. In many European, or common law countries, where the practice is banned today, initially only provisions on banning inhuman, degrading, and cruel punishment existed. This, over time, decreased the level of acceptance regarding what constituted ‘reasonable’ punishment and ultimately resulted in the possibility to include any sort of physical violence in it. Child protection actors’ aims to prepare the grounds for a legislative framework in Zanzibar build on these experiences. Continuing his elaboration, he critically reflects on the initial attempt to approach the matter more directly:

In the earliest draft, which was a mistake in retrospect, there was a provision prohibiting corporal punishment explicitly. This became the lightning rod for all kinds of reactions and oppositions to having an act. It would have been better to not have it in the draft but to talk about it and suggest it as a possibility to include instead.

To start the overall process of limiting the use of the cane by openly making this the aim of the initiative was not well-received and complicated steps towards achieving the goal of child protection initiatives. A European aid worker with another organisation reflects on the situation similarly, telling me, they anticipated a possible legal reform in 2020, “maybe a referendum or an amendment to the current Children’s Act”. They add that it “needs to be made explicit saying any form of physical and humiliating punishment (PHP), because so many parents don’t consider corporal punishment as abuse”. This call for the need of a more explicit ban of any potentially harmful form of child discipline, but only upon the moment of a referendum or amendment to the current Act, supports the view, that to eventually achieve full prohibition, this sensitive matter is better approached indirectly, by first amending people’s tolerance levels to certain forms of behaviour and in the course of that changing what practices are regarded acceptable.

Alongside the non-existence of an explicit legal ban of corporal punishment, the continuing existence and operation of other older rules and regulations mattered. “Many old acts that have not been abolished, so the court can use them all. It’s a law pluralism”, an officer at the Department of Women and Children explains. The Education Act of 1988’s Corporal Punishment Regulations are a good example for such older legal guidelines, that contradict with the aim of new legal frameworks like the Children’s Act. The flexibility of semi-legal regulations, like the Corporal Punishment Regulations and their openness to individual interpretation, was equally stressed as a non-coherent factor in the process of legal change.

The extent to which these regulations can be outdone is amplified when a headmaster at one of my research schools tells me, “only when the headmaster isn’t feeling well or is busy, and an incident has already occurred, they allow another teacher to deal (*amshughulikie*) with that student and use the cane.” Inquiring on the possibility of transferring the exclusive right to chastise from headmasters to other teachers, my interlocutor explains: “This is because our tradition (*mila*) teaches us that a child is raised (*analelewa*) by the whole society. A teacher is like a parent (*mzazi/mlezi*). He takes the responsibility (*jukumu*) of being with the child and correcting them (*kuwarekebisha*).” Recalling the social norm of community child rearing (*malezi ya jamii*), in which all adults are responsible for assuring children’s manners (*adabu*) and protection, the cultural discourse is used to justify interpretations of legal guidelines.

The discontent with legal flexibility and room for interpretation over chastisement regulations was echoed by some of my students at ZU. Discussing with them a government campaign to stop violence against women and children, which was launched in December 2015, they claimed “it’s good to be looking at these things, but the law (*sheria*) has to change first. There is still too much bribing. Even if the *sheria* is there, there are too many ways around the system so that cases don’t get followed up properly.” Particularly their emphasis on ‘ways around the system’, or alternative approaches to dealing with cases of violence, are relevant in assessing what legal change can do when it operates in an environment in which other forces of settling conflict may be more powerful.



Figure 8.1. A group of demonstrating women and children during the launch of the national campaign to stop violence against women and children, 2015.

Much like the non-contingent adherence to existing regulations, there is confusion with local protection actors who navigate their identities between the globalised and Zanzibari discourses on child protection, all to some extent part of their work and lives. A former teacher and now child protection actor himself, sees the conflict inherent in him moving between these discursive spheres: “If you ask me as a teacher, when is it ok to hit a child – only when children fight with each other or a teacher. But if you ask me as a child protection worker – there is no situation when a child can be beaten at school because all can be resolved.” Despite generally disapproving of normalised physical chastisement, he is caught between opposite positions, as he struggles to acknowledge only one discourse to define what is best to do.

The question of legal agreement over which rules to follow regarding physical chastisement regulations touches on the dynamic of the secular and the *Sharia* and what is considered appropriate to legislate on. In this regard children’s rights legislation was opposed by religious leaders, who saw Islamic regulations compromised for universalised rights approaches. This opposition of socio-cultural

and religious justification in support of the practice and the global child protection discourse is at the heart of insufficient legal agreement over the question of corporal punishment and runs through all implementation levels. Rights-based protection interventions against physical chastisement were contested for being understood as anti-Islamic and people's trust in religious authorities and guidelines frequently outweighed their trust in government structures and activities. This is not surprising considering that government ministries are largely financed by international development budgets, that are viewed as promoting 'Western' discourses that result in decay of Zanzibari morals.

Considering the impact of Islam and Islamic law on everyday life, the collaboration with religious leaders and integrating Islamic approaches to keeping children safe was considered particularly important. A child protection activist explained: "You can work with or against religion. In Afghanistan we even changed the law. If you get these religious guys behind you, it's a massive step. Working with the Qur'an is key, because that is the language people understand here. Not CRC articles – that doesn't work." That some controversial human rights claims, that presume "too 'thick' a conception of the human good", will inevitably be rejected, and particularly outside the "developed world" (Appiah 2005: 260f), proved true for Zanzibar considering the compatibility of the rights to participation and protection (Chapter 6). While some Islamic authorities – like Sheikh Mubarak – worked with the ministries in charge of implementing the national child protection system, gaining religious leaders' support was generally regarded challenging. An MoEVT Positive Discipline coordinator emphasises:

Working with religious leaders is a challenge. Muslims (*waislamu*) say that religion says a child should be smacked (*mtoto achapwe*). In some places people even said – 'you are a *kafir*, you are against God and our religion'. Working with *sheikhs* helps because many people reason with religion. When they say religion disagrees, because it tells us to hit (*inasema tupige*), he tells them 'No!' and provides evidence from the Qur'an. It is important to work with *sheikhs* and the Mufti's office, they understand society best. When a *sheikh* says something, people believe it.

As previously discussed, *sheikhs* who support the child protection agenda were able “to make people understand that in Islam there is a process before hitting (*kabla ya kupiga*)”, Khalid from the Unit for Alternative Discipline emphasises. Establishing processes for hitting helps to decrease tolerance levels of what forms of physical chastisement are considered acceptable. Nevertheless, other research participants, such as another head teacher, argued that: “Particularly at *madrassa* it is completely impossible to fully abolish it (*kuiondosha*). You can decrease it (*kuipunguza*), but eliminating it is not easy. In a Muslim household (*nyumba ya mwislamu*), there has to be a cane (*lazima iwe na bakora ndani*). That’s why people oppose this programme.” The importance of focusing on the religious discourse and its actors was particularly evident, while simultaneously viewing the complications inherent in this approach. Viewing existing hierarchies of protection practice in light of neo- and post-colonial undertakings, and in the context of legal pluralism, leads me to outline what a re-arrangement of hierarchies of protection knowledge – a decolonisation of the child protection apparatus – may mean in the context of notions of ‘Westernisation’, secularisation and ‘modernity’.

III Decolonising Child Protection: Re-arranging Protection Discourses

Outlining the current conditions of the child protection regime in Zanzibar through the eyes of child protection policy makers and implementers at NGO and governmental level helped to consider how “reality, in sum, had been colonized by the development discourse” (Escobar 1995: 5). Regarding the fragile legal situation, that protection interventions build on to legitimise interventions, reflects my interlocutors’ discontent with rights-based approaches that exclude religious and socio-cultural norms as they exist in Zanzibar. While recognising the importance of a basic legal foundation for child protection, “the assumption that law and enforcement should be the primary structure through which the protection of children operates is highly debatable” (Bourdillon and Myers 2012b: 615). Following this while thinking about decolonising children’s protection, I support the need to shift the emphasis “from law and normative standards, to community and social relationships as the centre of protective effort” (ibid.). This relational approach aligns with Zanzibari children’s realities that define them as social beings and becomings, as discussed in Chapter 1.

In my attempt to more justly acknowledge multiple ways of being and knowing and to carefully build “pluriversal dialogue that is neither embedded in culturalism nor absolute particularism, but in the realization that multiple loci of enunciation coexist and are entangled through the colonality of knowledge, being and power” (Schultz 2017: 139), the specific value of children’s knowledge concerning their own lives and safety is central. If, before anything, decoloniality means “to listen carefully”, it also means understanding “how to become a better ally to those who are directly exposed to the everyday realities of coloniality” (ibid.). Learning from Zanzibari children and adults themselves about how to protect children best in their specific environments and in collaboration with them is therefore indispensable (see Chapter 3). While legal systems can contribute to assuring respectful interactions and feelings of equality between people in communities, they might also do the opposite and decrease respect and equality and cause conflict, if the plurality of legal approaches intertwined in them collides. Exploring the “internal logic of the aid apparatus” (de Waal 2002: 265) through the contradictions that exist within it, visualises possibilities to improve it.

Possible ways to decolonise the child protection apparatus, or to make it a less – even if unintentionally so – imperialistic undertaking, should include both aspects that define decolonisation: the liberation from suppressive thought and the freeing from political-economic dependency. What would child protection reality have to look like to make the lawyer’s claim in the opening vignette – that ‘we’ “do not protect our children better”, but in fact “just spoil them” – obsolete? Re-arranging protection discourses without validating only one discourse as dominant and authorising, could prevent contesting other modes of knowledge.

Decolonising child protection thinking

Decreasing hierarchies of language and discourse

According to Mudimbe, “missionary discourses on Africans were powerful” because “they were both signs and symbols of a cultural model (...) constituting a kind of knowledge” (1988: 57). Following this, a decolonised approach to child protection practice should begin with equally valuating different systems of thought and by “divesting African [philosophical] thinking of all undue influences emanating from

our colonial past” (Wiredu 1998: 17). Frequently regarded as a ‘Western’¹¹² kind of knowledge and an imposed external cultural model of caring for and protecting children, the global child protection discourse operates as in Mudimbe’s analysis. The power with which the protection discourse operates, excluded other modes of protection based on religious and ‘cultural’ reasoning, although in Zanzibar all categories co-exist and carry relevance. To prevent Zanzibaris from perceiving child protection interventions as shaping reality into foreign cultural models, approaches should include Zanzibari-Swahili understandings of protection. Utilising or deliberately silencing some knowledge sources on childhood and protection, discipline and punishment, constructs cultural identities in imperialist ways.

In child protection, as in other areas of development intervention, reformers “remain entangled in the principles and ideas upon which it was founded” and which originate in the European Enlightenment, “in which rationality, the search for objective truth, and a belief in a movement towards modernity are paramount” (Crewe and Harrison 1998: 15). To break with the “discursive regimes” (Foucault 1981: 53) that naturalise, normalise, and shape how we think about children and their protection and define what forms of behaviour are considered appropriate towards them (Axelby and Crewe 2013: 12), protection programming should acknowledge itself as a “historically produced discourse” (Escobar 1995: 6). This may help Zanzibari government staff and child protection policy makers regain power over how child rearing and protection are defined and allow to construct vernacular models less perceived as mediated by non-Zanzibari knowledge and history. Otherwise certain forms of subjectivity as fostered through this discourse will remain considered as externally imposed (ibid.: 10).

Neo-colonial connotations of international development are difficult to avoid. Attempting to ‘remake’ child protection standards in the ‘South’ by drawing on standards of the ‘West’, inevitably provokes dissatisfaction with those targeted. Instead of ‘remaking’ others’ values and standards – much like with *adabu* that can imply someone’s inner strength to discipline one’s behaviour – child protection interventions might benefit from drawing on less passive approaches of ‘remaking oneself’. As “everyone has their own way of changing”, it is important to avoid

¹¹² ‘Western’, here, encompasses government workers too, as well as African urban elites.

impositions of thought, for “nothing is more arrogant than trying to dictate to others” (Foucault 2000: 444). Regardless, child protection actors are often perceived as “ideological traffic police” (ibid.) that dictate the change they expect to see. To explain how situations of globalised and socio-cultural views collide, it is necessary to rearrange, or flatten, the prevailing protection discourse’s hierarchy by acknowledging the existence and relevance of different values and norms. Actively including socio-cultural imaginations of how young people’s safety and protection can be achieved, may contribute to more robust and situationally sensitive approaches to child protection that balance hierarchies by integrating values and ideas of both the Zanzibari-Swahili world and the international domain.

Allowing ‘other’ (Muslim) modernities

Child protection programmes against corporal punishment in Zanzibari schools are rejected as an opposition to having an external ‘modernity’ imposed and as a claim to a ‘home-grown’ form of social change. Unlike in Japan, where the official ban of corporal punishment in schools reflects the search of global acceptance as a ‘modern’ and ‘civilised’ nation (Miller 2013), in Zanzibar, the opposite holds true. Here, corporal punishment is still not officially banned in schools precisely because of a vernacular claim to ‘modernity’ and ‘civilisation’ which is grounded in Islamic values and philosophy and contradicts secular universalised rights frameworks.

In Zanzibar, like Last noted for Nigeria, people’s “reluctance to adopt (or adapt to) new styles of child punishment” is part of people’s general doubts “about the modern, urban-centred world and some of its ways” (2000: 360). Recalling the idea of ‘multiple modernities’ (Comaroff and Comaroff 1993) as the “continual constitution and reconstitution of a multiplicity of cultural programs” (Eisenstadt 2000: 2) in which “modernity and Westernization are not identical” (ibid.: 2f) should be the starting point for reconceptualisations of protection programmes. To decrease objections against child protection programmes, impositions of ‘Western’ modernities should be avoided, but instead represent part of Zanzibar’s own ‘progress’ and change that supports “an equality of intelligences” (Biehl 2014: 106).

Similar to attempts to ban child labour, child protection interventions against corporal punishment have become a “measurement of modernity” (Axelby and

Crewe 2013: 118; Nieuwenhuys 1994) – a ‘Western’ modernity. Conceiving of child protection as a form of modernisation, suggests a linear, directional approach to social change that builds on ‘Global North’ norms that must be reached in ‘Global South’ contexts. According to Caplan’s work in Mafia Island, concepts of ‘modernity’ in a Swahili-speaking realm are defined, amongst other things, by notions of *kwenda na wakati* (to go with the time), implying a change in a society’s values, and *wafadhili* (donors), regarding development aid (2009: 214). Her interlocutors’ accounts of a feeling of *hatari* (risk/danger) of being excluded from *maendeleo* (development/progress), and of a “loss of culture” through foreign influences (ibid.: 219) resemble my own interlocutors’ emotions regarding child protection interventions’ potential to result in moral decay. To mitigate such fears and enable non-generalised and non-imperialist ways of *kwenda na wakati* and *maendeleo*, ‘other’ modernities should be allowed.

As Zanzibar’s everyday reality is structured predominantly by Muslim thought, so will any processes of change. Despite both *Sharia* law and common law applying in Zanzibar, social norms and values in society are and will remain inevitably interwoven with Islam. The perception of protection approaches opposing Islamic ideals causes the conception of their incompatibility with pious Zanzibaris’ notions of childhood socialisation. In her work on children’s agency and Islam, Habashi argues that “the agency of religion as resistance that provides an opportunity for both solidarity throughout the world, and resistance of globalized hegemony. (...) Religion as resistance parallels and responds to global power. It is a tool to give voice to the oppressed” (2011: 142). Following this, it holds close, that my interlocutors’ objecting reasoning with Islam also poses an opportunity for resisting hegemony through globalised aid regimes.

“We need to raise awareness with teachers by using the Qur’an and the *hadith*. Thereby we can look at the Qur’an not as traditional but also as modern”, an officer at the Department of Women and Children stresses. Conceptualising ‘modernity’ through, and not exclusive of, the Qur’an and Islamic values by integrating Islamic notions of child rearing into approaches to better protect children, may help manage people’s rejections of frameworks that refrain from doing this sufficiently. That Zanzibari Muslims “strive to be both modern and Muslim” shows in the relevance

they attribute to certain forms of knowledge and education, “as well as in what they conceive as their specifically Islamic responses to ‘neoliberal’ economic forms and practices” (Marsden and Retsikas 2013: 20). Being Muslim and being modern may therefore not oppose each other, but should be acknowledged in its own entanglement.

An anthropological reconsideration of internationally prescribed so-called modernities like child protection, in Zanzibar should include Islamic ways of being that allow and enable alternative conceptualisations of progress (Appadurai 2004; Sahlins 2002). As modernity may mean many things, “from owning a radio to speaking English” (Crewe and Harrison 1998: 134), practically this could redirect child protection programmes to also work with teachers in *madrasas*. Despite the aid discourse’s dominance within the realm of child protection, working with and through religious leaders and structures contributes to driving societal change concerning children’s safety. Excluding Islamic and other vernacular understandings of protecting children from child protection programming, leads to their exclusion from concepts of ‘modernity’ as to be considered as ‘traditional past’ incompatible with ‘developmental futures’.

Decolonising child protection political economy

Systematically decolonising child protection should also include decreasing Zanzibar’s economic dependency of international organisations’ child protection budgets. To increase local ownership over programmes that work to improve children’s lives, the Zanzibari government’s financial dependency should be lessened. A child protection system’s effectiveness, local ownership over programmes, and programmes responding to actual demand should be reconsidered if its mechanisms and institutions run exclusively on external financial support. If ‘Westernisation’ happens without ‘modernisation’, as Mazrui argued happens in Africa, the mere introduction of new frameworks takes place without assuring their content is ‘modern’ too (1986: 201). Following this, newly introduced child protection structures like Save the Children’s ‘systems approach to child protection’, that have been considered ‘successful’ elsewhere, may become empty packaging. “The tension between new imported structures and old resilient cultures” is due to European colonial rule having been “more effective in destroying indigenous African

structures than in destroying African *culture*” (ibid: 20). In Zanzibar, too, ‘Western’ protection structures may define the creation of a social welfare system, but not the religio-cultural content that people consider relevant to fill these structures with.

Otherwise, international child rights organisations potentially disempower local actors and civil society ownership regarding child protection matters, for their financial and influential monopoly allows little space for less financially influential but equally important initiatives. If government bodies rely almost entirely on external funding to undertake protection interventions, the formation of a civil society that actively demands and implements change is not supported. Strengthening civil society is difficult, if there are too many links between so-called non-governmental organisations and the government, and hence relationships that define the form that initiatives take. Accountability that prevents nepotism and hence the mixing of private and political interests is problematic if civil society, as in Zanzibar, is rather weak.¹¹³

Towards secularisation?

While child protection programmes should not imply ‘Westernisation’, Zanzibari-Muslim alternatives may neither translate into Islamic fundamentalism. In a contemporary approach to interpreting the Qur’an, “Muslim feminists are not interested in casting religion and scripture aside” but “their most important tool is the Qur’an itself and sustained arguments about how it should be read” (Saeed 2006: 23). Innovative ways to approach, interpret and understand the Qur’an are needed for contemporary issues “such as human rights, women’s rights” and “the relationship of Muslims to non-Muslims” (ibid.: 149). Child protection activists, who support minorities like children in a feminist manner, should make use of the Qur’an and of Islamic law, in ways that fully support the protection of children.

Nevertheless, making Islam a central tool and framework for child protection interventions and promoting children’s rights, incorporates both possibilities and dangers (Kirmani and Phillips 2011: 87). Falling “into polarizations that place feminism on the side of the West” (Abu-Lughod 2002: 788) should be avoided.

¹¹³ In Zanzibar, the post-revolution situation until today directly links to the fear and mistrust in the government that prevails in society.

Using Islamic approaches and working with religious leaders as educators on children's rights issues offers a way "of deflecting accusations of taking a 'Western' or anti-Muslim approach" to children's rights, and is important and often inevitable in countries "in which part or all of the legal system is based on particular interpretations of sharia" (ibid.: 93). Instead of prescribing "religious-based solutions", children's rights advocates should create spaces for dialogue about these issues (Kirmani and Phillips 2011: 97). A sole focus on religion as a primary means of promoting children's rights may deny the complexities of social relations just like exclusively secular frameworks, and disable "space for non-religious or secular approaches" (ibid.).

Drawing on the example of the 'inoculation' of Saudi Arabian children against 'Westernisation', atheism, liberalism and secularism, a recent article in the *Independent*, discussed what a purely Islamic reconceptualisation of child protection could look like (Dearden 2016)¹¹⁴. In Saudi Arabia, like in Zanzibar, the above categories are perceived as threats to 'ideological security'. Following this perception, in 2015 the government launched a project to "protect schoolboys and schoolgirls from deviant behaviour" by enforcing religious and moral values. This translation of a child protection programme into what children are locally perceived in need of being protected from reflects recent developments in Zanzibar. The perceived need to cultivate Arab and Islamic values is reinforced through the education system that aims to "mould children to be 'useful' in society". Considering human rights and child rights standards, and protection programmes based on them, such developments have been viewed as alarming and as threats to liberal thought. Saudi Arabia using "'immorality' laws to crack down on feminist and reformist writing" reflects, despite to a lesser extent, current developments in the archipelago.

In the post-colonial period "Islamic discourses on education are simultaneously linked to processes of both Westernization and modernization", in which the power of definition and providing orientation is increasingly linked to the secular dialectics of development as defined by Northern America and Europe (Loimeier 2009: 529).

¹¹⁴ <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/saudi-arabia-islam-inoculate-children-education-against-westernisation-atheism-liberalism-secularism-a7478761.html> [Accessed: 3 January 2017]

The rejection of rights-based protection programmes for oppositions against external processes of ‘modernisation’ and Islam’s perceived loss of authority in the governance of social life, must therefore be viewed in connection to secularism, which is “centrally located in ‘modernity’” (Asad 2003: 12). Considering laws on the use of corporal punishment as “a shifting geo jurisprudence of licit and illicit body contacts” which “fundamentalist religious groups” (McGillivray 1997: 211) made particular use of, emphasises the dangers of exclusively religious frameworks to promote children’s safety and well-being. The danger of Islamic approaches turning into “Islamic Fundamentalism” (Parkin 1995: 201), fuelled by “the hegemony of tourism” (Keshodkar 2013: 165) and religious revival with new forms of Islamic involvement (Turner 2009: 239) may otherwise become an “alternative modernity” (ibid.: 258) that is equally exclusive of secular ideas.

Child protection interventions build on secular norms and values, but secularism itself can effect exclusion (Asad 2003). This happens with programmes that move child and family matters out of Zanzibar’s religious private into secular public spaces. Like child protection interventions, secularism “presupposes new concepts of ‘religion,’ ‘ethics,’ and ‘politics,’ and new imperatives associated with them” (ibid.: 1f). Social norms – such as the acquisition and display of *adabu* – that constitute Zanzibari culture, are excluded by suggesting replacing them with ‘alternatives’ (*adabu mbadala*). While in a technical, secular, development context, ‘alternatives’ to *adabu* may be imaginable, they are not thinkable to be replaced by external impositions in Zanzibar.

As child protection interventions are part of a ‘modernity project’ “that certain people in power seek to achieve” and that “aims at institutionalizing a number of (...) principles” (2003: 13), like human rights and civil equality, the role of religion must be acknowledged. Mahmood’s development of Asad’s argument shows how modern secular governance exacerbated religious tensions and inequalities rather than reduced them and contributed to “hardening interfaith boundaries and polarizing religious differences” (2016: 1). Finally, this happens with insufficiently contextualised child protection interventions in Zanzibar – they further the growth of an Islamic opposition and of religious tension that builds on simplified, binary notions of the ‘Muslim world’ versus the ‘West’.

Secularism “emanates, in part, from the structure of the modern liberal state” (ibid.: 2). As a force in the creation of religious strife and child protection interventions, the aim “to create a body politic in which all its members are equal before the law” (ibid.) is difficult in contexts where liberalism is not perceived, for example, in participation but rather located in silence. Particularly secularism’s aim “to reorganize substantive features of religious life, stipulating what religion is or ought to be” (ibid.: 3) inevitably faces rejection, if this process is perceived as external. Secularism as a “discursive operation of power” (ibid.) generates and establishes the boundaries of the public, private, political, and religious spheres. This is problematic as in the postcolony being “entwined with the history of power inequalities between the West and non-West, not least because many of its signature concepts, institutions, and practices were introduced through (direct or indirect) colonial rule” (ibid.: 10f). This is inevitably true for child protection programmes in Muslim contexts like Zanzibar, which must negotiate the intertwinedness and frequent collision of religious and secular ideas in its approaches, unintentionally making the power of religion “more, rather than less, important to the identity of the majority and minority populations” (ibid.: 15) and risking new radicalised and exclusive misinterpretations.

Conclusion

Considering the need to decolonise the child protection apparatus had me unravel the hierarchies my research participants identified in the knowledge operation of the system. It led me to consider re-arranging these hierarchies in order for child protection interventions to improve and function on less hegemonic terms. Such re-arranging should be led by actors within Zanzibari society and cannot be achieved by outsiders. In Chapter 9, which also serves as the conclusion, I summarise what this may entail. A consideration of protection interventions’ legal situation that is torn between common and *Sharia* law, showed the fragile grounds these programmes build on. This exploration made clear that rejections of child protection programmes that support the use of alternative forms of discipline, do not immediately express an indifference concerning Zanzibari children’s safety and well-being, but must rather be understood as a distinction from the ‘West’ in light of moral hierarchies and claims to ‘modernity’, that are insufficiently inclusive of Islamic understandings of progress and change, and eventually of growing up in Zanzibar.

CHAPTER 9

Understanding Well-being, Remaking Respect: Towards Better Protection of Children



“My sister in law cares for two of her sister’s children, Mohammed (2) and Arif (4). Once I asked Arif if he was happy and he started crying. He said, ‘she beats me, I don’t want to live here anymore, I want to go home’. Arif showed me the hatred against his aunt and opened up when I asked. This situation happens to so many children. It is hidden in their heart but they usually don’t get the chance to talk about it. So, what children learn is, ‘when I’m going to be an adult I

will treat my children the same way because that is the way I was treated'. And my in-law said the same thing when I asked her: 'This is the way I was brought up, it is the only way I know how to raise a child'." (Interview with a local child protection worker, Stone Town, March 2015)

This thesis is a collection of perspectives on "the relationships between policy discourse and field practice" (Mosse 2005: 2) in the context of child protection interventions in Zanzibar through an anthropological lens. It has shown that child protection is a complex and contextually specific phenomenon, and a "slippery concept" (Montgomery 2015: 14) entangled in local and global ecologies of care, networks of authorisation and universal discourses of rights. In this final chapter, I return to the aim of my findings to contribute to both the anthropology and the policy field of child protection. As a way of concluding, I draw together the strings of knowledge I spun throughout this thesis and which were reflected in each chapter's opening vignettes – ethics/morality, childhood, socialisation, discursive power, the body, violence, discipline, participation, gender, Islam, law, and 'modernities'. Each story I re-told intentionally reflected the often confusing and non-immediate comprehensiveness of the reality of childhood and child protection in Zanzibar as viewed from all relevant angles involved.

After exploring and drawing some conclusions about hierarchies of adult knowledge in Chapter 8, this concluding section of the thesis does the same for children's knowledge and opinions. I revisit one of the central themes that reoccurred throughout children's accounts – the 'nation of tomorrow' – to view protection practices as ultimately affecting children's futures and general well-being in society. I consider the changes child protection programmes effect in Zanzibar's moral landscape, by returning to the roles of manners (*adabu*), respect (*heshima*) and empathy in children's lives (see Chapter 2), and the qualities of protection that are health and well-being (see Chapter 3). I draw out the links between them by recalling children's and adults' conceptualisations of protection. Returning to children's ideas helps to fully reconstruct the ethical landscape in which questions of chastisement and protection exist in Zanzibar. As a starting point for these final considerations, and in hindsight of drawing things to a close, I put the concept of protection back

into the earliest discussions of respect. This allows us to view processes of punishment and protection in relation to another essential quality to life in Zanzibar. By considering children's ideas about the future, I view respect on a broader societal level, and in close connection to Islamic practice.

To be able to judge “in a morally and politically informed way, even those practices we consider objectionable” – like the continuous use of corporal punishment and objections towards programmes that try to ban it – we must consider “the desires, motivations, commitments, and aspirations of the people to whom these practices are important” (Mahmood 2001: 225). As Zanzibari children and adults understand protection in multiple ways but always primarily in relation to these concepts, I build on these ideas to tentatively suggest rethinking protection approaches against chastisement that might contest *adabu* and *heshima* in regard to young people's conception of the ‘future’. Sticking to the transposition from medical anthropology to see children as diagnosticians, this directs my conclusions. It finally leads me to consider some possible recommendations for the policy field of child protection that might enable a better suited and situationally sensitive and fluid approach in the archipelago. In a way that is continuous with what children and adults have said, I propose four essential focus areas for innovation: assuring health and well-being; guaranteeing parental and community care; preventing violence and poverty; and upholding Islamic morality and norms.

I Building “the Nation of Tomorrow” through Well-being and Respect

*Mtoto umleavyo
ndiyo hivyo akuavyo
Wazazi tusiende ovyo
taifa litapotea.*

As you raise a child
So they become
Parents let's not go away
Or the nation will be lost.

*Watoto ni zao letu
ndio tegemeo letu
Ambalo taifa letu
Kesho linategemea.*

Children are our crop
We depend on them
Our nation
Tomorrow, depends on them.

What Nadra (13) makes clear in these verses of her poem, is the important role that children play for the ‘nation of tomorrow’, and how this largely depends on how children are treated by adults. “How people function and relate to others, as much as

what they have, or how they report their well-being at a single moment in time” (Camfield, Streuli and Woodhead 2009: 98) is all part of the concept of well-being, which I turn to in this final discussion. Considering the question, how we might more effectively protect children, I take as a starting point Bourdillon and Myers’ suggestion to “replace the concept of ‘protection’ with the idea of promoting well-being and development, drawing on assets that may inhere in the situation” (2012b: 619)¹¹⁵. As children depend on others for their well-being (Lancy 2015: 7), children’s relationships need to be taken seriously (Stevenson and Worthman 2014: 487) in attempts to guarantee their protection and general well-being in Zanzibar.

To avoid that too narrow conceptions of ‘protection’ (Bourdillon and Myers 2012b: 613) cause children problems in the context of child protection programmes, I turn to the metaphor of children being the ‘nation of tomorrow’, which was another recurring theme my young interlocutors used to express why they should be protected and cared for. This allows us to understand child protection as a discussion about children’s futures, which they should not be excluded from. Thinking about the effects of corporal punishment and child protection in terms of children’s own futures and their well-being, which in Zanzibar includes becoming responsible, respectful, well-mannered, pious people, enables us to restrain from reflecting on their lives the concerns of adults that tend to victimise them and view them as lacking agency.

The multiple facets of ‘child well-being’ and the idea’s breadth and heterogeneity “is illustrated in human rights treaties” (Ben-Arieh et al. 2014: 1) like the CRC. The rights enshrined there are considered to create “well-being or opportunities for well-being, referring to the quality of children’s lives economically and emotionally” (ibid.) and were reflected in the various demands and views my young interlocutors voiced. Additionally, well-being is conceptually related to health (Morrow and Boyden 2014). While ‘health’, in its broadest sense, describes a state of “complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not the mere absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO 1948), ‘care’ can be understood as looking after people with the aim to assure their well-being in society. Following this, I echo critiques of the

¹¹⁵ Their claim echoes human development and capability approaches that build on the direct improvement of life quality (Sen 1999; Nussbaum 2011).

“organisational tendency to define ‘child protection’ as a discrete policy or programme area, separated from health, education, and other development-oriented activities” that encourages “single-issue approaches that by addressing a particular ill in isolation only generate new ones in different areas of children’s lives” (Bourdillon and Myers 2012b: 614). By understanding what well-being means to children in Zanzibar and what it does in terms of ‘nation-building’ reflects on protection aspirations on the broadest level.

While traditionally parents and ‘experts’ decide children’s best interests, children’s voices are largely absent from debates about how harm is constituted (Montgomery 2015: 12). Nevertheless, understanding children’s well-being needs to include “children’s conditions of living and ‘objective’ measures of their well-being”, their “perceptions, evaluations, and aspirations regarding their own lives – including children’s subjective well-being”, and “perceptions, evaluations, and aspirations of other relevant social agents (stakeholders) about children’s lives and conditions of living” (Ben Arie et al. 2014: 16). Prioritising children’s perceptions onto discourses and practices that concern them first, and contrasting them with adults’ views who play central roles in their lives – parents, teachers, religious leaders, and development workers, offered such a multi-level reflection onto a rarely contested field of action.

Asking children what messages they would have for Zanzibari parents or the President, if given the opportunity to address them, their responses reflect the breadth of their most fundamental aspirations of doing well in society – of their well-being as the ‘nation of tomorrow’. Guaranteeing parental and community care to assure their future well-being was frequently reiterated and put a positive focus on parents and guardians as protective forces in children’s lives:

“Parents should take care of the children (*muwatunze*) and care for them (*muwajali*) because they are the nation of tomorrow (*taifa la kesho*).” (f 14)

“Education is important and can help me in my life. Parents and teachers are important people in society. They make a great contribution (*mchango mkubwa*) in our everyday lives (*maisha ya kila siku*) and in our future (*maisha ya baadae*).” (m 15)

“We would like to tell the parents to love (*muwapende*) and care for (*muwajali*) children, and to value them (*muwathamini*) because they are the nation of tomorrow (*taifa la kesho*).” (f 13)

Furthermore, preventing violence and poverty were common concerns that children considered important in terms of drawing adults’ attention to, reflecting the intertwinedness of emotional and economic well-being, that applies to children in Zanzibar as elsewhere:

“My parents should raise me well (*wanilee vizuri*), should neither make me suffer a lot (*wasinitese sana*) nor abuse me (*wasininyanyase*). This is important in my life.” (m 12)

“I would like to tell the president that we students have problems at *madrassa*. Our trousers get dirty (*zinachafuka*) because of the bad state of the *madrassa*. We don’t have desks and I would like it if you could get us some. After all, we are the nation of tomorrow (*taifa la kesho*).” (m 13)

Equally important was children’s demand for upholding Islamic morality and norms through adequate education and socialisation:

“My message to all parents is that they shall educate their children in a religious and worldly manner (*masomo ya dini na dunia*) and raise them well, as the Prophet Muhammad (s.w.) has guided us.” (m 15)

Finally, their imaginary messages revolved around assuring their health and general well-being:

“I would tell the president to help the children because they have important needs (*mahitaji muhimu*) in their lives. Above all, children are the nation of tomorrow (*taifa la kesho*) which means they should be close to their leaders (*viongozi wao*).” (m 17)

This variety of things they identify as important for their well-being in society, repeatedly depicts children as the ‘nation of tomorrow’ and hence as an integrated part of Zanzibari society, in the process of being prepared to lead the country in the future. It suggests that Zanzibari children are not disorderly, but in fact seek to maintain the social order by assuring they are treated in ways that allow them to uphold it. Far from being unruly, they also have a clear sense of order and justice that is not actually at variance from adults’ views but in fact continuous with their expectations. Children ask that adults themselves be rule-governed and conform to the very ideals of respect and empathy that they seek to impose on children. In the

same way that children care about other children, they demand adults to do the same. A boy's (no age) photograph of a child standing amidst garbage scattered across the ground, depicts their empathy and underlines their understanding of protection as parental responsibility and care, as well as protection from disease and hence assurance of health:



Figure 9.1. “This photo explains the life of children who wander around in the neighbourhood. They are hungry and have nowhere to live. We should take care of them (*tumajali*) because children are the nation of tomorrow (*taifa la kesho*). Let’s not let them go astray, while their peers are being educated. Roaming around, they might get diseases.”

Similar to the other children’s accounts, the young photographer explains the need to care for children and to assure their emotional and physical well-being with the metaphor of children being the ‘nation of tomorrow’. As discussed in the Introduction by means of the video of the beaten girl, witnessing others’ pain, particularly of children, demands and creates empathy and compassion (Ahmed 2004). As empathy “involves having the feelings of another (involuntarily) aroused in ourselves, as when we see another person in pain” (Slote 2010: 15), it is precisely what children have for their peers and what they demand of adults to have for them too. Empathy – as discussed in this concluding chapter’s vignette with the example of the protection worker’s encounter with Arif – structures child protection on an emotional level. Arif disliked how he was treated by his aunt. When he was given the

opportunity to speak, he said so and was clear about why. His aunt said she treats him as she was treated, because she knows no different. This allows us to remember what children have been saying all along: that they want to be treated well and respectfully, but that their realm to demand this is constraint, as the social demands they must fulfil do not sufficiently allow such contestation.

As “a pluralistic phenomenon” (Slote 2010: 34) empathy carries moral significance but is difficult to define (Fagiano 2016). Nevertheless, ‘the primacy of the ethical’ – “a combination of pre-cultural compassion, empathic love, and care” (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 418), has long been considered necessary for engaged anthropology, and is similarly relevant to care and protection practice. Children’s very clear ideas about respect and empathy, that they must have towards others but equally expect in return, to fully be able to become the ‘nation of tomorrow’ they consider themselves as, suggests the relevance of these notions for child protection theoreticians and practitioners.

There are links between the rejection of child protection programmes and the danger of not becoming full social persons – by learning manners and morality (*adabu*) through discipline and chastisement (*adhabu*) – that will be part of the ‘nation of tomorrow’. For the most part, therefore, children are mainly docile and accepting of being hit or even of the injustices of a child protection system that, for example, makes them late for school because of meetings or causes them financial difficulties through the misappropriation of alternatives it introduces. Nevertheless, because children clearly identify central values to Zanzibari culture largely in Muslim moral behaviour and are naturally inclined to be cooperative to fulfil them – and hence to contribute to reinforcing the social order and being part of the ‘nation of tomorrow’ – adults need not fear eliciting children’s cooperation and eventually do not need to physically instil order in them.

As “diagnostic categories are the starting points or building blocks for constructing therapies” (Das 2015: 29; Davis 2000), a community starting point that takes children’s ideas seriously is necessary to address child chastisement and to improve child protection knowledge and practice in Zanzibar (Twum-Danso Imoh 2016). If speaking of illness must include “the patient’s judgments about how best to cope

with the distress and with the practical problems in daily living it creates” (Kleinman 1988: 4), my interlocutors’ accounts identify respect and empathy as fundamental to dealing with both physical chastisement and the protection from it. Above all, Zanzibari children want to be respected and empathised with in the same way that adults request from them. They want to be guaranteed parental and community care, prevented from poverty and violence, educated in ways that align with Islamic morality and norms and cared for their health and general well-being. Following their requests, I propose reimagining child protection practice by “equally integrating other ways of thinking” (Davis 2012: 505) that originate in Zanzibar, where they facilitate dialogue, potential conflicts and make new relationships, to allow us to view the ‘therapy’ that is applied to a ‘societal ill’ in a new light, which corporal punishment is considered as through the lens of children’s rights. To genuinely “listen to the sick and abused and to those most likely to have their rights violated” (Farmer 2003: 239), I return to my child and adult interlocutors’ priorities regarding Zanzibari children’s safety and protection to draw conclusions from for the possible future – or the ‘nation of tomorrow’.

II Summary of Findings and Theoretical Conclusions

By examining why and how well-intended child protection programmes are rejected, for, usually inadvertently, decontextualising and disrupting children’s lives (Bourdillon and Myers 2012a: 441), I considered how international laws to protect children translate in Zanzibari communities. I explored children’s worldviews of protection and personhood in schools, how these perceptions vary between children and according to gender and age, how concepts of childhood, protection and personhood are embedded in children’s and adults’ social relations, and the role of the body within them. I argued that child protection interventions against corporal punishment are rejected, because they overlook the contexts in which corporal punishment makes sense, contributes to children’s full achievement of social personhood and might even be considered a protection itself. As people “experience development not within idealised states but in the spaces between categories” (Crewe and Axelby 2013: 214), the moments of tension when different worldviews crossed, emphasised those intersections of child protection theory and reality that deserve particular attention.

What does all I have shown in this thesis actually mean?

Throughout the chapters I moved from a focus on children and how childhood is formed in Zanzibar, to the links between children and adults in everyday child protection reality, to the adult-centric spheres of knowledge production. This three-fold approach brought to the fore varieties of authorisation that operate in the realm of child protection, various global discourses that exist of rights and laws, and local ecologies of care that have been missing from universalised policy approaches to protection. I restrained from quick judgements but now eventually come to side with the children I worked with. By contextualising some of their experiences and the moral issues they encounter in the context of child protection interventions, my findings contribute to knowledge about childhood discipline, chastisement and protection by making plain how power authorises and de-authorises knowledge that defines how children ought to be protected. Universalised discourses of protection, personhood and childhood tend to overrule Zanzibari children's and adults' ideas about these themes and make their thoughts appear as of lesser value or relevance.

As the order of child protection discourses in fact defines how the policy field of child protection turns into a system of domination, it is the Zanzibari Islamic and 'cultural' discourses that should become the mediums of power to counter this hegemony (Foucault 1981). Enriching and challenging ruling globalised adult discourses through children's narratives, supported this analysis of the moral hierarchies that structure protection knowledge. Children's views on their own lives are often at the bottom of the hierarchy in discussions about their lives and the processes that structure them. This hierarchy may only be flattened in a decolonial way of thinking by taking seriously children's and adults' ideas about what being young, growing up, being well-mannered, and being safe and protected, mean. Furthermore, it should be led by actors within Zanzibari society itself instead of attempted to be achieved by 'outsiders'. Children's conceptualisations of the notions of violence, discipline, and participation in combination with statistics and practical observations, are starting points for reconsidering current protection approaches. Assuring that children's own assessments of the difficulties they face are taken into account, may contribute to more robust approaches to keeping children safe.

Without a doubt, the children I worked with or learned about experience forms of harsh corporal punishment that affect their well-being beyond the acceptable. At no point, I intended to justify the abuse children like Arif are exposed to in and outside of schools. However, as any observer of human rights abuses, I frequently confronted the “moral dilemma: does one’s action help the sufferers or does it not?” (Farmer 2003: 226). Eventually, I believe that witnessing and recording children’s suffering is not a kind of “perverse cynicism” but can serve “as a tool for critical reflection and for human liberation” (Scheper-Hughes 1995: 418). Two principles should “influence and inform social reform in Africa” – the imperatives of “looking inwards towards ancestry” and “looking outward towards the wider humanity” (Mazrui 1986: 21). Therefore, understanding physical chastisement in the context of Zanzibari society and its moral agenda rather than in isolation allows us to comprehend why children continue to be hit in Zanzibari schools and homes, and why programmes that aim to interfere with that face contestation. Contextualising processes of chastisement and protection teased out the motivations and intentions of those who punish and protect and showed that most Zanzibari teachers and parents do not hit children to inflict violence on them, but to help them achieve social personhood and hence to even the grounds for their future lives.

Much like feminism’s liberatory goals “should be rethought in light of the fact that the desire for freedom and liberation is a historically situated desire whose motivational force cannot be assumed a priori” (Mahmood 2001: 223), child protection interventions should be reimagined by interrogating “the conceptual relationship between the body, self, and moral agency as constituted in different cultural and political locations” instead of holding on to “one particular model to be axiomatic as is often the case in progressivist narratives” (ibid.). Rethinking child protection through a feminist lens, hence, requires recognising the kind of futures, or ‘the nation of tomorrow’, as it is envisioned in the archipelago itself.

In the first chapter, I discussed how in Zanzibar, children and adults seldom define childhood in terms of age, but instead regard the onset of puberty as an end to that period, and marriage as the eventual marker of adulthood. Childhood itself is understood as a stage of learning in vernacular and more institutionalised spaces of education, whereas the former, that consisted mainly of childhood rituals, are being

replaced by the latter through religious and state schooling. The sociality children learn in these spaces, as well as the moral order they thereby incorporate, defines their social ‘being’ and ‘becoming’ in Zanzibar, the agency they hold as a social category and the important role that communities play in raising children in social networks.

The non-static and sometimes contradictory ways in which children define childhood and the things they say about what a child and a person is, and how children are formed spiritually and socially, show how childhood in Zanzibar is constantly prone to change. They also show how Zanzibari childhood is largely influenced by Islam and what my interlocutors refer to as ‘custom’ and ‘tradition’. These sources of knowledge set the framework for vernacular notions of being a child, being a person, and in the widest sense, having humanity. It also shows that there is little agreement on what constitutes childhood as a category and therefore stands at odds with the universalised CRC-based conceptualisation of children as everyone below the age of eighteen, which are of little use for people in Zanzibar, if more powerful definitions exist alongside. The ongoing relevance of community child rearing (*malezi ya jamii*) and the perception of children as ‘communal goods’ underline the relevance of the links between children’s and adults’ well-being.

Children’s well-being is inseparable from “the notion of childhood and without a clear understanding of what childhood is or views on what it should be, it is not possible to determine what a good childhood should consist of” (Adams 2013: 525). Therefore, first understanding what being a child and a person mean, is inevitable for large-scale attempts to improve Zanzibari children’s safety in schools or the wider society. Otherwise, child protection itself may “become an impediment to children’s well-being” if viewed “too narrowly, without reference to the meanings of practices for the children’s place and their transitions to adulthood within their societies” (Boyden, Pankhurst and Tafere 2012: 521).

In the second chapter, I explored the process of Zanzibari children’s socialisation and how it is structured primarily by the concepts of *adabu* (courtesy/manners) and *adhabu* (chastisement/punishment) which each have multiple, frequently overlapping, meanings and connotations, largely anchored in Islamic philosophy. These ideas are

central to young people's being and formation, or 'person-making', to eventually acquire *utu* (full social personhood/humaneness). They are inextricably linked and function together but also cause difficulties when the boundary between them becomes too blurry and discipline eventually turns into punishment. Their interwovenness showed that some degree of physical chastisement is considered necessary for turning Zanzibari children into pious, moral adults.

As these 'civilising concepts' often overlap in how they are used and translated by both Swahili-speakers and non-Swahili-speakers, their translations' nuances are important for programmes that attempt to target child discipline. Zanzibaris do not define a clear line between moral education and physical chastisement, the adequate age for hitting, and also consider physical chastisement necessary for both girls and boys. Therefore, discussions of chastisement and the possible protection from it, must consider the critical role of these ideas in children's lives. Achieving social personhood, the eventual goal of socialisation in Zanzibar, is considered to be possible only if moral training also includes regulated chastisement.

As only in 'Western' discourse morality and punishment are fully separable, as we can see, for example, in the form of Save the Children's Positive Discipline programme, a differentiation between non-physical and physical discipline eventually faces complications. Even if how communities and families define and practice what they consider children's best interest – like personhood-making through physical punishment – does not align with global or governmental ideas and policies, they "typically do care about the best interests of children in their care" (Bourdillon and Myers 2012b: 616). While corporal punishment may be objectionable to child rights activists in Zanzibar, and if administered excessively also to many Zanzibaris, in other contexts it also makes sense and is perceived as a productive practice of person-formation. Zanzibaris' interpretations of physical chastisement as contributing to constitute Muslim moral personhood can therefore enhance the knowledge about and provision of child protection.

What makes life meaningful for growing children and adults in Zanzibar, is, above all, Islam. Therefore, spirituality, or the "combination of processes through which people develop awareness, connectedness to others and the world, empathy, and

responsibility” (Scales et al. 2013: 500), makes children “fit constructively, and to their own satisfaction, into the societies in which they live” (ibid.: 501f). It protects them from social exclusion and reproduces social cohesion. It is relevant to programmes that target children but want to refrain from interfering with how they are understood to become ‘good persons’ and to cultivate successful relationships in Zanzibari society.

In the third chapter, the discussion of childhood and socialisation came to a close by turning to the existing interpretations of what it means to be safe, or protected, as a child, according to the three main sources of knowledge that define it: Islamic, Swahili-Zanzibari socio-cultural, and aid/government thinking. Zanzibari children and adults understand protection in various ways and explain to keep children safe largely through educational initiation rites and protective Islamic practices, but also through physical chastisement to assure their moral development. Zanzibari authorities who administer these practices, like traditional healers who focus on children’s health, traditional birth attendants and practitioners of Qur’anic medicine, were considered important people in attempts to guarantee well-being. Partially serving children’s health needs, they were also responsible for their spiritual needs and for sources of guidance regarding moral matters.

These insights reflect the little agreement on what constitutes child protection or the protection of children in Zanzibar. It is evident that child protection is much more than what policy agendas ascribe and needs to be imagined beyond development discourses. While various ideas about protection complement each other and overlap, they do not exist independently of each other. Even though people do different or even contradictory things to assure children are safe, all share the intention of protecting a young person. Child protection practitioners’ assumptions, that children are insufficiently protected in their communities, conflict with many Zanzibari adults’ and children’s views, who think they protect them all the time, only in ways that might not immediately align with policy notions of child protection. Taking children’s concepts of protection and risk seriously, “would enable a shift from reaction to prevention and the injection of a political-economy perspective to understand how broader structural inequalities put children at risk” (Pells 2012: 572). That vernacular protection practices are overwhelmingly conceptualised in health

terms and as prevention (*kinga*) from harm, suggests the need to include this angle to programmes that focus on protection (*ulinzi*) only. Otherwise, ideas that matter to Zanzibari communities are neglected by universalised protection approaches, eventually causing these programmes' rejection.

In the fourth chapter, I discussed the shapes that 'violence' takes in Zanzibar through the different forms of physical chastisement children and adults defined as hitting (*kupiga*) and smacking (*kuchapa*). Demonstrating how hitting is put into question for the higher potential of pain and harm it carries, how smacking remains accepted and considered necessary for children's socialisation and protection, and how the two frequently overlap in practice, visualised the nuances that exist of violence. People do not question each other for making use of corporal punishment, but rather hold each other to account for how they chastise children, and condemn only excessive use. While my interlocutors considered child protection programmes useful in terms of decreasing hitting, they regarded them as not applicable to smacking, which as a supposedly non-violent practice, fell outside of the programme's reach. These insights show that simply condemning corporal punishment as a practice is insufficient to address all different forms it may take. Programmes that aim to improve children's safety by banning corporal punishment may fail to address less obviously violent or visibly harmful forms of chastisement, that may have equally damaging effects on children. Recognising these existing degrees of violence is essential to intervening in a sensitive field like child protection.

In the fifth chapter, I interrogated Save the Children's 'Positive Discipline' approach to decrease the use of corporal punishment in schools through students' and teachers' perceptions. I visualised the incoherence and tension inherent in the use and definition of this child protection concept specifically in relation to the overlaps between *adabu* and *adhabu*. Demonstrating teachers' misappropriations of the approach and children's objections towards them, illustrated the side-effects child protection interventions have in Zanzibar. It put into perspective both students' and teachers' continuous support for corporal punishment, as a form of chastisement less difficult to deal with than alternatives like financial compensation that cause less visible but equally complicated harm for children to face.

While I am not suggesting that choosing between being hit or paying money is a good choice, physical chastisement eventually allows them to deal with school-based mistakes independently unlike having to ask their families for financial support to fulfil compensations. I have consistently underlined the importance of children as social actors in this thesis and their roles as much more than passive victims of chastisement. I believe it is important to trust them when they say they would rather be hit than pay money, as by making this choice they try to control certain aspects of their lives and try to prevent their agency being limited by protection interventions that unknowingly do so. While it would be too much to suggest that corporal punishment is a free and informed choice for children, its effects may be less damaging than those of misappropriated alternatives to it.

These findings also show that protection from singular risks like physical chastisement can deprive children of opportunities for well-being in other areas, if appropriations of Positive Discipline complicate rather than improve their abilities to deal with issues they face at school. Eventually, children and adults also continue to approve of physical punishment for moral ends. It is understood as a way of fulfilling children's societal responsibilities and upholding respect towards their parents, and a way of becoming moral Muslim adults. Positive Discipline programmes which suggest an alternative to the disciplinary system that operates in schools and society, also suggest a non-Muslim system of morality (Bourdillon and Myers 2012a: 444f), that for reasons of religiosity cannot be accepted.

They finally make clear that one reason why adults continue to hit children and respectively reject interventions against it, is the fact that there are no sufficient means to allow them to stop. Neither trainings on alternative disciplinary methods, nor sufficient legal agreements are in place that would contribute to this. Most fundamentally poverty affects this situation. Protection approaches should recognise children's need to be safe not just from corporal punishment in schools, but on a broader level from various harms in their communities – poverty and violence being the structural factors they identified as most pressing. What Scheper-Hughes described as “an average expectable environment of child death, meaning a set of conditions that place infants at high risk, accompanied by a normalization of this state of affairs in both the private and public life” (1992: 20), applies to the

continuing use of corporal punishment in Zanzibari schools that is conditioned by prevailing poverty and routinises structural violence. Weak school infrastructure and extremely large class sizes complicate the non-contextualised application of Positive Discipline approaches designed for ‘Western’-sized, well-equipped classrooms. Teachers are eventually left little option but to resort to physical chastisement to keep children in order. Basic protection should recognise and attend to hazards in the environment and acknowledge that “the greatest of these is poverty” (Bourdillon 2014: 499). Even though corporal punishment certainly compromises children’s well-being, it can no longer be considered the most pressing protection factor in Zanzibar.

In the sixth chapter, I discussed child protection approaches in the light of their aim to facilitate participation. Demonstrating how participatory approaches often actually contest children’s protection, led me to acknowledge the notion of children’s responsibilities as another factor in need of attention in Zanzibar. Without recognising children’s responsibilities and solely promoting their participation, protection programmes face rejection for being considered to undermine children’s roles in their society by promoting ‘Western’ ideas of childhood that result in moral decay and a loss of respect.

These insights emphasise the importance of restraining from conceptualising children as separable groups in society and promoting their participation without acknowledging the social networks they are part of and the relationships that define their well-being. CRC-based imaginations, that depict children as rights-holders only and adults as duty-bearers only, collide with Zanzibari views which consider both children and adults as holders of rights *and* bearers of duty. As child protection is a “state intervention in the lives of families by professionals” (Waterhouse and McGee 2015: 11), child protection programmes in Zanzibar should include a focus on all family members and should work with children as much as with parents and guardians. “Child protection practice needs to take proper account of the wide-ranging effects of poverty, deprivation and inequality of opportunity” as “the system has become so child oriented that it has lost sight of the needs of parents” (Daniel 2015: 128). To not render protection policies and programmes irrelevant to Zanzibari children and adults and unintentionally disrupt their relationships and routines

without improving their general life situations, programmes should recognise how participatory approaches may contest children's roles if they promote values that oppose what is considered respectable in Zanzibar – such as outspokenness over silence, or agency over obedience.

Children's relationships are inevitably interfered with when the private is no longer private, but “intersects with the public” (Mayall 2011: 434). Protective interventions into one sphere of children's lives simultaneously imply interventions in others too, for the realms that children move between – the home, the school, the community – are intertwined. An individual's well-being cannot practically “be separated from the well-being of the group to which that individual belongs” because “individuals are integrally incorporated within families, clans, and other groups and not seen as existing outside those groups” (Morrow and Boyden 2014: 2914). Therefore, the “current child-centric risk paradigm” as it is “wedded to constructions of children as individuals who are unanchored in networks and communities and operates with superficial understandings of the importance of attachments, histories and legacies” (Featherstone et al. 2014: 16), must become more sensible in Zanzibar.

In the seventh chapter, I began to think about re-approaching existing conceptualisations of child protection, by discussing the relevance of religion and gender as intertwined factors in protection interventions that target children's and women's bodies. Considering that particularly Zanzibari boys suffer from sexual abuse but are frequently excluded from child protection discourse and practice, and cases are not reported, I explored the gendered nature of corporal punishment from a Zanzibari-Muslim perspective. Viewing women's and children's chastisement in accordance to Islam, established an important link between protecting male and female children and adults and emphasised the necessity to approach both physical chastisement and gender-based violence through protection interventions to protect all children.

While the current global stance on the absolute need to ban all forms of corporal punishment is certainly not wrong, it fails to acknowledge other forms of abuse that children experience in Zanzibar, such as both boys' and girls' sexual abuse. Additionally, interventions must take into account that gender and chastisement are

constructed differently than in the ‘West’ and overwhelmingly built on Islamic norms. This is particularly critical in Muslim contexts such as Zanzibar, where an adherence to certain interpretations of gender notions in the Qur’an may lead to a partial conceptual equation of women and children. Looking “beyond violence at the interpersonal level, to violence at the structural level” (Pells 2012: 571) and considering gender specific discrimination that conditions abuse, as is the case for Zanzibari boys (see Chapter 7), is crucial.

In the eighth chapter, I considered the wider hierarchical structures through which protection discourses authorise practices and showed how conceptualisations of child rights-based approaches are perceived as ‘Western’ impositions of ‘modernity’ and present child protection as anti-Islamic. Rejections of child protection programmes therefore do not immediately imply adults’ indifference concerning Zanzibari children’s safety and well-being, but serve as a distinction from the ‘West’ in light of moral hierarchies and claims to ‘modernity’, that insufficiently include Islamic and other vernacular understandings of progress and change, and eventually of growing up in the archipelago. The Zanzibari government, and the international organisations they cooperate with, have largely adopted such ‘Western’ definitions, which inevitably clash with other people in Zanzibar who have not. Above all, there is a lack of consensus over questions of child protection and corporal punishment, which is visible in the ways that even local child protection actors face rejection in communities. Recognising the difficulties that are inherent in implementing child protection programmes in places with multiple legal situations like Zanzibar, further illustrated the structural difficulties that programmes face. Identifying the need to decolonise child protection practice as it currently applies accordingly to my interlocutors’ views on existing hierarchies of knowledge in that field, allowed us to see how child protection interventions may improve and move away from hegemonic terms. As demonstrated people have already begun this process in their own terms, by building alternatives to child protection policy within or out of the Islamic tradition. In this concluding chapter, I summarise what this may include.

On a general level, I conclude that child protection development actors’ moral reactions to corporal punishment are likely to continue causing problems if they fail to recognise that Zanzibari teachers and parents think they are protecting children

through measured physical chastisement, and therefore doing good. Nevertheless, this should not imply inaction, as the indeterminable line between acceptable and excessive corporal punishment, and the inevitable risk inherent in it, eventually does not make its application acceptable. It rather means that the way forward in child protection interventions in Zanzibar requires negotiation instead of rules for and punishment of adults. As Zanzibari children do themselves, adults should not be exclusively depicted as perpetrators of harm through child protection programmes, but equally taken seriously in their ambitions to produce good citizens – just on less potentially harmful terms. By identifying and building on Zanzibari adults' positive intentions to raise children well and safely, the accusatory manner through which protection programmes operate against adults' child rearing practices, may be limited and replaced with a more positive and productive approach. Furthermore, it should not be underestimated, that all adults – teachers, parents, and both foreign and local aid and government workers – are largely ignoring children's views and therefore their right to participation. In this context, a 'Western' versus 'non-Western' polarity – as frequently used by adults – does not suffice, as no one is taking Zanzibari children's views seriously enough. While adults consider 'Zanzibari versus foreigner' the most interesting distinction, children's accounts showed that the more general differentiation between 'child versus adult' makes a bigger difference to them.

III Practical Implications and Tentative Recommendations for Child Protection Policy

Above all, my exploration proved the need for both Zanzibari children and adults to gain more control over the child protection movement and respective interventions as they take place on their islands. Based on my theoretical conclusions, I tentatively suggest recommendations for child protection policy and practice that align with the identified need for redistribution of power and control. In the first place, these are addressed to Zanzibaris who work in the field of child protection, for it is them who should mainly be in charge of a system that assures their children's safety. While to some extent they are already involved in these processes, Zanzibaris should increasingly drive and facilitate child protection interventions on their islands with their own developments of authenticating modes of understanding child protection at the centre of redirecting processes.

For policy models like Save the Children's Positive Discipline programme to 'work', they "have to be translated into the different logic of the intentions, goals and ambitions of the many people and institutions they bring together" (Mosse 2005: 232). Sensitive translations of child protection that include local interests into revision processes may affect people's lives without questioning the fundamental legitimacy of child rearing practices. Even if needs-based programme approaches do not align directly with priorities on the global agenda of child rights and protection movements, local needs and both Zanzibari children's and adults' priorities must be taken seriously and responded to by "donors and their powerful constituencies" (Maternowska 2006: 178; Cheney 2011).

Making children's needs central to development debates and policies and "integrating child protection concerns around sources of risk and protection", can help to avoid "the danger that child protection could be tasked with everything and consequently achieve nothing" (Pells 2012: 572). Shifting the focus of Zanzibar's current child protection system from a supplies side to a demand side, that responds to the attitudes, behaviours and practices of children in relation to their own protection, will be important for improving protection practice and children's well-being (Rutherford and Bachay 2017: 119). This may also help to increase the acceptance and uptake of national institutions' delivery of protection services. To cater to this actual demand side a limitation of our conception of children's rights to legal codes "would severely limit, not increase, both children's entitlements and our understanding of children's subjectivity in the making of both culture and childhood" (Nieuwenhuys 2008: 8). Listening closely to young people's views on their own protection and avoiding an essentialist notion of culture and childhood by foregrounding their subjectivity is the only way in which "the interpretation of illness meanings can also contribute to the provision of more effective care" (Kleinman 1988: 9), and in the context of Zanzibar to more effective child protection. More sensible and inclusive approaches to child protection in Zanzibar, and other Muslim-majority settings, may include a focus on Zanzibari children's and adults' priorities:

Guaranteeing parental and community care

Child protection activities in Zanzibar should pay more attention to the contexts children live in, particularly their families (Bourdillon 2014: 499), and increasingly

relate to protection within the community context. As children's protection is inherently relational and situational, it will always, to some extent, resist universalisation and standardisation (Bourdillon and Myers 2012b: 616). Nevertheless, if protection actors take communities' and families' definitions of children's well-being and development as starting points, they might succeed in refraining from involuntarily contesting vernacular notions that are considered essential for community life. Enhancing existing community efforts to protect children instead of introducing entirely new strategies that end up competing with or intending to replace them, may limit objections towards interventions. Increasingly working with parents, including both mothers and fathers, could shift conceptualisations of child protection as a girls' matter only to also include a focus on boys. Rethinking Zanzibari child protection through an 'ethics of care' (Lonne et al. 2016) includes recognising the importance of a relational approach to child protection and also working with fathers and men. By returning to relationships and respect as core components for working with children and families, and placing these principles alongside the need to understand and value culture, may help an overall attempt to improve and assure child safety and well-being (Lonne et al. 2008).

Preventing violence and poverty

Furthermore, child protection in Zanzibar should be considered "in a broader political-economic context" (Hart 2015: 51) and interventions should regard the socio-cultural dimensions of young people's lives, as well as the factors through which poverty and marginality are reproduced (Hart 2008: 4). This involves exploring "systemic causes of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children, and violence against them" (Nelems and Currie 2012: 612). Violence should be targeted as a structural phenomenon closely intertwined with poverty, instead of addressing corporal punishment only and thereby risking to neglect more critical problems children may face (Boyden, Pankhurst and Tafere 2012: 520) when they try to live securely and well with their families (Cooper 2012: 495). Such single-issue approaches are insufficient "to address the systemic problems that children face" (Wessells et al. 2013: 134) in Zanzibar. Addressing wider social and political issues may enable moving beyond individualised child protection systems towards a public health approach, recognising rights, social harms and structural inequalities (Parton 2014; Adams 2013: 535).

In Zanzibar, as elsewhere, “child welfare services normally focus on intervening once abuse and neglect have occurred” (O’Donnell 2015: 111). Child protection may become more effective through shifting from protection concepts as a response mechanism to violence, to violence prevention¹¹⁶. As violence prevention is both a health matter and a political issue, child protection programmes could learn from public health approaches, that, grounded in epidemiology, study “how a disease is distributed in populations and factors that increase or reduce the risk of developing it” (ibid.). Similarly to what has long been recognised in the area of communicable disease – “that intervening only once there has been an outbreak of a disease” – the current focus of child protection interventions in Zanzibar on response instead may be shifted towards prevention as a more effective means to reduce abuse. This could improve links between children’s situations and those of their families and communities, which children’s risk and protective factors are inevitably related to.

Upholding Islamic morality, empathy, and respect

Child protection programmes, particularly in Muslim-majority settings like Zanzibar, should increasingly attend to the “neglected areas of well-being sometimes referred to as ‘spiritual’” (Bourdillon 2014: 497). Understanding protection through an ethics of well-being that integrates a “conception of what it is to be human” and emphasises dignity (Freeman 2010: 251), may help to uphold Zanzibari ideas around personhood acquisition. This may decrease the rejection of protective interventions for being perceived as disturbing young people’s spiritual and moral being and becoming. Religious ideas, such as how children are made into ‘good’ Muslims in Zanzibar, intersect with the moral dynamics of development work and “should be understood as informing all areas of life, including the planning, implementation and reception of development projects” (Bornstein 2005: 2f). Engaging closely with Zanzibari “children’s positive emotions and [paying attention] to behaviour and values that might be classified as spiritual” (Bourdillon 2014: 502), and in Zanzibar as Islamic,

¹¹⁶ The ‘socio-ecological framework’ that child protection organisations typically use to understand “how factors that influence a child’s likelihood of experiencing interpersonal violence interact within and between a number of social and ecological ‘levels’” (UNICEF 2015), acknowledges how “violence is intimately connected to how relationships are structured and defined by power dynamics” (Maternowska, Potts and Fry 2016: 8). However, while the framework is promising and certainly a helpful tool, it misses the opportunity to look at the links where, for example, as in the case of Zanzibar, religion and law overlap (see Chapter 8).

may underline the potential of protective approaches that are inherent also in ‘Muslim modernities’.

Vernacular and religious ideas about being young and growing up in Zanzibar are largely conceptualised in terms of health and spirituality. Engaging more directly with these areas may contribute to protection programmes being received more willingly, and beyond universalised and secular ideas of well-being. As the associated cultural dimensions of religion “are important social factors which influence governance, social practices and beliefs around childbearing, rearing, well-being and protection” (Hutchinson et al. 2015: 396), their power to shape child protection practice in Zanzibar is relevant. Therefore, interventions to protect children in Zanzibar should draw on the productivity of “the development of positive emotions, responsibility, and connectedness” (Scales et al. 2013: 501) and accept moral and spiritual development as fundamental to humans as social beings (ibid.).

A focus on religion shows how children’s well-being and children’s rights do not naturally align but may oppose each other through certain legal frameworks (Tisdall 2015a). Recognising that an exclusive reliance on Western-based models interferes with the credibility and trust that enable interventions in Islamic communities (Hutchinson et al. 2015: 395), may open up new space for genuine improvement of protection practice. Targeting the “significant gap in how Islamic knowledge and principles are practically applied to child protection policy and practice” may help build a “knowledge base that can be practised in Islamic communities” (ibid.) like Zanzibar. This may entail going beyond tokenistic involvement of religious authorities and increasing specialist training on child protection for *madrasa* teachers too. Equally, non-Muslim child protection development workers “should receive training about Islamic teachings” to ensure their sufficient knowledge of religious laws and texts related to children (ibid.: 403). Instead of overlooking them, child protection programmes should draw on “existing organic child protection mechanisms in Islamic communities” (ibid.: 404), such as the conflict mediating authority of *sheikhs* and their capacity to promote moderate child rearing and protection practices in religious speeches (*mawaidha*) in their community mosques. Otherwise mistrust towards people who work with Western-based organisations will

remain a “significant barrier to engaging with community-based mechanisms in Islamic contexts” (Hutchinson et al. 2015: 405).

In poverty contexts like Zanzibar, religion itself belongs to the preventive and protective factors that bring children emotional and social benefits and community belonging (O’Leary, Hutchinson and Squire 2015: 719). Including them in protection programmes may help increase health and well-being outcomes by encouraging “‘hopeful thinking’” (ibid.). Inviting ‘traditional’ and religious healers into the child protection process could be a meaningful and progressive step to signify to Zanzibaris involved in protection programmes that all of their needs, whether of physical or metaphysical nature and centrally beyond a biomedical understanding, are acknowledged to matter in processes of child care and protection (Maternowska 2006). Spirituality and empathy are closely intertwined. As “empathy is absolutely foundational to successful human relationships” and “becomes the experience and expression of spirituality” (De Souza 2014: 48), an increased focus on Muslim ideas about being young, growing up and being safe may deepen Zanzibari adults’ sensitivity towards children’s suffering. Instead of categorising Zanzibari children’s experiences into what promises measurability¹¹⁷, such as risk or resilience, work with and for children in the field of care and protection should work towards making “our societies more just and empathetic” (Bourdillon and Myers 2012b: 619). The need for “empathic support, based on relationships, which places ‘care’ rather than ‘risk’ at the heart of intervention” (Daniel 2015: 128), is necessary in Zanzibar, where the negative and accusatory connotation of protection from supposed adult violence is also rejected for being perceived as undermining of parental authority.

As visible in this chapter’s opening vignette, empathising with children’s situations, listening to them, and allowing space for contestation in a society where children’s silence and obedience is valued more than their outspokenness, may be a path towards better interventions. While these can never become more empathetic or attentive on a whole, the individuals holding defining roles within them – teachers,

¹¹⁷ The “growing enthusiasm of measuring and making quantifiable aspirations in the field of social life and human rights” (Merry and Summer 2015: 3) should include creative attempts to include more difficult to measure – or less recognised for having been unmeasured – concepts such as empathy and care, spirituality, respect and compassion, as locally these ideas mattered most.

parents, and aid workers – may indeed. More than how adults relate to children and families, ethical practice also concerns “how policies are made and implemented, and whether or not this promotes respect and justice, and contributes to the creation of a society that cares” (Thompson et al. 2006: 9). Hence, protection programmes in Zanzibar should promote forms of engagement that do not contest what constitutes children’s respect towards others but emphasises it instead. Increasing a focus on empathy, care, respect, and relationship-based ethics, may therefore not only concern protection practitioners’ approaches towards the children they aim to support. Empathy must also increase towards the adults involved in programmes and their perceived struggles to uphold certain standards they consider necessary for their children’s well-being.

Protecting children’s health and well-being

Finally, if health is a “global public good” (Das 2015b: 181), child well-being – children’s health and the care for them – is turning into one as well, as international organisations take major roles in its definition. If public health implies a government’s duty to look after its citizens’ health (Marsland and Prince 2014: 1), child protection, too, is a matter of health and power. For more ethical paths to protecting children, well-being should be understood beyond a realm of health-thinking and instead on a broader societal level to guarantee that protection interventions do not disrupt but instead improve young people’s experiences in educational settings. To better reflect the relationship between childhood and protection in Zanzibar, critical global health and a medical anthropological approach need to deal with child maltreatment, understand well-being and integrate health and care thinking into protection programme planning (Korbin and Krugman 2014).

The right to bodily integrity and a healthy body relates to the infliction of pain onto children’s bodies, and their protection from it. That “a ‘health angle’ can promote a broader human rights agenda in unique ways” (Farmer 2003: 234), also holds true for guaranteeing children’s right to protection. The esteem in which public health and medicine are held affords unique openings and therefore “the health part of the formula” (ibid.) may contribute to the child rights movement in Zanzibar. While the fields of social science or children’s rights are more openly value-laden and directly imply moral judgements, medical or public health frameworks may provoke less

rejection for being primarily associated with technical knowledge regarding treatment, and not immediately with value impositions as to what well-being should constitute. Making healing and health “the symbolic core” of the child protection agenda in Zanzibar may succeed by tapping “into something truly universal – concern for the sick” (ibid.: 238f). To guarantee child well-being, “protection must be broader than simply protection from particular risks, and take in protection of opportunities” (Bourdillon 2014: 497) and Zanzibari children’s and adults’ diverse needs to flourish in their communities.

IV Child Protection and the ‘Future’

How child protection intervention will continue in Zanzibar will only show over time. Knowledge and views about it are inevitably changing, and while diverse perceptions have always existed, Zanzibari attitudes toward child chastisement, such as the protection worker’s view in this chapter’s opening vignette, are changing too. Both external and internal alterations of Muslim-Zanzibari cultural identity cause fears of losing the power to produce pious, disciplined and responsible people. The imagined need to reproduce respect, obedience and submissiveness are clear examples of that. Despite people’s fear of losing parts of a ‘Zanzibari’ identity through influences from the ‘West’, Zanzibar will neither remain free from tourism (largely from the ‘West’) nor from fundamentalist religious influences (largely from Saudi Arabia), and the respective discourses that travel with people will shape children’s and adults’ experiences of both protection and chastisement.

Protection actors in Zanzibar often emphasised the need to develop evidence-based protection interventions that build on approaches that have proved ‘successful’ in other places. Nevertheless, simply drawing on ‘evidence’ from other places may ignore contextual particularities and I therefore want to underline the importance of cross-cultural and cross-topic comparative research, particularly from locations with similar social norms. Identifying ‘respect’ as both a crucial obstacle and driver of protection practice toward Zanzibari children, may apply to similar social situations elsewhere. Thereby, my findings hold relevance beyond the confines of the archipelago and may translate to places where ‘respect’ holds equal significance. Sharing findings between Muslim-majority contexts, such as the Middle East and

North Africa, or countries like Indonesia and Malaysia, could contribute to more robust approaches to protecting children in settings where ‘respect’ defines everyday being.

More comparative ethnographies of child protection, that acknowledge their specific contexts but also emphasise similarities between experiences in keeping children safe, would add knowledge to this field of inquiry. Such comparison should be drawn less based on geographic location, but rather in regard to other characteristics such as legal systems and situations, and religious belief. Focusing on the central angle points of the centuries-old Indian Ocean trading network, including places like Oman, Yemen, India, may be productive, not least because many of my interlocutors considered these places as possible points of comparison in terms of religion or conduct. Therefore, I deem it most sensible, to compare the findings from the Zanzibar context not exclusively to findings from other African countries, but more importantly to states with *Sharia* law and without a full prohibition of corporal punishment: Somalia, Saudi Arabia, State of Palestine, Malaysia¹¹⁸.

It may be equally helpful to compare to states with a full prohibition of corporal punishment in these regions, such as Israel, South Sudan, or Tunisia, or those with a clear commitment to law reform, like Oman¹¹⁹. Experiences from these locations could further help to understand and learn about protection approaches that worked for people in these societies. Finally, there is a need for more research on how to best protect children in educational settings. Opportunities for future research may include the linkages between religious and non-religious education systems, children’s own protection strategies, and the protection of boys, specifically from sexual abuse. Exploring those and other themes along the East African Swahili coast and beyond, could add comparative data to existing scholarship of the region, and increase opportunities to improve development actors’ efforts in the protection field.

¹¹⁸ <http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org/interactive-map> [Accessed: 27 December 2017]

¹¹⁹ [http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org/assets/pdfs/legality-tables/Middle%20East%20and%20North%20Africa%20progress%20table%20\(commitment\).pdf](http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org/assets/pdfs/legality-tables/Middle%20East%20and%20North%20Africa%20progress%20table%20(commitment).pdf) [Accessed: 5 March 2017]

As Montgomery put it well, “while the West does have a responsibility to act, it also has a responsibility to understand” (Montgomery 2001: 163): both the situation of corporal punishment in Zanzibar, but also its own responses to it. Therefore, only by understanding the forces I have depicted in this thesis, discussions of child protection and corporal punishment in Zanzibar can become more attentive to what matters most to those concerned by both practices. Childhood, discipline, chastisement, and child protection are, as I have shown, by no means unproblematic categories, and people who campaign against physical chastisement would be wise not to treat them as if they were.

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APPENDIX I

Research Evaluation with Child Research Participants

At the end of my fieldwork I conducted a small evaluation (*tathmini*) of my research project with the sixty children who participated in it. To understand better how they felt about the different research activities we did together, I asked for their feedback on the different tasks they had participated in. Their responses include all levels of emotional involvement and are a detailed reflection of the positive and negative challenges my young research participants faced while working with me. What my young interlocutors perceived as positive about our research collaboration included the exposure to new tasks, an improved understanding of their own position in society, a heightened awareness of their own safety in schools, being listened to and taken seriously, as well as working in a friendly environment:

Exposure to new things

“It opened the students’ minds (*inawafungua akili*) for different tasks.” (f 10)

“It was nice that we were given the photos from the research, and that you asked us to explain our photos.” (f 15)

“I liked many things, like taking photos, and drawing.” (f 14)

“I’m happy and I think I did a good job in my research. Thank you.” (m 14)

“We would like you to increase your time with us. The work you give us like drawing etc. usually we don’t have these things.” (m 13)

“Taking photos was a lot of fun. I gave some of my friends the photos I took of them and they were very happy to see them.” (m 13)

Understanding their own position in society

“You helped us to understand our rights.” (f 13)

“It is nice that you went to visit different areas to learn about children’s development in society. We thank you for coming to see us. You helped us to realize many things.” (m 15)

“I liked the drawing exercise and to learn about children’s responsibility in their community (*majukumu katika jamii*).” (m 17)

“It encouraged us to know that we the children are also part of society (*pia jamii*), and that the government cares about us because they started a research office on children.” (f 12)

Increased awareness of safety at school

“We now understand the importance of *adhabu mbadala* at school.” (m 12)
I like that you collected many different information about children’s safety that are important for us.” (m 13)

“Since your research was also on the cane (*bakora*), it has now decreased to some extent (*kwa upande fulani*) here at our school.” (f 14)

Being listened to and taken seriously

“It helped us children to be free to say what we want. When you leave hopefully there will be another one or you should continue.” (m 14)

“I liked taking photos and telling my opinion about my fellow children. It was also very nice to get to know you Franziska.” (m 14)

“I liked being with her because she is warm (*mchangamfu*) and doesn’t discriminate (*habagui*) against people.” (m 16)

“I liked about you and your research the way in which you like children (*jinsi unavyopenda watoto*) and how you care about your work. I hope you will come back to work with our fellow students.” (m 13)

“Because we spoke about important things like children’s safety and their manners and punishment by using things like cameras. And our leader Franziska (*kiongozi wetu*) sat with us nicely (*kwa uzuri*) and worked together with us.” (m 14)

“I liked your cooperation (*ushirikiano wako*) and how you like to make us children at *madrassa* happy. We thank you and hope you will come again. We love you very much.” (f 12)

Working in a friendly environment

“It was nice to work with you and that you gave us your phone number.” (f 14)

“I thank Franziska for her research, it was very nice. I have nothing to say but I love you and God Almighty (*Mwenyezi Mungu*) shall grant you a peaceful journey.” (m 13)

“I like how you explained things.” (m 11)

“I liked laughing with you and playing with you. I love you Franziska, because you love me.” (f 14)

What my young researcher participants experienced as less positive about being involved in a long-term research project, included inconvenient times for participation and difficulties with understanding the research topics, a dislike of the proposed tasks, fear of consequences when disclosing sensitive information, unfulfilled (often material) expectations, and my involvement with Islamic religious schools:

Inconvenient times and difficult topics

“When she came to teach, people were studying in class.” (f 12)

“Not so good was that sometimes the teacher was teaching at school and the topics themselves are hard to understand and even when she explained them you could not understand.” (f 12)

“We didn’t see the development (*maendeleo*) of the research. She called us when we were studying, so while our friends were learning we missed class. I advise her to call us during our break or during a time when people don’t study.” (m 13)

Dislike of the research activities

“I would have preferred to go somewhere to visit instead of taking pictures.” (f 14)

“I didn’t like the drawing and writing.” (f 13)

“The research brought some difficulties because of the pictures. Many elders didn’t want to be photographed by their children.” (f 14)

“To take photos on these themes is not nice.” (m 14)

Fear of disclosing information

“Some children don’t want to tell us about the way they are brought up at home (*malezi ya nyumbani kwao*) because when they tell us they will get difficulties (*watapata shida*).” (m 10)

Unfulfilled (material) expectations

“You didn’t do a good job, because you haven’t given us presents and cameras yet.” (m 11)

“We would have liked to have more resources (*vitendea kazi*) to work with.” (m 14)

“Please, if you go to another *madrassa* and they need some support (*msaada*), give them anything you have even if it is not much, so God help you.” (f 13)

“We want help (*msaada*) for our *madrassa*. We want to have a mosque and a school built, if you do that, we will thank you.” (f 13)

“We would like carpet to sit on (*mazuria ya kukalia*). We are sad that you are running away from us (*unatukimbia*). Come visit us. We depend on your contribution. We love you very much.” (f 12)

“It was bad that you did not come every day, but – surprise – you were also teaching somewhere else.” (m 12)

“I don’t like that you are leaving because we have gotten used to you already and now we won’t see you anymore. Come back to visit us one day and remember us, and we will also remember you very much.” (m 14)

“Why do you not want to continue the research. Have you lost your motivation? Continue with us, we like seeing you at our school.” (m 13)

“Next time you should include children with disabilities, like with their eyes, or their mind, so they can also contribute the things they face.” (f 14)

Involvement in madrasas

“One thing I didn’t like was that she also went to the *madrassa* to do her research. For me I didn’t like that because we didn’t know that she went there because she goes up to (*mpaka*) the orders of Allah (*maamrisho ya Allah*).” (m 16)