

PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: IMPACT ON IDENTITY FORMATION



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ABSTRACT

This article aimed to understand the contribution of black social movements, in defense of the decolonization of the school curriculum, and consequently to the teaching of African and Afro-descendant history and culture, from the perspective of black peoples and not of colonizers. In this sense, it analyzes the changes that have been occurring since Law 10.639/03 and Law No. 11.645/2008, a legal framework of the policy that indicates the mandatory theme of Afro-Brazilian, African and Indigenous history and culture in basic education. The study pointed out stereotypes suffered by black children in preschool classes, by their classmates and teachers and the impacts of racism in the form of prejudice and discrimination in the formation of the identity of black children. Possibilities for interventions based on legal contributions such as legal security were also pointed out.

Keywords: Black Movement. Prejudice and Discrimination. Identity of the Black Child.

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INTRODUCTION

The need for an anti-racist education arises due to the centuries of slavery that founded a racist structure in Brazilian society, "Brazil, Colony, Empire and Republic, has historically had, in the legal aspect, an active and permissive posture in the face of discrimination and racism that affects the Brazilian Afro-descendant population to this day" (RIBEIRO, p.8 2004).

Racism permeates all fields of action in the country, including education, a fundamental institution for the maturation of democracy.

It should be noted that in this context, the black movement emerges with great prominence in the fight against racism, in education, with the objective of correcting discrimination and promoting social inclusion through affirmative policies to promote ethnic-racial equity in basic education, obtained a great victory with the inclusion of the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in basic education, through Law 10.639/2003, including articles 26-A, which amended Law 9394 and Law No. 11.645/2008, which made the teaching of African, Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous History and Culture mandatory in basic basic education.

The discussion of the theme of anti-racist education from the perspective of early childhood education is recent, revealing as an important attribute the composition of the pluricultural curriculum, through the approach of teaching Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in all fields of early childhood education experiences, through the learning and development objectives.

The objective of this article is to understand the contribution of Black social movements, through their various struggles in defense of the decolonization of the school curriculum, and consequently to the teaching of African and Afro-descendant history and culture, from the perspective of black peoples and not of colonizers.

MOVEMENTS FOR THE DECOLONIZATION OF THE CURRICULUM

The central agenda of Black Movement is the struggle for the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture, effectively in education. The scenario is the defense of the inclusive, multicultural and multiethnic school. Historically, the Black Movement has occupied a prominent place in the "struggle to overcome racism, for the construction of social emancipation in Brazil and in the diaspora of Africa, bringing to the

field of struggles the debate on racism in the scope of public policies in the emancipatory perspective of equality and rights". (GOMES, 2020, p. 21).

It should be noted that one of the forms of action of the Black Movement took place in forums and congresses, decisive events of educational policy, such as the First Congress of the Brazilian Black, held in 1950, when it was recommended, in the educational sphere, "the stimulus to the study of African reminiscences in the country as well as the means of removing the difficulties of Brazilians of color and the formation of Research Institutes, public and private, with this objective" (NASCIMENTO, 1978, p.293).

From 1978 onwards, a significant year in the demands of black social movements, the struggles were concentrated on four major points:

1. Against racial discrimination and the dissemination of racist ideas in schools; 2. better conditions of access to education for the black community; 3. reformulation of school curricula aiming at valuing the role of blacks in the History of Brazil and the introduction of subjects such as History of Africa and African languages; 4. participation of blacks in the elaboration of curricula at all levels and school bodies (HASENBALG, 1987).

Almost a decade later, in 1986, the National Convention of the Negro by the Constituent Assembly took place in Brasília – DF, in which the inclusion of the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in the school curriculum of Brazilian education was defended.

This historic event was attended by representatives of sixty-three entities of the Black Movement, from sixteen states of the Brazilian federation. He addressed himself especially to the country's leaders, and especially to all the members of the National Constituent Assembly of 1987, with the following positions: "the educational process will respect all aspects of Brazilian culture, it will be mandatory to include in the school curricula of grades I, II and III the teaching of the history of Africa and the History of the Negro in Brazil". (HASENBALG, 1987).

This mobilization was of great importance for reflections on the issue of racism in Brazil, positively impacting the advancement of the democratization of education.

It can be seen that, in the following decade, in 1995, the Zumbi dos Palmares National March Against Racism, For Citizenship and Life took place, about 30 thousand activists from all over Brazil participated, marched on the Esplanade of the Ministries, in Brasília, in an articulation between the (Central Única dos Trabalhadores – CUT and Força Sindical), the black social movement, sectors of the church, NGOs and social movements

from other areas. As a conclusion, the Program for the overcoming of racism and ethnic-racial inequality was delivered to the President of the Republic (RIOS, 2012).

After decades of struggles, a milestone that has concretized the struggle of the black movement since the 1980s was Law No. 10,639, of January 9, 2003, sanctioned including articles 26-A, which amended Law 9394, of December 20, 1996, which established the guidelines for national education, to include in the official curriculum of the Education Network the mandatory theme of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture to be experienced in elementary and secondary education, by all public and private schools. Law No. 9394 was also complemented by Law No. 11,645/2008, which made the study of Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous History and Culture mandatory, and article 79-B, which establishes the inclusion of November 20 as the 'National Day of Black Consciousness' in the school calendar (BRASIL, 2003, 2008). A policy of recognition of black cultural identity is constituted.

Law No. 10,639/2003 (BRASIL, 2003) and Law No. 11,645/08 (BRASIL, 2008), which propose to break with the omission of knowledge about African, Afro-Brazilian and Indigenous History and Culture by associating these themes with the school curriculum, representing the breaking of the invisibility that is historically given to Afro-descendants, Africans and Indigenous people in Brazilian education.

Through the legal text, the proposal to present the true history of the original peoples was inaugurated, being a gain through the struggle of the Black Movement that claimed education and teaching of African and Afro-Brazilian culture in the school curriculum.

In this process, the decolonization of the curriculum through a text with a stamp of legality (Law No. 10,639/2003, and Law No. 11,645/08), imputes to the education systems the valorization of black and indigenous cultural memory, no longer written from the perspective of the Western colonizer, a model used in books, teaching materials and in the entire curriculum, it is a milestone in the perspective of the elimination of Eurocentrism of Brazilian education and the democratization of the school.

It should be noted that the aforementioned laws are the result of the III World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Forms of Intolerance, held from August 31 to September 8, 2001, in Durban, South Africa, the Brazilian State internationally recognized the institutional existence of racism in our country and committed to building measures to overcome it. Ratifying the final report of the event, Brazil committed to act positively against racism and racial discrimination, building policies

with this objective. From this came the national mobilization for the construction of an instrument that would allow, in the area of education, the effective realization of the commitments assumed by the aforementioned conference, gaining normative expression in the first Law 10.639/2003, sanctioned by the government of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, on January 9, 2003 (UNESCO, 2007).

Considering that the history of African and indigenous culture was already configured as an indication of the composition of the common national base, since in the Federal Constitution of 1988, in article 242, § 1, it indicates: "The teaching of the history of Brazil will take into account the contributions of different cultures and ethnicities to the formation of the Brazilian people" (BRASIL, 1988), Law 10.639/2003 is not fully known by the vast majority of teachers, managers and the school community, there is still a long learning to be done (SILVEIRA, 2012, P.169).

As a result of Law 10.639/2003, we have the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian History and Culture, a basic document for curricular guidance regarding African and Afro-Brazilian culture.

As can be seen below in article 2 of the aforementioned Guidelines, which indicates "guidelines, principles and foundations for the planning, execution and evaluation of Education, and have as their goal to promote the education of active and conscious citizens within the multicultural and multiethnic society of Brazil"[...] (BRASIL, 2004, p. 31).

For the implementation of anti-racist education, changes in the pedagogical structure are required, in the decolonization of the curriculum, in the acquisition of appropriate pedagogical materials with the theme of teaching African and Afro-Brazilian history and culture.

In this sense, in 2009, the National Plan for the Implementation of the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture was institutionalized.

Presenting ways to implement the aforementioned Guidelines in educational establishments, with the central objective: "To collaborate so that all education systems comply with legal determinations, with a view to facing the different forms of prejudice, racism and discrimination to guarantee the right to learn and educational equity" [...]. (BRASIL, 2009, p.19).

In the specific objectives of the National Plan for the Implementation of the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture, there are indications of how the directions and actions to confront racism, prejudice and discrimination can be put into practice.

PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION IN PRESCHOOL

Early Childhood Education, the first stage of basic education, which aims at the integral development of children up to 6 years of age, in their physical, psychological, intellectual and social aspects (art.29 of the LDB). (BRAZIL, 1996)

It is understood that, in this phase of development and learning, integral education is necessary, and social relations are aggregating this formation, which can cause serious individual and social inequalities, if it does not occur in a way that welcomes all children without distinction. (CAVALLEIRO, 2001 p. 143).

Regarding the reception of all children, it is a fact that does not always happen with black children in early childhood education, who suffer discrimination and prejudice by peers and adults, intentionally or not.

It should be noted, through the testimony of a six-year-old child in a field research carried out by Cavaleiro in 1998, "the children curse me as a black woman who does not bathe. Just because I'm black they say I don't shower. They keep cursing me as a black charcoal. [...]. I told the teacher, she didn't do anything." (CAVALLEIRO, 2001, p.146).

Effectively, the issue of racial prejudice and racial violence continues to be on the agenda of debates and research, making it necessary in this field of struggles for human rights, not to be silent, to face this issue that causes so much pain to black children, often leading them to mischaracterize themselves and deny themselves. Often black people introject white identity and feel ashamed of being black, they go through various sufferings and repressions for not having the color that is socially valued. (GOMES, 2001, p.93).

Racist and crystallized speeches that indicate a relationship of inferiority of the other due to the black color of their skin "According to the teachers, it is not only common, but constant, for a child to refer to another through labels, such as: "ugly little black" "dirty black". In the face of these stereotypes, black children are refused to form a pair in lines, in games, in June festivals." (CAVALLEIRO, 2020, p 52).

Initiating the change in daycare centers and preschools is an urgent action with regard to the decolonization of the school curriculum, providing conditions for children to

experience multicultural interactions, where all children are given the opportunity to play a leading role regardless of their phenotype.

Cavalleiro, 2001, indicates in his research situations in which teachers refer to black children in an adjectival and pejoratively way as [...] "puppies of São Benedito", "dog in the form of people", "little coal", among others". Dialoguing with the teachers participating in the research, this author found that they think this way of treating black children is normal.

In this sense, black children also suffer depreciation in schools by adults, the negative and prejudiced images created against black men and women that were seen in a derogatory way in the eighteenth century, as indicated by Munanga (2020, p.27) "[...] Sexuality, nudity, ugliness, laziness and indolence are the key themes of the description of blacks in the scientific literature of the time, which unfortunately still persist today.

During the research, Cavalleiro (2020, p.64), also witnessed the devaluation of black children in various situations such as:

Children find themselves in the video room watching children's programs. Enters, in an extraordinary edition, the death note of a singer of a famous country duo. Upon hearing the news, the teacher quickly asks "Which one died?". She learns that the black singer had died and so she comments: "ah... It wasn't the beautiful one! All the children hear your comment; [...].

After centuries, the distorted and crystallized view of beauty continues in the thinking of an educator, being black is synonymous with "ugliness", that is, the teacher's standard of beauty is totally linked to the European standards of the eighteenth century, "to be beautiful is to be white" is imposed in the teacher's speech a white aesthetic standard as a reference of beauty.

Evidently, in view of the above, there is a consensus that there is still much to be done to guarantee the right to a large portion of children in early childhood who are excluded from harmonious living in early childhood education because of the color of their "black" skin.

Understanding itself as an aggravating factor when early childhood education professionals do not

In short, although there are laws that awaken to the teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture, which enable both understanding and intervention in situations of racial violence in the school space, in the current political context we do not experience substantial public policies that lead to the implementation of these legal advances, requiring actions in the field of continuing education of teachers to be effective.

It is also necessary for school leaders to make didactic-pedagogical support material available that refers to African and Afro-Brazilian culture, as well as to understand the impact of racist stereotypes on the psychic structure of children.

STEREOTYPES AND THEIR EFFECTS ON THE IDENTITY OF BLACK CHILDREN

It should be noted that the concept of race according to the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture has nothing to do with the biological issue. [...] race is understood as the social construction forged in the tense relations between whites and blacks, often simulated as harmonious, having nothing to do with the biological concept of race coined in the eighteenth century [...] (BRASIL, 2004 p.13).

In the nineteenth century, the history of Africans was recorded to the detriment of the liberation made by the new agents of the dominant economic system, which aimed to transform them into consumers, "disappearing as a specific theme and only returning to the scene in a few works in which popular culture was briefly mentioned – in these cases, contributions such as capoeira and samba, appeared linked to these groups." (LIMA, 2006, p. 42).

From this perspective, in the field of education, the history of Africans and Afro-Brazilians is expressed in a way that accentuated the racist culture, since the image of black men and women was portrayed by "a vision that was intended to be "progressive" in the textbooks of history, geography and social integration, where they were presented working on the plantations, being victims of exploitation directed by interests linked to expanding capitalism, or as quilombola fugitives". (LIMA, 2006, p.42).

Thus, being presented without protagonist capacities, of beings who fought and fight for equal rights. In this sense, in the first decades of the twentieth century, in the classic literature worked on in schools, blacks were not presented in a position of protagonism, appearing in secondary situations: they were characters without any protagonism, submissive, "mute characters" as he indicates (GOUVÊA, 2005, p.83-84).

Evidently, no differently, in children's literature, racism is visibly wide open, as is the case of the notorious books of Monteiro Lobato, a writer of great "renown" for the generation of the twentieth century, who shows himself as a great influencer for racist rhetoric in the children's universe, such as, for example, his work published in 1921: "Narizinho arrebitado", and concretizes the beginning of Brazilian Children's Literature in this work, the

black character, Aunt Nastácia, is presented in a racist and prejudiced way, being inferiorized by Emília, a white character, as we can extract from the following excerpt in the speech of the character Emília the explicit racism and feeling of superiority:

I only put up with these stories as a study of the ignorance and stupidity of the people. I don't feel any pleasure. They are not funny, they have no humor. They seem to me very coarse and barbaric — a thing of black people who are sloth, like Aunt Nastácia. I don't like it, I don't like it and I don't like it. (GOUVÊA, 2005, p.85). (emphasis added)

It means that, in view of the above, despite having passed more than a century, the basis of the construction of children's literature has been perpetuated mitigated to rare African and Afro-Brazilian protagonisms, limiting its appearance to social roles of low prestige and stereotyped.

These phenomena can be harmful to the development of black children, since according to (ROCHA, 2011, p.36). [...] Stereotyped images induce black children to inhibit their potential, limit their professional and human aspirations and block the full development of their racial identity.

In this context, black children carry from an early age the negative impacts on their self-image, a reflection of racism and the lack of appreciation of ethnic-racial diversity in the school space, since the works that permeate this space do not value black aesthetics (TRINIDAD, 2011, p.126).

In this sense, regarding the issue of stereotypes, the closer the personal characteristics of a given individual are in relation to the Negroid type, the greater the probability that he will be discriminated against throughout his life cycle, the history of the black population is reported in the condition of slaves, being reduced to a commodity in the economic sphere, in culture as exotics and in politics as a group devoid of organizational and propositional capacity (PAIXÃO, 2006; INOCÊNCIO, 2006; GOMES, 2001).

The impact of racism on children's self-esteem is verified in the doctoral thesis of "Ethnic-racial identification in the voice of children in early childhood education spaces." (TRINIDAD, 2011, p.126), (Thamires Hélio, 4 years old, white mother and father without identification excerpt): "I wanted to be with my hair 'without being curled'. I then asked her what else she would like to have different. She replied: "I wish my eyes were like Sleeping Beauty's. [...] "I wish I had the same color as Sleeping Beauty[...] ?" "Yes, [...] Pink, skin color'.

The school is an institution for the emancipation of people, school exclusion limits the full participation of subjects in society, especially blacks, who are suffocated by stereotypes, while in early childhood education, the beginning of the school cycle, such behaviors need to be extinguished, since these stereotyped images for Rocha (2011, p. 72) [...] "It excludes, underrepresents and stigmatizes black people, preventing the positive valuation of ethnic-racial diversity, blocking the emergence of a spirit of mutual respect between blacks and whites and compromising the idea of universality of citizenship."

Furthermore, it is noted that the exclusionary and discriminatory historical construction continues to have undergone few changes over the last decades in Brazil, thus, there is an urgent and incessant need to be fought in order to build a just, democratic and legal society.

SCHOOL AND BLACK CHILDREN'S IDENTITY

It can be seen that even before the "abolition" of slavery, the school was a restricted space for whites, since Decree No. 7,031-A, of September 6, 1878, already existed, establishing that blacks could only study at night and several strategies were set up in order to prevent this population from having full access to school (BRASIL, 1878).

It is important to note that in the twenty-first century, after 134 years of the "abolition of slavery", it is urgent to deepen the discussion about the right to education of blacks, no longer with regard to access to school as in the nineteenth century, the struggle now turns towards permanence without the suffering caused by racism, permanence with equity.

Contemporaneously, the Federal Constitution of 1988 in its article 205 provides for education from the perspective "[...] of the full development of the human person, his preparation for the exercise of citizenship and his qualification for work. (BRAZIL, 2018).

On the one hand, although constitutionally the right to education is accessible to all, it is perceived that racism becomes an obstacle to the full development of students and human relations.

Effectively, the fight against racism must begin in early childhood education, since, [...] "At the end of social life, the child will have built a subjective world, as well as will have incorporated basic social roles, his own and those of others, present and future, and acquired the fundamental characteristics of his personality and identity. (CAVALLEIRO, 2006, p. 84).

Considering that both white and black children are prone to watching and experiencing derogatory attitudes against black people, both have their psychic structures altered, it is necessary that in the school space children experience intercultural experiences in this way, it is necessary to consider that we are a multicultural and multiethnic country and that the constitution of the cultural and economic riches that we have today is part of the composition of various peoples such as Africans who made up the slave labor force that enriched the colonialists (MUNANGA 2005, p.16).

In fact, the daily relationships that take place in daycare centers and preschools between children and adults must be free of any prejudice and discrimination, enriched by multicultural coexistence, contributing to the healthy psychic formation of black and white children free from the impregnation of racism.

The denial of the history and culture of the black child, the invisibility of the protagonism of their ancestors, always being presented in situations of suffering, humiliation, evil or as a supporting actor, suffering in various ways veiled stereotypes from the colonialist period to the present day, leaves as a reference of success cultural and aesthetic representations that are not theirs, which most of the time develops self-rejection behavior. (SILVA J, 2005, p.23).

It is essential that early childhood education contributes to the construction of the identity of the black child, of their racial awareness, provides opportunities for situations where they fully develop their aspirations and potentialities and that they can understand that their color does not define their possibilities.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the Black social movements, through various struggles and with the support of various institutions, brought in the twenty-first century the struggle for the decolonization of the school curriculum, bringing to the field of debate the teaching of African and Afro-descendant history and culture, from the perspective of black peoples and not of colonizers.

The studies presented so far indicate the existence of racism, prejudice and discrimination present in early childhood education with profound effects on the construction of the social identity of black children.

Several stereotypes presented at school inferiorize black children in relationships and interactions, this, in games, toys, lunch lines, children's stories, speeches and through the school curriculum itself, which is still mostly Eurocentric.

Concluding that, although we have Law No. 10,639/2003, and Law No. 11,645/08, anti-racist laws and curricular guidelines also with proposals for pluricultural education, they are only materialized on a daily basis, on the classroom floor, starting from a curriculum that teaches African and Afro-Brazilian history and culture and through the critical awareness of the school community regarding the existence of racism in early childhood education and the consequences for black children caused by racism prejudice and discrimination.

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