'The other half of the story'

A study of the role of men in women's empowerment in a Brazilian favela

Master's Thesis

Hilda Alberda (S 1457594)

Amsterdam, August 25, 2006

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Supervisor: dr. M. E. M. de Theije

Second reader: dr. L. A. Brouwer

Master Social and Cultural Anthropology

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

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Photo front-page:

Picture of woman breastfeeding her youngest child, sitting in the door post of her house in Caranguejo. Taken on March 30, 2006.

This entails an approach that would look 'not only at the category "women" – since that is only half of the story – but at women in relation to men, and the way in which relations between these categories are socially constructed (Moser 1993:3).

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Introduction

I think that when we talk about the position of women (…) and see how miserable it is, quite often we forget that these miserable women are married to miserable men
(Wanagari Maathai cited in Silberschmidt 2001: 657).

My initial interest was focused on the so called "feminisation of poverty" which is mainly rooted in specific gender characteristics subscribed to womanhood on which the (universal) power inequality between men and women is based (Sassen 2000: 503, Silberschmidt 2001: 664). Corresponding this idea, women are positioned as universally poor and disadvantaged victims of male domination (Cornwall 2000: 5). However, corresponding to Wanagari Maathai's statement, I found out that men were missing in gender literature. Because I believe that men play a significant role in the achievement of gender equality, I decided to focus on the role of men and the relationship between men and women in my Master's thesis.

After this brief introduction of the topic and its social relevance I will further introduce its history and relevance in gender and development studies and the different angles from which I will approach the topic in this thesis. Based on women's universal subordinated position and in response to the absence of women in anthropological studies, feminist gender studies initially focused strictly on women as mothers, sisters, wives and daughters in a context of male superiority. In feminist studies and development projects directed towards a better position of women, men were either absent or regarded as "the problem" (Cornwall 1997: 11). However, as Wanagari Maathai argued, although as a result of gender inequality women in general suffer more from poverty than men (World Bank 2005), we tend to forget that poverty is a problem faced by women as well as men (Green 1993: 3 and 11).

It is only recently that the importance of men's role in gender and development is recognised and that men are actually referred to as gendered beings. Gender now includes both men and women and revealing the dynamics of gender visualises masculinity and problematises men and their role in gender issues (Connell, Hearn and Kimmel 2005: 1). This change in focus has resulted in an increasing number of studies on manhood, masculinity and machismo, and more recently in the involvement of men in development. However, now that men are included in gender and development studies, the next step is to question the problematised role of men in processes that are strictly focused on women, which is the aim of this thesis. More specifically, the aim of this thesis is to question the role of men in the issue of women's empowerment. Women's empowerment is an example of a process that aims at a better position of, and a more equal power distribution between women and men that has recently been popular in social sciences and development. I will further elaborate on this process in the theoretical chapter (1).

In contrast to the growing focus on men in literature and development, in projects and literature addressing women's empowerment men are still missing or solely mentioned for their behaviour hindering women's empowerment (Kabeer 1999: 28, Batliwala 1994: 131).

As, Chant and Gutmann state; the exclusion of men and not regarding them as gendered beings "gives them little chance to challenge the constructions imposed upon them, dealing with 'the problem' *through* women, negates the self-reflection on the part of men that might be crucial to change existing gender relations"(2000: 24). In other words: men play a key role in existing gender inequalities and therefore need to play a key role in eliminating the inequalities between themselves and women (Kabeer 1999: 28). With the inclusion of men as gendered beings in empowerment and through that the recognition of their individual characteristics, I aim to uncover the different roles that men (can) play in this process. On the other hand, regarding men as gendered beings uncovers the (individual) difficulties they face when being part of the process of women's empowerment.

The relationship between men and women's empowerment can be approached from two angles. First: there is men's influence on women's empowerment process. Women cannot do their empowerment alone; men's support in this is essential since efforts to increase women's status are unlikely to succeed without men's support (UNFPA 1997: 1). Although women have come a long way in their empowerment, most men have retained their advantaged position in relation to women (Chant and Craske 2003). For example, where women have taken on an increasing role in contributing to their families' income, men have not taken up their share of responsibility in family life (UNFPA 1997: 2). This implies that men need to change and fulfil different roles and tasks as well; therefore, men need to become aware and part of the importance of women's empowerment. Although the intended outcome of women's empowerment is gender equality that aims at benefiting women and men, women's empowerment is often regarded as a threat to male authority (Chant and Craske 2003: 169).

The second angle of the relationship between men and women's empowerment therefore concerns the effect that empowerment has on men. Existing literature on men, dealing with changes in power distributions, mainly refers to their feelings of losing out, resulting in increased conflict between men and women, domestic violence or alcohol abuse (Melo 2002; Coomaraswamy 1997; Edbrooke and Peters 2005; Chant and Craske 2003; UNFPA 1997: 8). Aiming to decrease violence and abuse, it is therefore important to regard men's complexity and the fact that they also have to deal with changes, instead of generalising them as the problem (Cornwall 1997: 11). In contrast to this problematised role of men, there is little literature on the fact that men, through women's empowerment, lose traditional burdens, which can liberate and empower them in material and psychological terms (Batliwala 1994: 131).

Apart from the focus on men who, in relation to women, posses the greater share of power, not only in the household, but also to influence societal thinking in most parts of the world, I aim to underline the influence that women have on their own empowerment process (Kabeer 1999: 28). As Kabeer rightly argues:

> *Women's acceptance of their secondary claims on household resources, their acquiescence to violence at the hands of their husbands, their willingness to bear children to the detriment of their own health and survival in order to satisfy their own or their husband's preference for sons, are all examples of behaviour by women which undermine their own well-being* (1999: 440).

Following Kabeer, I argue that, even though men are the more powerful, women have the choice to accept or resist their situation and the power exercised on them. In this thesis I will use the concept of agency to underline the influence of individual women on their situation and on their empowerment.

In this thesis, the concept of agency is also used to underline the differences among men and among women through their ability to make independent choices, relating to the idea that gender is not static and therefore that the process of women's empowerment cannot be regarded as static. Furthermore, with the concept of agency I aim to stress the influence of individual women as well as men on their perceptions, observations and opinions of their daily social, cultural and personal reality. However, regarding the distinction between the social, cultural and personal reality, I believe that the personal or individual reality is grounded in and interacts with cultural and social structures and agents are free to a certain extent. I have combined three dimensions of the personal, social and cultural with the contrast between agency and structure into an analytical tool that I use in the data analysis of this thesis and which I will further introduce and explain in chapter 1.

Recapitulating the above, the aim of this thesis is to establish what the role of women but mainly that of men as gendered beings is in the process of women's empowerment. In this, I argue that in the process of women's empowerment, men, as the more powerful, do not have to be 'the problem'. Instead, I believe that, by understanding the role of men in the process of women's empowerment, without neglecting the role of women themselves, men can become part of the solution when eliminating gender inequality.

After the introduction of the topic and relevance of this thesis, the next step is to operationalise these ideas and assumptions through localising the fieldwork and formulating a research question and sub-questions. I chose to do my field research on the role of men in the process of women's empowerment in Caranguejo, one of Brazil's *favelas*[1]. My interest in Brazil was raised in the premaster year of this study when I wrote my Bachelor's thesis on women's empowerment and microcredit in Brazil. This large country is characterised not only by its diversity of nature and population but unfortunately also diversity of income and living standard.

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[1] *Favela* is the Brazilian name for slum, further explanation can be found in chapter 4.

I chose to do the fieldwork for this thesis in a *favela* in Brazil, because it are in particular the poorer[2] and therefore already disadvantaged women who suffer from unequal power distributions between genders (World Bank 2005). Secondly, the well-known machismo[3] of Brazilian men made Brazil the ultimate place for a research that focuses on men's role in women's empowerment.

Summarising the discussion, assumptions and questions discussed above, I have formulated the following research question:

How are men as gendered *beings included in the process of women's empowerment?*

With this research question I aim to uncover the role that men play and, even though it has long been ignored, have always played in the process of women's empowerment. I believe that understanding the role of men as gendered beings in the process, and with that revealing their individual characteristics and struggles they face, will benefit the success of women's empowerment.

Regarding the specific location of the field research and the discussion above and in order to operationalise, this research question can be complemented by two sub-questions. First, in stressing the influence of individuals through agency, I aim to find out which role social and cultural structures and people's direct environment plays in their personal reality and life. The second sub-question is linked to the analytical tool that is set out in the theoretical chapter and is formulated as follows:

a. *How do men and women in Caranguejo, as individual agents, combine cultural and social structures into their personal reality?*

Secondly, in order to answer the research question, my first objective is to determine how power is currently distributed between men and women in Caranguejo, as power is central to gender inequality and women's empowerment. In this, my aim is to underline the differences between and among men and women in different households. Therefore I formulated the first sub-question as follows:

b. *How is power divided between men and women in Caranguejo?*

With this question I do not only focus on how men and women perceive and value their own roles and position, but also on how they perceive and value the role of their spouse and of men and women in Caranguejo in general.

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[2] Poor is further defined in chapter 4.
[3] There is further elaborated on the term macho in chapter 3.

The data for this thesis has been gathered through interviews, which I conducted with both men and women in Caranguejo. Although my initial idea was a strict focus on men, shortly after I arrived in the field, I decided that women should and could not be left out of my study.

In my interviews I focused on the relationship between husband and wife and among others asked them about the division of household tasks, how decisions are made in the household and who controlled the money. The questionnaire I used during my interviews can be found in appendix IV, while my research methods are elaborated in chapter two.

Summarising the above, the structure of my thesis is as follows. After the introduction this thesis is divided in three sections. The first section encompasses the theoretical framework (chapter one) and methodology (chapter two). The theoretical framework contains a discussion of the concepts and theories used in this thesis and the analytical tool on which the data analysis of this thesis is based. In the methodological chapter, I will discuss the process of doing fieldwork and the methods I used in this.

The second section of this thesis contains a presentation of data gathered, both in the field, in literature and other resources both in Brazil and in The Netherlands. The division of this section is based on the analytical tool presented in chapter two and the chapters of this section represent the cultural, social and personal levels of analysis. In chapter three the cultural level of analysis is presented which includes a description of traditional gender roles. In chapter four, I present the social context of Brazil in general and that of Caranguejo in specific in relation to the theme and research question of this thesis. This is followed by an analysis of the data gathered through interviews in chapter five, which is called the personal.

The third and final section of this thesis contains the conclusions. First, the answers to the two subquestions are presented, placed in the context of Caranguejo, based on a combinantion of theory and data. Subsequently I present my conclusion, in answer to the research question, in the context of Carnguejo. Then I present an overall conclusion that provides an answer to the research question that goes beyond the context of Caranguejo. To end this thesis I make a brief final remark in answer to a question that was asked during a discussion I attended in Brazil.

Concluding this introduction I wish to make a brief reference to the theme of the Master in Social and Cultural Anthropology at the Vrije Universiteit, which is Human Security. Human Security is concerned with economic, environmental, political, physical, social, cultural, religious and existential security and can be further defined as freedom from fear and freedom from wants. It therefore encompasses all the themes related to my research, for example; gender, power, social and cultural structures and vulnerable livelihood. While my research seems to be so specific and the term Human Security so all-embracing, I chose to use Human Security strictly as a lens to focus on men's role in women's empowerment.

1 Theory

In this chapter the central concepts of this thesis are further explained and defined, through discussing and combining existing literature and theories, keeping in mind the research question of this thesis. The main concepts that are dealt with are; gender, power and empowerment. Also included is a description of the analytical tool I put together, that is used for the analysis of the data gathered for this thesis in chapter three, four and five. This tool includes three levels of analysis; the cultural, the social and the personal, and is closely related to each of the concepts discussed in this chapter.

1.1 Gender

To start the discussion of gender I present a brief introduction of the history of gender in anthropology and subsequently of men in anthropology and gender. The focus on men's roles in the progress towards gender equality is the result of three decades of change in social sciences research. After strictly focusing on men, women's movements in social sciences first developed in the mid 1850s (Kaufman 2003: 14). However, this movement only appeared in a number of countries and progress was slow. In the 1960s a rebirth of the women's movement developed and put women's issues on the agenda in most parts of the world (Kaufman 2003: 14). This "new wave of feminism" strongly influenced the introduction of gender in development in the West (Potter in Allen and Thomas 2000: 384). The movement started with an emphasis on women in development (Potter in Allen and Thomas 2000: 384). Women In Development (WID) was an important step in development effort, because it named women both as a specific object and subject of development and led to women-centred development programmes (Kaufman 2003: 5). Then, following criticism on women in development-studies for being too narrow, a shift was apparent to gender as a category (Kaufman 2003: 5). This resulted in the introduction in the 1980s of the Gender And Development (GAD) movement (Potter in Allen and Thomas 2000: 384; Caulfield 2001: 454). In this movement gender is considered as a broader analytical category that includes consideration of the social construction and positioning of female and male subjects and the femininity and masculinity of power (Caulfield 2001: 454). Therefore, The Gender And Development framework gave room for the inclusion of men as actors and subjects in the debate of gender equality in anthropology and development (Kaufman 2003: 5-6; Chant and Guttman 2000: 6).

This thesis connects to the idea of Gender And Development, and addresses men as gendered beings who are as important as women in achieving gender equality and therefore in the matter of women's empowerment (see Flood 2004). This entails an approach which does not only look at the category women or men, since that is "only half of the story" (Moser 1993: 3), but also at the relation between women and men, and the way in which relations between these categories are socially constructed.

While the relationship between men and women is of central importance in the study of gender equality through women's empowerment of this thesis, I briefly wish to elaborate on this relationship and on the importance of a study that includes men.

As identities are constructed in relation to others, female identities are developed in relation to men and male identities are developed in relation to women, or in other words, the formation of masculinity and femininity are interdependent (Brandes 1980 in Gutmann 1997: 386). This interdependency is for example illustrated by women's socialised expectations of their men acting as men that stimulate machismo in men (Chant and Craske 2003). Furthermore, a result of the focus on changes in women's lives, is that men were forced to give up positions that put them in advantage and were left with little more than a series of negative images of masculinity (Cornwall 1997: 11). However, instead of regarding men as standing in the way of positive change, men should be seen as gendered beings who are influenced by their (changing) environment to the same extent as women are. In order to include men as gendered beings in the study of changing gender relations and women's empowerment, greater understanding of men, masculinity and machismo is needed. For this reason, whereas women's roles and identities have been intensively studied in the last decades, the focus of this thesis is mainly on male identities and roles. Nevertheless, regarding the interdependence of masculine and feminine roles and identities, men's roles cannot be studied without understanding women's roles and the relation between the two.

The next step is to define the concept of gender. Gender is based on sex, meaning the biological differences between male and female (Nanda and Warms 2004: 233). Gender can therefore be described as "a cultural construction, which makes biological and physical differences into socially meaningful categories that seem reasonable and appropriate" (Nanda and Warms 2004: 234). An important characteristic of gender is that it is not a static and fixed entity: it is neither biologically nor socially fixed; the identities we have as women or men are multiple and shifting, depending on the environment and the people that surround us (Cornwall 1997: 11; Kaufmann 2003: 7).

Gender roles include expectations about the "natural' abilities of men and women, the occupations considered suitable for each sex, differences in temperament and personality, the behavioural patterns most appropriate for men and women, and their attitudes toward themselves and others (Nanda and Warms 2004: 242). Therefore gender roles, more so than biology affect the typical feminine or masculine (social) behaviour of men and women of a culture (Brody 1997: 376). In each culture there are different roles ascribed to men and women and in some cultures even to third genders. These roles include the sexual division of for example labour and the distinction between public and private dichotomy (Moser 1993: 27-28). Referring to gender roles as being neither universal nor static (Silberschmidt 2001: 658), men's and women's position in the social structure significantly influences their perception and definition of masculinity and femininity; these therefore differ across racial, ethnic, class, sexual, and regional boundaries (Ciabattari 2001: 576).

In the analysis of the data gathered for this thesis, these relations and interactions are underlined with the use of three different levels of analysis, viz. the cultural, social and personal (see subchapter 1.4).

While not only gender, but more specifically gender inequality is central to this thesis, the next step is to further define gender inequality. I start this discussion with Komter, who makes a useful distinction between five fields of equality, namely biological equality, moral equality, psychological equality, social equality and juridical equality (Komter 1990: 38). However, in order to make this distinction useful for this thesis, some changes had to be made. Based on Komter's underlying ideas of the fields of equality, I constructed a model that contains three fields, which are named: the cultural, the social and the personal. First, there is the cultural field of inequality, which includes the cultural construction of gender roles. Cultural gender inequality is based on both universal and regional culture and includes for example culturally established norms, values and roles. Secondly, the social gender inequality among others includes opportunities such as education and work, equal access to resources like power and income but also juridical equality. Finally, I have aimed to underline the interaction of individuals and their specific characteristics, position and environment, which are captured in the personal level. Each specific situation of gender inequality is based on cultural and social gender inequality as well as on personal reality. The personal, social and cultural fields of inequality are each based on and at the same time encompass beliefs and ideas considering biological, moral and psychological inequality.

1.2   *Power*

Power is central to gender (in)equality and is therefore the second concept to be discussed in this chapter. Andersonn and Umberson state that "the performance of gender makes male power and privileges appear natural and normal rather than socially produced and constructed" (2001: 359). For men, masculinity or manhood are often equated with powerful (Kaufmann 2003: 11), whereas for women, femininity and womanhood are equated with powerless. Gender relations are based on power distributions, in which men typically own a larger share of power than women do. Ascribed gender roles and the inequality which stems from these can be applied to both men and women; changing these gender roles and challenging the existing power distribution therefore needs to involve both genders.

Starting from the subordinated position of women to men, gender relations can be analysed in terms of power on which the principle of women's empowerment is based (Poldervaart 1985: 51, Van Halsema 1991: 10). The concept of power has been discussed extensively both in anthropology in general and in feminist anthropology. Below I aim to combine a number of these (feminist) theories and ideas on power in order to come to a definition that can be used in the analysis of power in gender relations and in the discussion of women's empowerment. There are three sets of characteristics that are central in the debate on power which include: power as an asset or as relational, power as repressive or productive, and power based on agency or structure (Van Halsema 1991: 8).

First, there is the question of power as an asset or as relational. Since this thesis is based on an analysis of the relationship between men and women instead of strictly on men and women, power will be considered as based on (gender) relations and thus relational, I will elaborate on this below (Van Halsema 1991: 8). Weber's defined power as "the chance of a man or of a number of men to realise their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others" (Weber 1978: 926 cited in Davis et al. 1991: 7). Although Weber defines power as a one-way process, from his definition can be derived that power is always related to another person and therefore not only relational but also relative (cited in Davis et al. 1991: 7). Connecting to this idea, Foucault defines power not only as relational, but also as something that only exists in its exercise constituted in a network of social relationships (afterword in Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982: 208-226). This is related to Giddens' idea of power relations as "*two-way*, even if the power of one actor or party in a social relation is minimal compared to another" (1979: 93, see also Davis et al. 1991: 7). Elaborating on the idea of power as a two-way process, power is often regarded as dichotomous, the struggle between the powerful and the powerless (Van der Velden 1991: 9). Especially in gender relations and the issue of women's empowerment, men and women are often pictured as respectively the powerful and powerless.

However, I argue that this is an oversimplification of power in gender relations, since men's powerfulness does not automatically imply women's powerlessness (Gebara 1994 in Jacobs 2002: 118). Referring to Gebara, Jacobs makes a distinction between women's and men's power, in which she defines men's power as formal in terms of control over others, and women's power as subversive (1994 cited in 2002: 117-121). The use of a distinction in power based on gender differences, in my opinion, contributes to the issue of women's empowerment. However, linking to the idea of power as relational and not as an asset, I prefer to state that men and women do not so much possess different forms of power, but rather that they either use different resources or the same resources in a different way when obtaining power. Next I will elaborate on the concept of agency, which is related to the way in which men and women use the available resources. In Nanda and Warms power is actually defined as "the ability to control resources in one's own interest" (2004: 254). These resources are not only based on material issues, but as Giddens defines it, they are the "media through which power is exercised, and structures of domination reproduced" (1979: 91). For example, structures existing of (cultural) norms and values can be used as resources for power as well money and networks (see Jacobs 2002: 117-121).

Recapitulating this first part of the discussion of power as an asset or relational, power can be defined as relational in which differences in access and the use of resources influence the individual share of power of men and women.

Secondly, linking to the discussion of power as dichotomous or as the struggle between the powerful and powerless, power has for a long time been considered as repressive only, especially in women's studies (Van Halsema 1991: 8). In this view on power, women were seen as victims of men's power or as the powerless, whereas men were regarded as the powerful.

Although power in gender relations may be partly repressive, women's acquiescence with practices that subordinate them or their resistance to this, cannot be understood in terms of power as being exclusively repressive (Gremmen 1988). As Foucault argues, where there is power, there is resistance (afterword in Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982: 208-226). Since the idea of power as dichotomous was rejected above power can be considered as both repressive and productive (Giddens 1979, Komter 1990: 84 and Van Halsema 1991: 8).

Thirdly, there is the question of power exercised by agency or structure (Van Halsema 1991: 8). According to Giddens, power is "centrally involved with human agency; a person or party who wields power *could* have acted otherwise, and the person or party over whom power is wielded, the concept implies, *would* have acted overwise [otherwise, H.A.] if power had not been exercised" (1979: 91). Briefly, the concept of agency can be defined as the way individuals use the (power) resources they have at their disposal. According to Sherry Ortner, whatever agency people have as individuals, it is always something that is interactively negotiated (2005: 16). This implies that agency is influenced by people's direct environment, including other agents, as well as by their own characteristics. In other words, agents are never free, in the sense that they do not have the freedom to formulate and realise their own goals in a social vacuum. They are also not fully able to control the relationships in which they are involved towards their own ends (Ortner 2005: 16). The degree of freedom under which people can formulate and realise their own goals depends on the degree of power (based on resources) and the agency they possess. Agents are partly determined by structures and therefore not totally free to act (Giddens 1984), but as Lukes states: "although the agents operate within structurally determined limits, they nonetheless have a certain relative autonomy and could have acted differently" (1977: 6-7).

In summary, power can be characterised as relational, both repressive and productive, and is exercised through agency in which structure can either be restricting or used as one of the resources through which power can be obtained and therefore enabling.

1.3 *Empowerment*

Although empowerment is a popular term in social theory and research, and in development work, there are no universal agreements on what the term means and how it should be achieved. Much of this fluidity of meaning originates in the different definitions of power on which the different understandings of power are based (Sharp, Briggs, Yacoub, and Hamed 2003: 282). The steps undertaken below, in order to arrive at a definition of empowerment to be used in this thesis, are based on the characteristics of power according to the above discussion.

The first step in defining empowerment is to regard empowerment not as an outcome but as a process with a certain outcome. In relation to this, I aim to question the measurement of empowerment, while the process of empowerment and the outcomes are not static.

The need to empower women is based on gender inequality and, although the subordinated position of women can be regarded as a universal truth, gender is not static and the specific subordinated position of women depend on her individual characteristics, personal environment and the actors in that environment. This clarifies why neither empowerment as a process or its outcomes can be regarded as static. Empowerment can now be further defined as a process of which the process itself and the (ideal) outcome depends on the environment and the different actors involved. While the need for empowerment follows from the existing inequality between men and women, the intended outcome can be generalised as: a more equal distribution of power between men and women. The process of empowerment can then be defined as: changing the existing power distribution between men and women into a more equal distribution.

The second step is to define by whom this empowerment process is or should be initiated. While I aim to underline the influence of individuals on the process and the outcomes of empowerment, I will elaborate briefly on the role of agency in this process. In power as defined above, agency can be related to a positive sense of power in which it refers to the capacity to define their own life choices and to pursue their own goals that can be summarised as productive characteristics of power. Agency can also be related to a more negative sense of power, where it implies the capacity to impose goals against the wishes of others, or repressive power. Lukes takes the definition of power one step further and defines three forms of power, the 'power to', 'power over', 'power from within' (1994: 29). The 'power to' is similar to power as enabling or productive and can be further explained as "people's capacity to define their own life choices and to pursue their own goals" (Kabeer 1999: 438). The 'power over' is related to power as repressive and can be further explained as "the capacity of an actor (…) to override the agency of others" (Kabeer 1999: 438). To these two forms of power, Lukes has added the 'power from within', which "encompasses the meaning, motivation and purpose which individuals bring into their activity" (1994: 29). The power within can also be described as the sense of agency, which makes agency more than an observable action into something that cannot be given but has to be self-generated (Kabeer 1994: 229, 1999: 438). It is the 'power from within' that underlines the individual influence of women on their empowerment.

Connecting to the discussion on 'power from within', I argue that empowerment should be initiated by women and not for women (Afshar 1998: 3). Helleman underlines women's influence on their own empowerment by defining the process as: "a through the women involved self directed process of power formation, with which they gather an increased share of influence over their own body and life, independent decision making about the design of their own life and society of which they are a part and being able to, from an independent position, be a part of the decision making about wanted developments and changes" (cited in Fehse 1995: 24).

However, the fact that women are the initiators of their own empowerment process, does not deny the relational aspect of power or the 'power over' and the 'power to' that people, mainly men, in women's environment can exercise to influence their empowerment process (Afshar 1998: 3).

As follows from the definition of empowerment that resulted from the first step in defining this process in the discussion of empowerment, power can be regarded as a combination of agency and resources. This means that, in order to get empowered, women need to gain both agency and access to or control over resources. The access to resources is one of the areas where other agents (either their husband or for instance NGO's) can act as productive or restricting towards the process of women's empowerment. But, while gaining access to resources does not automatically imply empowerment, in the end women's agency determines the degree of empowerment obtained with this access. I therefore add to the definition, that empowerment is either done with the help of or in spite of the resistance of women's environment.

Concluding the discussion above, empowerment can be defined as: '*a through the women involved self directed process of changing existing power relations towards an equal distribution between women and men, either with the help from or in spite of the resistance of their environment*'.

It is important to mention that although this thesis mainly focuses on individual empowerment of women, in this process of individual empowerment, the influence and the existence of collective empowerment cannot be ignored. Changes in the discourse on women's empowerment or changes in gender equality in women's environment can be used as (power) resources for individual empowerment. In the data analysis chapter of this thesis, attention is paid to collective empowerment through analysing the general ideas on women's empowerment. While the term empowerment is not used in interviews, this data is indirectly gathered by collecting general (cultural) norms and values that concern women's position in the household and society.

1.4   *Analytical tool*

Ortner states, "we must be absolutely clear about what we are trying to explain, before explaining it" (Ortner 1972: 6). Therefore, I will now introduce a tool of analysis that has been used in analysing the data presented in this thesis.

Following the discussion about power, Lukes (1974) argues that power is not only manifested in public behaviour, but also in perceptions, cognitions and preferences of humans. However, changes in conceptions and norms do not necessarily result in simultaneous changes in public behaviour (Komter 1990: 54-55). Komter states that this gap between perceptions and public behaviour or reality is one of the main problems in the process of women's empowerment (Komter 1990: 54). Elaborating on these ideas, in this thesis I have used a tool of analysis that is based on feminist literature, in which a distinction can be made between (personal) reality and (shared) norms and values.

There are several variations of analytical tools present in feminist literature. Below I introduce the ideas of Evetts (2000), Komter (1990) and Ortner (1972) which I have combined into a model that is applicable to the data gathered for this thesis and that is related to the levels of gender inequality named in the subchapter on gender (1.1).

Like Ortner who in her discussion of the secondary status of women in society isolates "three levels of the problem", I have made a differentiation between three analytical levels (Ortner 1972: 6).

Ortner names the first level: the (universal) culture (1972: 6). Komter describes this level as: the desirable or the level of norms and values (1990: 85). According to Ortner, this level includes universal cultural values, or pan-cultural facts on the secondary status of women in every society (Ortner 1972: 5- 6). Evetts, in her article on change in women's careers, describes this level as "cultural dimensions: family and feminine ideologies, and organisational cultures" (2000: 58). Following the somewhat overlapping ideas about the first level of analysis set out above, in the analytical tool used in this thesis, the first level is named 'culture'. This level can be related to the cultural level of gender inequality and includes among others (universal) cultural norms, values, ideologies.

The second level is called the symbolic level by Ortner, which includes specific ideologies, symbolisations and social structural arrangements (1972: 6-7). Komter's description of the second level is somehow different, as she describes it as "the level of perceptions, cognitions and preferences" (Komter 1990: 85). Evetts describes the second level of her analysis as "structural dimensions: family structures and organisational processes" (2000: 58). The second level of analysis used in this thesis is related to the social level of inequality and can be defined as the 'social', which encompasses social environment composed of social structures and processes. The symbolic aspect referred to by Ortner, is in my analysis included in the first level of analysis, culture (1972: 6-7).

Ortner describes the final and third level as the "observable on-the-ground details of (…) activities, contributions, power, etceteras" (1972: 6-7). Komter describes this level as the behavioural (1990: 85). Evetts then names this level the "action dimensions: women's choices and strategies" (2000: 58). When defining the third level of analysis for this thesis, I aim to stress the individual or personal influence that men and women have on their daily reality. The third level is therefore named the personal and encompasses the personal reality that is constructed of and based on the cultural and social, as these can be considered as an integral part of daily life of men and women (Van Halsema 1991: 19).

In order to take this analysis to a higher level, I aim to relate these three levels of analysis to the distinction between agency and structure. In this, the personal level is connected to agency and the cultural and symbolic levels are connected to structure.

With the connection of the concept of agency to the observable level of analysis, I aim to underline the influence of the individual on their personal reality (see also Ortner 1984: 144). As Ortner states, the concept of agency is closely related to terms as practice, action and performance, and also to agent, actor, person, self, individual and subject (1984: 144). In other words, agency underlines how individuals influence their personal reality by undertaking action, for example taking decisions (Evetts 2000: 63, Crompton 1997, Hakim 1991).

The use of agency stresses "the complexity of every individual life where, for example, women can experience oppression in some spheres, while being privileged and also exercising oppression in other spheres" (Evett 2000: 63, Holland and Blair 1995).

The cultural and social levels of analysis are related to structure. As Giddens argues "structures are both a medium and a result of social interaction" (1984: 15), which he calls the "duality of structures". This underlines the interaction between the structural levels of analysis and the personal level in which agency is active. Ortner underlines how culture not only allows and enables people to see, feel and act, but that it also restricts and inhibits them from seeing, feeling and doing (1984: 152). Relating this to agency, actions can be taken despite existing cultural barriers or social constraints (Crompton 1997, Evetts 2000: 63, Hakim 1996).

To elaborate on this, personal realities are "not perceived as determined by cultural and structural forces, rather, such forces are mediated in their impact by processes of social interaction; cultures and structures are experienced; individuals respond and react in diverse ways; people construct their own meaning, make choices and develop strategies" (Evetts 2000: 63). From this follows how social and cultural structures arise out of actions and how actions are influenced by these structures (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, Evetts 2000: 64). In other words: "what people do (…) always presupposes some kind of pre-existing structure (…) but in what they do, people simultaneously recreate the structure (…) anew or alternatively new structures emerge and cultural expectations are gradually adjusted" (Evetts 2000: 64).

Following this statement, I will briefly reflect on the concept of change: how the system can be changed by practice (Ortner 1984: 154) that is both important in the interaction between agency and structure and in the process of women's empowerment. Based on the classic Marxist model, "changes come about as a result of class struggle in which formerly dominated groups succeed to power and institute a new hegemony based on their own distinctive ways of seeing and organising the world" (Ortner 1984: 155). Although power is central to the question of women's empowerment and women are a universal dominated group, the aim of this (individual) process is equality and not hegemony. Therefore I introduce Sahlins' definition of change, in which he emphasises "the importance of changes of meaning of existing relations" (Ortner 1984: 155). Sahlins argues "change comes about when traditional strategies, which assume traditional patterns of relations (…), are deployed in relation to novel phenomena (…) which do not respond to those strategies in traditional ways" (Ortner 1984: 155). Relating to the idea that, with their actions, agents reproduce social and cultural structures, Sahlins broadly defines change "failed reproduction" (Ortner 1984: 156).
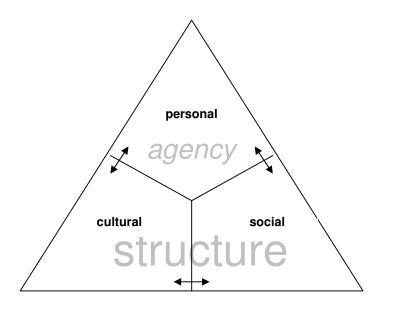
Figure 1.1

The three analytical levels and the distinction between agency and structure are represented in the figure above. In this, the triangle stands for the complete reality, which, in the analysis of this thesis, comprises the personal, cultural and social, all interacting and interrelated with each other. Important is to notice that, in the reality of the people included in the research for this thesis, this distinction between the different levels is not recognised, it is purely an analytical tool. Based on this analytical tool I subdivided the information gathered in three chapters that correspond with the three levels of analysis presented.

The final point I wish to make, considering the data analysis of this thesis, is the difference between perceptions, observations and opinions of men and women. This is not represented above, but is both based in the structural and in the dimension of agency. Gender differences are rooted in social and cultural structures and through action; agents create and define their own personal reality. This formation of reality is based on personal characteristics, regarding which general differences can be described to men and women based on gender (cultural and socially constructed). Furthermore, the formation of reality is based on the personal environment in which, among others, power relations (also based on the social and cultural) play an important role, through which women's perceptions, etceteras, are more strongly influenced by men than the other way around. This again underlines the interaction between structure and agency and therefore between the three levels of analysis. Individuals, men or women, can experience the same reality differently. In relation to this, Komter states that the gender (in)equalities are experienced and valued differently by men and women and that this is expressed in power (in)equalities between them. Expressing judgements regarding gender differences can be a way of maintaining the existing gender inequality, either consciously or subconsciously (Komter 1990: 233).

Komter adds that perceptions and observations of reality can be influenced in such a way, that these prevent people from experiencing situations as negative so that they acquiesce in their current situation. In practice, traditional gender roles can for example be used by men to maintain the existing task division in the household (1990: 84-85).

2　Methodology

The fieldwork for this thesis was conducted in Caranguejo, a *favela* in Recife, captial of the state of Pernambuco in Brazil from January until April 2006. Before my departure to the field I was hoping to do my research in one of Recife's *favelas*, however I was aware of the fact that without the right (inside) contacts these *favelas* would not be safe to enter for me, being a white, tall,[4] Western woman. Throughout this chapter I will elaborate on my experiences after arriving at the field, the decisions I took and the methods I used to gather my data. An expanded discussion of the field and my informants is to be found in chapter four, The Social.

2.1　Access

With the help of my supervisor at the Vrije Universiteit, dr. Marjo de Theije, I got in touch with Professor Parry Scott, a professor of anthropology at UFPE[5] (Universidade Federal de Pernambuco) in Recife. Prof. Scott is also the head of FAGES[6] (Núcleo Família, Gênero e Sexualidade), a group of researchers, professors and students that aims to realise research, seminars and discussions on family, gender, sexuality and health. During my fieldwork period I was able to make use of computers, library and other facilities of FAGES at UFPE, attended meetings and got in touch with other (international) students who were doing research for FAGES. Furthermore, Prof. Scott introduced me to Dayse Barros de Almeida Machado, a doctor at the health post in Caranguejo, the *favela* in which I conducted my research, who had participated in research[7] done in co-operation with FAGES. Even though Caranguejo is not considered a safe place, it is not the most violent *favela* in Recife and with these inside contacts it would be a relatively safe place for me to do my research.

On my first visit to the health post I met Dayse and the health agents. Besides professional medical staff, the health post, a governmental organisation, also employs inhabitants of Caranguejo who are trained to be health agents. There are seven health agents in the health post and each of them has a specific area (see appendix II) where he or she makes regular visits. The health agents are well known in the community and were therefore able to provide me with useful contacts and information. Furthermore, two of the female health agents became my first respondents.

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[4] Today, Alfonsina (one of my friends in Recife) told me that one time when she was sitting in a bus near UFPE, the university to which we were both connected, and all the people in the bus looked through the windows on the right. She wondered what there was to see and when she looked outside she saw me walking. Of course, being Western and white, with green eyes and straight hair makes people notice you in a city like Recife, but me being 1.83m tall made me an even bigger attraction. People always noticed me and openly stared at me (fieldnotes April 1st 2006).

[5] www.ufpe.br

[6] www.dcs.ufpe.br/fages

[7] Gomes do Monte, A. et. al (2005) *É conversando que a gente se entende.* Recife: Universidade Federal do Pernambuco. A research on all NGO's that are active in the community of Caranguejo/ Tabaiares and Vietnam.

On later visits, I would walk straight towards the health post and from there one of the health agents would accompany me and my translator to the house of a respondent. When the health agents were unavailable, *Senhor* Bernardo, a former leader and founder of Caranguejo, would accompany us to my respondents. One problem was that *Senhor* Bernarndo tended to stay during the interview and I was not in a position to ask him to leave. As *Senhor* Bernardo is well known in the community he was a useful contact, but I was sometimes worried that his presence would influence the answers of my respondents (see below). However, there were certain incidents and stories that made me aware of the possible dangers and stopped me from walking through Caranguejo without the company of an inhabitant. For example, on days when I would visit Caranguejo, my translator and I would meet at a friends' house located near the *favela*. People from Caranguejo found out about this meeting place and one time a man visited this house in order to warn me about the dangers of going into the *favela*. The dangers he referred to included robberies or kidnappings when people were held hostage for a certain period and were taken to ATM machines in order to get money. I took this warning seriously, since a voluntary worker who used to live in or close to Caranguejo had indeed been kidnapped for a few days, but in agreement with my translator I decided not to let this stop me from visiting the community. There were other stories and warnings that I received from the people I interviewed and of course there were my own observations when walking into Caranguejo. During my visits I saw glue sniffers, transsexuals, groups of boys hanging around and police patrolling that made me aware of the kind of neighbourhood I was entering, however these can also be found outside the *favela*. None of this persuaded me not to proceed with the interviews in Caranguejo and the only time I did experience a(n armed) robbery was outside Caranguejo.

2.2   *Data collection*

I conducted my research during January, February and March 2006. However, most of the time I spent in Caranguejo was during February and March. The first few weeks were spent on acclimatising, arranging a place to live, studying Portuguese, reading some (Brazilian) literature at FAGES and planning and organising my research. I paid my last visit to the *favela* on the fourth day before my departure, March 30, which coincidentally was the day on which the health agents presented their research of Caranguejo, which they conducted in the six months before. The health agents were honoured that my translator and I visited their presentation and at the same time it allowed me to gather some last data. This meeting also gave me with the help of my translator the first and ultimate opportunity to present the purpose of our visits to the people of the community.

In total I conducted 22 interviews in 15 households in Caranguejo. All of these interviews were semi-structured, which can be defined as "a context in which the interviewer has a series of questions that are in the general form of an interview schedule, but is able to vary the sequence of questions (…) also, the interviewer usually has some latitude to ask further questions in response to what are seen as significant replies"(Bryman 2001: 110).

I decided to do semi-structured interviews based on my former research experiences in which this method turned out to be most effective. Most of my questions were interrelated and these open-ended questions often led to answers on other questions without having to ask these and to a great amount of additional background information. I believe that the power relation between the interviewer and respondent in a semi-structured interview is more equal than in structured interviews, because both have a certain amount of control over the conversation. Although the respondent is always in control of the answers he or she will give, a structured interview is strongly directed by the interviewer.

Wherever possible I formulated my questions in Portuguese, otherwise my translator translated these for me. The interview consisted of my questions in an unstructured order; while often questions automatically followed on from the story the respondent told me. After discussing all the topics and questions on my list, I ended the interview asking if the person had anything to add. Through this method of interviewing I was able to formulate questions differently in different interviews. This gave me the opportunity to find the most effective formulation and also to skip some questions, which did not seem to produce the wanted answers and add new ones, which worked well in providing the information I was looking for. During the process and in hindsight, I feel that this method increased the creativity and the quality of the outcomes of my interviews.

All the interviews I conducted were face to face. In most cases we managed to have the interview with only me, my translator and the respondent, but in some interviews we could not avoid children, neighbours, spouses or in some cases a health agent or *Senhor* Bernardo staying during the interview. This might have influenced the respondent, but my impression was that they still talked fairly freely. However, when possible I asked the most personal or difficult questions when those people left the room.

Initially, I planned to do some focus group interviews. In the field it turned out to be difficult to arrange a meeting with more people at the same time. As it was already a challenge to arrange the individual interviews, since people had irregular working hours and for other reasons were often not at home at the time I arranged to meet, I decided to focus on these individual interviews and to spend the time in which I could not schedule any interviews on my search for other sources of information in and around Caranguejo.

Besides the interviews, my regular visits to Caranguejo also gave me the opportunity to make some observations. When visiting the *favela* I often arrived around 8am. Normally my translator and I would stay in the *favela* till 12.00 o'clock, after which we left and had lunch together till 2pm, which is regular lunchtime for most Brazilians. After lunch we would return to Caranguejo and stay till about 4 or 5pm. Both my translator and I preferred not to be around the *favela* after 5pm, as darkness falls at 6 pm in North-eastern Brazil. During these visits I would conduct interviews when possible. Nevertheless, a lot of my time was also spent on arranging these interviews, walking about the *favela* and waiting for my respondents, which gave me the opportunity to get a better insight in the daily life of the Caranguejo.

Some of the houses of my informants I passed regularly, and in this way I could get a better insight in the daily activities of these people. For example, when visiting a house of one of the respondents, my translator and I met him washing his daughter before going to work while his wife was inside cooking. Observations like this helped me to construct a context in which I could place the answers giving by these respondents during the interview. Another place we often visited was the health post, which was always crowded with women and children and hardly any men.[8]

I recorded every interview with my voice recorder and also wrote down the translation that Amanda gave during the interview. In this way I now have an English report of the outcomes of the interview and for specific quotes I can listen to my taped interviews. I did not experience any hinder of the presence of my voice recorder. Most respondents thought that my voice recorder was a mobile phone, but after explaining what it was none of them seemed to be influenced or bothered by the fact that they were taped.

2.3   My translator

Amanda Scott, one of the daughters of Prof. Scott, assisted me during my research in Caranguejo. Primarily, she was my translator. Before I left for the field I studied Portuguese, but my Portuguese was not sufficient to do the in-depth interviews, which I had planned. Initially she helped me to reformulate my interview questions while the Portuguese I had used was too formal for interviews in a *favela*. When conducting an interview, I would start with my interview questions in Portuguese and Amanda would translate the answers for me. During an interview there were always other questions that popped up, which Amanda translated for me at the spot. After some interviews I began to understand a greater part of the conversation. But, even at the end of my fieldwork period, there were interviews I could hardly follow because of either the pronunciation or words that were used. I also often missed the essence of the answers that were given and therefore I could not do without the assistance of a translator.

Besides being a good translator, Amanda turned out to be a great help during my research because of her own former social sciences research experience and her knowledge of Brazil and its culture. This was very helpful but at times I had to temper her enthusiasm in order for me to maintain control over my research. Although we discussed everything that Amanda would arrange for me, I felt left out when conversations that were for example held to arrange interviews, went so fast that I could not follow them and I was only left with a summary and afterwards had to ask her to provide me with more details. However, Amanda was very enthusiastic about my research and came up with suggestions of where to get more information or possible additional questions during interviews which was very useful.

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[8] When attending a seminar on Masculinidade é Saudé one of the speakers actually mentioned his research on the fact that most men are too 'macho' to go to a hospital. It is considered not manly to be sick.

I am aware that the need to use a translator has influenced my research, although I think I was lucky that Amanda and I were on the same wavelength regarding most aspects of my research. I also believe that her method of going about in the *favela* may have positively influenced my research. Although Amanda is relatively white for a Brazilian (her father is American, her mother Brazilian) and does not live in a *favela* herself, she has far more inside knowledge and was able to provide me with a lot of information and insights into Brazil's culture and society. Above all, I really appreciated the fact that she treated everyone as equal and the way she seemed genuinely interested people in general, which also created a good environment for the interviews I conducted with her assistance.

2.4   My respondents

There were 15 households included in the research for this thesis. Eleven of these households consisted of husband and wife, of which nine had or were living with their children. Three of the households only consisted of men: two were divorced and one was a widower. There was one household, which consisted of a woman and her children whose husband and father had died five years ago. Nine of my respondents were female and thirteen were male. The average age of the respondents was 35. The youngest respondent was a woman of 19 years of age, the oldest respondent was a man of 85. According to Brazilian notions, all of the respondents included in this study are regarded as black. The younger respondents (under 40) in general grew up in Caranguejo, the older respondents often came from the countryside and moved into the *favela* when they married. In chapter 4, The Social, the characteristics of the men and women that were part of the research in Caranguejo are related to general socio-economic trends and statistics of Brazil.

First, I intended to interview only men, but shortly after arriving in the field I decided to interview both men and women, in order to get a more complete picture (see subchapter 1.1). Referring to the feminist paradigm "truth might vary according to its context": what a husband tells might not be true to his wife (Babbie 2004: 39-40). In my research it indeed turned out that sometimes husband and wife told different stories, or described the same situation with different details or different conclusions. Komter calls this the "power of the double morality" and defines it as "the systematic difference in observation, assessment, appreciation, treatment and perception of women and men (or feminine and masculine), (…) [that results in the confirmation of] the existing asymmetry in the relation between genders" (1990: 13). Furthermore, she argues: "the power of the double morality is not so much expressed in intentional and direct observable behaviour, but in implicit, (partly) unintended, obvious ideas and ways of acting" (Komter 1990: 14). I therefore believe that interviewing both husband and wife enhanced the quality of the data I gathered.

I aimed to interview mostly married women and men, but I also interviewed some men and women who had had one or more relationships but who were currently single; all of my respondents were married or had been married before[9]. From each family that I interviewed, the wife had some work experience; either before or after the time she got married. I interviewed families where the wife was the only one currently working, where only the husband was working or where both or none of the two were working.

2.5   Other resources for data collection

Besides the interviews in Caranguejo, I gathered much information from other sources. To start with, there was the library of FAGES that contained useful books related to my research topic. I also contacted the founders of PAPAI[10], the first NGO in Latin America that is focused on research on men and masculinity from a feminist perspective. In the library of PAPAI I found some very useful information, including a thesis[11] on men's feelings of loosing out as the head of the family, which was conducted in a *favela* in a city near Recife. I was invited to a meeting at PAPAI with representatives from NGO's from Uruguay, Argentina and Poland who were all involved with research and work on men from a feminist perspective. We all presented our research and the following discussion taught me a lot about the differences in ideas and approach of each participant. There were also two seminars organised by FAGES and PAPAI and other NGO's that I attended. One was on masculinity and health and the second was on masculinity from a feminist perspective. The second seminar has been most informative for me, while there were Brazilian anthropologists discussing the main theme of my research[12].

Furthermore I visited Sebrae[13], a research company located adjacent to Caranguejo, where I interviewed a woman who was in charge of a project involving the community of Caranguejo. She handed me the report published in May 2004 which contained useful data on Caranguejo resulting from the surveys Sebrae conducted and which also provided me with the names of other companies involved and their websites. One of these companies, Etapas[14], has a website on Caranguejo[15] which lists the outcomes of their research on the community and also includes some general information and photos of the *favela*.

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[9] When couples told me they were married, this did not always imply a formal marriage, couples could also be informally married.

[10] www.papai.org.br

[11] Guedes do Nascimento, P.F. (1999) *"Ser Homen ou Nada": Diversidade de exeriênceias e estratégias de atualização do modelo hegemônico da masculinidade em Camaragibe/ PE.* Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Recife.

[12] At the time of the second seminar I had almost finished my fieldwork and my Portuguese had improved significantly so I was able to understand a great deal of the seminar. Nevertheless, PAPAI had arranged a translator, which made it possible for me to follow the complete discussion.

[13] www.Sebrea.com.br

[14] www.etapas.org

[15] www.caranguejo.etapas.org.br/caranguejo/index.php

2.6   Ethics and reflectivity

The interviews I conducted were always laid-back and informal. Most of the interviews were conducted at people's houses, which also gave me the opportunity to observe their homes and living situation. When thanking people for talking to me, they often thanked me for listening and added that they enjoyed talking about their lives, some literally told me that they experienced the interview as a kind of therapy. Sometimes respondents would ask me questions, to which I always replied truthfully. Brazilian culture did not give me any reason to lie, for example, about the fact that I was not married or other issues related to my personal life. When introducing my research I told the interviewees that I was doing research on household situations, the relationship between husband and wife and work. This was true and provided an acceptable basis for me to ask my questions and to gather the needed information. None of the people I wanted to interview refused this request.

Although, as Seale argues, "in some cases confidentiality may not be an issue, some respondents may even be proud and pleased that their story is going to be shown to a wider public" (2004: 120), I chose to change the names of my respondents in order to secure their anonymity. Furthermore, as Seale argues, it is crucial to reflect on your role as interviewer in generating research knowledge (2004: 24-25). I was made aware of the influence of my role as female, Western researcher when, for example, my respondents started the interview with giving me socially wanted answers, when later in the interview they gave their own contradicting opinion. In my analysis I dealt with these contradicting answers through the use of the analytical tool explained in the theoretical chapter, that distinguishes between the cultural, social and personal reality.

3 The cultural

Following the analytical tool introduced in the theoretical chapter, the data analysis is subdivided into three chapters that correspond with the three levels of analysis: the cultural, the social and the personal. Throughout this chapter I will briefly discuss the cultural aspects of Brazil that are related to the theme of thesis.

3.1 Defining the cultural

To start with I wish to underline that people's cultural beliefs, values and behaviours are not independent of people's social positions. However, the distinction between social and cultural helps to understand why people in similar economic and social situations adopt different behaviours, and similarly that different social and economic situations exist among people who share cultural beliefs, values and behaviours. Cultural structures can be used as a source of motivation. Cultural structures can for example be used to motivate existing gender role patterns and power inequalities (Mariz 1994: 122). To illustrate this, poverty and unemployment can give a man the feeling of being powerless and might create the need for an extra income. However, the power derived from his traditional gender role, as man as breadwinner, might retain him from permitting his wife to get a job. His behaviour and the feeling of power he derives from his decision is motivated by cultural beliefs and values.

Since there is not one definition for culture, following the brief introduction above, I chose to present only two characteristics of culture that I find relevant for this study. First, as follows from the above, culture cannot be thought of in isolation. Not only is culture subject to the influence internal dynamics, culture is influenced by outside forces as well (Allen in Allen and Thomas 2000: 465). Another aspect of culture that is relevant to this study is the fact that cultures are not static and subject to change (Nanda and Warms 2004: 73).

3.2 Culture in Caranguejo

Caranguejo is a Brazilian *favela* and the beliefs, values and behaviours of its inhabitants are therefore grounded in Brazilian culture. Brazilian culture is divers; observable elements of this culture that I, for example, came across in Caranguejo were music, Carnival, football and religion. However, I will restrict myself to the aspects of Brazilian culture that are related to the topic of this study.

Typical aspects of Brazilian culture are the traditional Brazilian gender ideologies that are defined as machismo and marianismo (Neuhouser 1999: 82). Machismo comes from the word macho that in Brazil refers to any male, but often indicates a powerful, fearless man who is always ready to prove his manhood (Neuhouser 1999: 83). In relation to women, this man is dominant and sexually aggressive towards women (Neuhouser 1999: 83). Machismo not only dictates that men dominate the public sphere; it also justifies their role in economics and government due to their masculine nature (Neuhouser 1989).

McCallum calls cultural machismo hegemonic, because the creation of women's identities is subordinate to it (1999: 276). Among other factors, situations of poverty intensify the negative outcomes of machismo, such as violence, alcohol abuse and financial irresponsibility (Chant and Craske 2003: 15-16). Machismo is not exclusively or even primarily a means of structuring power relations between men and women; it is a means of structuring power between and among men (Chant and Craske 2003: 16).

Marianismo, on the other hand, refers to Mary, the mother of Jesus (Neuhouser 1999: 83). Women are defined by motherhood; their primary duty is reproductive labour within the household and taking care of others (Neuhouser 1999: 83). As Moser states, women in most low-income households have triple roles. Their roles include reproductive work such as childbearing, and rearing responsibilities. When women do productive work, they often work as secondary income earners. Women also undertake community-management work around the provision of items for collective consumption (Moser 1993: 27-28).

There are also gender roles, of which the values are grounded in culture, present in Caranguejo, that are interrelated with the gender ideologies set out above. As written in the theoretical chapter (1), gender roles can be defined as "the cultural expectations of men and women in a particular society, including the division of labour". These gender roles encompass expectations about the natural abilities of men and women, differences in attitudes, temperament, behaviour and personality. Universal gender roles are women's role as mother and homemaker and men's role as breadwinner. Related to these gender roles is the division between the less prestigious domestic domain, inhabited by women, and the more prestigious public domain, dominated by men. These roles are present in Caranguejo and were expressed and subscribed to by all of my interviewees. Gender hierarchy is also related to gender roles and stands for the way in which female and male characteristics are differently valued and related to the distribution of resources, prestige and power (Nanda and Warms 2004: 241).

Another undeniable aspect of Brazilian culture is the great diversity in race and class. Related to this is the term "culture of poverty" that was originally coined by O. Lewis in the 1960s. The term stands for the typical way of strategy and order that life in poverty generates (Allen in Allen and Thomas 2000: 455). With this term I aim to underline the influence of race and class on people's life, on the people in Caranguejo and therefore on the people in this study. Not only do these people have to deal with their current state of poverty, they face limited access to education and employment and chances to escape the *favela* are limited. Furthermore, do people in a *favela* have to face unhealthy and dangerous living circumstances. The above stresses how culture can be grounded in socio-economic structures and how socio-economic structures can be part of a culture as well.

4 The social

The social, is the second level of analysis that forms part of the analytical tool of this thesis. The information presented in this chapter mainly consists of socio-economic data of Brazil, Pernambuco, Recife and Caranguejo. Where relevant I related these data to information about my respondents.

4.1 Brazil, Recife and Caranguejo

With a surface of 8.5 million square kilometres, Brazil is one of the five greatest countries in the world (Klösters and Groenleer 1999: 5, 8, Neuhouser 1999: 7, IBGE 2006). Brazil is also the fifth most populous country in the world, with a total population 186 million in 2006 (IBGE 2006). Brazil is a racial democracy, which implies that discrimination is forbidden by law (Klösters and Groenleer 1999: 43). The racial equality is Brazil's pride, but reality is different. A popular saying is: "In Brazil, there is no racism: the Negro knows his place" (Klösters and Groenleer 1999: 43). Skin colour is almost always directly related to prosperity; black people fulfil the most simple jobs, more than half earn less than the minimum income, belong to the lower class, have the highest per centage of illiteracy and most criminals are black (Klösters and Groenleer 1999: 43). Four out of ten Brazilians are black and six out of 10 poor Brazilians are black (Klösters and Groenleer 1999: 43).

Recife is the capital of Pernambouco, a state in the northeast of Brazil. Although it is characterised by extensive migration southwards, the northeast is the second most densely populated region of Brazil (Klösters and Groenleer 1999: 8). Social inequalities are typical for Brazil; fifty per cent of the poor and one per cent of the rich produce an equal national income (Klösters and Groenleer 1999: 40). In total, the northeast inhabits one-third of Brazil's total population who earn only fourteen per cent of the national income (Klösters and Groenleer 1999: 41). Recife, as a major city in the northeast, has over 1.5 million inhabitants (IBGE 2005) of which more than two thirds live in poverty. The population of Recife grows with an average of hundred thousand inhabitants a year. The largest part of this growth happens among the poor and is due to immigrants from the interior and natural growth (Klösters and Groenleer 1999: 39).

Caranguejo is one of Recife's *favelas*, which is an area, predominantly used for housing, that is characterised by a low-income population, precarious infrastructure and public services, narrow and irregular layout of access ways, irregular shaped and sized plots and unregistered constructions. The name Caranguejo, which means crab, is derived from the occupation from the first inhabitants, who were crab fishers (*Senhor* Arlindo Pedre Alexandrino, Líder Comunitário Voluntário). Originally I understood Caranguejo meant crap instead of crab, which seemed quite applicable to the community, as it is built on a swamp and garbage is used in order to increase the firmness of the ground on which 'palafitas' (houses on poles) are built.

The first people settled in the area in 1910. Around 1970 a Catholic Church supported the fight for ownership of land of the inhabitants and settlements intensified. Today the community spans an area of 7,4 hectare and has more than 3.368 inhabitants. There are about 865 households in Caranguejo with an average number of 3,9 members (Etapas 2005, Centro Josué de Castro, Sebrae and Fresres des Hommes 2004: 10). Together with Tabaiares, Caranguejo forms a community that since 1996 is one of the ZEIS[16] areas, which implies that this area needs special attention considering socio-economic conditions as schooling, work, housing and health of its inhabitants or in other words: an (extremely) unhealthy and precarious environment. There is no sanitary system in Caranguejo, sewers are open and often float, and furthermore there is an overall lack of basic infrastructure as water supplies, pavement, and garbage collection. Houses are small, often shared with more than one family; many do not have a bathroom, no adequate ventilation and are built of used materials (see also Etapas 2005).

4.2 Poverty

The minimum salary was, until March 2006, determined at R$ 300,- and was in April adjusted to R$ 350,-. In order to indicate the purchasing power of a minimum salary, there is the 'cesta básica' (essential basket), which is a theoretical basket containing all the essential food that a typical family (parents and two kids) minimally requires in one month. The contents of the basket are defined by Dieese (see Dieese 2006). For 2006, the contents are defined as: beef (6 kg), milk (7.5 litres), beans (4.5 kg), rice (3 kg), flour (1.5 kg), potato (6 kg), tomato (9 kg), bread (6 kg), coffee (600 g), banana (7.5 dozens), sugar (3 kg), cooking oil (900 ml), butter (750 g). Prices vary per region, the most expensive basket among the capital cities in Brazil is that of São Paulo, at R$ 177.28 (€ 65,-) and the cheapest basket is that of Fortaleza ad R$ 125.03 (€ 46,-) for which the average time of man hours is established at 97 hours and 52 minutes. The price of a basket in Recife is R$ 133,46 (€ 49,-). These baskets include only food. Dieese also calculates what the minimum monthly salary should be to satisfy the essential needs of a typical family, including food, health, clothes, transportation, leisure, education and so on. For April 2006, the minimum salary was determined at R$ 1,489.33 (€ 546,-) (Dieese 2006a and 2006b).

Rocha provides indicators based on per capita monthly income in order to identify the poor. The first indicator, the low line, is based on a nutritional norm of 2,100 calories per person per day and is further defined by the level of per capita monthly expenditure at which this norm is met, allowing for regional differences in calorie requirements, prices, and diets.

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[16] It is estimated that there are over 600 squatter settlements in Recife. Most of these settlements are now declared as ZEIS area. ZEIS stands for Zona Especial de Interesse Social, which can be translated as Zone of Special Social Interest. It covers the urban area of Recife, which is mainly used for housing that spontaneously arose, and is characterised by a lack of infrastructure; it is subject to special municipal legislation. ZEIS are special zones in which the municipality of Recife aims to urbanise (through the implementation of slum upgrading programmes) and regularise land in an attempt to integrate such settlements into the urban grid. ZEIS is one of the means by which government agencies can deliver water, electricity, rubbish collection and other services, and can legalise the land where households have built their houses illegally. But, in reality, once an area is designated ZEIS, it does not automatically change the ownership of land, nor does it increase a households' perception of tenure security, since land tenure is subject to further disputes in court, and households still face the prospects of eviction (De Souza 2002: 7-8).

The second indicator, the high line, includes non-food expenditures such as housing, clothing, transportation, and health. Depending on the region, this indicator ends up two to three times the level of indigence lines (see next page). To illustrate, the low poverty line in the São Paulo metropolitan area is 40 per cent of the monthly minimum wage (R$350,- in 2006 (IBGE 2005)). The region's high line is determined at a level of 110 per cent of the minimum wage. In the metropolitan area of Salvador the indigence line 31 per cent of the minimum wage and the poverty line is 85 per cent (in Sotomayor 2006: 142, see also Rocha 1997).

4.3   *Brasileiros and Brasileiras*

Of the total population of Brazil, 50.56 per cent is female (The World Fact Book 2005). Furthermore, of the total population, 52.1 per cent are women and 47.9 per cent are men. There are slightly more men in the youngest category and 61.1 per cent of women compared to 38.9 per cent of men in the category of 60 years and older, which consists of 180 people in Caranguejo.Brazil not only has a persistent gender hierarchy that advantages men over women in material resources, power, status and authority, racial inequality, prejudice, and discrimination are Brazil's social reality (Lovell 2000: 89). The Brazilian society is both capitalist and patriarchal which places women in a disadvantaged position (Neuhouser 1989: 688). In Brazil, poor people still conclude that women are less powerful than men (Melo 2002). Domestic abuse is common and the level of violence against women is increasing (Melo 2002). A positive point is that women did gain better access to justice (Melo 2002). With this, the consciousness about women's rights has increased and this may decline the levels of violence in the future (Melo 2002). Some women are even taking the difficult step to leave their abusive husband and manage their household on their own (Melo 2002). There have been few initiatives aimed at men and masculinity in Latin America so far, existing projects are often guided by feminist politics and aimed at violence, health and sexuality (Chant and Craske 2003). One of the major problems concerning gender initiatives in Brazil is that women are identified as mothers and through that, as primary carers of children and consequently end up carrying an even greater responsibility on their shoulders (Chant and Craske 2003: 256).

As in many parts of the world, Brazil's households and families have been embedded within patriarchal kinship systems. These systems are often conceived as playing an important role in gender difference and inequality, and women's subordination (Chant and Craske 2003: 263). Around the turn of the century, women were allowed access to schools and employment, but they did not have the same rights as men within the family. Men were heads of households and married women were legally obliged to subordinate to them. Divorce was made legal in 1977, due to inconveniences caused by informal remarriage. In 1988 women became entirely equal to men for all legal purposes (Hudson 1997). But, despite this equality established by the Federal Constitution, men are still "civilly defined as heads of conjugal units, and have power to act as legal representatives of their families and to manage family assets" (CRLP 1997: 62).

Men even have the right to dissolve their marriage, if within 10 days after marrying it appears that the wife is not a virgin (Chant and Craske 2003: 167). These rights also affect the possibilities for women to get empowered. For example, there are cases when women need their husbands' permission to work at all (Chant and Craske 2003: 183). But, despite persistent gender inequality, the status of women in Brazil is improving on various fronts (Chant and Craske 2003).

While many women are now less economically dependent on men's income, men who fail to contribute to household survival risk their wives leaving them. On a positive note, instead of resisting women's employment, some men "made personal adaptations to accommodate patterns which benefit the household collectively" (Chant and Craske 2003: 164-165). But, despite their potential, these changes have not produced a significant change in the foundations of masculinity, as was the case for femininity (Fuller 2000: 103, see also Chant and Craske 2003: 164-165). Due to cutbacks in state services and increased reliance on subsistence strategies with rising costs of basic goods, women's work in the household intensified. Besides this, owing to the insignificant movement by men into reproductive tasks, it is not surprising that women's labour burdens have increased in Brazil. It must be mentioned that Brazilian women may be reluctant to let their spouses waste precious resources through lack of skill or experience. They may also resist men participating in housework or childcare because it suggests that they do not have a 'real man' for a partner, an issue that also reflects on them. In accordance to women's resistance to let men do household tasks, part of men's apparent unwillingness to participate in reproductive labour is due to their fear of losing their masculinity (Chant 1994: 227). In addition, women's increasing access to employment, in Brazil as elsewhere, challenges male power and privileges in the households. Women's rising labour force participation without a release of housework has significantly increased women's work burden, which negatively influences the empowering outcomes of female employment (Chant and Craske 2003: 186).

4.4 Education

On the subject of schooling or education, from 1992 to 1999, the proportion of employed people having completed at least secondary school went up from 15.9 per cent to 21.2 per cent in the male population and increased from 22.4 per cent to 30.4 per cent in the female population (IBGE 2005). Five of the men and women included in the research did not have any schooling; two of these were illiterate while the other three had managed to teach themselves some reading, writing and arithmetic. Five of the respondents in this research included men and women who were currently attending school, either to finish their primary or their high school education. Four of the respondents had finished high school, of which only one was male. Five respondents were following some kind of extra education, all of whom were women.

Of the total population of Caranguejo and Tabaiares, 37.2 per cent has followed up to three years of education or did not finish 'ensino fundamental 1' (basic education 1 or primary school), while 79.7 per cent has up to 7 years of study or did not conclude 'ensino fundamental 2' (basic education 2 or high school).

4.5   Employment

The 2000 Demographic Census (IBGE 2005) of Brazil showed that 40 per cent of the working population was female. The National Household Sample Survey-PNAD, carried out by IBGE in the country, verified that, in the employed population, the per centage of working women went up from 38.8 per cent in 1992 to 40.13 per cent in 1999. In the male population aged 10 years and over, the participation of employed men declined from 72.4 per cent in 1992 to 67.9 per cent in 1990 (IBGE 2005).

The economical active population of Caranguejo and Tabaiares consists of 1.468 people, of which 58.8 per cent is male and 41.2 per cent is female. The unemployment rate is 29.4 per cent, which means that 431 inhabitants of the economical active population are unemployed. The unemployment rate among women is higher (31,8 per cent) than that of men (27,5 per cent) (Etapas 2005, Centro Josué de Castro, Sebrae and Fresres des Hommes 2004: 13). Of the 1.037 inhabitants that are working, most have irregular employment, work autonomously and do unregistered work. Of the employed inhabitants of Caranguejo and Tabaiares 22.6 per cent earns up to half a minimum salary, 42.3 per cent earns between a half and 1 minimum salary and 26.6 per cent earns between 1 and 2 minimum salaries (Etapas 2005).

In comparison, twelve of the 28 people included in the research for this thesis were currently unemployed; eight of these were men of whom three received a pension. Four of the women that were unemployed were housewives and not actively looking for a job. All of the unemployed men were either actively looking for a new job or earning an income through other (irregular) projects or activities.

The services sector concentrates more than half the female workers (IBGE 2005, based on 2000 Demographic Census).). In 1999, of the female working population, 56.6 per cent worked in services, 13.5 per cent in trade, 8.9 per cent in manufacturing and other industrial activities, 0.6 per cent in construction and 20.4 per cent was employed in the agricultural sector. The 2000 Demographic Census (IBGE 2005) of Brazil showed that 17 per cent of workingwomen have jobs as domestic servants. The proportion of women devoted to household duties (19.2 per cent), unpaid (10.5 per cent) is also higher than that of men (0.8 per cent and 5.9 per cent, respectively) (IBGE 2005).

Among the male population, the distribution was as follows; 34.0 per cent worked in the services sector, 13.4 per cent in trade, 15.2 per cent in manufacturing and other industrial activities, 10.6 per cent in construction and 26.8 per cent in the agricultural sector (IBGE 2005, based on 2000 Demographic Census).

Considering the way workers were employed, the composition of the female employed population in 1999 was the following; 43.9 per cent of employees, 17.2 per cent of domestic servants, 16.1 per cent of self-employed workers, 2.2 per cent of employers, 12.3 per cent of unpaid workers, 8.2 per cent of workers in production for own use and 0.1 per cent of workers in construction for own use. Among the male population this composition was 56.3 per cent of employees, 0.9 per cent of domestic servants, 27.9 per cent of self-employed workers, 5.4 per cent of employers, 7.3 per cent of unpaid workers, 1.9 per cent of workers in production for own use and 0.2 per cent of workers in construction for own use (IBGE 2005).

Related to the above, three of the 13 women included in my research were employed as domestic servants, two women were working as seamstresses. Two were health agents, and two were studying to become teachers of whom one was actually working in a school.

4.6   Income

Brazil is also has one of the widest gender wage gaps in Latin America. (Proaño 2005: 27, Gotur 2000). This wage gap is the largest in the northeast of Brazil, where women earn, on average, 63.5 per cent of men's wages. The average wages are also lower in the northeast; women living there earn 42 per cent of the average wage in Rio de Janeiro. Among women, Afro-Brazilian women are the most affected by wage and occupational discrimination. The largest share of working women continues to be that of domestic servant, 90 per cent of whom are black (Lovell 1994: 12, Pena and Correia 2002). Resulting from new employment patterns, women's participation in the Brazilian labour force grew substantially in the 1970s and 1980s. Main causes were the expansion of the services sector, and economic pressures on family income. Female economic participation in Brazil rose from 18 per cent in 1970 to 27 per cent in 1980 and 30 per cent in 1990 (Hudson 1997) and 40 per cent in 1997 (Pena and Correia 2002). Hudson (1997) remarks that these figures might fail to include informal activities, in which women are typically involved. The informal sector in Brazil includes about 40 per cent of the wageworkers (Soares 2004: 2). Workers employed in the informal sector are not entitled to benefits such as unemployment insurance and do not contribute to social security (Soares 2004: 2). Another side of the increased female participation in the labour force is that they replace men, both socially and economically. "Women's gains have been men's losses, as women steal men's jobs and feminise them" (Hakim 2004: 2).

The National Household Sample Survey-PNAD figures (IBGE 2006) show that, despite the narrowing gap between the incomes of the two genders, the average remuneration of work for women is still at a level much below that for men. The Synthesis of Social Indicators for 2001 (IBGE 2006) presented a profile of the Brazilian woman in which it was concluded that women earn less than men and a smaller number of women take up retirement. Even when both sexes have the same average number of years of schooling, men earn more than women.

Women with 3 or fewer years of schooling earned 61.5 per cent of the income of men with the same level of schooling, women with 11 or more years of schooling earned 57.1 per cent of the income of men with the same schooling level (IBGE 2006). Furthermore, the employed female population is concentrated in the lower income classes: 71.3 per cent of working women earn up to 2 minimum wages compared to 55.1 per cent of working men (IBGE 2006). The proportion of men earning more than 5 minimum wages was 15.5 per cent to 9.2 per cent of women who are employed (IBGE 2006).

The average salary earned by the respondents is R$ 380,-, which is close to one minimum salary which is stated at R$350,- which is about € 125,-. In Caranguejo, the average income of the female respondents is R$ 325,-, the average income of male respondents is R$ 365,-. Important is to notice that these incomes were differently structured. In most cases, when working, men were full time employed, where some women were only working part time. In a number of cases the income is complemented by money that is earned with a vending place or in nails and hair services. Women mainly generate these extra forms of income. There are also a number of households that receive either an unemployment payment, child allowance or a retirement subsidy. In none of the households these payments are the only form of income.

4.7   Conclusion

Briefly recapitulating the discussion above, there can be stated that on all socio-economic areas women's status has improved, but they nevertheless retained arrears on employment, payment, education and legal rights, etceteras.

5   The personal

The personal level is the level at which individuals as agents combine aspects of cultural and social structures and their direct environment[17] into their personal reality. The outcome depends on existing structures and environment as well as on the personal characteristics and agency. Through their actions, agents either consciously or subconsciously re-enforce existing structures or create new structures.

In this chapter I present the analysis of the personal realities of my respondents, through analysing the perceptions, observations, opinions, norms and values they expressed during the interviews I held. I will start the analysis with an introduction into their daily life, followed by an analysis of the relationships between men and women in Caranguejo. Then, I will discuss the division between the public and the domestic sphere, in which I will focus on work in the public sphere and a number of issues concerning the household unit as the domestic sphere. In these analyses, I combine the data gathered in Caranguejo with the theory introduced in chapter one; where relevant, I additionally present a theoretical background on the subject of discussion.

5.1   Daily life in Caranguejo

In this subchapter I aim to give a small impression of what daily life in Caranguejo looks like through the eyes of my respondents or in other words, how my respondents perceive their daily life in a *favela*. Each of my respondents referred to Caranguejo as their living environment in a negative way. *Senhor* Ferreira for example, who is a father of four children whom he raised in Caranguejo told me: *"Having children is not so bad, the bad thing is the situation in which to raise them"* . All of the parents included in my research considered the *favela* as a bad place to raise their children. One family actually moved when one of their children got sick and are now living in a part of the *favela* that is surrounded by houses from middle class people. Families had their own way of protecting their children from the negative influence of Caranguejo. *Senhora* Maria for example told me that she locked the door of the house when she and her husband were not at home to watch the children. She believed her children would be safer inside than playing outside in the *favela*.

Furthermore, there were specific complains about the safety situation in the *favela* related to for example alcohol abuse. Especially older people expressed their concerns about this. For example, *Senhor* Bernardo, expressed the following:

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[17] In this chapter, when referring to people's direct environment, this is restricted to their household, family and direct friends and neighbours. I included the more general characteristics of the broader environment, not obtained by interviews in Caranguejo, in chapter 4, which represents the social level of analysis.

People get R$300 but drink and smoke it all in the weekend, and then they start talking bad about politicians. In a place like this on Sunday and Saturday you cannot even walk around. People are full with beer, which causes many arguments, problems and death. Don't you think that if the president outlaws beer it would be better? Because, where there is beer there are arguments. When people don't drink, the income would be sufficient and everything would be better (Senhor Bernardo).

In addition to alcohol, drugs and gambling are also common problems in Caranguejo. To illustrate this, one of my male respondents was an ex-drug addict and another of my interviewees told me about his history of alcohol abuse and violence against his wife. All of my respondents referred to alcohol or drugs abuse and gambling during the interviews I held with them. During my first visit to the *favela* the health agents showed me the 'alcohol and drugs area' and warned me not to visit Caranguejo on Friday afternoons and in the weekends when people receive their wages and spend these on alcohol.

Another way in which people showed their dissatisfaction with their current situation, was by voicing their dreams and wishes for change. As *Senhor* Gilberto commented: *"a man always wants a better life for his family"*. Moving out of Caranguejo or to a bigger and better house was mentioned by each of my respondents. Where for most families moving out was only a wish, a number of families actively tried to realise this wish. For example, *Senhor* Soares told me:

We have a dream of building a better house and to get better education for the children and us and for many other things that would improve our living conditions. We want to move out of the favela and have already bought a plot of land (…) to build a house outside Caranguejo (Senhor Soares).

Like *Senhor* Soares, other families had bought a plot of land or had in some other way managed to (partly) realise their dream of improving their living situation. When moving out of the *favela* was considered unreachable, these wishes were more focused on improving the house they lived in or other aspects in their living environment. However, this does not imply that there was no reason for people to stay in Caranguejo. Family for example was quoted as an important reason not to move out, but to focus on improving their living situation in the *favela*.

Furthermore, their financial situation is one of the main concerns of people living in a *favela*. Therefore, other wishes concerning change that were expressed were directed towards people's work or financial situation. One of the problems for people in the *favela* is that they mainly have access to lower skilled and therefore lower paid jobs with minimal job security. My informants all expressed the wish to either increase their income or to find a more stable job. I further elaborate on this in the subchapter on employment.

To sum up this short introduction of people's perceptions of Caranguejo, the *favela* not only directly influences people's lives through the general living conditions but also indirectly through the limited opportunities that are available to improve these conditions.

5.2   Relationships in Caranguejo

While the relationships between men and women are central to this thesis, in this subchapter I will give a short insight in how men and women in Caranguejo perceive these mutual relationships. To introduce this discussion, I start with a quote in which *Senhora* Alfonsa briefly summarises her relational background.

> *My husband was my second boyfriend. I stayed with him because he lied to me that he was sterilised and I became pregnant by him. I wasn't formally married to him, but he was my husband. In three years we had two daughters. He died in a motorcycle accident when I was pregnant with my second daughter. After his death I enjoyed my weekends; drinking, sleeping, but no men or boys were involved, I enjoyed my freedom. I went out, bought clothes and other things for myself. I enjoyed having my own initiatives (…). Since three years I am dating a protestant man. He was an evangelist, but started drinking a lot. I do not like this. He does not live with me, but sometimes sleeps at my house. I do not want to marry again because of the bad experiences I had. Now my first boyfriend wants to get back with me. He has just divorced and found out my telephone number. I really like him and the relationship we had was very good. But, his mother didn't want him to marry a girl from the favela, that's why we broke up! Now he has broken up with his wife because she was very jealous. He was always trustful trustworthy to me and really encouraged me to study (Senhora Alfonsina).*

Except for one older man who expressed himself rather negatively about his former relationship and preferred to be alone, like *Senhora* Alfonsina all my respondents were involved in relationships. Furthermore, the majority of my respondents had been involved in more than one relationship and did not spend much time being single in between. In general, girls in Caranguejo get involved with boys at a young age and too often this results in (unwanted) pregnancies. Although condoms are available and are for example handed out at the health post, these are not always used. Furthermore, as happened to *Senhora* Alfonsina, girls are often convinced by their boyfriends not to use condoms. The fact that boys often do not take responsibility for this, results in many young, single mothers. During my first visit to Caranguejo, when the health agents showed me the *favela*, we passed one of these young mothers and her child. I wrote the following about this in my fieldnotes:

The favela is subdivided in seven areas: each falls under the responsibility of a health agent. These areas differ in quality of housing and general environment (…). Some houses are relatively well maintained and built from stones, where other houses are built from second-hand material and the areas around it are filled with dirt, garbage, flies and the streets function as open sewers (…). In one of the worst areas for housing and dirt, we passed a little girl (about 1 year old) who was without any clothes sitting on the dirty ground in front of a house. The health agents appeared to be worried because the young mother (she must have been around 16 years old) did not seem to pay any attention to her child. Later the health agents explained that she was one of the young mothers who gave birth to a child but, while she is still a child herself, has no clue how to take care of her child (field notes, January 23, 2006).

Later, when doing interviews, it turned out that in most of the households, there were children from another relationship, often born when the parents were still in their youth. Children often stayed with their mother, while their fathers went on to marry another woman. In most cases he would not inform his new wife about his other child or children before they married. One of the women I interviewed actually had three children from three different men who eventually all ran off with another women who carried their child. Only in one of the households included in my research, the man had brought his two children from a former marriage with him. He had also informed his wife about his children from the beginning of their relationship.

Above I have discussed a number of characteristics that typify relationships in Caranguejo. In conclusion I can say that the problems of life in a *favela* are reflected in the relationships between men and women. Where life in Caranguejo is difficult, the environment depressing and income unstable, these and other conditions challenge relationships.

5.3   *The household*

The household unit is central to the research of this thesis. In this subchapter I present and analyse the ideas expressed by the members of fifteen households in Caranguejo that were included in my research. I will begin with an introduction into the theory about households in general. After that, I will present the analysis of the different aspects that are central to households and to the (power) relationship between husband and wife.

First, I present some theory on the household as a unit with which I aim to stress the importance of studying the household and indicate its place in society. Within the wider context of the social system, the exercise of power takes place in specific arenas, most feminist scientists see the household as the primary arena in which gender relations in society are organised (Van der Velden 1991: 125, Van Velzen 1994: 15). Although gender roles are social and cultural products, the general patterns of gender identities are established in the domestic sphere of the household (Davidson and Gordon 1979: 1, Humphrey 1987: 54).

More strongly formulated, the household is often regarded by feminists as the locus of the subordinate position of women or the primary institution where society's gender relations are organised (Van Velzen 1994: 15). However, while the household is regarded as "arena of gender inequality", it is also the place where women's individual empowerment can begin (Sharp, Briggs, Yacoub, and Hamed 2003: 164). It is important to mention that women do have some share of power in the household. As Van der Velden argues, women usually build strategies through which they exert power from the background (1991: 161).

For women, the household can traditionally be regarded as the centre of their social space (Van der Velden 1991: 152). But, in reference to the analytical tool of this thesis, it is important to notice that the household is not isolated from the outside world and should therefore always be analysed in relation to its social and cultural environment (Van Velzen 1994: 15). Furthermore, the household can be seen as a mirror of society, while it shows the same features as the outside world; unequal distribution of power related to the input of assets and access to capital and other benefits based on gender hierarchies (Van Velzen 1994: 15 and Jain and Banerjee 1985).

For example, the power of men in the household strongly depends on the support they get from their environment (Connell 1987 cited in Van Velzen 1994: 15).

5.3.1   Being the boss and taking decisions

There are several fields on which power is exercised in the household sphere. This subchapter focuses on two of these fields, namely being the boss and decision taking. First I will focus on being the boss. Most households have an internal hierarchy to which gender and age are central (Van der Velden 1991: 127). Households in Caranguejo in general consist of husband, wife and children, in which the husband is regarded as the boss of the house, which is based on cultural values and motivations and subscribed to by them and their wives. As *Senhor* Pereira expressed his ideas about his role: *"I am the boss of the house. It is not a matter of being chauvinistic, it is a responsibility. When we men get married and build a family, we have this role of being the boss. I am no chauvinist, no way!"* With this expression, *Senhor* Pereira refers to the social role of men as the head of the house (Blood and Wolfe 1960: 11).

Men's power as the boss of the household can be described as authority that is closely related to power, while this role is legitimised not only by both partners, but also to the authority pattern that is prescribed by society at large (Blood and Wolfe 1960: 11). Another way of legitimising man's role as boss of the house is based on the bible. In this context, *Senhor* da Silva replied: *"We are evangelic and follow the bible which says that men are the head of the family"*. Referring to the bible, in two of the households that were shared by husband and wife, both responded that there was no boss in their house but that God ruled their house. However, in none of the households that were shared by husband and wife, the wife was regarded as the boss of the house, even when she was the only income earner. I will elaborate on this below in subchapter 5.5.

Since characteristics of direct gender hierarchy vary among households (Holter in Connell, Hearn and Kimmel 2005: 17), being the boss of the house implies different meanings in different households. *Senhor* dos Santos for example described his role as head of the house as:

> *The man takes the decisions, independent of the situation. He is the active voice in the house. It should be like that. He is the man and the owner of the house and he should take charge in things. I couldn't be indoors when my wife goes out and represents the house in general. I should be the one representing the house.*

For *Senhor* dos Santos his authority as the boss of the house is exercised in representing the household and in all the decisions that are taken. However, from the answers of other respondents can be concluded that being the boss of the house is not carried out as strictly as in *Senhor* dos Santos' situation. For example *Senhor* Guilhermo said: *"when I am at home I take the decisions. When I am not at home, whatever she decides I support"*. His wife, who told me the following, underlined this situation:

> *My husband takes the decisions here, but always asks for my opinion. I say: 'You have the final word'. Even about our daughters, I tell them: 'Go and ask your father, if he lets you go, you can go'. His opinion always carries more weight. I agree, because we understand each other very well (Senhora Luciana).*

These quotes underline the agreement of men and women about men's role as boss of the house and the decision making process. However, *Senhor* Guilhermo's role in the decision making process is not representative for the other households included in my research. Instead of the situations named above, in which men indicate to take most of the decisions, in most other households, husband and wife take decisions together. *Senhor* da Silva underlined this by saying: *"I am the boss in this house, (…) but we take decisions together. If she doesn't agree we won't do it" (Senhor da Silva).* Regarding women's role in decision-making, most of my female respondents appear to have the power to influence the argument. *Senhor* da Silva for example said about the discussions*: "Sometimes I look at my wife and say: 'you only want what you want'. She always gets what she wants when we have an argument" (Senhor da Silva).* From this quote can be concluded that the husband not necessarily owes the greater share of power in a discussion, even though he is regarded as the boss of the house. However, as the importance of the decision that needs to be taken increases, in most households men's influence in the decision making process increases.

To sum up, the power that is derived from being the boss of the house can vary from symbolic to active, in which power is among others exercised in decision-making and in the representation of the household. In the majority of the households included in this research, although men are the boss, decision making is done together by husband and wife in which women can also exercise some power.

5.4   Housework

The division of household tasks is a visible aspect of the existing inequality between husband and wife. Traditionally, housework is women's responsibility and the assignment of domestic responsibilities to women is so deeply institutionalised in household rules and practices that it appears non-negotiable (Kabeer 1994: 225). In this subchapter I will analyse how the perceptions, norms and values regarding housework in Caranguejo in reference to existing literature presented in the theoretical framework.

To begin, it is important to define housework where there are two possible concepts. First, there is the work that is done in one's own household. Secondly, there is paid work that is done in so called family houses of middle or higher class people, which is a form of employment for many women and some men in Caranguejo. When considering the definition of housework, it is important to pay attention to this distinction. Reid defines housework as "unpaid activities, which are carried on, by and for the members, which may be replaced by market goods, or paid services, if circumstances such as income, market conditions, and personal inclinations permit the service to be delegated to an individual outside the household group". While in this thesis, paid housework is referred to as paid work or employment; the definition of housework can be narrowed down to "*unpaid activities, which are carried on, by and for the members (…) [of one's own] household group*" (Reid 1934: 1).

The next step involves the perception of housework by men and women in Caranguejo, since the way housework is perceived by men and women influences the division of these tasks. Based on her study of sixty working, middle and upper class households, Shaw argues that there are consistent gender differences considering the definition of housework. Shaw relates these differences to the fact that housework is closely related and often associated with the female gender role and as a result referred to as women's work (Shaw 1988: 336). Following this, Shaw argues that in general women regard housework as labour and men regarded these activities as leisure (1988: 337). Perceiving housework as leisure implies a less tiring and time consuming value of the work than when it is perceived as labour. During my interviews in Caranguejo, some of my male respondents replied that they would prefer the situation in which their wife would stay at home and rest. Resting in this case implied not being employed, but it did not exclude housework. Important is to add to this that for women working in a paid job does not imply doing less work in the house. Quitting their employment in this case means that women would be freed of the double burden of both their job and the housework. Although this does not directly imply that men perceive housework as leisure, it does however underline that they perceive working outside the house as heavier than doing housework.

In contrast to this, some women replied to find housework tiring, but there were others who replied that it was less tiring than working outside. There were no men in my study who referred to housework as tiring either for themselves or for their wives, although none of the men carried the full responsibility of the household tasks. Furthermore, it is important to include the task division in the concepts of housework for men and women. Regarding this, Shaw argues that the only activity that men did perceive as work in her study was gardening, which, according to her is not so strongly related to the female gender role (1988: 337). Because people in Caranguejo do not have gardens, gardening is not included in housework in this thesis. Although all the household tasks are considered as women's work, men had strong preferences when they would assist their wife in the housework. For example, washing clothes was a task that most men chose not to do.

Another interesting point is the fact that 50 per cent of the men claimed that, when they would do certain household tasks such as cooking or ironing, they would do a better job than their wife. There were only three men that expressed that their wives were good in doing housework, for example that they were good cooks.

To sum up, from my research appeared that female and male gender roles are still used as a norm regarding the division of work in and outside the house. Both men and women value housework different from a paid job, in which housework is still clearly seen as women's work and having a paid job as men's responsibility. Besides this there is a difference in the perception of housework between men and women, although I would regard this difference not as strong as the work and leisure division that Shaw (1988) describes. However, in general, men value housework as easier and less time consuming than women do. Furthermore, while women are the ones doing most of the housework, they also attribute more negative aspects to it regarding the nature of the work.

5.4.1 Responsibility and task division

The idea that women are responsible for the household tasks is widely shared among my respondents in Caranguejo, not only among men, but also among women. For example, *Senhora* Bandeira told me that: *"The household is a woman's obligation, it doesn't look good if a man did that"*. Even though the majority of the men and women I interviewed agreed that housework should be shared or that men should at least help when needed, the final responsibility in all but one household turned out to be the women's. In this context, the reference to housework as women's work is something that I often came across doing my research. The following quote from one of my study underlines this idea:

> *The man is not obliged to do housework. The right thing for him is to work outside and for women to stay at home. A real man doesn't do housework; he is weak when he does that. I will never get used to how things are in here in Caranguejo. God put men and women in the world for that, to take care of each other.*

The man has to work outside and the woman should take care of her husband at home. Nowadays majority of men are half men, they are not complete men. It is a woman's work to take care of the house (Senhor Bernardo).

This man strongly relies on traditional roles when replying to the question of who should do housework. The opinion of housework being women's work of this man is stronger than the general norm in Caranguejo, which can be due to the fact that this man was one of my older (68 years) respondents. When comparing the opinions on the responsibility of housework, there are differences between the youngest and oldest respondents. Especially the older men (above 50), appeared to share the opinion that men are not supposed to do housework at all, or more strongly, that men are 'half men' when they do housework. In general, the younger male respondents had more moderate opinions on this, while the respondents under 30 years did not refer to housework as women's work at all. These younger respondents replied that housework should at least be shared when both men and women had paid employment. Furthermore, younger respondents more often replied to actually enjoying to do some of the household tasks. For example, *Senhor* Santos told me: *I like ironing, but I do not like washing clothes. I used to wash the clothes, but now she does it"*.

In her study Komter (1985: 122) mentions that in general women ascribe more responsibility towards the housework to themselves than men ascribe to women. From my research can be concluded that men and women in Caranguejo agree that the responsibility of the household should be or is that of women, whereas it seems that for men this idea of responsibility goes further than for women. Women more often disagree with the fact that their husbands do not or hardly assist them in the household tasks. Men often replied that they helped their wife in the household tasks, but there was only one household in which husband and wife seemed to be equal in their responsibility considering the household tasks.

Following the views on household responsibility, the next step is to analyse who is responsible for the housework in daily life and what this responsibility implies because ideals expressed above do not always reflect the reality. Moreover, similar ideas and ideals on responsibility can be explained and implemented differently in different households.

Regarding the division of household tasks in literature, I refer to Reid (1934) who defined five major categories in which housework can be grouped. These categories are useful guidelines when discussing the division of housework between men and women in their household and include; 'All Food Preparation' which includes regular preparation of meals, cleaning up after meals and special food preparation; 'All House Care' which includes regular house care, special house care and care for yard and car; 'All Family Care' which includes physical and non-physical care; 'All Clothing Care' which includes washing, ironing and special clothing care; 'Marketing and Management' which includes marketing, shopping, record-keeping and all management activities (Reid 1934: 1).

Considering these tasks, from my research can be concluded that, except for one household, all women carry the responsibility for the first four groups; food, house, family and clothing care. This is different for the fifth group, marketing and management, for which both can share responsibility. In a minority of the households the fact that women have the final responsibility of the housework implies that they actually do all the housework except in case of sickness. Although most women also agree with the fact that they are the ones who carry the final responsibility for the housework, this does not mean that they are satisfied with the situation in which this responsibility implies doing all the housework on their own. *Senhora* Luciana told me:

> *I do all the housework by myself. (…) I would love my husband to help me. He doesn't help me with anything, only when I am sick. (…) Even when he had lunch he leaves his plate on the table. It was always like this. I already knew it would be like this, when he was single, his brothers would already tell me about this.*

The tasks that are included in Reid's (1934:1) groups of food, house, family and clothing care are sometimes shared with men or children, but none of the men I interviewed carried the final responsibility for any of these task groups. Like *Senhora* Luciana, most women replied that they would prefer to have their husbands help them out more in doing housework, especially when they were working outside. However, final responsibility of the household results in a division of household tasks that varies among the different households in daily life. As stated above, except for the older male respondents, most male respondents replied that housework should be shared. Nevertheless, when asked direct questions about their own household, men often came up with a reason for this equal division not to be implemented in reality. For example, men often replied that they came home after their wife and she would have done all the household tasks or that they were often outside arranging things for their family and therefore not at home to do housework.

In households where tasks were divided, it appears that men do the tasks that they like. As Shaw argues, men perceive more freedom of choice regarding the household activities they carried out (1988: 336-337). Most men in my research responded, that there were household tasks that they did not do at all, often this referred to doing the laundry (see above, quote of *Senhor* Santos).

Finally, I would like to lift out one example where both the responsibility and the task division were shared in the ideals expressed and in daily life. Remarkably, it was the man in this household that appeared to be mainly responsible for the housework. He was currently unemployed while his wife was working. He told me: "*Now she also does a little, she helps. And when both of us are working, we help each other. Whoever has more time does more, of course. Now, when she arrives from work, she is tired, her dinner is ready (Senhor Batista).* Interestingly, as the only man who voluntarily carried full responsibility for the household, now that his wife was working, he did not refer to negative aspects of the housework.

Recapitulating, women perceive housework as more time consuming and heavier than men perceive this. This might be due to the fact that, where men are free in their choice if and what they do in the household, women have little chance to escape from the responsibility of the housework that is imposed on them. From the analysis of the responsibility of housework and the task division can further be concluded that traditional roles are strongly reflected in this and also that men's power is decisive in this.

5.4.2 Changes and arguments

None of the married men expressed any wishes to change the division of household tasks. Each of the three men that were living alone indicated not to like the situation in which they were responsible for the housework, but each of them managed to arrange a female relative, neighbour, friend or girlfriend to help them in the household, which solved their problem.

Other than these men, women are often left with feelings of displeasure where men impose the division of household tasks. They often desire changes in their responsibility for all the household tasks or at least in the division of these tasks. Formulated differently, most women would like their husband to help them out (more) with the housework. Expressing to be unsatisfied with the current situation did not imply that women intended to change this situation. Furthermore, women were often not capable of changing their situation. Therefore, instead of changing the current division, women often seemed to accept it, although not always without protest. Women had different reasons for resigning to their current situation. There was for example the fear that their husband would leave them if they complained about the task division. Additionally, women often compensated negative characteristics of their husband with positive ones, which somehow justified their current situation in their view.

The fact that women more than men accepted certain situations or behaviour from their spouse clearly reflects the situation of inequality. As *Senhora* Maria said: *"We never had any arguments about housework, only because I accepted that he wanted me to stay at home"*. Most women still strongly depend on their husbands. A main reason to stay with a, for example, unfaithful husband is based on financial concerns. *Senhora* Zelá for example stopped arguing with her husband about his behaviour towards other women because she is afraid he will leave her. She told me:

I also used to be very, very, very jealous. He already gave me reasons to be jealous (…). I used to cry a lot, but now I am fine. I stopped being jealous because of my children and the problems we had to solve (Senhora Zelía).

However, this does not mean that women are not able to bring about changes. Some women gave me examples of situations where they realised the changes they wanted against their husbands' will. *Senhora* Maria told me how she accomplished changes in her husband's behaviour:

When he was unemployed and I worked, he didn't do any housework. But, I demanded him to do it. I just didn't cook; he was at home and had time so I thought he should do it. I just had dinner at my mother's house and he would starve. Another day he wanted me to put food on his plate for him. I had already cooked but he also wanted me to put the food on his plate. I didn't do it and then he just wouldn't eat out of protest. Now he does it himself.

This is a good example of the way in which women are able to exercise power and accomplish what they want. However, *Senhora* Maria represents a majority of the women in Caranguejo who actively stood up against their husbands. *Senhora* Maria is also unhappy about the task division in her household and while her husband is the most controlling of all my male respondents, she is not able to realise all the changes she desires.

Although changes may not be accomplished, the housework is a basis for arguments in the households in Caranguejo. From arguments and the way these are solved, it can be derived who has the larger share of power and how power is exercised in a household. Therefore I included questions about arguments in my interview. I asked if my respondents had arguments, about what and how these arguments were solved. The answers to these questions differed. *Senhor* Pereira for example replied to my question if he and his wife had arguments:

Yes, because I am very demanding [he runs his finger over a shelve, leaving a mark in the dust, H.A.]. What is your reaction when you see that? I get nervous. When I am at home I go and do it. When I am at work and get tired, I get nervous. Now I am relaxed about it. She is not here now (Senhor Pereira).

Although the main causes of arguments that were named during the interview were the division of household tasks and jealousy, in contrast to *Senhor* Pereira, the majority of the men would not confront their wives in this way about the housework. There were many households in which both men and women replied not to have many arguments because they sat down to talk about things together. Or, whenever they had an argument they had their own ways of solving these. For example: *"When we have arguments we kiss and it is finished" (Senhor Santos).* Both men and women preferred to solve their arguments with words. *Senhor* Batista told me:

We never came to the point of having any physical aggression. If one day I lift my arm to hit her, I want my arm to fall. It is absurd for a man to hit a woman. If there is something that does not pleas the other, we sit down and talk. Only words solve, not aggression.

In summary, although women desire changes in task division and responsibility for housework, these changes are often not realised for a number of reasons. Two main reasons for the fact that women do not (try to) accomplish change in the household are men's greater share of power rooted in social and cultural structures and women's (financial) dependency on their husband. Undoubtedly, the housework is a source of arguments between men and women. These arguments are often solved with words but do not often result in real changes in the task division.

5.5 *Work*

Based on traditional gender roles work is typically divided in domestic work and paid work, in which women take care of the household and men of the income earning. Even though a growing per cent of people with paid employment is female this does not imply a change in the obviousness of this task division. The discussion of paid work in this chapter is based on two traditional ideologies that follow from this task division. First, the ideology of man as breadwinner in the context of Caranguejo is introduced, to which the discussion of men and work in the *favela* is linked (Komter 1985: 121). The second ideology is that women are expected to be at home to which the discussion of women and work in Caranguejo is linked (Komter: 1985: 121).

5.5.1 Men as breadwinners

In only two of the 15 households included in the research for this thesis, the man was currently the single provider of the family. In both households the wife used to work. In the first household the woman took care of her mother and therefore could not work. In the second household the wife was breastfeeding her child, but was planning to start working again when her child was older. However, from my research can be concluded that the traditional norm of man as the provider or breadwinner is still strongly present in Caranguejo. Except for the situations in which men were unemployed, men generate a greater income than women do. Furthermore, derived from the role of man as the breadwinner, men and women regard the income as mainly the responsibility of the husband. Even when both work, the man is seen as the main income provider and the income that is contributed by the woman is regarded as extra.

Although both men and women in Caranguejo support the ideology of man as breadwinner, men appear to value this role more highly than women do. During the interviews held, men especially seemed to idealise their role as provider of the family. When discussing the current work situation of men and women in Caranguejo, men often referred to this traditional division.

For example, *Senhor* Bernardo replied: *"The right thing is for a man is to work outside and for a woman to stay at home"*. None of the women similarly expressed herself, referring to this role pattern. For men this role division not only appears to underline 'how it should be', but being the provider of the family is something from which they derive their manhood and status. This is for example shown in expressions such as: *"Nowadays the majority of men are half men, they are not complete men"* as *Senhor* Bernardo commented about men loosing their role as breadwinner.

Men strongly preferred to be employed, both based on the ideas described above and on the fact that they enjoyed it. The majority of my male respondents were working in construction or other practical jobs like electrician or gardener. Seven out of fourteen men replied to do services, which implies irregular work often done in construction related projects. Two of the fourteen men had their own business, either in construction or in curtain making.

What happens when men are no longer able to live up to what is expected of them? Following men's role as breadwinner, an important aspect of male employment is the income that they generate. Being able to support your family is an aspect of the breadwinner role from which men derive feelings of masculinity and status. In my interviews I asked how men and women would experience the situation in which men were unemployed, *Senhor* Santos answered: *"This would only happen if there was no escape. I would invent anything to work or to get an income, not to be like that"*.

However, not having a registered (…) or regular job does not imply that no income is earned. For people who live in a community like Caranguejo, employment is often irregular and unstable. Due to this, (temporary) unemployment or regularly changing jobs is common in the *favela*. Furthermore, while the income that is earned with a job is often not sufficient, many households have extra sources of income. Besides governmental benefits such as child allowance, four of the fifteen households generate extra income by running a small store from their house, selling for example ice (creams). Besides this, women often make an extra income by offering small services such as doing hair and nails. When unemployed, most men carried out activities through which they were able to generate at least a small income. Staying busy and generating an income enables men to accept their situation of being unemployed and therefore makes it more acceptable to their environment. As *Senhora* Lima expressed: *"When he is unemployed my husband is often out to earn money. Thank God he is not lazy!"*

Being unemployed and not generating any income as a man is generally unacceptable in Caranguejo. Both men and women subscribe to this idea, although men suffer more from this situation than their wives do. As *Senhora* da Silva told me about her husband's unemployment:

> *We never talk openly about his unemployment. I don't put much pressure on him, but I know he is looking for something. I know he is feeling uncomfortable with the situation. He has been unemployed for almost 4 months now (Senhora da Silva).*

In the interviews conducted in Caranguejo none of the women combined the fact that their husband was or would be unemployed with a negative appreciation of him, although, like *Senhora* da Silva, they did express to be aware of the negative effects of unemployment for their husbands. The other women whose husbands were (temporarily) unemployed also told me they did not push their husbands too much in his search for a job. Women did however indicate to be worried about the consequences of his unemployment for their financial situation.

In conclusion it can be said that work is central in men's life, since men are expected to work and provide for their family. Being unemployed is therefore, mainly by men but also by women and their environment, regarded as an undesirable situation, which they actively try to change.

5.5.2   Women are supposed to be at home

Not having a job and therefore, not contributing to the family income is more acceptable for women than it is for men, while women are traditionally held responsible for the housework and men are responsible for the family income. These traditional norms are still strongly supported in Caranguejo, where for women it is more acceptable to be unemployed than to be employed, even though almost all women have some work experience. Although stronger expressed by older men (above 50), the young expressed similar ideas. *Senhor* Lima who is 30 years old, formulated this idea in the following quote:

> *Women should work at home, don't they?! Women nowadays need to work outside because of the money. But, the real thing is that women should work at home. When women work outside, the house is left abandoned. When she is at the house, things are more organised (Senhor Lima).*

Similar to the norm of men as the breadwinner, both men and women underline the ideology that women are supposed to be at home. Where, in Komter's (1985) research the ideology that women should stay at home is a man's view which women consider as negative, in Caranguejo this ideology is shared by men and women. For men, this ideology appears to be a description of how reality should ideally be. This can be derived from the fact that the ideology itself is used as an argument in the discussion about women's work between husband and wife. Whenever men wanted to stop their wives from working outside, there were also other arguments they used. For example, one woman said the following about the discussion with her husband whether or not she could work: *"He worries who will make his lunch if I worked outside" (Senhora Alexandria).* This argument is related to women's role as caretaker. Moreover, when a woman would work, she would no longer be restricted to the domestic domain, which can be an uncomfortable idea for men. For example, *Senhora* C. responded about her husband that: *"He believes that women who work betray their husbands. So, he didn't want me to start working" (Senhora Cacilda).*

Although not expressed in such a strong way, similar ideas ware expressed by other female and male respondents. For example, *Senhor* Bernardo said: "*It is a woman's work to take care of the house. The women who work do not love their husband. It is like children who go to the crèche, they don't love their mothers*".

When asking women about their ideal situation, they all expressed to prefer having a job instead of solely doing housework. The reason for this goes beyond the need for an extra or their own income. For example, *Senhora* Rodrigues who is restricted to the household because she needs to take care of her mother, responded:

I would like it to be different; I don't like staying at home. Everyday repeats itself; I go from the kitchen to the front window and back. After that I go to bed and then on a new day it is all the same" (Senhora Rodrigues).

The desire of women to get employed was in all cases based on experience, as all of the women interviewed had some work experience. Due to the financial situation among the people in Caranguejo, both men and women often started working when they are still young. For example, girls at the age of ten are able to work in a family house to assist in household tasks. Two of my respondents, a man and a woman, told me that they started working at the age of 7 and 8. In general, the money that is earned with a job is seen by men as the main reason for women to start working either in the past when they lived with their parents or after their marriage. Eight women stopped working when they married, but only three of them are still at home, the others started working again when their children were older.

All women preferred to contribute to the family income to being dependent on their husbands' income. Women expressed different reasons for this preference. There are households where her money is necessary to complete the monthly payments; in other households her money is appreciated because it improves the lifestyle of the family. Other women told me that the main benefit of earning their own money was that they did not have to ask their husbands for money, either when doing regular shopping or when buying "women's things". They not only expressed to attach value to the financial need of their income, but also to their contribution on itself. As *Senhora* Luciana expressed: "*My contribution to the income is very important to me. Nowadays everything in this society is shared by men and women*".

When extra income was really needed, the decision of women to start working was supported by husband and wife. But, women did not always manage to get their husbands' immediate agreement, although most eventually managed to convince him. *Senhora* da Silva for example managed to convince her husband, who is now positive about the fact that his wife is working: "*In the beginning when we started dating, he said his wife couldn't work. I was always against that idea. Then I told him that my husband would have to accept that I am working. That's justice!*"

This woman clearly had a strong voice in her household and believed that she had the same right to work as her husband. Now that *Senhora* Lima's husband is unemployed she is the main income provider and he now acknowledges the need for her to work.

When asking about the importance of the contribution of women to the family income, in general, women valued their contribution as more important than their husbands did. Although husbands of working women are in general positive about their wife's contribution to the family income, they value her income lower than their own. This appreciation appeared not to be linked to the actual difference between the incomes, while even when husband and wife earned the same income, men would appreciate their wives' income as less important. I believe this is based both on traditional roles and on the fact that women's incomes are in general lower than men's. When asking about the importance of her contribution to the family income, men's reactions varied from expressing that her contribution is not important, to acknowledging that her income could not be missed. When comparing both incomes, *Senhor* Lima commented about his own income: *"It's little, only pennies"*. When asked about his wife's income, on which they relied when he is unemployed, he first replied that her contribution to the family income is not important. Later he replied that "*Sometimes I am really unemployed, so she has to provide for the family. If it weren't for her, things would stop then. So, it is a bit important, although not much".* But, later in the interview he referred to their financial situation when he replied that: *"Much changed after she started working again. It got better for us" (Senhor Lima). Senhor* Lima expressed that the ideal situation was for men to work and for women to be at home, but he also described a situation in which a woman worked and a man was doing housework as beautiful. Ideas were often contradictory when discussing women's work in general and the situation they preferred regarding their own wife. When asking about women's work, *Senhor* Santos for example replied:

> *It is cool. Not only because you share your expenses, but also because she shows she is independent and that she can survive on her own Sometimes a man leaves and a woman is left with nothing. I admire women who work.*

But, when asked if he would like his own wife to work, he replied: *"To tell the truth, no, because of the child" (Senhor Santos).* Similar contradictions often appeared in interviews, where men came up with varying reasons for their wives to be at home instead of working. It appears that men were struggling with, on the one hand their appreciation of daily reality in which it is becoming increasingly normal for women to work, and the traditional ideologies on the other hand. Comparing men's and women's stories often resulted in contradictions as well. For example, *Senhora* Maria told me how her husband was against the fact that she was working when they met.

During the interview with her husband he replied after being asked what his opinion was about the fact that his wife was working: *"She has to work, if she doesn't work how is she going to grow in life and survive?!" (Senhor Pereira).* This opinion clearly differs from what his wife told us about him. This man either changed his ideas or gave us a socially wanted answer, which he did not support.

Regarding the appreciation from men about their wives' job, men's opinions varied. When asked how they regard work that women (can) do in general, *Senhor* Bernardo replied: *"A woman can never do what a man does. Women are not tough enough to do a lot of work. Whatever you ask a man to do, he will face it, but not women" (Senhor Bernardo).* When asked about the difference between men's and women's work, *Senhor* da Silva expressed an opinion that is similar to that of the majority of my male and female respondents:

> *There is work that women cannot do, like being a security guard. But, there are some female security guards needed to search women anyway. But for strength, they need men. I do not think that there is work that men cannot do, because it's man's priority to work. Men can do even domestic work; there is always work in that sector. I know many men will not do domestic services. Only work related to strength women can't do, the rest they can (Senhor da Silva).*

In general men appreciated the work that their wives did. As *Senhor* Pereira replied about his wife's work as a health agent: *"It is a talented, very talented job, but the salary does not give a good compensation. You have to deal with many kinds of people and face many things in order to survive in her work".* Regarding women's own appreciation of the work that they did, a female health agent said the following about her job:

> *I enrolled in the health agent training because I always wanted to be a nurse. I like: it to prevent sickness and to educate people. It includes some office work as well and fieldwork [each health agent has an area in which he or she regularly visits households, H.A.]. I believe that my work is very important. I am saving lives and make people aware that they can be clean and healthy although they are poor. I feel like a guardian angel. I have worked at the health post for 6 years now. Last September I finished a course of 15 months for which I received a scholarship. Now I am working for another scholarship to do the technical course that is also part of the health agent training. (…) I prefer to be working, to have money and knowledge. The salary is firm [which means that she can depend on it, it's stable, H.A.] and the work is good. Although I would prefer a registered job (Senhora A.).*

Even though most women replied to enjoy working and to like the work that they were doing, this woman was unique in the way she talked about her work. I did not hear many women talk about their work with so much enthusiasm, even though all women seemed to like what they were doing. The work that women do is mostly restricted to cleaning, sewing, being a maid, or, whenever they had more education, being a teacher. It can be said that women who worked in jobs that required some kind of education or training appreciated their work more than women who worked in lower skilled jobs. Female employment that was appreciated most by men was working as a teacher or health agent; in other cases men did not express specific appreciation for the work their wives did. In contrast, it is remarkable that none of the men had a job that required specific education.

To recapitulate this discussion, contradictory ideas are often expressed which may be an indicator of the change in the reality of women being restricted to the household in contrast to the still present ideals based on traditional gender roles. It is mainly men who struggle with these changes that contradict traditional ideas; women uniformly express to prefer escaping their traditional role through their involvement in a job outside the domestic realm.

5.5.3   When men stay at home and women become breadwinners

In three of the households in which interviews for this thesis were done, men were currently unemployed and women were the main income earners. Each of the men in these households had been fired and were therefore not voluntarily unemployed. When comparing the opinions of men and women on this topic, men appear to be far more dissatisfied with a (imaginary) situation in which they would have to depend on their wife's income. Women in general share the idea that men are expected to be the major income earner. Although they preferred the situation in which their husband worked, women did not express themselves strongly against the (imaginary) situation in which they would generate the major part of the family income.

When asking *Senhor* Santos about the possible situation in which he would be unemployed and his wife would be the only income generator, he replied: *"I would be a gigolo then. I would invent anything to work or to get an income, not to be like that. At least I would do the housework then" (Senhor Santos).* When discussing this subject, like *Senhor* Santos, five of the male respondents referred to the term gigolo [gigolô, H.A.]. These are men who are unemployed and who do not perform any household tasks. Often the word gigolo is related to a men spending his wife's money on his alcohol or gambling addiction. It is accepted that men who are (temporarily) unemployed are actively searching for work or earning an income with irregular activities or helping their wife in the housework. Similarly, it is accepted that, when women work when the husband is employed, he supports her in her household tasks. However, when a woman is employed and her husband is unemployed and not actively searching for ways to earn an income or assisting in the household, and on top of that he is spending his wife's money on alcohol, this is disapproved by men, women and their environment.

Gigolos did not seem uncommon and all of my respondents could name an example of a household in which women were responsible for earning the income as well as doing the housework. As *Senhor* Lima said:

> *Forty* per cent *of the men are lazy here. They put women to work and play games, betting for money in the casino. I think that is very wrong! Women are working to help their husbands and those men start destroying women's lives. This is what we call gigolos. (…) There are also many men working and women at home, this is the ideal situation (Senhor Lima).*

In contrast to this, Blood and Wolfe (1960: 49) reported that in families where wives worked outside the home, husbands did more in the home. This was based on the idea that the chief resource required for doing housework is time. Usually the person with the most time is the wife (73-74). Much of the literature on women and work has asserted that, as women take on paid employment outside of the home and, consequently, assume part of the provider role, men should shift some of their energy to family roles, an assumption called into question in a provocative article by Jane Hood (1986). (…) Implicit in this definition is the idea that enacting role behaviour does not necessarily mean that one is taking on responsibility for that role. In other words, entering the work force should not imply that women are also automatically assuming the psychological responsibility to provide for the family economically. In fact, the scant amount of research on this topic (Haas 1986; Hood 1983, 1986) has indicated that most women in dual-earner families are not taking on the duty to provide. Similarly, many men are not relinquishing their provider-role duties but continuing to hold the "psychological responsibility" for the financial stability of the family even when the wife is employed (Perry-Jenkins and Crouter 1990: 139-140).

As follows from the above, employment or unemployment of one of the partners does not always make a difference in the task division regarding the household. If men feel they hold the ultimate responsibility for the economic survival of the family, they will feel less obliged to take on family work responsibility (140 Jenkins). When women do not have paid work, they are often expected to do (most of) the housework. In a situation where both men and women are unemployed, it appears that the general opinion is that household tasks should be shared. Because, as Hood (1986) and Peplau (1983) suggest, family roles are defined in the context of interdependent family relationships, it follows that when role expectations are violated, one consequence may be dissatisfaction with the relationship (in Perry-Jenkins and Crouter 1990: 140-141). In practice this often results in women doing the largest part of the housework and men 'helping'. As *Senhora* Zelá told me, this helping is often limited to situations of sickness:

I do all the housework. There are not many things to do, he doesn't have to help, there's no need. Only when I have paid employment. When I am sick and my daughters are not here he does some things (Senhora Zelía.).

It can be concluded that men are not directly blamed for being (temporarily) unemployed, since this often happens and forms part of the daily reality of Caranguejo. However, men need to show that they do not accept this situation and moreover that they do not depend on their wives. Although, when the wife is employed men are expected to do most of the housework, their support is often limited and women keep performing the greater share of household tasks. It appears that, although women escape from the domestic domain and enter the public, men in turn do not take up their role in the domestic sphere.

5.5.4 Control of financial resources

As pointed out above, the income is crucial in men's role as provider. Furthermore, a lacking income is the main reason for women in Caranguejo to start working. Besides this, earning an income and having control over financial resources can be a main source of power in the household. Therefore, analysing men's and women's ideas about the control of the financial resources in their household provides information on the power distribution between men and women. As Van der Velden states, access to and control over material or economic resources is the first power base in the household (1991: 153). The fact that men contribute the larger part of the family income, builds a strong male power base (Van der Velden 1991: 124).

Following this, I introduce resource theory that underlines the importance of contributing to the family income. In resource theory, marriage is conceptualised as a set of exchange relations in which the balance of power rests with the partner who contributes most resources into the household (Ferree 1990: 873-874). This corresponds with the role of men as the breadwinner, which often implies men holding the larger part of power in the household. Blood and Wolfe illustrate this theory by arguing that women who contribute income to the household have more power than those who do not (1960: 18). Besides this, they argue that the longer women work, the more power they hold in the household (Blood and Wolfe 1960: 37). In conclusion, Blood and Wolfe claim that power would become more equally distributed when women contributed to the household's income (1960: 98).

Although research supports that, on a general level, women who go out to work have more power than those who do not (Rubin 1978: 97-106), placing this conclusion in the social context of poverty and gender inequality changes it significantly. Gender inequality in, for example, access to work and resources, benefits men in contributing a higher level of economic resources to the household (Hakim 1991: 107-108). Apart from the barriers women have to face in their access to work and resources, an actual contribution to the household income does not automatically imply a change in the existing power distribution.

Zelizer's historical research illustrates this by showing how women's access to economical resources has not historically increased their share of power in the household. She ascribes this to the construction of man's image as breadwinner, being responsible for the family regardless of their actual contribution to the household's income (in Vogler 1998: 690). The association of men's bread winning or provider role with masculinity made their economic contribution of greater value than that of their wives, which I argued above in subchapter 5.5.2. In other words, the work that men do is often overvalued and the work that women do is undervalued (Humphrey 1987: 53). Zelizer's conclusion is that an increase in women's income is unlikely to change the power distribution within a household, as women's contribution is seen as different or less important than men's (in Vogler 1998: 690).

The way the money is controlled in Caranguejo differs among the households, either depending on who is earning the money, who is able to manage it better (partly depending on schooling) or it is related to the power division in the household. As Kabeer states: "while women may successfully bargain over certain aspects of household expenditure, what remains non-negotiable is men's overall control over household land, capital and other valued resources *(*Kabeer 1994: 225*)*. In contrast to what Kabeer states, the overall control of money does not self-evidently lie in man's hands. In some households, the control is shared. For example in *Senhora* Fereira's household, who described the way money is controlled in his household as follows:

> *We only live on my salary now. We control the money together, but he goes to the bank and takes it and then gives it to me. Everything I buy he notes down and when he sees that I spend too much he tells me to stop buying. Before he was the one who went shopping, now I am doing it. Whenever he couldn't go in the past I went and so I learned how to do it (Senhora Fereira).*

In another household where the wife is the only one generating an income, her husband controls the money. He told me the following about this:

> *I control their money, she gets the money and puts it in my hands. Before, she controlled the money, when I was still working. I would give her the money then. She thinks I am more confident with money and I agree. She has a hole in her hand. If we would go to a shop she would want a bag, clothes. And, she would also help other people a lot. She would lend money to people in need (Senhor Soares).*

In one household, husband and wife control different parts of the expenses. *Senhora* Maria says the following about the way money is controlled in her household: "*He controls the payment of the house and the food. I control clothing, perfume, shoes* etceteras*"* In this household both control their own income, which is used for different expenses.

However, most households with two incomes put their money together so that no difference is made between the expenses that are paid with the different incomes. This is for example the case in *Senhor* da Silva's household, who told me:

> *We do not have a division in the control of the money. It doesn't matter who controls it. If we need something we take money and buy it. We have a place where we put the money and whenever we take some, we tell the other for what and why we take it (Senhor da Silva).*

To sum up my findings on the control of money in the household, I can conclude that in all but one of the households where husband and wife both generate the income this is not restricted by gender roles. The control is either shared or done by the person who is most able to handle financial resources. This is similar to the households in which either the man or the woman works, where in most cases the money is controlled by the spouse who is not working.

6 Conclusion

Women's empowerment has been a process, which, whilst aiming to eliminate gender inequality, focused on women and ignored men's role as gendered beings. The aim of this thesis is to conclude to what extent there is room for the inclusion of men in women centred process like women's empowerment. In this I aimed to regard men as individual, gendered beings and to go beyond the stereotype as men as 'the problem'. In this concluding chapter I start with presenting the answers to the two sub-questions that followed from the research question. Subsequently I present the answer on the research question placed in the context of Caranguejo. In the final subchapter I will move beyond the context of Caranguejo and present an answer to the research question that is applicable to a broader context of gender inequality and women's empowerment. In order to come to these conclusions I relate my findings and conclusions presented in the three chapters above to the theory presented in chapter one and the data-analysis chapters.

6.1 The individual

The first sub-question is: *How do men and women in Caranguejo, as individual agents, combine cultural and social structures into their personal reality?* With the answer to this sub-question I aim to indicate to what extent the personal reality is influenced by social and cultural structures and what the influence of individuals as agents is in this.

Based on gender as a non-static category as it was defined in the theoretical chapter, I stressed that it is important not to generalise the process towards gender equality. However, in each society and culture there are shared norms, values believes, motivations and perceptions, which are grounded in the social and cultural structures. Each of the households in Caranguejo that were included in my research is grounded in similar social and cultural structures, and my respondents therefore shared norms, values, believes, motivations and perceptions. I therefore will start this conclusion with some of these shared ideas and perceptions about the social and cultural aspects that were expressed by my respondents.

On the cultural level, both men and women in Caranguejo expressed ideas that are linked to the traditional division of the domestic and public sphere. Moreover, machismo, marianismo and traditional role-sharing patterns persist within households in the *favela*. However, men derive more benefits from the dependence on existing role patterns and therefore more strongly support these ideas. Furthermore, based on these cultural ideas and values, men have the power to influence the beliefs and actions of their wives as well as social relationships and social thinking in general. Being surrounded by these ideas and values of men and having the smaller share of power, women in Caranguejo tend to reflect to and agree with these ideas. With their support of these cultural believes and values, women as well as men recreate existing gender power inequalities between the sexes and stand in the way of change.

Besides cultural ideas and values, the people in Caranguejo share their social reality. Unfortunately, this social reality, being black and poor, strongly influences the opportunities of men and women in Caranguejo to increase their living standard. On the other hand, their financial situation related to their social class did create the need for women to produce an income, which can be seen as a first step towards their empowerment. However, this social reality that made it socially acceptable for women to start working seems to be in conflict with the cultural beliefs of the people in Caranguejo. Traditional role-sharing patterns persist within families even though the largely male-dominated cultural structures are increasingly challenged by social changes. The reliance on these traditional norms, in contrast to the changing social reality, stands in the way of the process of women's empowerment. Where the belief in and reliance on traditional gender roles provides women as well as men with security, the changing social structures appear to create insecurities. This happens where the ideal of the division between men and women, based on the cultural values and motivations attached to gender roles of man as the provider and woman as caretaker, no longer corresponds with the changes in the social environment. Moreover, all respondents expressed their awareness of the changing social reality and appeared to be struggling to combine these changes with the existing cultural norms and values.

Even though men and women in Caranguejo share ideas, beliefs and values, none of the men, women or households in my research are equal. For example, where *Senhor* Batista appeared to be the main force behind the equality between him and his wife, where *Senhora* Maria has difficulties to let her husband put his own food on his plate. Differences in norms, values and behaviour depend on individual characteristics and agency, however, general relations can sometimes be uncovered based on for example age, generation, gender or employment status. There are however relations or similarities in answers, which I could not trace back to one shared characteristic. Another remark I would like to make is that regularly the beliefs and ideals of my respondents did not agree with their actions and the reality.

When discussing these socio-economic changes in my interviews, only the two oldest respondents combined their belief in traditional gender roles with a strong disapproval of the changing position of women in society. Of all the other respondents, the answers given that can be linked to the social level of analysis were (somehow) in contrast to the belief of men and women in traditional gender roles. Based on changes in the social sphere, more than half of the respondents replied to be in favour of women working in general. On top of this, a minority of male respondents expressed that it is good that women become more educated and independent. Only one of the men acknowledged the positive influence that his wife's increased independence and knowledge had on their household.

Regarding the female respondents, all of them indicated to highly value the changing social position of women, that gave them the chance to work, to contribute to the family income and through that becoming more equal and less dependent on their husbands. However, in contrast to their support of working women in general, half of the men preferred their own wife to stay at home.

In this, the cultural ideal of men to be able to (financially) take care of their family appeared to be stronger than their support towards their wives' changed position.

Where women partly or in some cases completely took over men's role as provider, in most households men did not take up their share in the caretaker role of women. On the subject of household tasks, opinions were strongly related to traditional gender roles. Remarkably, women as well as men seemed to strongly support the view that housework is women's responsibility. Most women did not literally express this view, but their answers pointed strongly in this direction. There was only one woman who literally underlined this idea. However, being socially accepted that housework is women's responsibility does not imply that women do not want their husbands to assist them. Referring to change, the majority of my female respondents replied that they would like their husbands to help them more in the household. However, their socially determined position as the less powerful and the one responsible for the household, besides the idea that men are not supposed to do housework, restrains them from realising these changes.

In answer to the first sub-question I conclude the following. Traditional cultural norms to a large extent determine the way female and male roles are valued in Caranguejo, following this; cultural and social structures can be regarded as restricting. However, both men and women in Caranguejo appear to be enabled by these structures as well, while they, for example, provide feelings of security and motivation for their daily life activities. The extent to which these structures are present in people's personal reality depends on the individual agent, his or her environment and also on the generation. Since traditional roles and values are highly valued in the community, there can be concluded that in general they restrict (women's) opportunities to change the existing situation, power division and role patterns. However, when comparing the older with the younger respondents, I clearly indicated positive changes in the ideas and values towards women's escape and men's entrance of the domestic sphere, characteristics ascribed to gender roles and in task division. I indicated these changes by both men and women, although men are more reluctant to them then women are.

6.2   Power

The second sub-question I will answer is: *How is power divided in households between men and women in Caranguejo?* With this question I aimed to analyse how power is distributed in households and what the influence of this power distribution is on men's and women's personal lives, the choices that they make, their believes and perceptions.

In the theoretical chapter, I defined power as relational, both repressive and productive and as exercised through agency in which structure can either be restricting or used as one of the resources through which power can be obtained and therefore enabling. One area in which the power inequality between husbands and wives is most noticeable is the division of housework that is strongly based on men's ideas, wishes and needs.

The unequal task division in households that drive against the wishes of women is a result of the, mainly repressive, power exercised by men and the acceptance of women. In the only household included in my research where household responsibilities were equally divided between husband and wife, this was due to the influence of the husband. Furthermore, from the analysis of changes in the household and task division it appeared that although women desired change, only a minority managed or intended to obtain it. This was mainly due to their dependence on their husband, their acceptance of the situation and their lack of power. From this can be concluded that men are better able to exercise power in a repressive as well as a productive than women are. Whenever women accomplished changes, they did not directly exercise their power, but used indirect strategies.

This division in power is strongly based on and grounded in social and cultural structures. In this division men's role as boss corresponds with the traditional male gender or the macho gender ideology. Women's role as the more powerless agrees with her gender roles as caretaker and the marianismo gender ideology. There are however differences between individuals and households. These differences are based individual characteristics and agency, but are also mainly influenced and determined by men. Similar to the changes in reliance on traditional social and cultural structures, based on age there are differences to be found among men and women. From my research appears that older women possess less power and agency than younger women. This is for example based by the way they stand up against their husbands and their voice in discussions and decision-making. Similarly, where older men took all the decisions, younger men accepted and valued women's opinions in discussions and decision-making.

In conclusion it can be said that, although power distributions among households vary, in general men possess the greater share of power in households in Caranguejo, which is both based on a greater access to resources, such as cultural structures, as on agency. This power is not only derived from, but also justified by the traditional cultural norms that place men in the more powerful position, as was discussed in subchapter 6.1. Furthermore, this power is exercised on levels such as task division and decision-making but is also used to influence women's behaviour and even their opinions. However, this does not imply that women are powerless. Although fewer and not culturally based, women have access to power resources and escaping the domestic domain also improved their sense of agency. Nevertheless, without denying the positive changes, from my research it would appear that the share of power and agency of women are to a large extent influenced by their husbands.

6.3   *Men and women's empowerment in Carangeujo*

In this subchapter I aim to present an answer to the research question of thesis: *How are men as gendered beings included in the process of women's empowerment?* applied to the context of Caranguejo. As I explained in the introduction, the aim of this question is to describe what the role of men as gendered beings is in the process of women's empowerment.

Since men have been missing or referred to as the problem in women centred processes as empowerment, there has been little literature on their role in it as gendered individuals.

Following the definition formulated in chapter one, empowerment is a process that is done by the women involved in which their environment can act as enabling or restraining in this process. Initially, women's empowerment was regarded as a step taken by women towards gender equality. However, the inclusion of men in gender created the awareness of the need to include men in processes towards gender equality. As written above, men posses the greater share of power, which can be used as restricting or enabling. Although there are examples in my research of men who use their power mainly as enabling or productive towards their wives, the majority uses their power as restricting towards their wives. Furthermore, when men as well as women keep holding on to traditional role patterns, values and beliefs, this will keep standing in the way of gender equality while it is one of men's resources of power that women do not possess. Gender equality can only be reached when men and women take steps in the same direction and loosen their reliance on traditional structures. In doing that, gender identities and roles should be re-formulated and eventually power should be redivided. Taking in consideration the biological differences between men and women, the aim should be: equal access to power, status and rights for men and women without denying the biological gender differences.

Mainly as a result of socio-economic changes, women in Caranguejo have become empowered in certain areas, for example by entering the public sphere, but this has not yet resulted in an overall change in power division between husbands and wives. Women might have been able to partly escape the domestic sphere, either in defiance or with the co-operation of men, in most cases this has not resulted in changes in the housework while men have resisted to share the tasks. This appears to be the result of the significant influence that men have not only in their personal relations with women or their wife in specific, but also on the social and cultural level. However, even though men can to a great extend resist or ignore them, they are not able to change the socio-economic situation that forces them to accept the need for their wives, and women in general, to work. They can and do, however, stand in the way of other changes that would contribute to women's empowerment, such as a review of the division of the household tasks and, for example, loosening the believe in traditional role division.

Due to these socio-economic changes, the provider role is on its way out in Caranguejo, but a legitimate successor has not yet appeared. This new role needs to be formulated by men and women aiming at gender equality. In order for the women to see their status improved and their power increased in their communities, there has to be some acceptance or agreement by the men in their lives of their new roles and responsibilities. Moreover, not many new norms and values have been formulated to reflect the new situation in which women escape the domestic sphere and gain more power, status and influence. In this, as stated above, the social and the cultural appear to conflict on the personal level.

It does not make sense, in movement towards gender equality, to empower women as a historically and culturally marginalised group, and to ignore men who commit the marginalisation and are most socially privileged, and expect everything to go smoothly. On the one hand, men are the acknowledged heads of households and decision-makers. On the other hand, more and more men do not meet the normative standard, and they find themselves torn between the cultural norms they expound and the sense of discontent and powerlessness as a result of their subordinate economic status. It would appear that men are open to the idea of non-domesticated women, but that they are reluctant to share their own provider role with women and take up their share of the housework. Men are unavoidably involved in gender. Therefore, to move towards a gender-equal society must require men and boys to think and act in new ways, to re-evaluate traditional images of manhood, and to reshape their relationships with women and girls.

Recapitulating the discussion on how men as gendered beings are included in women's empowerment in the context of Caranguejo, based on the outcomes of this study I conclude that power division between husband and wife in a household largely depends on men. Men therefore have a significant influence on the success of women's empowerment, although through their acceptance of this situation women contribute to their subordinated position. However, the answer or solution varies from one situation to another, and involves the ways men's beliefs and practices are shaped by the gender system and with individual agency. Finally, I should like to stress that, even though power divisions in 14 of 15 households included in this research are still unequal, men as well as women have accomplished changes. With this I hope to contradict the ideas that men's role in women's empowerment goes beyond being the problem and that, even though they were not included in studies and projects, men in Caranguejo managed to accomplish these changes.

6.4 Men's role in women's empowerment

Based on recent literature in which the role of men in gender and development is underlined, this thesis has examined the need for and possibility of inclusion of men in the process of women's empowerment. My findings about the lives of men and women in Caranguejo presented above confirm the domination of men on the cultural, social and personal level, which is extensively discussed in existing literature as well as they show the changes accomplished by both men and women. However, going beyond generalisations, with the analysis of the data I gathered in Caranguejo, I have also underlined the differences among and between men and women. Although these women and men share similar backgrounds and are similarly restricted by their social class and environment, they distinguish themselves through agency. Agency is based on personal characteristics as well as personal environment, the latter considering, for example, the influence of men on women's behaviour, believes, etceteras.

The concept of agency was also used in this thesis to underline the influence of individual women on their own empowerment. However, as stated above, men possess the power to restrict and enable the way and the extent to which women are able to exercise their agency. As I stressed in the local conclusion, the influence of men on women's empowerment is significant and therefore men should be included in this process. Nevertheless, this should not be done without emphasising the role of women in their own empowerment. This leads to the answer on the research question of this thesis: *How are men as gendered beings included in the process of women's empowerment?* In answer to this question I stress that men's role in women's empowerment is undeniable and crucial, but has been and can be positive or negative depending on the man as individual, or in other words, his agency. I argue that, based on my findings about men in Caranguejo, the power that men exercise is to a great extend repressive, but that there are clearly positive changes noticeable and examples of men who use their power as enabling towards women.

Summarising: the role that men as gendered beings play in the process towards women's empowerment is as important as that of gendered women. And, as well as with women, the recognition of the differences between men is crucial. The goal of women's empowerment is gender equality and with this thesis I aimed to underline that this cannot be done either without men or without women.

6.5   A final remark

Ultimately, I should like to give an answer to the question of Jorge, one of the founders of Papai[18]. He asked me if I believed that men needed special programmes to become empowered or deal with women's empowerment or their own disempowerment. In answer to this, although from my thesis can be concluded that men are aware of the changing society, I believe that men should be made aware of the advantages that gender equality through women's empowerment can bring them as well as their wife and family. Furthermore I believe that it is not so much women's empowerment, since, as I concluded above, men strongly influence this process, but the changing social reality that brings problems for men and may result in feelings of loosing out. Women taking over the task of provider as well as women's empowerment are the result of a changing reality, which created the need for women to complement the family income, and to escape their traditional restriction to the private domain. I argue that it would be best to set up an empowerment process that focuses on both men and women and their relationship instead of focusing on each as a separate group, without ignoring their biological differences. Again, I want to underline the differences between individuals and households, which should be considered in these every process towards gender equality.

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[18] Papai is the first NGO that is specialised in research on men from a feminist perspective. See also chapter two on methodology. www.papai.com.br.

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Appendix

# I	Schedule of respondents

Household	Sex	Age	Relation	Children	Scholing	Income	Work
1	female	36	married (3rd x)	(1)	some	R$ 300- 400,-	maid/ more than 1 job/ also rents a part of their house
	male	22	married	none		R$ 350,-	ceilings
2	female	33	widow/ dating	2	finishing highschool/ health agent courses	R$430,-	health agent/ vending place/ party catering
3	male	55	devorced	4 (3)*	almost none	R$496,-	public worker/ worked in circus as clown
4	female	24	living together	2	up to 6th grade	R$50,-/75,-	maid (the used to have a vending place), she works since 3 years now
	male	30	living together	2	can't write/ read	R$ 500,-	unregular work/ services, sell ice from freezer, does gardens/ services
5	female	29	formally married	1	finished high school/ health agent courses	R$395,-	health agent
	male	38	formally married (2nd x)	3 (2)	doing 2nd grade	R$2000 (very irregular)	now unemployed, but has construction agency
6	male	60	widower (married once)	5	1st grade highschool	R$400,-	not retired, but to old to have registered work, mainly services
7	female	26	formally married	not yet	studied to become a teacher	R$ 400,-	teacher/ own school
	male	26	formally married	not yet	till first grade	R$ 300,-	unemployed (carwash)
8	female	19	formally married	1	2nd grade high school - a computer course	none	unemployed/ housewife
	male	22	formally married	1	5th grade primary school	R$ 350,-	bricklayer, painter, electrician
9	male	68	seperated	2	none	R$300,-	retired/ his main activity now is fighting for the community
10	female	48	living together	4	up to 5th grade	none	housewife
	male	55	living together	7 (3)	up to 5th grade	R$ 300,- (irregular)	unemployed (vending place/ hydraulics)
11	female	37	married	2	high school and teacher training	R$200,-	vending place, hair, nails
	male	37	married	3 (1)	finished high school	R$350-400,-	curtainmaker/ autonomous
12	female	34	married	not yet	now in 5th grade	R$380,-	sewer
	male	29	married	not yet	doing 6th grade	none	unemployed (cleaner, services)
13	female	35		3	till 8th grade	R$360,-	maid, babysitter in family house
	male	35	married	4 (1)	till 4th grade		unemployed since 5 months (cook)
14	female	37	married	(3)	till 2nd grade high school	none	unemployed (sewer/ doing some work as a nurse now)
	male	38	married (2nd x)		doing 5th grade - tries to do the fast way	?	construction
15	female	74	married	17	illiterate	none	housewife
	male	85	married	17	none	R$300,-	retired (politics)

Note: (-) refers to children from other relationships or marriages.

II   Plan of Caranguejo

LIMITE ZEIS CARANGUEJO/TABAIARES
LIMITES DA ÁREA DE ATUAÇÃO DO PSF
ACESSOS PARA A ÁREA
RIO CAPIBARIBE
CANAL DO ABC
VIA ASFALTADA
VIA PAVIMENTADA
VIA EM CHÃO BATIDO
UNIDADE DE SAÚDE
OLHO D'ÁGUA
TERRENO PRETENDIDO PARA HABITAÇÃO
ANTIGA FERMENTAÇÃO
ASS. DEFENSORA DAS C. DO C.EC. TABAIARES
ASSOC. DE MORADORES DO C. E CAMPO TABAIARES

CLUBE DE MÃES
SEDE DA UNIÃO DOS MORADORES
TERRENO P/ FUTURA CONST. DA ESCOLA MUNICIPAL
SEBRAE
ÁREA NON AEDIFICANDI (MARGEM DO RIO)
ÁREA NON AEDIFICANDI (ATUALMENTE OCUPADA P/ PALAFITAS)
VIVEIROS DE CAMARÃO
MICRO ÁREA 01 (TÂNIA)
MICRO ÁREA 02 (CRISTINA)
MICRO ÁREA 03 (ADRIANA)
MICRO ÁREA 04 (ROSA)
MICRO ÁREA 05 (JORGE)
MICRO ÁREA 06 (ANDREA)
MICRO ÁREA 08 (LURDES)

III   Interview questions

Questions (and observation)

> ➔ **Perguntas (e observação)**

1. <u>General statistics</u>

- Name **(Qual e o seu nome?)**

- Age **(Que idade tem?)**

2. Relationship

- Are you married? **(É casado/a?)**

- Do you have children? **(Tem Filhos?)**

- With whom do you live? **(Com quem você mora?)**

- Do you think your husband/ wife is a good husband/ wife? **Ache que seu marido/ sua marida é un bon marido/ marida?**

- How is your relationship? **Como é seu relacionamento (en geral)?**

3. <u>Current/ household situation. **(Situação atual/ governo da casa**)</u>.

- How do they live? – house (observation), family members and their position…

→ **Como vocês moram? (observação).**

- Can you describe of whom your family consists?

→ **Pode descrever sua familia composição?**

- How is the family income earned?

→ **Como vocês ganham seu salário?**

- Who is working?

→ **Quem trabalha?**

- What kind of work do they do?

→ **Que trabalho vocês fazem?**

- Are their any other activities to earn money?

→ **Fazem outras atividades por ganhar dinheiro?**

4. <u>Opinion on household situation</u>

1. How are the tasks in the household divided?

> ➔ **Como está a distribuição de encargos doméstica?**

2. What do you think of this division?

> ➔ **O que você pensa de esta divisão?**

3. Is there anything you would like to change in this division? Is it fair?

    ➔ **Há alguma coisa que você quer modar nesta divisão? Está justar?**

4. What is the importance of this division?

    ➔ **Esta divisão é importante para você?**

5. Are there any differences between this household and others?

    ➔ **Há diferenças na divisão entre seu <u>familía/ casa/ divisão das tarefas domesticó</u> e outros?**

6. Were there any major changes in the household situation in the last years?

    ➔ **Houve umas mudanças no <u>governo da casa</u> e divisão das tarefas domésticas? Na sua casa? E em geral?**

7. What do you think about the division of householdwork between men and women in general?

    → **Como você acha de divisão das tarefas entre homem e mulher em geral?**

<u>5.   Opinion on work situation & changes</u>

8. What kind of work does she/ do you do?

    ➔ **O que ela/ você trabalha?**

9. What do you think about your/ her job?

    ➔ **O que você acha sobre seu trabalho?**

10. For how long are you/ is she working?

    ➔ **Há quanto tempo você/ ela trabalha?**

11. Why did you/ she started to work?

    ➔ **Por que você/ ela começou ou trabalha?**

12. What do you think about the fact that you/ your wife started to work?

    ➔ **O que você acha sobre você/ sua esposa ter começado a trabalhar?**

13. What does your husband/ your wife think about the fact that you/ she started working?

    ➔ **O que seu marido/ esposa acha de você/ ela ter começado a trabalhar/ contribui para o salário de familia?**

14. How important is her contribution to the family income?

    ➔ **É importante ela contribuir para o salário de familia?**

15. Are there any changes in your relationship with your husband/wife after you/ your wife started working?

    → **Há mudanças na sua relação depois que você/ sua esposa começou a trabalhar?**

16. Did anything change in your position in the household? – in task division (cleaning, taking care of children…), decision taking, (other) responsibilities

    → **Houve mudanças na sua posição em casa? (no repartição das tarefas (limpar, andar dos filhos...), tomar de decisão (dinheiro), (outros) responsabilidades (dinheiro...).**

17. How do you feel about these changes or the fact that there were no changes?

   ➔ **Como você acha destas mudanças ou de não haver mudanças?**

18. Would you require any other changes?

   ➔ **Você quer mudar outras coisas?**

19. Do you prefer the situation before or after you/ your wife started working? Why?

   ➔ **Você prefere o situação antes que ou depois que você/ ela começou trabalhar? Por que?**

20. How would you describe the differences bet5ween your household and other households? (task division, decision taking, responsibilities, roles of husband and wife)

   ➔ **Como você descrevia as diferenças que na dorma de engasuzan a casa e outros? (repartição das tarefas, tomar de decisão (dinheiro), responsabilidades, posição esposa e marido).**