



REPERCUSSIONS OF THE NORMAL COURSE¹ IN THE LIVES OF BLACK WOMEN

REPERCUSSÕES DO CURSO NORMAL NA VIDA DE MULHERES NEGRAS

REPERCUSIONES DEL CURSO NORMAL EN LA VIDA DE LAS MUJERES NEGRAS

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ABSTRACT: This article seeks to understand the repercussions of acquiring a teaching course on the lives of black women in the city of Muzambinho, Minas Gerais. To this end, we dialogued with three black women normalists who experienced their teaching training in a secular institution. It was part of the methodological procedures used: interviews, analysis of documentary sources, bibliographic survey, among others. The results show that the education acquired through the Normal Course is positively evaluated by black students.

KEYWORDS: Black normalists. History of education of the black. Ethnic-racial relations education.

RESUMO: *Este artigo busca compreender as repercussões da aquisição do curso magistério na vida de mulheres negras na cidade de Muzambinho, Minas Gerais. Para tal, dialogamos com três mulheres normalistas negras as quais vivenciaram a sua formação do magistério em uma instituição secular. Fez parte dos procedimentos metodológicos utilizados: entrevistas, análise de fontes documentais, levantamento bibliográfico, entre outros. Os resultados apontam que a formação adquirida por meio do Curso Normal é avaliada positivamente pelas normalistas negras.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Normalistas negras. História da educação do negro. Educação das relações étnico-raciais.*

RESUMEN: *Este artículo busca comprender las repercusiones de la adquisición de un curso de docencia en la vida de las mujeres negras en la ciudad de Muzambinho, Minas Gerais. Para ello, dialogamos con tres mujeres negras normalistas que vivieron su formación docente en una institución laica. Formó parte de los procedimientos metodológicos utilizados: entrevistas,*

¹ Vocational course that is taken along with High School. The purpose is to capacitate professionals to work in Early Childhood Education. In this paper, we are going to reference to it as “teaching course”.

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análisis de fuentes documentales, levantamiento bibliográfico, entre otros. Los resultados muestran que la educación adquirida a través del Curso Normal es evaluada positivamente por los estudiantes negras.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Normalistas negras. Historia de la educación del negro. Educación en relaciones étnico-raciales*

Introduction

This article derives from a research conducted as part of the master's degree program in education and seeks to understand the repercussions of the acquisition of the magisterial course in the lives of black women⁴ in the city of Muzambinho, Minas Gerais. More specifically, we intended to know, among other things, to what extent taking the course would provide them with social, cultural, and economic transformations. Furthermore, the institution where the research was conducted is secular. Therefore, we believed that this study would contribute to the field of knowledge of the History of Black Education, considering the incipient academic productions carried out in this school.

The state school Antonieta de Barros⁵ was created in June 1906, working in the training of teachers, mostly women, until the year 2017, with a small interruption between the years 1998 and 2015. Among the discussions and surveys carried out for this research, the understanding about the Normal Course (currently Magisterial) in a city with strong agrarian characteristics, but also with educational tradition, became pulsating. Thus, this article seeks to present the training of black women in the historical Normal Course of Muzambinho.

From the methodological point of view, to identify the presence, or absence, of black women in the course, we sought identification, in school record books, histories, student folders, photographs and other documents available in the collection of the researched institution and the municipal museum, between the months of June and September 2019.

In a first insertion in the field, the secretary responsible for the collection provided full access to all the documentation. Next, we counted on the collaboration of employees of the school secretariat in the previous selection of documents; we adopted this methodology because we understood that being Muzambinho a small town, they knew and identified several of the students who had graduated from the course. Thus, even if there was no racial identification in

⁴ The category "Black" is understood as the group of people who self-declare black and mixed race, according to the color or race questionnaire used by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).

⁵ The name given is fictitious. We pay homage to Antonieta de Barros, the first black state deputy and author of the bill that establishes October 15th as teachers' day.





the records, they would indicate black students. Thus, for the identification of black students, at first, a racial-ethnic hetero-identification was performed, which according to Osório (2003) is based on phenotypic observations of the person, in which it is possible to identify their racial-ethnic belonging. Next, a selection was made based on the women listed in which they themselves made their self-declaration (black or brown).

Thus, we conducted the search in the documents available at the school and complemented our research with the analysis of the photographs archived at the Francisco Cerávolo Municipal Museum. It is noteworthy that the access to these last photographs occurred through the sharing of the Electronic Drive of the Francisco Cerávolo Municipal Museum, in July 2019, allowing us to return to them as many times as necessary, including when the Museum closed its activities to the public due to the Covid-19 pandemic⁶.

Another source also used was the analysis of photographs, because as Matuad (1996) argues, this technique seeks to capture a testimony of a reality, in which we can observe cultural conventions and options historically held. Thus, this author defends that "photography reveals us, through the study of image production, a clue to reach what is apparent at first glance, but that grants social meaning to the photo" (MATUAD, 1996, p. 11-12, our translation).

A bibliographic survey was carried out in the "Dissertations and Theses" area, at the Capes portal (<http://bdtd.ibict.br/vufind/>), periodicals portal of the area, such as *Scielo*, and through Google Scholar (<https://scholar.google.com.br>), we observed that the academic works in the area focusing on this theme are still very incipient.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three black normalist women who experienced their teacher training in different historical periods in the institution 1989, 1997, and 2017. This choice was intentional since it would make it possible to apprehend the perceptions of these subjects taking into consideration different historical, social, and political moments.

Through this methodology, we seek, by means of their reports, to elucidate and fill in gaps that the written documents are not able to answer and to achieve our objectives. From this perspective, it is also understood that

⁶ It is worth mentioning that doing research in the context of the Coronavirus was a very complicated situation. The interviews with the interlocutors, for example, would be done face-to-face, however, due to the social distance, all of them were done through Webconference on the Meet platform duly recorded, transcribed and discussed later. In addition, throughout the work we came across institutions (school, municipal museum, among others), all closed. It is important to register that to date more than 600,000 deaths (under-reported) have been accounted for by Covid-19 in Brazil.





[...] another role given to oral history refers to the possibility of finding, through the testimonies of marginalized, excluded and defeated people, the true history. A history that breaks with the official discourse, and, therefore, capable of unveiling the other history hidden and masked by power. The historian thus assumes the mission of giving voice to the voiceless (RIOS, 2000, p. 10, our translation).

Thompson (1992, p. 25) points out in this regard that "the interview will also provide a means of discovering written documents and photographs that otherwise would not have been located. In the same perspective of Rosa (2006, p. 17), we understand the interview as a data collection technique, done by means of a dialogue oriented to a defined objective that, through an interrogation, will lead the informant to narrate specific themes.

Situating the Muzambinho context: sociopolitical, historical and cultural configurations typical of the southern Minas Gerais region

Located in the south of Minas Gerais, Muzambinho borders cities such as Guaxupé, Juruáia, Monte Belo, Cabo Verde, and the São Paulo city of Caconde. Its birthday is celebrated on November 30, the date on which it became a city. In a search on the website of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE)⁷, it has a population that, according to the last census (2010), is close to 20,430 people and, therefore, with a demographic density of 49.84 hab./km.

The municipality has a strongly agrarian economy with large coffee production, according to IBGE (2016), occupying the 42nd place in coffee production in its region and 70th place nationally, and its coffee production is known regionally and stamped on the municipal coat of arms. The cultivation of coffee directly influences the classrooms of public schools, both because in the harvest period the demand for labor increases, decreasing the presence of students in schools.

The agrarian influence is even part of the municipal coat of arms, signaling it as an important engine of the local economy, affecting the cuisine and economy of the municipality's culture. The flag also features a cattle figure, referring to the traditional ranching of the place, for beef or dairy cattle.

The name of the city is a tribute to the Moçambo River and the *moçambinho* people that lived in these lands. Moacyr Bretas Soares brings in the book *Muzambinho: sua história e seus homens* (1940, p. 52, our translation), that "the *mocambinhos* that bordered the city, besides

⁷ Available: <https://www.ibge.gov.br/cidades-e-estados/mg/muzambinho.html>. Access: 04 Sep. 2019.





being the slaves' dwellings in that locality, served as hiding places for those who fled from other lands.

According to information obtained from the IBGE site, the city's history is related to the conquest of freedom by African people in Brazil.

The history of Muzambinho is also associated with the struggle for freedom of Africans, mostly from Angola and Mozambique. In the region there was a large incidence of Africans who fled the farms and hid in the region, especially where today is the Brejo Alegre neighborhood. The name Muzambinho comes from the African influence in the formation of the town and has several meanings. According to tradition, the name of the city originated from the word *mocambo* or *mocambinho*, i.e., a dwelling used by black runaway slaves (IBGE, 2017, our translation).⁸

Nevertheless, despite this history of struggle and resistance in the origin of the city's name, when we consider the population percentage by color/race, pointed by the same Institute⁹, it appears that in Muzambinho the predominance of the self-declared non-black population. What we notice is that, despite its historical formation, the city today has almost 20% of its population self-declared as black (*pardo*¹⁰ or black), well below the population of the state, which has an average of 53.8% of its population black. The possible explanations for this fact can be understood in several moments of the history of the municipality and of the regional and national formations. This is because, despite the etymology of its gentile name, the constitution of Muzambinho was based on several characteristics and influences.

Therefore, the understanding of the formation of the municipality is related to strong historical characteristics that, besides being those of Minas Gerais, are those of southern Minas. Such analysis must be taken into consideration due to the strong and different socio-political, cultural, and colonial characteristics of this to the other regions of Minas.

The South of Minas Gerais is part of the old Comarca of Rio das Mortes, bordering São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro and being the troops' path, target of expeditions of clearing and settlements - with emphasis on the villages of Aiuruoca, Baependi and Campanha as the oldest villages.

Nevertheless, it was with coffee farming that Muzambinho approached another region: known as Mogiana Paulista, the West Paulista (region of Campinas and Ribeirão Preto). Castilho (2011, p. 34, our translation) points out that:

⁸ Excerpt taken from the IBGE *site*, in the History & Photos of Muzambinho, Minas Gerais, Brazil.

⁹ Available: <https://cidades.ibge.gov.br/brasil/mg/muzambinho/pesquisa/23/25888?detalhes=-true>. Access: 16 Sep. 2019

¹⁰ Color category used by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).





The coffee culture in Sul de Minas followed its expansion through the municipalities to the west of the region, on the border with the interior of São Paulo, such as Monte Santo de Minas, São João da Fortaleza (today Arceburgo), Santa Bárbara das Canoas (Guaranésia) and Cabo Verde, all established as an extension of the expansion of the West of São Paulo. Thus, the expansion of coffee farming in the South of Minas Gerais was the result of an even more voracious expansion in another region, in this case Oeste Paulista, a process that would imply in the commercial approximation of the two regions.

In the same sense, Martins (2014) points out that the region of Guaxupé expanded greatly at the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, stimulated by Cia Mogiana. Thus, we agree that, as in the province of São Paulo "slave labor was being replaced by the European immigration current, mainly composed of Italians, due to the Free Womb Law and the constant abolitionist movements" (CASTILHO, 2011, p. 33, our translation), in Muzambinho this replacement was also present.

However, it is worth reflecting that, in the coffee plantations already formed, the cultivation started to be based on foreign labor importation or harvesting contracts. Thus, an important population of immigrants attracted to the region also worked in urban activities as tailors. We also highlight that, differently from what happened with the black population, now freed, the European immigrants were given several incentives, such as

The farmer accompanied by his family could buy a rural lot in installments or at sight. The heads of family could obtain a new lot, provided that the family had at least five people able to work or that the culture of the first lot had been carefully developed (CASTILHO, 2011, p. 56, our translation).

Normal Course, Feminization of the Teaching Profession, Black Teachers

The proposal of the Normal Course in 1906 in the city of Muzambinho-MG is linked to the spirit of the political demands expressed with the advent of the new Republic, still in its genesis. This is because the creation of the Normal Course, through the Decree No. 10.060, November 30, 1888 (BRASIL, 1888), is part of a series of measures that sought to improve the civility of the Brazilian population, regenerating, and preparing it, therefore, for the new country that was desired. These desires intensified after the proclamation of the Republic, when a project of formation of national identity was accentuated.

In this sense, Muller (2008) states that, little by little, the school became the space thought and planned for the creation of these Brazilian people, always going through the so-called moral and physical values. Seeking to achieve such values, Jairza Silva (2018) highlights





that, governed by changes in patriarchal and economic relations, the feminization of teaching became a worldwide phenomenon at the end of the 19th century and throughout the 20th century. The consequence of this was that

[...] middle-class women became responsible for the mission of social moralization of the working classes. In this way, the presence of the feminine started to be effective, from the end of the 19th century, and followed this trend throughout the 20th century. This process also occurred in Brazil with due specificities (SILVA, 2018, p. 83, our translation).

In parallel to the process of feminization of teaching, which associated it with maternal values and characteristics, it is worth noting that the very construction of the curriculum ended up directing women to the course. Thus, the curriculum also worked as a limiting factor to the continuity of their educational trajectory.

To the curricular construction, as mentioned, and to the association of the belief of a gender docility, we can add economic reasons for this feminization of the teaching profession. This is because, along with the proposal to educate and civilize the Brazilian population, also came the challenge of how to foster such a process. Thus, the state could pay reduced salaries, since it could subject women to such a condition. Carvalho and Carvalho (2012, p. 110, our translation) also add that the aspired profile for this teaching was that "this woman who won this space in a useful and dignified work was from a wealthy social class, so the salary was secondary".

Thus, we realize that the Normal Course initially meant possibilities of working, being teaching one of the few possibilities of work for women. On the other hand, if for women, especially those linked to the middle class, it meant the possibility of formal work, as well as a way to leave the private space of the home to the public space of the school, for black women, who had always occupied jobs considered subordinate or in conditions analogous to slavery and whose access to public spaces already occurred without any formality, prestige and recognition, it meant only a means of survival.

The meaning of the Normal Course, therefore, is different for this social group. That is, for white women coming from wealthy social classes, besides financial issues, the insertion in this world of work also meant relative independence, while for black women,

[...] the whole experience of the private space, destined to black women, was implied in a public experience, because after the formal abolition. These women had to adjust their lives by making innumerable negotiations and agency. Thus, for them there is no public and private separate, this would be a central aspect of problematization when it comes to producing the feminization of teaching (SILVA, 2018, p. 86, our translation).





As the course became more technical through educational reforms, the teaching career became more professionalized, and a new public began to seek the course. Added to this is the devaluation of the teaching career, which, with low pay, is no longer desired by the higher social classes. Thus, the entry of black women from the lower social classes in the course has historically happened gradually.

Nevertheless, the insertion of black women continued to be deficient, because, with exclusion mechanisms such as the admission exam, implemented by Law No. 4.024 of December 20, 1961, which established that "Art. 36. Admission to the first series of the 1st cycle of high school courses depends on approval in an admission exam, in which satisfactory primary education is demonstrated, if the student has completed eleven years or will reach this age during the school year (BRAZIL, 1961, Art. 36).

This policy was in force for 40 years and, along with these legally placed barriers, the obstacles imposed by institutional racism are added, operating in the maintenance of indirect discrimination, as argued by Moreira (2017 apud ALMEIDA, 2019) when he explains that indirect discrimination is marked by the absence of explicit intentionality to discriminate against people. This can happen because the norm (in this case, the entrance exam) does not consider or foresee the effects of it.

The contact with the collection revealed historiographic data on the presence of black women in the institution, including when it was still private. This finding is available in the photographic collection referring to the periods before the fire in the 1960s¹¹, in which it was observed, in a photo dated 1924, the presence of two students with predominantly black phenotypic characteristics, located in the photograph standing in the foreground, being the second from right to left and the fifth student from right to left, also standing in the foreground (Figure 1). Nevertheless, it was not possible to identify them in the documents analyzed.

¹¹ The school suffered an accidental fire on June 3, 1969, when students invaded the school to steal evaluations that would be applied that week. Moreover, the information available in the records could only be accessed from the year 1989, since, in that year, the school suffered a flood and its leaders were told by the Regional Secretary of Education (SRE) of Poços de Caldas to discard all documentation in order to minimize risks of infestation and mold transmission to the other documents.





Figure 1 – Normalists with the nuns (1924)



Source: Francisco Cerávolo Municipal Museum, Muzambinho - MG

When consulting the records of the students' data, there is no identification of the normal students. Consequently, it was not possible to retrieve other records that corroborate the color/race, since there are no names or more information in the photograph and there are no records of this period in the school, due to the fire and, later, the flooding. However, their presence during the analyzed period already called our attention and led us to ponder on the presence of black women in the teaching course, even in the first decade of the 1920s.

In addition to these obstacles, and to propose a time frame for the research, we proposed the implementation of Law No. 7.044/82¹², which changes the provisions of Law No. 5.692¹³, of August 11, 1971, regarding the professionalization of secondary education. This was important because several normatizations were made in the teaching course after the implementation of the above-mentioned Law. Moreover, we emphasize that, with this cut, it was possible to get in touch with the school teachers who had graduated from the course, thus being able to count on their testimonies.

In the specific case of the locus of the research, it is verified, through the sources consulted, that the increase in enrollment of black women in the teaching course in Muzambinho is placed after the sanction of Law No. 5.692 of August 11, 1971 (BRASIL, 1971a), which sets the guidelines for teaching in the 1st and 2nd grades. It is possible to consider, therefore, that the aforementioned legal provision has a direct impact on the formation

¹² Available: http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/L7044.htm#art1. Access: 10 Feb. 2021.

¹³ Available: http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/l5692.htm. Access: 10 Feb. 2021.



of the same, since it puts an end to the practice of entrance examinations: "the entrance examination was for some decades the decisive dividing line between primary and secondary school. [It was a kind of password for social ascension [...]]" (NUNES, 2000, p. 45, our translation).

Regarding the period in which the course functioned, we highlight that it had its activities maintained almost uninterrupted until 1997, when, after the approval of the Law of Directives Bases of National Education (LDBEN) - Law no. 9.394/96 (BRASIL, 1996) - it was established that, to teach at the basic level of education, it would be necessary to have a higher education degree, causing conflict with the course. However, the course returned to its activities in 2016, offering two classes, but closing again in 2017, after the graduation of these classes. We observe, therefore, a longevity in the training of normalist women in the municipality.

To this extent, it is worth reflecting on the formation of their identity as a social construction is to reflect on the possible categorizations and on the place that was established for them also in the educational field, since the identity of these individuals was built not only by opposition to the white man, but also by conflict, by dialogues, by the approximations and distancing of white and black men, and even of the white woman.

Nilma Lino Gomes (2003, p. 171-172, our translation) argues that:

In this perspective, when we think of the school as a specific space of formation, inserted in a much broader educational process, we find more than curricula, school subjects, regulations, norms, projects, exams, tests, and contents. School can be considered, then, as one of the spaces that interfere in the construction of black identity. The look cast on the Negro and his culture at school can either value identities and differences or stigmatize, discriminate, segregate, and even deny them.

It is in the sense that black and female identity is a construction that education and schools had (and have) an important role. We turn again to Nilma Lino Gomes (2002, p. 40, our translation), who explains that:

[...] racial difference is transformed into disability and inequality, and this transformation is justified through a view that isolates the black within the unjust socioeconomic conditions that affect, in general, the Brazilian working class.

Thus, to think about an education for blacks is to reflect on the importance of curricula and of public policies. Nevertheless, as discussed above, education for the black population in Brazil has not been stimulated. On the contrary, obstacles were created when thinking about their insertion.





We cannot also disregard that the elementary school, for example, assumed an essential role in the construction of the national identity through the choice of contents and the simplest regulations, such as the dressing of the students and teachers. Still in relation to the formation of a national identity, it is worth mentioning that it also went through the construction of the teaching profession and its feminization, giving birth to the ideology of the little teacher, especially the white teacher. In this way, we realize that, as the teaching profession was feminized, it was transformed into the figure of a white woman. Maria Lúcia Rodrigues Muller (2014) presents the whitening process of the teaching profession, and not only of the students.

According to the author, this process was part of a legitimization of Manichean inferiority, allying the antagonism white/black, beauty/ugliness, and superiority/inferiority to pedagogical competence. She also adds, at another point, that:

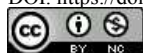
[...] already in the [19]20s, the standards set by educational reforms for the elementary school teacher have a precise racial and ethnic connotation, not only through the requirement of the Normal School diploma, but also through the requirement of "merit", and that the teacher could present a "healthy" biotype (MULLER, 2006, p. 09, our translation).

In this way, it is worth noting that the absence of public educational policies was a determining factor for the removal of black girls from school benches. Thus, we can observe a disappearance of black female teachers and students in the records and documents of this period.

With the affirmative action policies undertaken in recent decades, this reality has been changing, examples of which are Laws 10.639/03 and 11.645/08 (BRASIL, 2003; 2008). The proposal is that, through the inclusion of these contents in textbooks and even in festivities, it would be possible to articulate education and black identity formation. For Gomes (2002, p. 46, our translation), it would also be possible to

More than simply presenting students with data on the situation of racial discrimination and on the social, political, and economic reality of the population, the school should problematize the racial issue. This problematization implies discovering, getting to know, and socializing African references recreated in Brazil [...].

We verified that the black schoolgirls had to reconcile work and studies in their life trajectories, breaking with this the assistance/voluntary character of teaching as apprehended by women from other racial-ethnic groups and from a different social class. We noticed that, when they were still very young, they had to deal with the overcoming of obstacles given the





social reality they lived, which was, many times, disregarded or unknown, even by their teachers.

Teaching and black women: ruptures, conquest of rights and possibilities

Considering the socioeconomic context of the city of Muzambinho, that is, considering that Muzambinho is part of cities with tradition and economy strongly linked to agricultural and livestock production, having a teacher in the family is a reason for pride and growth, since there was a traditional break with manual labor.

To the same extent, also considering that, as previously stated, Muzambinho is a city with school tradition and that employs hundreds of people in their schools and federal institute, thus, having a family member in the teaching condition is a source of great pride for lower classes, especially after the agricultural school became a federal institute, when it provided the increase of vacancies and brought many professionals to the city. In this sense, when asked about the importance of her training to be a teacher Maria Madalena¹⁴ told us that

Since my mother worked as a maid, and she worked at the teacher's house [...] it was an upper class people, right, for us it was upper social class. So, my graduation was a joy for my father. Because besides... there were only two of us, a couple of children. My father, his mother passed away and he was only nine years old, so he was raised in other people's houses, without any resources, from house to house. Each time he was in one. So when I graduated for him it was like this, I was a doctor, right. It was the same thing as graduating in medicine. So when I went to college and finished it was a joy for him (Maria Madalena, black, 42 years old, graduated in 1997, our emphasis)

However, despite the traditional schools in the municipality, we observed that these black women are the first in their families to advance in their studies, reaching higher education. At the same time, we also observe that all of them emphasize that the teaching course offered this possibility, either by providing financial conditions or by the maturity that the course brought.

*What led me to take the teaching course was curiosity. I was wanting to take a course, so I started administration [at the technical level] and I met a friend who was taking the magisterial course and she told me that everything was very good. Then I got curious [and sought] to know how it works. I went and I liked it. **Then I learned and learned. I really like to learn.** I fell in love. [To practice the job]. I usually take substitution at the school where I did my internship. Because sometimes a teacher is missing. Or the teachers*

¹⁴ The names of the interlocutors are fictitious and they were chosen by themselves.



themselves call me, you know? The teacher will be absent on such and such a day, then he calls me: "Fatima [...] can you come tomorrow? They leave the material, and then I work on that material with the students in education. Usually early childhood education, because the teaching I did is for early childhood education (Fátima, black, 34 years old, graduated in 2017, emphasis added).

Yes, very big, there was a very big change. Because I used to earn money working in the rural area, in a very difficult job, with a lot of suffering, little valued, I think it should be more valued, because it is the rural people that keep our table. They are discriminated against too much. Not so much now, but before it was us: "look at the day laborer, look at I don't know what...". So, today people don't talk like that anymore, because today everything is mechanized, today there are machines to brew coffee, today there are state-of-the-art tractors. So today it is different, but not before, it used to be a hoe, a little scuttle, the lunch box was wrapped in newspaper and tied with a dishcloth. So it was very hard work, and what we earned was not enough. And the black woman in the zone suffered even more. So after I graduated, yes, I did. I managed, I fought, I did a lot of substituting, I spent many years substituting, until I was recognized as a teacher and then it changed a lot (Maria Madalena, black, 42 years old, graduated in 1997, our emphasis).

As a teacher. And so, my greatest, my greatest dream when I finished teaching, my father went to my graduation. And my greatest dream was to go to college, just like you said, I couldn't afford it, it was very expensive, everything... so I only went to college after I started working. Then I had the money to pay for college. Then I managed. (Maria, black, 52 years old, graduated in 1989, our emphasis).

It has called our attention in this way that the normal/magisterial course provided these black women with educational possibilities that were not previously possible for their families to attain. In addition, even though, today, the profession of early years teacher may be undervalued from a financial point of view, the profession is doubly significant for these black women.

This is because teaching breaks the cycle related to the family's low schooling, and also means possibilities of advancement in their professional careers. Thus, the course reverberates positively in terms of building the self-esteem of these women, a perspective shared by other studies, because:

Exercising the teaching career, therefore, for these subjects is not necessarily related to socially occupying a profession of low social prestige. On the contrary, for them it means achieving a certain social mobility, given their life and family trajectory (SILVA, 2018, p. 86, our translation).

The perception of a change in life after entering the course for Teaching is shared by Fatima when she considers that





*The memory I have of teaching is a memory of... you know? Discovery. Because I was very ignorant, really ignorant, I was an ignorant mother, an ignorant person. Then I discovered in teaching, that to educate, to teach you don't need to. (...) you don't only have to be a mother, you also have to be a companion, you know? Understand the other side of the story. You don't just go there and teach a student. For one student. You are teaching 25 students in a room, you need to pay attention to everyone. **Everyone needs attention and I was very ignorant about this. I learned that I have to learn more and more** (Fatima, black, 34 years old, graduated in 2017, emphasis added).*

Thus, education is understood in a broad sense, which is constituted not only in our schooling, but also takes place in our humanization process, including in our family relationships. In other words, the educational practice takes place in several social spaces: in the family, in the community, at work, in collective actions, in cultural groups, in social movements, in the school, among others.

The role of the family is, therefore, fundamental in the process of black identity formation and socialization. In this sense, Eliana Oliveira (2006. p. 17) explains the meaning of socialization as a set of mechanisms by which the individual learns about social relations and assimilates the norms, values, and beliefs of a society and a collectivity. Thus, we noticed that the family support for the continuity and permanence in the teaching course, being considered as a possibility of opportunities and social recognition,

*[...] so **my father and mother always encouraged their children to study.** [My mother] said that reading was very necessary and so [...] the memories I have that are already deceased, right? It's of her always encouraging me to study, to have a life different from hers, right? (...) É. This brother of mine, my brother helped to buy some school material for me and my other sister [...]. And so, when I was a student I didn't have everything I needed. We still had a difficult situation, but rice and beans were always there. So, I didn't have clothes, they were clothes, a change of clothes, and I didn't have the notebooks that everyone else had, I belonged to the school box, so that was my childhood. But my mother said that I was very studious, that I was very intelligent, and she encouraged all of us to study. Since... **my older brothers, me, you know. And then I kept going, I kept studying, so things started to get better. Because then I started working.** [You know, she used to talk all the time that it was very important to study, that she couldn't read, she couldn't write, and that we... she... I remember her talking, insisting with all of us, for us to have a registered job, you know. She talked about stability at that time, stability. So she used to say a lot: "**study, so you can have a different job than the one we had. So, I think that each one took advantage of this incentive in a different way.** My sister, [...], studied nursing. She is a nursing technician. She was a teacher, right. She went to high school, but she didn't want to pursue a teaching career. She didn't go to college. Márcia finished high school, in *Acertando o Passo*, a program that she had. My brother went up to the second year of high school. It seems that she studied until the fourth, third year, only when she was at home. Then she stopped studying, and [...], she did up to fifth grade at the time (Maria, black, 52 years old, graduated in 1989, our emphasis).*





*My mother is very fond of reading. She likes to read a lot and I always watched her reading and said: "Gee, Mom, I don't like this. I always said, "Oh, no, I'm not going to mess with that. I don't know how she can stand reading so much. I told her so. And my mother always said that to me, why [...] I am her only daughter, a woman. So she always put in my head: "**daughter, you have to be somebody in life**" "Somebody... you have to do something good with your life, because we are women, we already suffer. Even more so when we are black. Black people, you can't even dream, can you? So at least, if you dream and get it, my daughter, whatever you don't get is fine with me" (Fatima, black, 34 years old, graduated in 2017, our emphasis).*

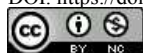
We noticed the importance of family support and encouragement in their education and formation. This can be explained by the fact that their respective families have not been assured the right to education, and that the working classes are often not recognized in these institutional spaces. Regarding this view, Lea Paixão (2007) argues that the lower classes place great importance on school, since they see in it the possibilities of learning, such as the basic skills of reading and writing, but also that they will be taught the norms that organize society more broadly.

Anyway, looking for formation, integration, or right, we verified in the interviewees' speech what was previously argued by Amauri Pereira (2005) that the democratization of the school should be encouraged and guaranteed by the direction and pedagogical team, but that it will not be implemented if there is no interest and "awareness" of the students, parents, or guardians.

However, we observed in the student trajectory of 2 of the 3 interviewees the continuity and training in higher education in private institutions, even Fatima starts her course in a private institution and then gets the remaining vacancy in a federal institution. Thus, considering their social conditions, having taken the Teaching course, technical medium level, was essential for them to have access to higher education, since there was a need for remuneration and work to support themselves, besides being part of the family support.

Gatti (2010) pointed out that 64% of the Pedagogy enrollments were in private institutions, also highlighting that in the 1980s, federal institutions focused on baccalaureate courses. The author also adds that, considering the age range of 18 to 24 years as the ideal age to attend higher education, that 20% of the pedagogy students are in the age range of 30 to 39 years. In this aspect, our interlocutors are not different from this since they attended/course after the age of 30.

Among the many political changes that explain the changes, including the vacancy in a federal institution in Fatima, we highlight the university reforms and expansions, highlighting





the creation of federal institutes that bring in Law 11.892/2008¹⁵ the obligation of a minimum of 20% of the vacancies to be in undergraduate courses, directly impacting the municipality studied and the interviewees.

Final considerations

The study pointed out that several policies directly and indirectly influenced the teaching education of black women in Brazil. Directly through obstacles such as the entrance examinations, mandatory from 1931 to 1971, which limited access to secondary education. In this context, such exams ended up becoming the main exclusion mechanism based on the technical meritocratic neutrality of the results, decreeing the end of the educational trajectory of several black women who did not have the financial conditions to study or even to acquire the school materials necessary to complete their studies.

It also explained the absence of black representation in the teaching career. This is because, by analyzing the documental sources, it was verified that, even though teaching is a mostly female practice and considering a secular course in teacher education in Muzambinho, in light of the intersectionality of race, gender, and class, it is verified that black teachers are underrepresented in the teaching career.

Finally, the education acquired through the Normal Course for the black schoolgirls is evaluated in a very positive way by them, considering the adverse social and racial conditions faced by these women.

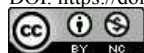
The experience of taking a course in education for these women, therefore, meant the starting point for them to be able to continue their schooling trajectories by continuing their studies at the college level and at the post-graduate level.

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¹⁵ Available: https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2007-2010/2008/lei/111892.htm. Access: 10 June 2021





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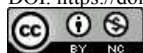
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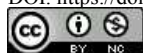
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