



## TEACHER TRAINING AND RACIAL LITERACY AS A MECHANISM FOR AN ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION

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### ABSTRACT

This research aimed to analyze how teacher training, especially through racial literacy, can contribute to the promotion of anti-racist education in schools. The methodology adopted was a bibliographic review, with a survey of academic articles and other relevant materials, using databases such as Google Scholar, Scielo, and EBSCOhost, focusing on studies between 2010 and 2023. The analysis of the data revealed that teacher training still lacks a critical and systematic approach to the racial issue, which hinders the effective implementation of anti-racist pedagogical practices in schools. In addition, the research highlighted that racial literacy is essential for educators to understand structural racism and its manifestations in the school environment, enabling the development of more inclusive pedagogical strategies. Despite the challenges, teacher training and the improvement of public policies are key to transforming the school into a truly democratic space in which all students, regardless of their racial origin, have equal opportunities.

**Keywords:** Teacher Training. Racial Literacy. Anti-racist.

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## INTRODUCTION

Teacher training is one of the most important pillars in the process of educational transformation, since teachers are the main agents that shape education and society. However, in the current context of Brazil, the training of educators still has gaps, especially with regard to confronting racism and promoting anti-racist education. Although there have been advances, structural racism still permeates educational institutions, reflected in curricula, interpersonal relationships and, especially, in pedagogical practices. Teacher training, therefore, needs to be rethought and reconstructed to respond to this demand, with an emphasis on racial literacy (Nascimento; Hydrangea; Peixoto, 2023).

Racial literacy, a concept that involves understanding racial inequalities, their historical origins and contemporary social implications, emerges as an essential tool in this process. Through racial literacy, teachers are empowered not only to recognize racism in its various forms, but also to act proactively to combat it inside and outside the classroom. Racial literacy allows educators to understand the specificities of the experiences of black students and thus be able to adopt pedagogical practices that promote equity and social justice (Oliveira, 2022).

The school, as an institution responsible for the formation of citizens, must be an environment that respects and values ethnic-racial diversity, offering equal opportunities for all students. However, it often ends up reproducing discriminatory practices, either due to the absence of a critical approach to the racial issue, or due to the lack of adequate training of teachers. Teacher training focused on racial literacy is, therefore, an urgent need for the school to become a truly democratic and inclusive space, in which all identities are respected and celebrated (Pereira; Pear tree; Bianco, 2022).

Among the various aspects of racial literacy, one of the most important is the training of educators to understand the historical origins of racism, which are configured in slavery and the subsequent marginalization of blacks in Brazilian society. This historical knowledge is essential for teachers to be able to identify the manifestations of racism in everyday practices and develop pedagogical strategies to combat them. In addition, teacher training should promote critical reflection on power relations, intersectionality, and forms of resistance of oppressed groups, especially the black population (Ribeiro et al., 2023).

In the current scenario, Law 10.639/2003, which establishes the mandatory teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in schools, represents an important milestone. However, the implementation of this law in public and private schools still faces significant challenges, many of which are related to the lack of preparation of teachers. The lack of adequate pedagogical materials and resistance to changes in the curriculum are

also obstacles to be overcome. Teacher training, therefore, should be seen as a fundamental means for the effectiveness of this public policy and, consequently, for the construction of an anti-racist education (Ribeiro et al., 2023).

Thus, the objective of this research was to analyze how teacher training, especially from racial literacy, can contribute to an anti-racist education, enabling educators to recognize and combat racist practices in the school environment. The importance of this research lies in the fact that education plays a fundamental role in the formation of critical citizens who are aware of their role in society. When it comes to anti-racist education, it is essential that educators have theoretical and practical tools to act effectively against structural racism. This research contributes to the advancement of debates on teacher training and racial literacy, promoting reflection on pedagogical practices that can be adopted so that schools can play their transformative role more effectively.

## METHODOLOGY

The research carried out has a qualitative character and was developed through a bibliographic review. The objective was to analyze the state of the art on teacher training and racial literacy as mechanisms for an anti-racist education. To this end, academic articles, dissertations, theses, and books that deal with the topics covered were surveyed and analyzed, with an emphasis on the most recent scientific production, between the years 2010 and 2023.

The selection of articles and materials was made through consultations in academic databases such as Google Scholar, Scielo, EBSCOhost, and Capes. Strict inclusion criteria were used, prioritizing texts that addressed teacher training, racial literacy and its implications in basic and higher education. The search was carried out with keywords such as "teacher training", "racial literacy", "anti-racist education", "structural racism in education", "educational policy and race" and "inclusive education", aiming to ensure that the selection of texts encompassed different theoretical and methodological perspectives.

The analysis of the materials was conducted through an analytical and interpretative reading. The texts were systematically organized and categorized according to the main topics addressed: teacher training, anti-racist practices in education, racial literacy, and educational public policies. From this categorization, the most relevant contributions to the discussion on the importance of racial literacy in teacher training and its implications in pedagogical practice were extracted.

In addition, comparisons were made between the analyzed articles, seeking to identify the convergences and divergences in the proposals for teacher training and the

approaches to racial literacy. The research also sought to observe how the scientific literature addresses the application of racial literacy in everyday pedagogical practices and what are the challenges faced by educators to implement anti-racist education in schools.

## RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

### THE ROLE OF TEACHER TRAINING IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION

Teacher training is, without a doubt, one of the main factors for the implementation of anti-racist education. Many studies reveal that the initial and continuing training of teachers in Brazil still lacks a systematic approach to the racial issue. For the school to play a transformative role, it is essential that teachers acquire the necessary knowledge to deal with racial issues in the classroom, using racial literacy as a pedagogical strategy (Nascimento; Hydrangea; Peixoto, 2023).

Racial literacy is seen as an essential component for the deconstruction of prejudices and stereotypes. He proposes that the educator, by understanding the historical construction of racism and its manifestations in everyday life, develop pedagogical practices that promote respect for different cultures and identities. The absence of a solid education in this sense can result in the reproduction, even if unconscious, of racist attitudes, which perpetuates inequalities in the school environment (Ribeiro et al., 2023).

In many cases, teacher training still focuses little on the racial theme, prioritizing more traditional issues of the pedagogical curriculum. This mismatch between social reality and educational practices compromises the construction of a curriculum that takes into account the specificities of the black population. By integrating racial literacy into teacher training, educators are able to create a more inclusive school environment, where respect for diversity is the norm and not the exception (Lima; Domingues Junior; Gomes, 2023; File; Domingues Junior; Silva, 2024; Lima et al., 2024; Lima et al., 2024; File; Silva; Domingues Junior, 2024; Gomes, 2012).

Another important aspect is the need to include racial literacy in continuing education as well. Many teachers, throughout their careers, have contact with different realities and develop diversified pedagogical practices. The constant updating of educators, especially on issues of race, is essential to ensure that anti-racist education is not restricted to a specific moment of training, but is incorporated as a daily practice in schools (Gomes, 2012).

Teacher training focused on racial literacy should go beyond superficial debates on the racial issue and include more in-depth studies on the social structures that perpetuate

racism. By recognizing these structures, educators can develop teaching strategies that question these norms and propose alternatives for a fairer and more egalitarian teaching (Filizola; Botelho, 2019).

## CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING ANTI-RACIST EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

The implementation of anti-racist education faces challenges at several levels. First, there is the resistance of some educators to approach the racial issue critically, either due to lack of knowledge or personal issues related to prejudice. This resistance is a reflection of a society still marked by deep inequalities, where structural racism is often minimized or ignored (Coelho; Brito, 2020).

In addition, many schools still do not offer a curriculum that adequately contemplates the history and culture of black people. This is partly due to the lack of specific pedagogical materials and the absence of adequate teacher training. Schools often follow a traditional curriculum that ignores the contributions of the black population to Brazilian society, perpetuating the idea of a homogeneous history without diversity (Araújo; Walnut; Guerra, 2023).

Another important challenge is the lack of support from educational and government institutions for the continuing education of teachers on topics related to racial literacy. Insufficient support for these training processes makes it difficult to implement anti-racist pedagogical practices in a consistent manner (Camargo; Faustino; Benite, 2023).

## THE IMPACT OF RACIAL LITERACY ON PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

Racial literacy, when properly incorporated into teacher training, has a direct impact on pedagogical practices. Teachers trained in racial literacy are better able to develop a critical pedagogy that promotes reflection on issues of race, class, and gender. This results in a more inclusive and welcoming school environment for all students (Araújo; Walnut; Guerra, 2023).

The impact of racial literacy is also visible in the relationship between students and teachers. From the moment educators understand the racial dynamics present in the school environment, they can act in a more sensitive and empathetic way towards black students, promoting teaching that values their identity and culture. This strengthens the sense of belonging and self-esteem of black students, which is fundamental for their academic and social development (Alves; Teixeira; Santos, 2022).

In addition, racial literacy enables a more critical approach to curricular content. By integrating the racial perspective into the disciplines, teachers are able to give visibility to

the historical experiences of blacks, which contributes to the formation of a critical consciousness in students (Alexandre, 2013).

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The research demonstrated that teacher training focused on racial literacy is essential for the development of an anti-racist education. The ability of educators to recognize racism in its various manifestations and act against it is fundamental for the construction of a more just and egalitarian society. Although there are still significant challenges to the implementation of this training in schools, advances in the field of education, especially with regard to legislation and public policies, are important.

Law 10.639/2003 and other public policies have created a more conducive environment for reflection and implementation of anti-racist pedagogical practices. However, a continuous effort is needed to ensure that teacher training is not limited to a specific moment in the educator's career, but is a permanent practice. Continuing education should be seen as an investment to transform schools into truly democratic and inclusive spaces.

In addition, the research highlighted the importance of adopting a critical approach in training, which goes beyond a superficial view of racism. Afro-Brazilian history and culture must be treated with the depth they deserve, so that educators can act more effectively in combating structural racism.

It is believed that, with the proper training of teachers and the improvement of public policies, it is possible to transform the school into a more inclusive environment free of racial discrimination. This transformation is essential for building a future in which racial inequalities are overcome, and all individuals, regardless of the color of their skin, have the same opportunities.

Finally, the research contributes to the understanding of the importance of racial literacy as a pedagogical tool and reinforces the urgency of implementing anti-racist teacher training, so that schools can effectively contribute to a more egalitarian and just society.

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