


## VALORIZATION OF ETHNIC-CULTURAL IDENTITY: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF EXPERIENCE REPORTS IN VISITS TO QUILOMBOS IN THE STATES OF PARÁ AND RIO DE JANEIRO

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### ABSTRACT

The article "Valuing Ethnic-Cultural Identity: comparative analysis of experience reports in visits to quilombos in the states of Pará and Rio de Janeiro" analyzes visits to quilombola communities, comparing realities of two states. In Pará, the quilombola communities of Perpétuo Socorro do Tauerá, São Raimundo do Taperú and Maripí face a lack of cultural appreciation, especially among the younger generations, who tend to reject or be unaware of their Afro-descendant heritage. On the other hand, the quilombo of São José da Serra, in Rio de Janeiro, shows a strong connection with Afro-Brazilian culture and identity, valuing traditions and memory. The research addresses the importance of educational actions in the quilombola communities of Pará to rescue and strengthen the ethnic-cultural identity, proposing measures such as teacher training and the inclusion of practical activities based on Afro-Brazilian history and culture, following the National Curriculum Guidelines. The technical visits carried out by pedagogy students allowed a detailed analysis of the cultural dynamics and challenges faced, highlighting the need for integration between school and community to rescue these traditions. It is suggested that strengthening relations between the younger and older generations, through conversation circles and cultural practices, could help reverse the process of denial of Afro-Brazilian identity. Valuing emotional intelligence in interpersonal relationships within the school is also pointed out as fundamental for the success of these initiatives, promoting a positive and respectful organizational climate.

**Keywords:** Ethnic-cultural identity, Quilombola communities, Afro-Brazilian education.

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## INTRODUCTION

This study is the product of experiences observed and shared by the group of students of the Teaching Degree Course in Pedagogy, by the National Program for the Training of Basic Education Teachers (Parfor), of the Federal University of Pará (UFPA), in the Municipality of Porto de Móz, in the state of Pará, during the activities related to the discipline Ethnic Racial Relations in Education. The discipline provided students with the opportunity to expand the debates on cross-cutting themes about the discipline and practical class held in quilombola communities in the region.

The visits were carried out in 3 (three) Quilombola Communities: Perpétuo Socorro do **Tauerá**, São Raimundo do **Taperú and Maripí**. Quilombola communities are areas in which they were populated by blacks during slavery (1535-1888)<sup>4</sup> who organized themselves as quilombos<sup>5</sup>. In these communities, it was diagnosed through the pedagogy class, in which he participated in the technical visit, that the younger generations do not identify themselves as part of the quilombo, often devaluing the culture of their ancestors.

In this way, in other words, it is possible to say that it is easy to identify a problem within the quilombola communities visited in the region of Porto de Moz, in the state of Pará, with the lack of appreciation of identity and culture in the younger generations.

The problem is current, pertinent or relevant; Since it is of paramount importance not only the quilombos, but society in general with an emphasis on the quilombo to recognize, value and disseminate culture and history. "to recognize is also to value, to disseminate and respect the historical processes of black resistance unleashed by enslaved Africans in Brazil and by their descendants in contemporary times, from individual to collective forms" (ARRUDA, 2006, p. 100)

Therefore, the study seeks to lower possible alternative solutions to this problem, initially making a comparison with the experience report in the quilombo São José da Serra (RJ), in which the community has a strong appreciation of identity and culture. At the end of this study, possible suggestions are presented that the communities visited in the region of Porto de Moz, in the state of Pará, can adopt as a solution to the problem.

To carry out a comparative analysis between the communities visited, the community presented with literary basis and theoretical bases.

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<sup>4</sup> Slavery in Brazil that would only end 353 years later on May 13, 1888, with the Golden Law.

<sup>5</sup> The quilombos were places of refuge for African slaves and Afro-descendants throughout the American continent. In Brazil, they also housed white and indigenous minorities.

Finally, the final considerations are presented with possible solutions for quilombola communities, seeking to rescue the valorization of Afro-descendant identity in the younger generations. This, in other words, is the purpose: a long-term vision based on actions carried out in the school of quilombola communities, in the search to carry out cultural appreciation and identity recognition in the younger generations.

## REALITY OF QUILOMBOLA COMMUNITIES IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF PORTO DE MÓZ (PA)

Technical visits were carried out in 3 (three) Quilombola Communities: Perpétuo Socorro do **Tauerá**, São Raimundo do **Taperú** and **Maripí**. The communities, according to local tradition, were populated by blacks who organized themselves as quilombos<sup>6</sup>.

FIGURE 01: Sign in the event hall of one of the communities



Source: Author's own file.

Currently, the communities have mixed-race residents and many do not value ancestral identities. However, their stories resist in some customs, dances, beliefs and archaeological artifacts that can be found in a simple way in the vicinity of the communities.

The technical visit activity enabled the students to have direct contact with the customs, dances, beliefs and artifacts of the Afro-descendant race; as well as the understanding in practice of how the denial of racial identity occurs, observed in some residents of the communities.

Free interviews were conducted with older members of the visited communities, in addition to getting to know some areas such as: chapel, flour house, waterfront, school and place in which they believe to be an archaeological site, in which cults of Afro religious were held.

<sup>6</sup> The quilombos were places of refuge for African slaves and Afro-descendants throughout the American continent. In Brazil, they also housed white and indigenous minorities.

FIGURE 02: Open conversations with children from the communities



Source: Authors' own.

During the interviews, some statements show that the younger generations do not consider themselves quilombolas, with a devaluation of their Afro-Brazilian identity. It is worth mentioning that the communities have a school in each that includes Early Childhood Education (children from 3 to 5 years old), Elementary I (composed of 5 years, from the 1st year to the 5th year) and Elementary II (composed of 4 years, from the 5th to the 9th year). The school works following the guidelines of Law 10.639/03, which establishes the guidelines and bases of national education, including in the official curriculum of the school system the mandatory theme "Afro-Brazilian History and Culture"; in addition, its content amends the LDBEN, in addition to arts. 26-A and 79-B, and advances with the preparation of CNE/CP Opinion No. 03/04.

The CNE/CP Opinion No. 03/04, proposes and defines the guidelines that include, in the curricula of educational institutions, which operate at the various levels and modalities of Brazilian education, contents and curricular activities related to the education of ethnic-racial relations. (OLIVEIRA, 2012). In this sense, the CNE/CP opinion No. 03/04 clearly exposes the need for the school and all faculty to be qualified to worship and deal with the subject of Ethnic Racial Relations.

However, during the visit to the schools, we detected, although the class were direct descendants of quilombolas or riverside dwellers, it was possible to observe cultural devaluation and/or denial of racial identity. Student A said: "- I can't stand or rather I'm ashamed of these little boats on the edge of the city". In this sentence it is possible to verify the two aspects mentioned above, that is, cultural devaluation. Because the cities arose on the banks of the Xingu River, with boats as their main means of transport and trade, a large part of the population needs such boats for survival to the present day. Or student B's comment "I don't feel like being a quilombola"

Like these speeches by student A and B, others emerged during the visit made by the students of the schools present in the quilombos. Many of these were reevaluated and thought of by the students of the pedagogy course who participated in the technical visit to the communities.

In each quilombo there was a person responsible for the community, in which he presented all the points already mentioned above. In the Vila Maripí quilombo, such a guide, when taking the group in the archaeological area with pieces on terrains of Afro cults, he informed: "the residents of the community do not like to walk in this Syrian, because they consider that in this area in the past it should be to hold cults" and also "many of these pieces are removed and taken from here or from the edge of the beach – in which there are no pieces like from here – when the river fills up and dries up, by many tourists or people from other states or countries."

FIGURE 03: Archaeological pieces found by our students and handicrafts of the quilombolas on a technical visit.



Source: Own collection.

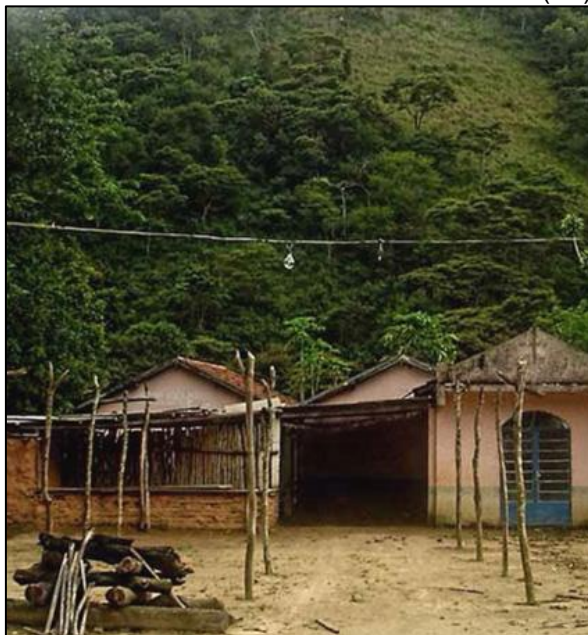
In these speeches the guide of the village of Maripí he demonstrates how many residents of the communities do not understand the religiosity of their ancestors, as well as the immeasurable cultural value of the archaeological pieces that are taken by indigenous people from outside the community. I affirm them as "immeasurable value", because these pieces should be collected, preserved and even exhibited in a small museum in each community, in order to preserve their stories in the struggle for freedom from slavery of their ancestors.

It is evident that the quilombola communities located in the municipality of Porto de Moz (PA), need actions of cultural rescue and of the Afro-Brazilian identity itself.

## REALITY OF THE QUILOMBOLA COMMUNITY SÃO JOSÉ DA SERRA (RJ)

The experience report of the quilombola community São José da Serra (RJ), was taken from the article entitled "ethnic-cultural identity and the struggle for recognition: experience report of a field visit to the quilombo São José da Serra (RJ)", authored by Gabriela Almeida Kronemberge, in 2019.

FIGURE 04: Quilombo of São José da Serra (RJ)



Source: DR1 Newspaper

We arrived at Quilombo São José da Serra around 11 am and were welcomed by the leader of the community, Antônio Nascimento Fernandes – Toninho Canecão – who led us to the quilombo shed, which was decorated with photographs, utensils, flowers and fruits. At the site, Toninho gave a brief opening speech in which he presented a little of the community's history, and explained the schedule of the day's activities. Then, we visited the two classrooms of the quilombola school, when the student-researchers talked to the quilombola teachers, and learned a little about the proposal of quilombola school education, which aims to work, in addition to the official curricular contents, the history, culture and traditions of Quilombo São José da Serra.

Quilombola School Education is a program of the Federal Government, whose references are systematized from the National Curriculum Guidelines for Quilombola School Education, given by Resolution CNE/CEB No. 8 of November 20, 2012. The provision of school education to quilombola communities is part of the struggle for the right to education, which is articulated with other struggles such as: for the recognition of their

identity, for the right to memory and for the experience of their culture. During the visit to the Quilombo São José da Serra school, the student-researchers were able to realize the importance of having a school in the community that guarantees its students a basic education, but with respect for their cultural values, their relationship with the territory and their ancestry and traditional knowledge.

Leaving the school, we passed through the wattle and daub kitchen, where the students could observe the preparation of the "Feijoada dos Deuses" – our lunch –, and in the São José Operário Chapel, where Toninho explained about the religious syncretism between Catholicism and Umbanda in the community. "As soon as we enter the chapel, our eyes are immediately called to the mural painted on the wall facing the door, where an image of St. Joseph the carpenter teaching his trade to the baby Jesus, both black, was drawn," wrote Iris, one of the students in her fieldwork report. "Each one sees Jesus the way they want. Ours is black," explained Toninho.

At the end of the interviews, the final moment arrives, in which the quilombolas spend themselves on us with a Roda de Jongo, singing and dancing their songs with joy, and showing pride in their history, culture and identity. We said goodbye to the quilombo.

## **COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

It is possible to verify two distinct realities between the quilombos of the state of Pará and Rio de Janeiro.

Through the experience reports, the three quilombos visited in Porto de Moz (PA), present different levels, but significant of the devaluation of their own cultures of African origin, as well as the non-recognition of their identity. Contrary to what happens in the quilombo São José dos Campos (RJ), in which it strongly presents culture at various times throughout the story, in addition to seeking to value the Afro-Brazilian identity.

It is necessary to initially carry out a more effective work in the educational process in the school of the communities of Perpétuo Socorro do Tauerá, São Raimundo do Taperú and Maripí, in Porto de Moz, in the aspect of education Ethnic-Racial Relations, in order to present to the younger generations the culture of the Afro-Brazilian peoples and their history.

For these actions to occur, it is necessary to highlight self-discipline – initiative, elaboration of pedagogical actions aligned with the Pedagogical Political Plan (PPP), elaborated with the entire school community and local community (quilombo). In which, it

has permanent actions that present Afro-Brazilian and African foods, dances, beliefs, customs and habits; in addition to training teachers and the entire technical-administrative staff of the school regarding "this Legislation, with a view to rooting the great gap that still exists in daily educational practices, as to the true history of our Brazilian education" (ARRUDA, 2006, p.104).

The training of teachers and relations with the local community (quilombo) must have a relationship of communication and permanent integration, in which all individuals according to their generations, their values and cultures must be valued. Moragas (2003) reports the fact that it is nothing more than a mere age prejudice, every human being has the capacity to develop, according to his potential and profile. Integration and cooperation should provide a healthy organizational climate in which individuals begin to acquire a certain satisfaction in the performance of their tasks. In addition, such communication, cooperation and integration between generations makes it possible for the population to age in a more dignified way and delaying its dependence.

The project of actions of the quilombola community goes through the impact of the macro-environment, starting initially with the legal aspects of the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture; in addition, the disciplines and how they will be worked according to the school years of the students and the decision-making of adaptations of pedagogical actions according to the local reality.

On March 10, 2004, the Ministry of Education released the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture. These guidelines were instituted by the National Council of Education – CNE to continue the Law of Guidelines and Bases of national education, which provides for the mandatory teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture in Basic Education in the official curriculum.

And it is precisely on these processes that the MEC, through the recent publication "Guidelines and Actions for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations", provides such a change. In this scenario, its reading and discussion become indispensable for teachers in different educational spheres. The work is a collection of texts, coordinated by several authors, divided into seven sections. The sections present bibliographic references that allow access to a vast literature on the various themes. In addition to the sections, the work



contains the aforementioned curricular guidelines, the opinion of the CNE/CP 003/2004, the resolution of the CNE/CP n. 001/2004 and the Law 10.639/03 in its final part.

The collection is an official document that was discussed by 150 scholars and educators, subdivided into the working groups of Early Childhood Education, Elementary School 1 and 2, High School, Youth and Adult Education, Teaching Degrees and Quilombolas. It is not a recipe of practices to be followed in the various teaching instances, especially because of the complexity that the theme involves. However, it is considered important that studies and projects aimed at changing Brazilian educational processes are dedicated to reading the "Guidelines and Actions for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations".

In addition to these, the school should carry out conversation circles between the older and younger generations, actions to rescue events and dances, so that the younger generations get to know and start to value the culture and history of their ancestors. In which, they fought, were persecuted, flogged and killed to win their freedom and lands.

In this way, Goleman (2001) emphasizes that emotional intelligence is the ability to identify one's own feelings and those of others, to motivate ourselves and to manage emotions well within us.

In the view of Cury (1997), Mayer and Salovey (1999), the concept of intelligence is of fundamental importance to achieve a balance between the rational mind and the emotional mind, emphasizing the need to learn to awaken and develop these human potentialities, so that it is possible to use these internal resources in social and professional relationships within organizations.

Therefore, it is possible to affirm that the school, by developing an environment conducive to the balance between the rational mind and the emotional mind, in which students, teachers, employees and the local community recognize their own historical and cultural identities, can awaken and develop these human potentialities. In this way, the need for Emotional Intelligence is also evidenced, to solve the problem faced by the quilombo.

In addition to these aspects, the importance of emotional intelligence in school leaders and employees, as well as students and families, in order to have a favorable organizational climate, among principals, teachers, administrative technicians, students and family members. Because affective life according to Bock, Furtado and Teixeira (2001) is understood as affective life, or affections, encompasses many states belonging to the pleasure-displeasure range, such as, for example, anguish in its different aspects – pain,

mourning, gratitude, depersonalization – the affects that sustain the fear of annihilation. That is, the affective life of individuals involves many states, these belong to numerous types of sensations and distinct affections, in the example made by the authors, it is possible to observe that a certain state of affective life, which is in this case anguish, can be a reflection of different aspects.

## **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The opportunity to visit the quilombola communities in Porto de Moz (PA), the Degree in Pedagogy class at UFPA/PARFOR, provides new positions and postures to students regarding the most varied topics that range from: values, growth, customs, cultures, etc. In addition to these aspects observed from the perspective of future teachers, it was possible to analyze the professional and scientific development provided to the student-teacher, as a result of personal and social experience and the experiences reported in society in the quilombos visited.

In order to prepare the new generations for the coexistence between different cultures, the government has been looking for alternatives, but only in 2009 was the National Plan of National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture established, which defines the mandatory teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in educational institutions in Brazil.

In the quilombo, São José da Serra (RJ) presents a community in which it has a strong Afro-Brazilian and African culture, in which we identify in the speeches, customs and habits of the community the appreciation of its identity. Unlike the quilombola communities in Porto de Moz (PA).

Therefore, as possible long-term solutions to be carried out by the school, the following are highlighted:

Teacher training with a focus on Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture;

Effective classes in accordance with the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture;

Conversation circles with the older generations to report their experiences, customs and habits of the community;

Carry out practical experiences related to customs and habits Afro-Brazilian and African Culture;

In this way, it is possible to understand that the National Plan of the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Ethnic-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African History and Culture is essential for the development of the Brazilian nation through a policy of valuing diversity, where all people will be recognized for their attitudes towards the world and not for their ethnicity.

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